UK Research and Innovation

Funding opportunity

Pre-announcement: ESRC applicant-led: explore awards

Opportunity status:	Upcoming
Funders:	Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
Funding type:	Grant
Award range:	£300,000 - £2,000,000
Publication date:	8 September 2026
Opening date:	5 November 2026 9:00am UK time
Closing date:	Open - no closing date

Apply for funding to advance knowledge through ambitious, curiosity-driven social science. We are looking for creative, innovative and bold proposals within ESRC's remit that advance knowledge by pushing disciplinary, methodological or conceptual boundaries. You can propose the approach that best achieves your aims. We will fund individuals or research teams with up to four core members.

You must be based at a UK research organisation eligible for ESRC funding.

The full economic cost (FEC) of your project can be up to £2 million. ESRC will fund 80% of the FEC. Projects can last up to five years.

This is a pre-announcement and the information may change. More information will be available on this page when the funding opportunity opens.

Who can apply

This opportunity will be open to organisations with standard eligibility. **Check if your organisation is eligible**.

Who can apply

You can be at any stage of your career.

Applications must be submitted by an individual researcher or a small central research team consisting of no more than four members, comprising one project lead and up to three project co-leads.

Further research and innovation associates, grant managers, specialists, technicians and professional enabling staff can be included in addition, so long as their contributions are fully justified and meet the requirements set out in the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) **roles in funding applications**.

International researchers can apply as **project co-lead (international)** and must be included within the maximum team size. You must include all other international collaborators (or UK partners not based at approved organisations) as project partners.

Business, third sector or government body project co-leads based in the UK can also be included as a project co-lead and must be included within the maximum team size.

We welcome applications that take an interdisciplinary approach. Find out more about how **UKRI supports research that spans different disciplines**.

The social sciences within **ESRC's remit** must represent more than 50% of the research focus and effort. Complete and submit **the remit query form**, if you are unsure whether your proposed research falls within ESRC's remit.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants. We encourage applications from a diverse range of researchers.

We support people to work in a way that suits their personal circumstances. This includes:

- career breaks
- support for people with caring responsibilities
- flexible working
- alternative working patterns

UKRI can offer disability and accessibility support for UKRI applicants and grant holders during the application and assessment process.

What we're looking for

Demand management

We do not anticipate that demand management will be applied to this funding opportunity. However, should the level of interest exceed what can be managed within the assessment process, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) may introduce limits on the number of applications that can be submitted. Further details will be clearly communicated where this is the case. UKRI encourages organisations to support applicants in preparing well-planned, high-quality applications that are competitive for funding relative to the funding opportunity.

Aim

Curiosity-driven social science generates ideas, perspectives and breakthroughs that advance and reshape understanding, creating the foundations for future social and economic benefit. Explore awards support individuals and small teams with ambitious ideas, recognising the important role they play in generating novel questions and disruptive thinking. We welcome creative, innovative and bold proposals from anywhere within ESRC's remit that advance knowledge by pushing disciplinary, methodological or conceptual boundaries, or otherwise generate important new understanding.

Scope

We are looking for applications that challenge assumptions, open up new areas of enquiry or new sources or uses of evidence, bring concepts together in unexpected ways, or test novel approaches and methods. Working in this way brings the potential for high reward but also involves uncertainty and risk. Outcomes may be uncertain, timelines to impact may be long-term, and the risk of failure is inherent in pushing the boundaries of social science. We are looking for ideas that embrace this challenge, take responsible risks that are integral to maximising potential, and actively manage uncertainty in ways that do not suppress innovation. Ambitious research will not always deliver anticipated results, but we expect you to demonstrate that the potential gains justify the risks involved.

What a high-quality project looks like will differ based on the focus of its ambition for advancing knowledge. You have the freedom to propose the approach best suited to achieving your aims, whether that means a research project, data resource or infrastructure initiative, or another mechanism. Projects may focus on experimental or theoretical work without a specific use in mind or be more applied in nature. We welcome proposals across a wide range of funding scales and award durations. What defines an Explore award is not the form of the project or the type of research, but the novelty and ambition of its contribution within or beyond its field, and its potential to shift understanding and inspire future directions for research.

Duration

The duration of this award is a maximum of 60 months.

Funding available

The FEC of your project can be between £300,000 and £2 million.

