



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council

Research Funding Guide

Version Control

The latest changes made to this guide will be recorded here. Please ensure you have the latest version of the Funding Guide.

Version	Date	Changes
6.3	13/02/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Changes to AHRC Responsive mode (beginning of guide) • Updated Research involving animals • Updated the Technician statement • Updated New role names (throughout guide) • Removed PhD project students (section 1) • Clarified FoF AHRC eligibility (section 1) • Clarified International researchers (section 1) • Updated Open access (section 3) • Added new panel grading scale (section 5) • Updated travel claims and Visa fees (Section 3) • Updated broken links (throughout guide) • Added Use of Links and References (Section 4)
6.3 version 2	06/03/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Sifting of proposals 'stage 2' (Section 5)
6.4	29/05/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added Trusted Research (beginning of the guide) • Updated changes to Follow-on Funding scheme (beginning of guide & Section 1)
7.0	11/06/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed scheme specific information (throughout the guide) <u>This information can be found in the Funding Finder</u> • Updated Peer review scales to match UKRI wording • Updated PL response policy to include images and tables
7.1	4/12/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added UKRI policy on use of generative AI (intro section) • Added UKRI policy on environmental sustainability concordat (intro section)) • Added UKRI policy on the Money Follows Researcher scheme (intro section) • Added UKRI policy on language of application content (intro section) • Amended policy on contract duration to match UKRI policy (section 2) • Guidance on project co-lead international eligibility and costs updated to match UKRI policy (section 2 & 3) • Added guidance on inclusion of mentors eligibility and costs (section 2 & 3) • Added mention of archives in project partner guidance (section 2) • Updated Items Expected to be Found in a Department guidance to match UKRI policy (section 3) • Clarification of resubmission policy (section 6)

Should you find any typos or broken hyperlinks please notify enquiries@ahrc.ukri.org

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Introduction

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) seeks to promote and support high quality arts and humanities research through a variety of funding opportunities across its schemes from postgraduate studentships to large scale collaborative research grants, specialist training schemes to strategic programmes.

Research funding is available through the AHRC's responsive mode schemes (funding for high quality research in any subject area within the AHRC's remit) and through research programmes and other specific initiatives (funding for high quality research in specific areas of intellectual urgency and wider resonance).

This funding guide contains details of the postdoctoral funding schemes that are operated in responsive mode.

You should note that the schemes we operate offer very different types of support. It is important to think carefully about the most appropriate scheme for the research project you propose to undertake.

This guide is split into separate sections providing information on the different elements of the application process and it addresses subjects such as eligibility, how to apply, and any important dates to note.

Case studies of research previously funded by the AHRC are available on our website at [AHRC research outcomes and impact – UKRI](#)

The guide is updated throughout the year and you should ensure that you are reading the most recent version by checking [our website](#) for any recent updates (see lower right-hand corner of the title page for the latest version number).

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) is committed to promoting the values of equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusivity.

It is our view that arts and humanities disciplines depend on a diverse range of methods, viewpoints, subjects and approaches in order to continue to thrive and develop. As the Bonn Declaration puts it, freedom of scientific research is inseparable from a plurality of voices. One important way to achieve this is through continuing to fund a diverse range of people and projects. We will work closely with UKRI colleagues to ensure EDI is embedded both at all levels of our organisation and in the portfolio of research that we fund and support. In doing so, we support our vision and contribute and benefit the R&I ecosystem.

When we talk about diversity, we do so with a holistic approach, as outlined in UKRI's strategy 2022-2027 principles of change, which state that UKRI will 'champion a creative and dynamic R&I system by supporting diversity of ideas, people, activities, skills and infrastructures'¹.

¹ UKRI strategy 2022 – 2027, p.8

As a UK public sector organisation, we are fully committed to our legal obligations under the [Equality Act 2010](#) legislation and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

We encourage everyone who applies for AHRC funding to consider the importance of EDI within the research they are delivering, the research teams they are working within and the people who engage with their research.

For more information, please look at UKRI's Good Research resource hub EDI guidance here - [Guidance for equality, diversity and inclusion – UKRI](#)

EPSRC have developed an 'expectations for EDI guide' with useful principles and resources to help applicants consider EDI within their research - [Expectations for equality, diversity and inclusion – UKRI](#)

For more information about AHRC's EDI vision, objectives and ambitions please visit our updated EDI Action Plan - [AHRC equality, diversity and inclusion action plan – UKRI](#).

UKRI's EDI strategy serves as a unifying framework for all Council's EDI Action Plans - [EDI strategy and action plans – UKRI](#)

Trusted Research

UKRI is committed to 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.

Further guidance and information about TR&I – including where applicants can find additional support – can be found on UKRI's [website](#).

Use of Generative AI

The UKRI policy on the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in the application and assessment process is available on the [UKRI website here](#).

In summary –

Applicants can use generative AI but must apply caution and consider the risks of providing personally sensitive or intellectually confidential content to a third party. They should also consider the risk of bias when using outputs from the generative AI tool or model and consider mitigation. Applicants are expected to be transparent where they have used generative AI tools in the development of an application.

Peer reviewers and panellists must not use generative AI tools in their assessment activity. They should not take into account or speculate as to whether generative AI has been used in an application.

Concordat to Support Research Integrity

The national Concordat to Support Research Integrity outlines the obligations on researchers, institutions and funders regarding the need to ensure the highest levels of integrity in all aspects of research, including peer review and the publication or dissemination of research outcomes. The document which sets out the national framework for good research conduct and its governance can be found using the following link:

[Supporting research integrity – UKRI](#)

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

The national Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, also known as the Researcher Development Concordat, outlines the key responsibilities of researchers, managers of researchers, institutions and funders with the aim of facilitating ‘the very best culture for our researchers to thrive’ and ‘increase the sustainability of researcher careers in the UK’². UKRI became a signatory to the Concordat in 2019 and subsequently issued its Funder Action Plan. AHRC has issued a Statement of Commitment to the Concordat. You can find these documents here:

<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat>

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKRI-071020-ConcordatToSupportTheCareerDevelopmentOfResearchersFunderActionPlan.pdf>

[AHRC commitment to support the career development of researchers – UKRI](#)

You are strongly advised to familiarise yourself with this Concordat and its expectations before you apply for an AHRC grant. We also recommend that you refer to the Concordat throughout the lifetime of your grant to ensure that researcher development is built into your project and that you adopt the principles, standards and good practice for the management of research staff set out in the Concordat.

Researchers, project teams and Research Organisations funded by AHRC should refer to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers for expectations of the training and development opportunities that should be made available to researchers.

We particularly encourage Research Organisations upon receipt of AHRC funding to provide research staff with a statement setting out the provisions for career management and development, including personal skills training, and ensure that they have access to appropriate training opportunities.

We also encourage Research Organisations upon receipt of AHRC funding to follow [AHRC Guidance on Training and Developing Early Career Researchers in the Arts and Humanities](#). The guidance includes sections for managers and for early career researchers too. It is inspired by the Concordat and AHRC’s ambition is for the Guidance to be used in supporting all people who identify as early career researchers (ECR) in the arts and humanities community to grow their careers within and beyond academia

² Please see the introduction to the Researcher Development Concordat. Link above.

The Technician Commitment

The Technician Commitment UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is a signatory of the Technician Commitment, a university and research institution initiative. It aims to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for technicians. It is intended for technicians working in higher education and research. The vision of UKRI is to recognise, celebrate and value the essential contribution that the diversity of technically skilled people make across the UK research and innovation system.