ESRC will fund 80% of the FEC.

What we will fund

You have wide scope and freedom to propose the research activities best suited to achieving your project's objectives. Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- basic or applied research projects
- exploratory or early-stage investigations
- methodological development or innovation
- large-scale surveys
- data infrastructure or novel data resources
- secondary analysis and other forms of existing data reuse

You must clearly set out your overall objectives, your project's novelty and potential significance, and why the proposed activities are appropriate to deliver these. You must also clearly address the risks in your proposed approach and how you plan to proactively and proportionately manage these to balance delivery, innovation and scope for long-term impact.

You are expected to set out leadership and management structures appropriate for the level of funding and type of activity you are seeking support for in the 'Approach' and 'Applicant and team capability to deliver' sections.

What we will not fund

Applications cannot be accepted under this funding opportunity for:

- uninvited resubmissions of projects that have previously been submitted to UKRI. Find out more about UKRI's **resubmissions policy**
- unspecified research work
- research already underway or carried out
- consultancy, evaluation or analysis whose primary purpose is to deliver pre-defined or specified policy, commercial or implementation outcomes
- data collection or data resource development that substantially duplicates existing data resources without a compelling justification of the additional value it would provide
- writing up previous research or completing previously funded research objectives
- literature reviews
- general conference attendance not related to the proposed project
- travel for general study not related to the proposed project
- expeditions not related to the proposed project
- requests to hold conferences, workshops or seminars where these constitute the primary project component
- preparation of books and publications where these constitute the primary project component
- preparation and production of materials such as curriculum materials and software development where these constitute the primary project component

The following cannot be included in applications:

- flexible funding pots that enable subcontracting of further small research projects

Research ethics

We require that the research we support is designed and conducted in such a way that it meets ethical principles and is subject to proper professional and institutional oversight in terms of research governance. We have agreed a Framework for Research Ethics that all submitted proposals must comply with. Read **further details about the Framework for Research Ethics** and guidance on compliance.

ESRC data infrastructure

We support a range of data infrastructure. You must carefully consider how your project can use, build on or contribute to existing data resources and infrastructures where appropriate. See **Facilities and resources** for information on finding and using ESRC datasets which are available across the UK.

Data requirements

We recognise the importance of data quality and provenance. Data generated, collected or acquired by ESRC-funded research must be well-managed by the grant holder to enable their data to be exploited to the maximum potential for further research. See our **research data policy** for details and further information on **data requirements**. The requirements of the research data policy are a condition of ESRC research funding.

Where relevant, details on data management and sharing should be provided in the Data Management section. See **the importance of managing and sharing data** and **content for inclusion in a data management plan** on the UK Data Service (UKDS) website for further guidance. We expect applicants to provide a summary of the points provided. The UKDS (email: **datasharing@ukdataservice.ac.uk**) will be pleased to advise you on the availability of data within the academic community and provide advice on data deposit requirements.

Supporting skills and talent

We encourage you to follow the principles of the **Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers** and the **Technician Commitment**.

Equitable partnership principles

When undertaking research and innovation activities outside the UK, you must recognise and address the possible impact of contextual, societal and cultural differences on the ethical conduct of those activities.

Researchers should also follow the principles of equitable partnerships to address inherent power imbalances when working with partners in resource-poor settings.

Applying the principles will encourage equitable access, especially in low and middle-income countries, while maintaining incentives for innovation. You should consider the principles from the start of the research and development cycle.

Read **UKRI's guidance on research in a global setting**.

Trusted Research and Innovation (TR&I)

UKRI is committed in ensuring that effective international collaboration in research and innovation takes place with integrity and within strong ethical frameworks. Trusted Research and Innovation (TR&I) is a UKRI work programme designed to help protect all those working in our thriving and collaborative international sector by enabling partnerships to be as open as possible, and as secure as necessary. Our **TR&I Principles** set out UKRI's expectations of organisations funded by UKRI in relation to due diligence for international collaboration.

As such, applicants for UKRI funding may be asked to demonstrate how their proposed projects will comply with our approach and expectation towards TR&I, identifying potential risks and the relevant controls you will put in place to help proportionately reduce these risks.

See further guidance and information about TR&I, including where you can find additional support.

How to apply

We are running this funding opportunity on the new UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Funding Service, so please ensure that your organisation is registered. You cannot apply on the Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system. We will publish full details on how to apply when the funding opportunity opens.