This is outlined in UKRI's People and Teams Action Plan <https://www.ukri.org/publications/ukri-people-and-teams-action-plan/>

Environmental sustainability concordat

The UK research and innovation (R&I) sector have co-developed a voluntary [environmental sustainability concordat](#). The concordat supports the government ambition to achieve net zero by 2050 and aligns with UKRI's aims as both funder and deliverer of research and innovation. Organisations can show their support for the concordat at two levels: as a signatory or as a supporter. The AHRC research community are encouraged to show their support for the concordat and carry out research in an environmentally sustainable way. [The UKRI Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2020 -2025](#) sets out UKRI's ambition to be a leader in environmental sustainability for the sector. UKRI has set the ambitious goal to for UKRI to be 'net zero' a decade earlier, by 2040 at the latest. Carbon offsets are not considered to be a direct research cost and will not therefore be funded on grants - further information can be found on the [UKRI website](#). Public funds should be deployed with due consideration to value for money, environmental impact, welfare and business needs across all activities. Consideration to the environmental impact of travel should be in line with the research organisation's institutional policy.

Transferring your research grant to another country

UKRI is part of the Money Follows Researcher scheme which facilitates the transfer of a UKRI research grant held by a project lead who is moving to a research organisation in Austria, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands or Switzerland.

It operates under an agreement between a group of Science Europe members. [Check which funders are participating](#) on the Science Europe website.

Further information about this is available on the [UKRI website here](#).

Research Involving Animals

There are occasions where AHRC may fund research that involves animals. As such, AHRC are signed up to the UKRI position statement on research involving animals.

As a public funder of research and innovation, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) has a responsibility to ensure that our activities and those we fund are aligned with UK legislation and other guiding principles on research and innovation involving animals.

For more information see [UKRI's position on animals in research and innovation](#).

COVID- 19 Guidance for Applicants:

Accounting for the unknown impacts of COVID-19 in any new application

UKRI acknowledges that it is a challenge for applicants to determine the future impacts of COVID-19 while the pandemic continues to evolve. Applications should be based on the information available at the point of submission and, if applicable, the known application specific impacts of COVID-19 should be accounted for. Where known impacts have occurred, these should be highlighted in the application, including the assumptions/information at the point of submission. There is no need to include contingency plans for the potential impacts of COVID-19. Requests for travel both domestically and internationally can be included in accordance to the relevant scheme guidelines, noting the above advice. Reviewers will receive instructions to assume that changes that arise from the COVID-19 pandemic, post-submission, will be resolved and complications related to COVID-19 should not affect their scores.

Where an application is successful, any changes in circumstances that affect the proposal will be managed as a post-award issue Mitigating against how COVID-19 has impacted applicants and the risk of projects needing to be abandoned for grants that were already awarded/ongoing before the COVID-19 pandemic UKRI recognises that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major interruptions and disruptions across our communities and are committed to ensuring that individual applicants and their wider team, including partners and networks, are not penalised for any disruption to their career(s) such as breaks and delays, disruptive working patterns and conditions, the loss of on-going work, and role changes that may have been caused by the pandemic. Reviewers and panel members will be advised to consider the unequal impacts of the impact that COVID-19 related disruption might have had on the track record and career development of those individuals included in the proposal and will be asked to consider the capability of the applicant and their wider team to deliver the research they are proposing. Where disruptions have occurred applicants can highlight this within their application, if they wish, but there is no requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption.

Language of funding application content

All content of funding applications, including letters of support, must be in English or Welsh. Content in other languages will not be translated by AHRC or the assessors and if extensive may result in the application being rejected.

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SECTION 1: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Please note that as from June 2024 this guide no longer contains details and guidance for our four responsive mode schemes, instead the guidance is contained in the associated page on the [UKRI funding finder](#).

The AHRC offers various postdoctoral funding routes.

Our four responsive mode schemes are always open to applications and open to research proposals within the full breadth of the AHRC's discipline remit as outlined in section 7. These schemes are Research Grants, Curiosity Awards, Catalyst Awards and Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement.

We also offer time limited funding opportunities which may support the full breadth of AHRC's remit or may have a narrower and targeted focus.

Details of all currently open funding schemes and opportunities are available in the [UKRI Funding Finder](#).

International Opportunities

AHRC attaches major importance to the position of UK arts and humanities research in the international and global arena and positively encourages active collaboration between UK researchers and those in other countries. The AHRC offers a number of international collaborative research opportunities which are available throughout the year through a number of collaboration agreements with overseas funders as below –

[State of São Paulo Research Foundation \(FAPESP\)](#) , Brazil

[National Science Foundation – Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences \(NSF/SBE\)](#), USA

[Research Council of Norway](#) (RCN)

[Collaborate with researchers in Luxembourg – UKRI](#) , Luxembourg

[DFG, German Research Foundation - UK-German Funding Initiative in the Humanities](#), Germany

The AHRC allows international researchers to act as Project co-lead (international) on Research Grants and some other funding opportunities. Further information on this policy can be found in the [Individual eligibility criteria](#) area.

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SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY

Institutional

All UK Higher Education Institutions that receive grant funding from one of the UK higher education funding bodies are eligible to receive funds for research, postgraduate training and associated activities.

These bodies consist of [Research England](#) , [Higher Education Funding Council for Wales](#) , [Scottish Funding Council](#) and Northern Ireland's [Department for the Economy](#).

Research institutes for which the Research Councils have established a long-term involvement as major funder are also eligible to receive research funding, from any Council. A list of these institutes can be found at: <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/eligible-research-institutes/#chapter-list>

Other independent research organisations (IROs) and Public Sector Research Organisation (PSREs) may also be eligible if they possess an existing in-house capacity to carry out research that materially extends and enhances the national research base and are able to demonstrate an independent capability to undertake and lead research programmes. They must also satisfy other criteria related to their financial and legal status: these are set out in full in the Research Councils' joint statement on eligibility. The statement itself can be found at:

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UKRI-310121-Eligibility-for-UKRI-Research-Council-Funding-V2.pdf>

The current list of eligible IROs can be found at:

<https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/eligible-independent-research-organisations/#contents-list>

The current list of eligible PSREs can be found at:

<https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/eligible-public-sector-research-establishments/#contents-list>

Further information on eligibility can be found on the [UKRI website](#).

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UKRI introduced new role names for opportunities being run on the new Funding Service from 22 May 2023.

Ful details of these roles is available on the [UKRI website here](#) but note that not all role types are available for every funding opportunity or scheme, please refer to the relevant [funding finder](#) page for details of those that are.

These are the role types AHRC uses.

New Role name (TFS)	Previous Role Name (Jobs)	Description
Project Lead (PL)	Principal Investigator (PI)	Is responsible for the intellectual leadership and overall management of the project. They are the main contact for UKRI.
Project co-Lead UK (PcL)	Co-Investigator (CO-I)	Is a member of the project leadership and management team based at a UK organisation. They may assume the project lead role, if required.
Project Co-Lead (International) (PcL (I))	International Co-Investigator	Is a member of the project leadership and management team based at an international organisation. They may not assume the project lead role.
Fellow	Fellow	Is responsible for the intellectual leadership and overall management of the personal fellowship grant.
Research and Innovation Associate	Researcher/PDRA	Carries out research or innovation work on a project. Must be employed by the lead organisation or one of the project co-leads' organisations.
Specialist	Technician	A specialist is an individual who brings specialist skills and intellectual input to the project; they must be employed by the lead organisation or one of the collaborating organisations.
Technician	Technician	Provide general technical support to the project as required; must be employed by the lead organisation or one of the collaborating organisations.
Professional enabling Staff	Other Staff	Provide significant professional contributions to enable the project in areas such as finance, accounting and marketing; must be employed by the lead organisation or one of the collaborating organisations.

Project Lead (PL)

The Project Lead takes responsibility for the intellectual leadership of the research project and for the overall management of the research or other activities. The PL will be the person to whom we shall address all correspondence and must be based at the organisation at which the grant will be held.

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Academic standing

To be eligible, you must be actively engaged in postdoctoral research and be of postdoctoral standing. This means that you either have a doctorate or can demonstrate in the application that you have equivalent research experience and/or training.

You must have a level of skills, knowledge and experience appropriate to the nature of the proposed project

Contractual eligibility for Project Lead and Project co-Lead (UK)

Contractual arrangement – nature

You must either:

- a) be employed by the Research Organisation submitting the proposal;
- Or
- b) if not employed by the submitting organisation³, have an existing written formal arrangement with the organisation confirming that the research will be conducted as if you were an employee, that is, enables you to carry out research there and receive from the organisation all necessary management and infrastructural support and that commits the organisation to take full responsibility for the research and its proper governance;
- Or
- c) be scheduled to move to the submitting organisation before the proposed start date of the grant, whether or not the proposal is successful, in such a way that would ensure that criterion a) or b) is met by the time the grant starts⁴.

It is no longer a requirement to provide evidence of contractual arrangements within the application. However we do require that such an arrangement is in place at the point that the grant begins and we may ask for evidence of it during the assessment process.

Contractual arrangement – duration

- a) The contractual arrangement must last for at least the duration of the grant if the project lead or project co-leads
- OR
- b) For other roles it must last at least the length of time that the person is working on the grant

³ That is, employed elsewhere and seconded to the submitting organisation; or not employed at all (for example, retired leaders, honorary or visiting fellow (see section on additional individual eligibility criteria)).

⁴ In this case, the affiliation shown for the leader should be the organisation that would hold the grant.

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For Project co-Lead (UK), where there is mention of "submitting organisation", this should be replaced by "an eligible organisation".

Individual eligibility criteria

- The Project Lead must be resident in the UK (AHRC follows the government definition of a resident in the UK)
- It is not permissible for someone to be both a Project Lead or Project co-Lead (UK) and a Research and Innovation Associate on the same project.
- Unless otherwise stated in the relevant scheme or call guidance Professors Emeriti are eligible to apply to AHRC schemes, as long as the contractual conditions outlined above are met. If you are a holder of any other senior non-stipendiary post you may also be eligible to apply for funding if you meet the requirement outlined under 'contractual arrangement – nature' above. It is possible for the RO to propose that any contract put in place if the proposal was successful would be stipendiary even if the current arrangement is not.

Project co-leads

The role of Project co-Lead (UK)

A Project co-Lead (UK) assists the Project Lead in the management and leadership of the research project. The Project co-Lead (UK) can also undertake research activity, although this is not a requirement.

Eligibility of Project co-Lead (UK)

The same eligibility criteria apply to Project co-Lead (UK) as Project Leads.

Project co-lead (international)

The AHRC has a policy to allow international researchers to act as Project co-lead (international) on some of its funding opportunities and schemes.

The comprehensive UKRI policy on the eligibility of such individuals, their organisations and associated costs is available on the [UKRI website here](#), below is a summary of that policy.

A project co-lead (international) is an individual employed by a research organisation (RO) in an overseas country who otherwise fits the normal definition of a project co-lead on a research project, collaborating with the grant holder in the management and leadership of the project. Project co-leads (international) will not be expected to take on a leadership role for some schemes where not appropriate to the scheme purpose (for example, fellowships).

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The project co-lead is usually expected to make a major intellectual contribution to the design and conduct of the project. Project co-leads (international) will not be permitted to take over as project lead if the UK project lead steps down for any reason. The contribution and added value of the international participants to the research collaboration should be clearly explained and justified in the application.

The international RO would be expected to meet the general equivalent requirements for being eligible to receive UKRI funding, taking into account the national context of the international RO.

From June 2023 it is no longer a requirement to provide a head of department statement for a project co-lead (international).

PhD project students

Please note that PhD study cannot be funded through any of our responsive mode schemes or through any other funding opportunity unless otherwise specified.

Eligibility of Research Council institute staff

A list of eligible Research Council Institutes can be found on UKRI website at:

[Eligible research institutes – UKRI](#)

Research Council Institute staff need to ensure that they meet the relevant criteria for each particular scheme in relation to their academic experience and to the nature of their contract.

Institutes that are considering submitting a proposal to a Council to which they will be newly eligible are encouraged to discuss the proposal with the relevant Council staff in the first instance.

Research and Innovation associate

Research and Innovation Associates must be of postdoctoral standing. This means that they should possess either a PhD or have the equivalent research experience.

The responsibilities of the post requested on the project should be commensurate with the level of experience and skills of the proposed Research and Innovation associate (whether named or unnamed).

The AHRC does not fund the employment of researchers who are registered for higher degrees unless the researcher is already of postdoctoral standing and:

- The work of the higher degree is not an integral part of, does not arise directly from, or feed directly into, the work of the project.

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- The salary costs sought are appropriate and directly related to the actual time the postdoctoral researcher will spend working on the project.

It is expected that the Research and Innovation Associate will be based at the same institution as a leader on the research project and a thorough justification as to how the Research and Innovation Associate will be supported must be provided where this is not to be the case.

It is also expected that the Research and Innovation Associate will be managed and supported in line with the principles of the Researcher Development Concordat and the AHRC Guidance on Training and Developing Early Career Researchers in the Arts and Humanities.

Mentors

Some AHRC funding opportunities and schemes allow for the inclusion of a mentor (the associated [funding finder](#) page will specify). The role of the mentor is to supervise and support the work of the PL, answer any queries and help with any problems that may arise during the research. They will not be directly involved in running the project, their role is advisory only.

Mentors should NOT be included in the Core Team section of the application form, instead their role should be outlined in the Applicant and Team Capability to Deliver section. Costs for mentor's time may be claimed from the grant, see section 3 of this guide.

Project Partners, Collaborating Organisations and Sub-Contractors

In Research Council proposals, the terms Project Partner, Collaborators and Sub-Contractors have specific meanings and cannot be used interchangeably and for all organisations with whom you are collaborating.

Project Partners

A third party person who is not employed on the grant, or a third party organisation, who provides specific contributions either in cash or in-kind, to the project. These contributions should be clearly identified within the 'Project Partner' section of the proposal; in-kind contributions should be included, even if a rough estimate. Entitlement to the outputs of the project and/or Intellectual Property will be determined between the parties involved, however any access to project outputs and/or IP must be in line with any relevant Subsidy Control regulation. As a rule Project Partners are expected to provide contributions to the delivery of the project and should not therefore be seeking to claim funds from UKRI. However, where there are specific circumstances where Project Partners do require funding for minor costs such as travel and subsistence, this will be paid at 80% FEC unless otherwise stated by us; note that any applicable Subsidy Control regulation and HMRC guidance will also be taken into account which may affect the percentage of these costs that we will fund. These costs should be outlined and fully justified in the proposal and will be subject to peer review.

UKRI Head Office Staff acting in their capacity as a UKRI employee are not eligible to be Project Partners.

Independent Research Organisations (IROs) and Public Sector Research Establishments (PSREs) may participate as project partners provided that they are not an organisation at which the Project Lead, Fellow or Project co-Lead (UK) are based.

SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY

University museums, galleries, libraries, presses and archives may be categorised as project partners provided that they are not formally linked to an organisation at which the Project Lead, Fellow or Project co-Lead (UK) are based.