Institutional matched funding

There is no requirement for matched funding from the institutions hosting the project lead, project co-leads or other staff employed on the application, beyond the standard 20% FEC. Expert reviewers and panels assessing UKRI funding applications must not consider levels of institutional matched funding as a factor on which to base recommendations. Direct and in-kind contributions from third party project partners are encouraged.

This policy does not remove the need for support from host organisations who must provide the necessary research environment and infrastructure for award-specific activities funded by UKRI. For example, research facilities, training and development of staff.

Summary

Word limit: 550

In plain English, provide a summary we can use to identify the most suitable experts to assess your application.

We may make this summary publicly available on external-facing websites, therefore do not include any confidential or sensitive information. Make it suitable for a variety of readers, for example:

- opinion-formers
- policymakers
- the public
- the wider research community

Guidance for writing a summary

Clearly describe your proposed work in terms of:

- context
- overall aims and objectives
- focus and novelty of contribution to understanding
- potential to shift understanding and inspire future research directions

Core team

List the key members of your team and assign them roles from the following:

- project lead (PL)
- project co-lead (UK) (PcL)
- project co-lead (international) (PcL (I))
- specialist
- grant manager
- professional enabling staff
- research and innovation associate
- technician

Only list one individual as project lead.

UKRI has introduced a new addition to the ‘Specialist’ role type. Public contributors such as people with lived experience can now be added to an application.

Find out more about **UKRI’s core team roles in funding applications**.

Application questions

Vision

Word limit: 750

What are you hoping to achieve with your proposed work?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Explain how your proposed work:

- is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
- has the potential to advance current understanding, or generate new knowledge, questions, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
- is timely given current trends, context, and needs
- is novel with potential gains justifying any risks involved

- has significant potential to inspire future research directions

In the Vision section you must also:

- clearly explain and evidence what is novel, creative and innovative about your idea and how you hope it will push disciplinary, methodological or conceptual boundaries, or otherwise generate important new understanding. For example, will it challenge assumptions, open up new areas of enquiry or new sources or uses of evidence, bring concepts together in unexpected ways, or test novel approaches and methods?
- describe the potential significance and scope for long-term impact of your proposed work

References may be included within this section.

You may demonstrate elements of your responses in visual form if relevant. Further details are provided in the Funding Service.

Approach

Word limit: 2,500

How are you going to deliver your proposed work?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Explain how you have designed your approach so that it:

- is the most effective and appropriate way to achieve your objectives
- uses a clearly written and transparent methodology (if applicable)
- appropriately uses, builds on or contributes to existing data resources and infrastructures, and why any new data collection is necessary (if applicable)
- clearly addresses risks and how they will be managed proactively and proportionately to balance delivery, innovation and scope for long-term impact
- describes how your, and if applicable your team's, research environment (in terms of the place and relevance to the project) will contribute to the success of the work
- incorporates leadership and management structures appropriate for the level of funding and type of activity for which you are seeking support

You have wide scope and freedom to propose the activities best suited to achieving your project's objectives.

Within the Approach section you must:

- clearly describe the approach selected and explain why the proposed activities are appropriate to deliver your project objectives

- highlight any specific innovations proposed in the approach, the uncertainty these may generate, how you will manage this, and the potential gains that this approach could enable if successful, including the expected timeframe for realising these gains

If you are planning to generate data as part of your grant, you must complete the separate ‘Data management’ question.

References may be included within this section.

You may demonstrate elements of your responses in visual form if relevant. Further details will be provided in the Funding Service.

Applicant and team capability to deliver

Word limit: 1,650

Why are you the right individual or team to successfully deliver the proposed work?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Evidence of how you, and if relevant your team, have:

- the relevant experience (appropriate to career stage) to deliver the proposed work
- the right balance of skills and expertise to cover the proposed work
- the appropriate leadership and management skills to deliver the work and your approach to develop others
- contributed to developing a positive research environment and wider community

You may demonstrate elements of your responses in visual form if relevant. Further details are provided in the Funding Service.

The word limit for this section is 1,650 words: 1,150 words to be used for Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI) modules (including references) and, if necessary, a further 500 words for Additions.