Where IROs, PSREs, university museums, galleries, libraries, presses and archives are the organisation at which the Project Lead, Fellow or Project co-Lead (UK) are based they may still participate in the project but must be fully costed to the project according to fEC rules, so cannot make contributions in-kind to the project

Except for the circumstances outlined above UK Higher Education Institutions that receive grant funding from one of the UK higher education funding bodies cannot be project partners, i.e. they cannot make contributions in-kind to the project.

Minor Directly Incurred costs may be requested to facilitate collaboration and these should be costed in line with the fEC of the project. If costs are being charged to the project, then they must relate solely to the activities on the project, and not be part of everyday business for the organisation. For example, travel and subsistence costs should not be charged to the grant, unless it is clearly justified in the proposal that the partner organisation would be unable to contribute to the project without having these costs covered. If all or a substantial amount of the collaborating organisation's involvement is being charged to the project as part of the fEC, then this organisation is **not** a 'Project Partner' and their role as a '**Subcontractor**' should be outlined in the application.

Each Project Partner must provide a Project Partner letter or email of support to provide assurance that the project partner has authorised the proposed contribution or commitment. The letter or email should be a maximum of 2 sides of A4 per partner. These also must be in English or Welsh, documents in other languages will not be translated by AHRC or the assessors; they should be signed by the named contact, stating the capacity in which they are providing the sign off.

Subcontractor

A third party individual who is not employed as staff on the grant, or a third party organisation, who is subcontracted by the host organisation to deliver a specific piece of work. This will be subject to the procurement rules of the host organisation. All costs that support the delivery of the subcontract are eligible and will be paid at 80% fEC unless otherwise stated, these should be outlined and fully justified in the proposal and will be subject to peer review. Entitlement to the outputs of the project and/or Intellectual Property will be determined between the parties involved, however any access to project outputs and/or IP must be in line with any relevant Subsidy Control regulation.

University museums, galleries and libraries may participate as subcontractors provided that they are not formally linked to an organisation at which the Project Lead, Fellow or Project co-Lead (UK) are based.

Collaborator

Do not have an official role/descriptor of "Collaborator" as this is a word often generically used in relation to a project, therefore this could lead to confusion. Instead, the term "collaboration" should be used in the generic sense to explain that there is a project relationship or interaction, accompanied with an official project role descriptor of Project Partner, Sub-contractor, PL, PcL etc to explain the nature of the collaboration.

SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY

Dual Roles

An organisation or individual can act as both a Project Partner and Subcontractor, however this must be fully justified and will be subject to peer review. Project partner related costs are expected to be minor. Where the project needs work to be undertaken that is more significant and includes costs other than travel and subsistence, then the organisation/individual may need to be included as both a Project Partner and a Subcontractor.

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SECTION 3: COSTS

All proposals to all AHRC funding opportunities and schemes should be costed on the basis of the full economic costs (fEC) of the research and all costs that contribute to the full economic costs of the proposal should be included. Proposals should be costed using TRAC <https://www.trac.ac.uk/about/> (Transparent Approach to Costing) methodology and should only include the costs required to support the research related to the proposal (that is, costs which fall outside the scope of the grant should not be included). Therefore as per fEC rules in-kind support is not permitted from any of the UK organisations hosting the Project Lead or Project co-Lead (UK), this includes salaries for Project Lead or Project co-Lead (UK).

If the proposal is successful, the AHRC will contribute 80 per cent of these costs.

All travel claims should evidence value for money alongside environmental impact, welfare and business need. Consequently, these should only include travel by standard class by train and economy class by air. Exceptions to this would be permitted where

- there is a justifiable health and wellbeing need and
- approved by the Research Organisation prior to purchase and
- evidence of this should be available.

Please note that patent and other IPR costs, such as those relating to licensing agreements and the establishment of spin out companies, are not eligible.

Open Access

UKRI provides research organisations with block funding for publication costs and as such the AHRC does not provide funding in grants for any publication costs associated with peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, monographs, book chapters and edited collections.

Publication costs associated with research outputs other than those listed above such as critical editions, catalogues etc. may, however, continue to be included in grants as a Directly Incurred Other Cost. Any request for such costs will need to be fully justified.

NOTE - the revised UKRI Open Access Policy of August 2021 requires that monographs, book chapters and edited collections published from 1 January 2024 to be made open access within 12 months of publication. Costs for these publication types cannot be included in individual funding applications

Details of the UKRI Open Access Policy are available on the UKRI website here <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/your-responsibilities-if-you-get-funding/making-research-open/>

SECTION 3: COSTS

Proposals with an international element

For some of our schemes, the AHRC allows costs to be included to support international elements as part of the proposed research. Details of allowable costs are listed in this section where they are further broken down into two parts; Project co-lead (international) and other international elements to proposals. For details of the eligibility required for Project co-lead (international) please see section 2.

Project co-lead (international)

UKRI only covers specific costs of project co-leads (international) involved in applications led by UK project leads, up to a limit of 30% of the overall cost of the project. All costs must be fully justified and will be assessed in the context of the proposal as a whole.

Directly incurred costs (for example, travel and subsistence costs, conference attendance) for a project co-lead (international) are required to be reasonable. Applicants may apply for funds to cover other directly incurred costs (for example, consumables, consultancy fees, survey costs and equipment costing less than £10,000), provided they are fully justified.

Applicants may apply for funds to cover the cost of roles based in the international RO to support the research activities in that country. Roles applicants can apply to cover are: researcher co-lead, research and innovation associate, specialist, technician, professional enabling staff.

Note that estates, overheads and indirect costs are not eligible to be claimed for Project co-leads (international). Single items of equipment over £10,000 are also not eligible.

All direct costs incurred by the Project co-lead (international), including salary costs will need to be entered as Exceptions in the application form to ensure they are funded by AHRC at 100% FEC.

Other international elements to proposals

If you are applying to a scheme in which Project co-lead (international) are not eligible or if it is not appropriate for you to have an Project co-Lead (international) on your project, you can still involve international elements within your grant application. These will be paid at the usual 80% fEC (as opposed to the 100% fEC for Project co-lead (international)– only elements associated with the Project co-lead (international) costs can be paid at 100% fEC). There is no limit to how much of the proposal can be spent on other international elements but the requested funds should be appropriate to the needs of the proposal:

- Project Leads and Project co-Leads (UK) can request funding for travel and subsistence to visit and/or research in other countries where this is essential to the conduct of the research proposed.
- Non-UK based academics can be part of certain activities associated with a grant where their input is justified and essential to the delivery of grant objectives, for example through being members of an advisory group. Costs such as travel and subsistence associated with this can be included if fully justified.

SECTION 3: COSTS

- Funds can be paid to a non-UK based researcher or expert on a 'consultancy' basis if their expertise is seen to be vital to the success of the project. This would need special justification in the proposal. For example, applicants would need to consider:
 - o Is the expertise available within the UK?
 - o Proportion of the overall costs that the consultancy constitutes (i.e. the majority of the research must still be undertaken by UK based researchers)
 - o Access to research data and IPR: Project Leads collaborating with overseas organisations in any capacity are required to have assurances in place before the start of the research project regarding access to research data, outputs, resource material, etc. as well as have an understanding of the expectations of the overseas organisation regarding ownership of material. Non-UK based consultancy costs would need to be listed under 'Other Directly Incurred Costs' on the proposal form and applicants must demonstrate clear value for money and justification.