Use the R4RI format to showcase the range of relevant skills you and, if relevant, your team (project and project co-leads, researchers, technicians, specialists, partners and so on) have and how this will help deliver the proposed work. You can include individuals’ specific achievements but only choose past contributions that best evidence their ability to deliver this work.

Complete this section using the R4RI module headings listed. Use each heading once and include a response for the whole team, see the **UKRI guidance on R4RI**. You should consider how to balance your answer, and emphasise where appropriate the key skills each team member brings:

- contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge
- the development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships
- contributions to the wider research and innovation community
- contributions to broader research or innovation users and audiences and towards wider societal benefit

Additions

Provide any further details relevant to your application. This section is optional and can be up to 500 words. You should not use it to describe additional skills, experiences, or outputs, but you can use it to describe any factors that provide context for the rest of your R4RI (for example, details of career breaks if you wish to disclose them).

Complete this as a narrative. Do not format it like a CV.

References may be included within this section.

The roles in funding applications policy has descriptions of the different project roles.

Ethics and responsible research and innovation (RRI)

What are the ethical and RRI considerations, implications and issues relating to the proposed work? If you do not think that the proposed work raises any ethical or RRI issues, explain why.

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Demonstrate that you have identified and evaluated:

- the relevant ethical and RRI considerations, including both the research or topic area itself and the design and delivery of the project
- the wider implications of the proposed work, and how you will maximise the positive societal, environmental, and economic benefits arising from the project, while minimising unintended negative impacts, such as research misuse or accidental harm
- how you will manage these considerations throughout the lifecycle of the project

If you are collecting or using data you should identify:

- any legal and ethical considerations of collecting, releasing and storing the data (including consent, confidentiality, anonymisation, security and other ethical considerations and, in particular, strategies to not preclude further reuse of data)
- formal information standards that your proposed work will comply with

Additional sub-questions (to be answered only if appropriate) relating to research involving:

- animals
- human participants
- genetically modified organisms

You may demonstrate elements of your responses in visual form if relevant. Further details are provided in the service.

Please refer to the **UKRI position statement on funding ethical research** and **Responsible innovation** for more information around our expectations on ethical and responsible research and innovation.

Animal involvement and "3Rs"

You must complete this section about how your proposed project will involve or impact animals.

If your project does not involve or impact animals, you must confirm this on the next page.

You may be asked about:

- what animals you are involving
- the severity of the procedures you are using
- where the procedures will take place
- welfare standards you aim to meet
- the relevance of your project to the development, validation or dissemination of the 3Rs

You may also need to download, complete, and upload at least one set of additional questions. You will be told how to do this towards the end of this section.

To complete this section and check whether your project is in the scope of the questions, refer to the **UKRI policy for research and innovation involving animals**.

What counts as an animal

UKRI policy relates to all animals in the Kingdom Animalia, including vertebrates and invertebrates.

Genetically modified organisms and biological risk

You must complete this section if your project will include genetically modified organisms or genetic technologies.

If you project does not involve genetically modified organisms or genetic technologies, you must confirm this on the next page.

You may be asked about:

- the type of organism your project will involve and the procedures your project will include
- the intended use of the organism or genetic technology
- the genetic, biological and environmental risks of your project

For more information, see **UKRI's guidance on genetic technologies**.

Human participation in health-related research

You must complete this section about whether your project will include human participation.

If your project does not involve human participation, you must confirm this on the next page.

You may be asked about:

- what type of human participation your project includes
- the project design for human participation
- the phase of the clinical trial
- whether the project will be in an NHS setting, if so, how the project will be registered
- whether diversity and inclusion will be considered

For more information, see **UKRI's guidance for human participants in research**.

Resources and cost justification

Word limit: 1,000

What will you need to deliver your proposed work and how much will it cost?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Justify the application's more costly resources, in particular:

- project staff
- significant travel for field work or collaboration (but not regular travel between collaborating organisations or to conferences)
- any equipment that will cost more than £25,000
- any consumables beyond typical requirements, or that are required in exceptional quantities

- all facilities and infrastructure costs
- all resources that have been costed as ‘Exceptions’

You can request costs associated with reasonable adjustments where they increase as a direct result of working on the project. For further information see **Disability and accessibility support for UKRI applicants and grant holders**. Where a funding limit is imposed on the opportunity, requested costs for reasonable adjustments may exceed the maximum funding amount.