Non-UK organisations who are contributing their own resources (in cash or in-kind) can be 'project partners' on grant proposals. This contribution could include supporting the time of researchers to be involved in the grant. A letter of support from the project partner would need to accompany the proposal. For further information please see section [Project Partners, Collaborating Organisations and Sub-Contractors](#).

Mentoring

Where mentoring is included for any of the researchers, salary costs to cover the mentor's time can be claimed from the grant; this is unless otherwise specified in the [Funding Finder](#) guidance for an opportunity or scheme.

Archaeology: Radiocarbon Dating

AHRC provides funding to the National Environment Isotope Facility (NEIF) to allow our research communities to make use of their radiocarbon dating function. If your project requires radiocarbon dates you must, in the first instance, request these from the NEIF. Only in cases where the NEIF confirms they are unable to provide the service required will use of other facilities be considered. All applicants must discuss their requirements with the Director of the Radiocarbon Facility, Dr Rachel Wood rachel.wood@arch.ox.ac.uk, prior to submitting their proposal to AHRC. Further details on the facility and how to apply for dates if your project is successful can be found at <http://www.isotopesuk.org/index.html>

Requesting less than 100 radiocarbon dates

If you require less than 100 radiocarbon dates and the NEIF has confirmed they are able to provide the type of service required, you must **not** include the costs for these in your application. However, you must state within your application that you have discussed this with the NEIF, and they are able to provide the service required.

If your proposal is successful you will still need to complete an application to the NEIF panel for confirmation of the dates.

SECTION 3: COSTS

Requesting more than 100 radiocarbon dates

If you require more than 100 radiocarbon dates and the NEIF has confirmed they are able to provide the type of service required, you **must** include the costs for these in your application as part of the proposed budget. As with all proposed costs, you should also include justification for the cost of the radiocarbon dating as part of the Justification of Resources. You must also state within your application that you have discussed this with the NEIF, and they are able to provide the service required. If your proposal is successful you will still need to complete an application to the NEIF panel for confirmation of the dates.

Cases where the NEIF is unable to provide the type of service required

If the NEIF confirm they are unable to provide the type of service required for the proposed project then costs for the dating must be included in the application and justified as normal.

Which calls and schemes does this apply to?

This guidance applies to all the funding opportunities run by AHRC.

We do note, however, that outside of our standard schemes, some funding opportunities may emphasise skills development or capacity building within the call document. In cases such as these we will consider requests to use other facilities on a case-by-case basis. We would advise applicants to discuss these cases with the AHRC prior to submitting the application. If use of alternative facilities is proposed, then the costs should be included in the proposal and justified as normal.

Cost headings

All costs should fall under one of the following headings:

Directly Incurred

These are costs that are explicitly identifiable as arising from the conduct of a project, are charged as the cash value actually spent and are supported by an audit record. They include:

Staff

Payroll costs requested for staff, full or part-time, who will work on the project and whose time can be supported by a full audit trail during the life of the project.

SECTION 3: COSTS

Travel and Subsistence

Funds for travel and subsistence, for use by staff who work on the project, where these are required by the nature of the work.

Equipment

Individual items of equipment up to £10,000 (including VAT) are permissible to be included in the fEC of the proposal and should be included in the 'Directly Incurred – Other' fund heading. Items should not be added under the 'Equipment' heading.

AHRC cannot support the funding of individual items of equipment costing more than £10,000 (including VAT). Therefore, if your project requires the use of equipment at this value, this will need to be provided from other sources.

Other Directly Incurred Costs

Costs of other items dedicated to the project, including consumables, books, survey fees, purchase/hire of vehicles, publication costs or recruitment and advertising costs for staff directly employed on the project. Items of equipment costing less than £10,000 should also be included under this heading.

Visas, Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) and Certificate of Sponsorship:

AHRC currently allow visa fees to be charged to the grant for all Directly Incurred staff directly employed on the grant for at least 50% of their time. All visa costs, including IHS and Certificates of Sponsorship, incurred must be a direct result of the person being employed on the grant for at least 50% of their contracted time and is not extended to family members. All costs must be met within the original grant funding limit. Contingency costs for unknown researchers at point of application are not eligible.

Directly Allocated

These are the costs of resources used by a project that are shared by other activities. They are charged to projects on the basis of estimates rather than actual costs and do not represent actual costs on a project-by-project basis. They include:

Researchers

Proposals will need to show the costs of the Project Lead and any Project co-Lead (UK) even if their time charged to the project is based on estimates rather than actual costs. It is not permitted for Project Leads and Project co-Lead (UK) to provide their time in-kind, i.e. their salary costs must be charged to the grant

SECTION 3: COSTS

Estates

These costs may include building and premises costs, basic services and utilities, and any clerical staff and equipment maintenance or operational costs not already included under other cost headings. Project co-Lead (International) are not eligible for Estate Costs.

Other Directly Allocated

These costs may include, for example, the costs of other research staff, technical, administrative and other support staff, or access to institutional research facilities such as equipment and IT systems.

Technical staff often provide essential support to research projects and should be recognised and costed accordingly. This group of staff include, for example, research software engineers, and other staff supporting data and digital aspects of a project.

Indirect Costs

These include non-specific costs charged across all projects based on estimates that are not otherwise included as Directly Allocated costs. They include the costs of the Research Organisation's administration, such as personnel, finance, library and some departmental services. Project co-Lead (International) are not eligible for Indirect Costs.

Exceptions

These are Directly Incurred costs that Research Councils will fund in full (that is at 100 per cent), subject to actual expenditure incurred, or items that are outside fEC e.g. costs incurred by the Project co-lead (international), including salary, where applicable.

Indexation

All costings should be at current prices, inclusive of VAT and other taxes where applicable, with no allowance for inflation. The AHRC will add extra funding to account for inflation at the point a grant is awarded.

Items expected to be found in a department

The AHRC will not fund items that would ordinarily be found in a department, such as non-specialist computers, laptops or tablets except for those which are for the use of a new member of staff who is being employed purely, and for all their contracted hours, for the grant that will require them. Any proposals requesting these items should include justification both for why they are required for the project and why they cannot be provided from the Research Organisation's own resources (including funding from indirect costs from grants).

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SECTION 4: APPLICATION GUIDANCE

Deadlines

From June 2023 and as an interim measure the responsive mode schemes listed in this guide will operate with consecutive submission rounds with defined closing dates, rather than 'always open'. Applications may be submitted at any time whilst a round is open; you do not need to wait until the closing date. AHRC will begin to process applications as soon as we receive them so, if an application is submitted early in a round, we may be able to provide you with an earlier decision.

Completing the proposal

The Funding Service (TFS), new grants system

Throughout 2024 AHRC will offer the majority of its funding opportunities on the new grants system, TFS, rather than on Je-S. In such cases it will be made clear in the applicant guidance which system should be used. Further information about TFS is available on the UKRI website here <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/improving-your-funding-experience/>

Contact the TFS helpdesk for information and support using the new Funding Service,
Email: support@funding-service.ukri.org Telephone: 01793 265810

Guidance for applicants using the Funding Service is available on the [UKRI website here](#)

Guidance for peer reviewers using the Funding Service is available on the [UKRI website here](#)

Guidance for research organisation staff using the Funding Service is available on the [UKRI website here](#)

Creating a proposal

Check the relevant [UKRI Funding Finder](#) page to identify which grants system should be used, Je-S or TFS.

In both systems once you have completed and submitted your proposal it will first be directed to your Research Organisation for review and approval, they will then in turn submit your proposal to AHRC. You must therefore, ensure you allow sufficient time prior to AHRC deadlines for your Research Organisation to be able to do this (note that some Research Organisations will have their own internal deadlines). The published scheme deadline is for submission of the completed application to the AHRC by the Research Organisation and late proposals will not be considered. Applicants must ensure that they have obtained the permission of any other person named on the proposal form (for example any Project co-Lead (UK) or Project Partners) for the provision of their personal information to UKRI and the processing of their data by UKRI for the purpose of assessing the application and management of any funding awarded.

SECTION 4: APPLICATION GUIDANCE

Submission Rules

If a proposal breaks any of the scheme submission rules (listed either in this guide or [Funding Finder](#) page) in any way it may be rejected.

Late proposals will not be accepted.

If a proposal has been rejected following initial checks but before it has been to reviewers, it will be eligible for resubmission; please see the Resubmission Policy section for full details. If there are any restricted eligibility criteria for the scheme to which you are applying, at the point of resubmission you must still be eligible to apply to this scheme.

Use of links and References

References can be included within the core question answers.

- Applications should be self-contained, and hyperlinks can only be used to provide links directly to references. Assessors are not required to access links to carry out assessment or recommend a funding decision.
- Hyperlinks can be provided to relevant publications or online resources. To ensure the information's integrity is maintained include, where possible, persistent identifiers such as digital object identifiers should be used.
- References should be included in the appropriate question section of the application and be easily identifiable by the assessors.
 - Assessors usually require the name and date to be able to easily identify a reference. This is dependent on research discipline.

Subjects

For all schemes you are asked to classify your proposal in terms of subject area and keywords. This information will be used to assist in selecting peer reviewers. Further details can be found in AHRC subject remit and proposal classification, AHRC disciplines section.

You are advised to keep in mind that while your proposal will be considered by panellists who have a broad knowledge and understanding of the subject areas and disciplines with which their panel is concerned, they might not necessarily have detailed knowledge of your particular specialism. Specialist advice is made available to the peer review panel via the reviews provided by Peer Review College members (See Assessment Criteria and Peer Review, Section 5 below).

You are therefore encouraged to address your proposal to a group of peers conceived as broadly as is consistent with the specialist nature of your project. The Council is committed to the principle that the work it funds should be disseminated to as wide an audience as possible, both within the UK and internationally. In framing proposals for peer review, therefore, Project Leads are advised to address as wide a group of peers as possible.

SECTION 4: APPLICATION GUIDANCE

Summary

Describe the proposed research in simple terms in a way that could be publicised to a general audience. Note that this summary will be published on the [UKRI Gateway to Research](#) website in the event that a grant is awarded. You should also summarise how the research will be beneficial to users who are within and beyond the academic research community, and how you intend on engaging with them.

Non-Academic partners

If appropriate, the project may be delivered in collaboration with one or more non-academic partner organisations. Both UK and International organisations are eligible and must be existing organisations, although there is no minimum period stipulated for which they must have been operating. When collaborating with international partners you must demonstrate that the UK research is at the international leading edge.

Technicians

Carefully consider and recognise the role of technical staff when submitting your grant application. AHRC's working definition of a Research Technical Professional (RTP) i.e. a Technician, is anyone who brings indispensable specialist technical skills, at an advanced level, to a research project, i.e. professional skills that are necessary for the development, delivery and completion of the project. Depending on the project, Academic/ Research/ Library professionals, Animators, Archivists, Conservators, Curators, Graphic designers, Illustrators, Sound engineers, staff who have expertise in digital, software and data areas such as Digital Technicians, Information Systems Specialists and Research Software Engineers, and others may qualify for inclusion. AHRC encourages a holistic approach to the research ecosystem.

Technical staff often provide essential support to research projects and should be recognised and costed accordingly. An important way of acknowledging the contributions of technical staff is by entering their details in the Core Team and the Applicant and Team sections of the application form; it should be noted that these sections can be completed even if you have not yet identified a specific person to perform these duties. UKRI is committed to ensuring that all the people whose work contributes to research and innovation are recognised and valued. This is outlined in UKRI's Technician Commitment Action Plan: [UKRI-040221-TechnicianCommitmentActionPlan.pdf](#)

SECTION 4: APPLICATION GUIDANCE

Submitting more than one application to the same scheme

The AHRC considers that you should be responsible for determining your own research priorities, and you should normally only submit one proposal at any one time to the same scheme. If you choose nevertheless to submit more than one proposal, then you must demonstrate that you will be able to carry out all of the projects that are successful. You should describe fully the scope and extent of your involvement in each of the projects, as our reviewers will evaluate the extent to which you, any leaders and members of the research team (as appropriate), are able actively to conduct and manage the research set out in your proposals.

Joint proposals

Proposals with leaders from more than one Research Organisation should be submitted on one proposal form. If successful, payment of the grant will be made to the institution in which the Project Lead is based and which submitted the proposal.

Confidentiality and use of the information supplied

By submitting a proposal you are giving your permission to the AHRC to process and disclose the data you provide, including processing of personal data.

The AHRC will publish on publicly available websites the details of funded projects such as the project title, project summary, names of all leaders, project dates, amount awarded, names of project partner organisations etc.

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SECTION 5: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PEER REVIEW

Detailed guidance on the assessment criteria that is used in the new grants system is published on the relevant [UKRI funding finder](#) page for each scheme. You can also refer to [Core section questions and how they will be assessed – UKRI](#)

Publication Metrics

As part of our commitment to support the recommendations and principles set out by the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA; <https://sfdora.org/read/>), AHRC reviewers and panel members are advised not to use journal-based metrics, such as journal impact factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess a leader's contributions, or to make funding decisions.

The content of a paper is more important than publication metrics, or the identity of the journal, in which it was published, especially for early-stage researchers. Peer review and panel members are encouraged to consider the value and impact of all research outputs (including datasets, software, other digital outputs, inventions, patents, preprints, other commercial activities, etc.) in addition to research publications. We advise our peer reviewers and panel members to consider a broad range of impact measures including qualitative indicators of research impact, such as influence on policy and practice.

UKRI Principles of Assessment and Decision Making

Assessment is the process undertaken on submitted applications to determine whether an application is fundable, and which applications should be funded. Assessments in all its different forms, including Independent Review Assessment (Review) or Collective Panel Assessment (Panel), is fundamental to our business. An assessor (reviewer or panellist) can be an expert or a peer from business, academia or other sectors, such as the public and charities. Assessment in our Councils and opportunities usually involves a two-stage process, where applications are considered by reviewers (by correspondence) and then by a Council Panel (at a meeting).

Review involves the assessment of an application independently of other applications. A Review is based on the Reviewer's judgement of the assessment criteria alone, and it does not normally benchmark the assessment against other applications of the funding opportunity.

At a Panel meeting, the assessment of an application is carried out collectively against other applications and with other Panellists. As such, judgement and/or scoring of an application is based on panellists' consensus of the criteria and by benchmarking against other applications of the opportunity.

SECTION 5: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PEER REVIEW

To facilitate collaborative trans-national funding, the Global Research Council set out a Statement of Principles on Peer/Merit Review (2018). These principles reflect current principles in assessment and decision making in our Councils as set out below.

We are committed to the following principles in our assessment and decision making: expert assessment, transparency, impartiality, appropriateness, confidentiality, integrity and ethics, equality, diversity and inclusion, separation of duties.

For a full description of UKRI's guiding principles, please refer to [UKRI principles of assessment and decision making – UKRI](#)

The Peer Review College

A complete list of Peer Review College members is available on [our website](#). The Peer Review College members will provide the AHRC with graded reviews. Please refer to [Guidance for reviewers – AHRC – UKRI](#).