Assessors are not looking for detailed costs or a line-by-line breakdown of all project resources. Overall, they want you to demonstrate how the resources you anticipate needing for your proposed work:

- are comprehensive, appropriate, and justified
- represent the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes
- maximise potential outcomes and impacts

For detailed guidance on eligible costs please see the **ESRC Research Funding Guide**.

Project partners

Add details about any project partners’ contributions. If there are no project partners, you can indicate this on the Funding Service.

A project partner is a collaborating organisation who will have an integral role in the proposed research. This may include direct contributions for example cash, donated equipment and resources, or staff seconded to the project, or indirect and in-kind contributions for example use of project partner’s equipment, datasets, or facilities. Project partners may be in industry, academia, third sector or government organisations in the UK or overseas, including partners based in the EU.

Add the following project partner details:

- the organisation name and address (searchable via a drop-down list or enter the organisation’s details manually, as applicable)
- the project partner contact name and email address
- the type of contribution (direct or indirect) and its monetary value

If a detail is entered incorrectly and you have saved the entry, remove the specific project partner record and re-add it with the correct information.

For audit purposes, UKRI requires formal collaboration agreements to be put in place if an award is made.

Project partners letters or emails of support

Upload a single PDF containing the letters or emails of support from each partner you named in the ‘Project partners’ section. These should be uploaded in English or Welsh only.

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Enter the words ‘attachment supplied’ in the text box, or if you do not have any project partners enter ‘N/A’. Each letter or email you provide should:

- confirm the partner’s commitment to the project
- clearly explain the value, relevance, and possible benefits of the work to them
- describe any additional value that they bring to the project
- be no more than one A4 page in length

The Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply. If you do not have any project partners, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Ensure you have prior agreement from project partners so that, if you are offered funding, they will support your project as indicated in the ‘Project partners’ section.

For audit purposes, UKRI requires formal collaboration agreements to be put in place if an award is made.

Do not provide letters of support from host and project co-leads’ research organisations.

Data management and sharing

Word limit: 500

How will you manage and share data collected or acquired through the proposed work?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Provide a data management plan that clearly details how you will comply with UKRI’s published **data sharing policy**, which includes detailed guidance notes.

Demonstrate that you have designed your proposed work so that you can appropriately manage and share data in accordance with **ESRC’s Research Data Policy** and **ESRC Framework for Research Ethics** (if applicable)

Within the Data management section we also expect you to:

- plan **for the research through the life cycle of the award** until data is accepted for archiving by the UK Data Service (UKDS) or a responsible data repository

- demonstrate compliance with **ESRC's Research Data Policy** and **ESRC Framework for Research Ethics**. This should include confirmation that existing datasets have been reviewed and why currently available datasets are inadequate for the proposed research
- cover any legal and ethical considerations of collecting, releasing or storing the data, including consent, confidentiality, anonymisation, security and other ethical issues
- include any challenges to data sharing (such as, copyright or data confidentiality), with possible solutions discussed to optimise data sharing

If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Facilities

Word limit: 250

Does your proposed research require the support and use of a facility?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you will need to use a facility, follow your proposed facility's normal access request procedures. Ensure you have prior agreement so that if you are offered funding, they will support the use of their facility on your project.

For each requested facility you will need to provide the:

- name of facility, copied and pasted from the **facility information list (DOCX, 43KB)** proposed usage or costs, or costs per unit where indicated on the facility information list
- confirmation you have their agreement where required

Facilities should only be named if they are on the facility information list above. If you will not need to use a facility, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Trusted Research and Innovation (TR&I)

Trusted Research and Innovation is the protection of the UK's intellectual property, sensitive research, people, and infrastructure from potential theft, misuse, and exploitation.

Organisations receiving UKRI funding are obliged to act in line with UK government legislation. They are also expected to undertake appropriate due diligence assessment of organisations involved in research partnerships, collaboration agreements, and commercial contracts.

You will be asked about:

- which areas of the National Security and Investment (NSI) Act your project relates to
- who you intend to collaborate with and how
- if your project requires an export control licence

Your answers may affect the T&Cs of your funding agreement if you are successful. We may use your answers to determine that our current T&Cs are sufficient or if additional T&Cs are required.

How we will assess your application

Assessment process

We will assess your application using the following process.