The AHRC reserves the right to seek reviews from specialists who are not current members of the Peer Review College if suitable College members are not available, or where such peer review input is required as part of agreements with other funding bodies. Reviews may be sought from specialists within the UK or abroad.

All peer reviews are subject to a quality check. Reviews deemed by the AHRC to be of insufficient quality will be rejected from the assessment process.

Confidentiality

The Research Councils operate an open peer review process, while at the same time preserving reviewer anonymity. Reviewers are required to treat proposals in confidence and keep any personally retained documentation (paper or electronic) secure. Reviewers should review all materials in accordance with instructions given in the Funding Service and should refer any questions relating to reviewing the application to the Council, and must not contact applicants. Applicants may be given the opportunity to respond to any completed reviews, the applicants' research organisation will also be given access to the anonymised review to support transparency of decision making. The Councils expect all parties to respect the roles of all involved in the peer review process.

SECTION 5: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PEER REVIEW

Peer Reviewer grading scale

Unless otherwise indicated grades awarded to all proposals and their definitions are contained in the tables below:

Generic

Score	Description
6	Exceptional the application is outstanding. It addresses all of the assessment criteria and meets them to an exceptional level.
5	Excellent the application is very high quality. It addresses most of the assessment criteria and meets them to an excellent level. There are very minor weaknesses.
4	Very Good the application demonstrates considerable quality. It meets most of the assessment criteria to a high level. There are minor weaknesses.
3	Good the application is of good quality. It meets most of the assessment criteria to an acceptable level, but not across all aspects of the proposed activities. There are weaknesses.
2	Weak the application is not sufficiently competitive. It meets some of the assessment criteria to an adequate level. There are, however, significant weaknesses.
1	Poor the application is flawed or of unsuitable quality for funding. It does not meet the assessment criteria to an adequate level.

Please note, a review is considered unsupportive where it is scored 1-3.

Sifting of proposals

Proposals will be sifted before going to moderating panel based on the following principles:

The AHRC will reject a proposal upon submission where the proposal does not meet the published eligibility criteria; either relating to documentation requirements or where it does not meet the aims or criteria of the scheme to which it has been submitted.

The AHRC will sift proposals against quality criteria, solely on the basis of information supplied by an AHRC peer review process.

SECTION 5: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PEER REVIEW

The sifting process

The sifting process occurs in two stages:

Sift stage 1

Each proposal is assessed on the following criteria, in reference to eligibility and assessment requirements:

- All application documents must be eligible under the scheme requirements
- All applicants and named staff must be eligible under the scheme requirements

The proposal must meet the aims and criteria of the scheme to which it has been submitted.

Sift stage 2

A sifting decision is made based on the overall confidence levels and grades given by the peer review process. An application will be rejected when the threshold of unsupportive review scores is reached. Details of the threshold will be included on the relevant funding opportunity webpage on the UKRI Funding Finder. If an application is rejected at sift stage 2, it will not be made available for Applicant Response. The reviews will be made available to the applicant through the Funding Service.

This change of process is being rolled out on funding opportunities across 2024. Please check the [funding finder](#) text of specific opportunities for details

Project Lead Response

For schemes outlined in the funding finder, the applicant will be given the right of reply to the reviews received.

The Project Lead (PL) response allows applicants to correct any factual errors or conceptual misunderstandings, or to respond to any queries highlighted in the comments from the peer reviewers. It is not intended to be an opportunity to change or re-constitute a proposal in the light of the reviewers' comments. You are not obliged to submit a response, but it is recommended that you do so as responses from applicants are forwarded to the moderation panel(s), and are taken into account in the grading and prioritisation of proposals. Applicants are given 14 days to respond to reviewers' comments.

The PL response must be:

- No more than 500 words per peer review

The PL response may include images and tables from May 2024.

SECTION 5: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PEER REVIEW

The PL Response should be a self-contained response to comments and should not depend on additional information such as the inclusion of external links. Applicants must not include hyperlinks to web resources in order to extend their PL Response. Peer reviewers are advised to base their assessment on the information contained within the application and are under no obligation to access such links.

The PL Response should be submitted through the grants system by the Project Lead (PL) wherever possible. However, if the PL is unavailable and the proposal contains Project co-Lead (UK), the PL can delegate response submission to one of one of the PCL, who will need to be given access in order to view the proposal. In order to delegate submitting the response, the PL should contact the TFS Helpdesk support@funding-service.ukri.org for further advice. If neither the PL nor PCL are able to respond within the 14 day deadline then an extension may be granted under certain circumstances. If an extension is required, this can be requested by emailing Operations@ahrc.ukri.org.

For schemes that operate with open deadlines, we will not be able to provide you with exact dates of when we will contact you for the PL response. You will be contacted once the reviews have been obtained and you will be sent an e-mail which will detail the size limit and deadline you need to submit your PL response by. These details vary according to the scheme and the number of reviews you have received so it is important to read the email carefully. Please note that the AHRC will not issue reminder for overdue PL responses and it is the PL's responsibility to ensure they submit their Response within the period allowed. If your response is not received within the period stated, then your application will proceed without it.

When you have submitted your PL response you will receive an email from our grant system confirming it has been submitted. This will be sent to your email address registered in your TFS account. If the email does not arrive within an hour you should check your spam or junk folder, and if you have not received it you should contact the TFS Helpdesk on support@funding-service.ukri.org who will be able to check if the response has been submitted.

As mentioned above, we strongly recommend that you do respond to the reviews even where extremely favourable, however if you do not wish to submit a response you should log into TFS to advise us accordingly.

Where there is no PL Response

Proposals that do not have a PL response stage, will instead proceed straight from peer review to the moderation panel.

Peer review panels

Non-standing Peer Review Panels are convened on an ad hoc basis from the Peer Review College membership.

In selecting panel members we will aim to achieve a balance in terms of gender, ethnicity, institution and regional distribution, and to achieve a range of expertise which broadly reflects that of the applicant population.

SECTION 5: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PEER REVIEW

The proposal, peer reviews, and the PL's response to these reviews will be considered individually by members of the peer review panel and then discussed at the panel meeting.

The peer review panel will determine a final grade for each application and will rank proposals in order of priority for funding. The panel will consider only the expert peer reviews and the PL's response to these reviews to reach its decisions. Final funding decisions will rest with the AHRC.

Peer review panel members are not permitted to discuss with applicants the content of any proposals they have reviewed, either during or after the assessment process.

Panel grading scale

Below is the updated panel grading scale.

Score	Score definitions
10	The application is exceptional ; it very strongly meets all of the assessment criteria to the highest standard. The panel agrees that it is difficult to articulate how the application could be improved.
9	The application is outstanding ; it very strongly meets all of the assessment criteria.
8	The application is excellent ; it strongly meets all of the assessment criteria.
7	The application is very good ; it meets the assessment criteria well but with some minor weaknesses/limitations .
6	The application is good ; it meets the assessment criteria well but with some clear weaknesses/limitations .
5	The application is adequate ; it meets the assessment criteria but with clear weaknesses/limitations.
4	The application is weak ; it meets the assessment criteria but with significant weaknesses/limitations .

SECTION 5: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PEER REVIEW

3	The application is poor ; it meets the assessment criteria but has major weaknesses/limitations .
2	The application is unsatisfactory ; it does not meet one or more of the assessment criteria .
1	The application is unsatisfactory ; it does not meet any of the assessment criteria.

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SECTION 6: AWARD DECISIONS

Notification of the outcome

The AHRC is not able to notify you of the outcome of your proposal by telephone. All outcome notifications are sent electronically to the email address shown on your Je-S or TFS record.