Eligibility checks will be carried out by ESRC at the point of submission on applicants, named staff and the application's fit to the funding opportunity criteria. Applications which do not meet these will be rejected.

We will invite at least three expert reviewers to independently assess each application on its own merit against the funding opportunity criteria. These may be drawn from the ESRC Peer Review College or other sources. You will not be able to nominate reviewers. If your application does not receive sufficient support in scores or comments from the first two reviews it may be rejected before a third review is sourced.

If your application secures sufficient support from expert reviewers, you will be able to respond to the reviewer comments. Your application will then be considered by an appropriate ESRC applicant-led moderating panel. Panel members will use your application, the expert reviews and your response to confirm its quality against the funding opportunity requirements and provide a final score. Applications will be assessed on individual merit and will not be ranked relative to each other.

ESRC will make the final funding decision, using a tiered approach. The final funding decision may adopt a portfolio approach to ensure a diverse range of projects in accordance with **How we make decisions**; balancing novelty, research significance, approach and impact potential in a way that is appropriate to the funding opportunity aims.

We reserve the right to adapt our assessment process should we receive a large volume of applications.

Timescale

You should apply when your application is ready for submission. We will hold regular decision points and will initiate the assessment process once an

application is received, ensuring you receive a timely decision.

Feedback

Applications will receive expert reviewer comments as feedback. Additional feedback will not be available. For applications that proceed to panel, the score range will be available on our website once the decisions for the opportunity have been processed fully.

Principles of assessment

We support the San Francisco **declaration on research assessment** and recognise the relationship between research assessment and research integrity.

Find out about **the UKRI principles of assessment and decision making**.

Using generative artificial intelligence (AI) in expert review

Generative AI may only be used for the purpose of language refinement during application assessment. When using generative AI to refine the language of a review, expert reviewers and panellists must ensure that:

- no part of the application being assessed is entered into a generative AI tool
- no personal information from the application is disclosed
- generative AI is not tasked with understanding, summarising or evaluating the application's content

Expert reviewers and panellists must also:

- comply with relevant intellectual property and data protection legislation
- not take into account or speculate within their assessment whether generative AI has been used to develop the application

For more detail see our **policy on the use of generative AI**.

Assessment areas

The assessment areas we will use are:

- vision
- approach
- applicant and team capability to deliver
- ethics and responsible research and innovation (RRI)
- resources and cost justification
- data management and sharing

Find details of assessment questions and criteria under the ‘Application questions’ heading in the ‘How to apply’ section.

Contact details

Get help with your application

If you have a question and the answers aren’t provided on this page.

The helpdesk is committed to helping users of the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Funding Service as effectively and as quickly as possible. In order to manage cases at peak volume times, the helpdesk will triage and prioritise those queries with an imminent opportunity deadline or a technical issue. Enquiries raised where information is available on the Funding finder opportunity page and should be understood early in the application process (for example, regarding eligibility, content or remit of a funding opportunity) will not constitute a priority case and will be addressed as soon as possible.

Contact details

For help and advice on costings and writing your proposal please contact your research office in the first instance, allowing sufficient time for your organisation’s submission process.

For questions related to this specific funding opportunity please contact **Explore@esrc.ukri.org**

Any queries regarding the system or the submission of applications through the Funding Service should be directed to the helpdesk.

Email: **support@funding-service.ukri.org**

Phone: 01793 547490

Our phone lines are open:

- Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5:00pm
- Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

To help us process queries quicker, we request that users highlight the council and opportunity name in the subject title of their email query, include the application reference number, and refrain from contacting more than one mailbox at a time.

For further information on submitting an application read **How applicants use the Funding Service**.

Additional info

Research and innovation impact

Impact can be defined as the long-term intended or unintended effect research and innovation has on society, economy and the environment; to individuals, organisations, and the wider global population.

Supporting documents

Equality Impact Assessment (PDF, 239KB)

Virtual town hall for potential applicants

We will hold a virtual town hall on 30 September 2026 at 10:00am UK time. This will provide more information about the funding opportunity and a chance to ask questions.

Register for the town hall

Timeline

- **5 November 2026 9:00am**
  Opening date

- **30 September 2026 10:00am**
  ESRC virtual town hall

- **Open - no closing date**
  Closing date

Guidance on good research

Good research resource hub

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https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/esrc-applicant-led-explore-awards