If you are unsuccessful, you will receive an email advising that you have not been offered an award, and indicating the final outcome your proposal received. The AHRC is unable to provide information on why your proposal was unsuccessful.

Applicants are advised that under no circumstances should they contact peer review panel members to discuss individual proposals, meeting details or outcomes.

Offer acceptance and payment

The AHRC, on advice from peer reviewers or panels, may remove costs if they are not justified or not permitted under the scheme rules.

If you are successful you will receive a notification email as will your Research Organisation (RO). Later a formal grant offer containing details of the funding and terms and conditions will be sent via JeS or TFS to your Research Organisation. The RO will have 2 weeks to consider and then formally accept this offer. Once the research activity has commenced the RO is required to complete and submit to AHRC the Start Confirmation via JeS or TFS. Grant payments will be made direct to the RO on a quarterly basis.

Under the arrangements for the full economic costing of Research Council grants, this reduction has an impact on the estates and indirect cost figures that have been provided. In such circumstances, the AHRC will contact the Research Organisation and request that you provide revised figures for these two budget headings. The research organisation will have ten working days to provide these revised figures.

The amount awarded may be different from the sum you sought as it may include an extra element for indexation (inflation). The sum may also differ if the Council considers that a lower level of funding to the one you sought is more appropriate. You will be notified of any amendments made for this reason.

All grant offer documents will include a nominal starting date that is at least six months after the issue date of the grant offer. Research organisations will be permitted to start their grants on any actual date that is later than the issue date of the grant offer document and, up to six months later than the nominal start date. Note that this does not apply to training grants (the funding of PhD students).

Therefore, grants may start before the nominal start date listed on the offer document without reference to AHRC. This can be done by entering the required start date in the start conformation.

SECTION 6: AWARD DECISIONS

Resubmission policy

Proposals that have been rejected at any point in the assessment process

If the application is rejected at any point in the assessment process (either following the peer review stage or the panel meeting stage) applicants will not be allowed to resubmit the same, or substantively similar, application to any scheme or opportunity.

This policy applies for both resubmission to the same scheme/opportunity and applying for a different scheme/opportunity provided by any part of UKRI.

Similarly, applications rejected by other UKRI bodies will not be allowed to resubmit the same, or substantively similar, application to any AHRC scheme or opportunity.

Proposals that have been rejected prior to the assessment process

An application will normally be rejected prior to assessment stage (termed 'Office Reject'), because of a failure to adhere to AHRC's scheme or opportunity rules. Applicants rejected in this way will be informed of the reasons why their application was rejected. Those that had been submitted to our responsive mode schemes may be given the opportunity to resubmit the same application again once the errors have been corrected. This applies only to these schemes: Research Grants, Catalyst Awards, Curiosity Awards, Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement.

What constitutes a new proposal?

A new proposal should involve a significant change of focus from any previous proposal you have submitted to AHRC or other UKRI bodies and will likely be accompanied by a different set of costings to deliver the project. Proposals which demonstrate only minor amendments from previous submissions, for example specific changes based on previous peer review feedback alone, will be counted as resubmissions.

We expect new proposals to have fresh or significantly modified objectives and/or an entirely revised methodological/analytical approach to a research question. Any proposal which does not meet either of these criteria will be judged a resubmission.

When preparing any new proposal a good approach is to critically ask yourself if any of the following apply. If the answer is 'yes' then your proposal may be considered a resubmission:

- broadly the same title and/or proposal summary
- overall aim of a new proposal and its high-level objectives broadly the same
- broadly the same research questions
- broadly the same resources required to carry out the research
- Project Lead and Project co-Lead (UK) on a proposal are amended (for example swapping of roles) whilst the content of the proposal is essentially the same.

However, this is not an exhaustive list and none of these points in isolation will be used to define a resubmission.

In order to treat everyone fairly, we cannot engage in discussions about whether a particular proposal will be treated as a resubmission before you apply. We advise that you consult within

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your institution before making an application which you believe may be considered a resubmission.

Monitoring

Research outputs, outcomes and impact

If successful, you will be required to submit outputs, outcomes and impacts linked to your award through the Researchfish system. Information can be added to Researchfish at any point once the grant has been made and beyond its conclusion. Although you can add information to Researchfish at any time you will be required to submit this information to AHRC at a point during the year which will be communicated in advance to all Research Organisations. This allows for a deeper and longer-term record of the results of AHRC funding. Researchfish is available at <https://www.researchfish.com/>; researchers will need to create an account in order to sign in and start submitting outcomes. More details on Researchfish are available on the UKRI website: <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/manage-your-funding-award/report-your-research-outcomes/>

Please also note that the monitoring of existing or past awards may be taken into account in the assessment of future applications, particularly if this monitoring is found to be less than satisfactory.

Financial Reporting

As part of the terms and conditions of an AHRC award, your Research Organisation will be required to submit a final expenditure statement (FES) no later than three months after the end of the award period. Final expenditure statements are made available in the Research Organisation's Je-S account as soon as the end date of the grant has been reached. The Research Organisation will need to complete and submit the statement using Je-S. Further information on submitting final expenditure statements through Je-S can be found [here](#) and clicking on 'Expenditure Statements', either for fEC or non-fEC grants. For further help with submitting final expenditure statements please contact the Je-S Helpdesk on 01793 44 4164 or email JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org

Please note that it is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to monitor when the FES is due and to submit on time accordingly. The Je-S system will automatically provide reminders of FES due dates but the AHRC will not notify grant holders or Research Organisations directly.

If a final expenditure statement has not been received within 3 months of the end date of the grant AHRC will recover 20% of the funds paid to the grant. The AHRC's grants system will automatically remove this from future pay runs to the Research Organisation or will raise an invoice for the Research Organisation to pay. If the FES has still not been received within 6 months AHRC will recover all funds paid to the grant. This is a policy in place across all Research Councils; please see the [Meeting UKRI terms and conditions for funding – UKRI](#) for more information. Research Organisations may appeal against sanctions but appeals must be received within 60 days of the pay run in which the sanction was imposed at the latest.

AHRC complaints and appeals procedures

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For details on the complaints procedure or appeal process, please refer to the document Complaints and Appeals Procedure for Applications and Awards which can be found on our website [here](#).

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SECTION 7: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Demonstrating potential impact

The excellent research funded by the UK Research Councils has a huge impact on the wellbeing and economy of the UK. Working together with our wider communities and other partners, we want to ensure that these impacts are effectively demonstrated and supported throughout the research lifecycle and beyond. This will add value, stimulate interest from wider stakeholders - including the general public - and, where needed, actively highlight the need for continued investment in the research base.

The onus rests with applicants to demonstrate how they will achieve this excellence with impact, bearing in mind that impacts can take many forms and be promoted in different ways.

The Research Councils describe impact as the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy. Impact embraces all the extremely diverse ways in which research-related knowledge and skills benefit individuals, organisations and nations by:

- fostering global economic performance, and specifically the economic competitiveness of the United Kingdom
- increasing the effectiveness of public services and policy
- enhancing quality of life, health and creative output

This accords with the Royal Charters of the Councils and with HM Treasury guidance on the appraisal of economic impact.

The Research Councils give their funding recipients considerable flexibility and autonomy in the delivery of their research, postgraduate training and knowledge transfer activities.

This flexibility and autonomy encompasses project definition, management, collaboration, researcher development activities, participation, promotion and the dissemination of research outputs; this approach enables excellence with impact.

In return, the Research Councils expect those who receive funding to:

- demonstrate an awareness of the wider environment and context in which their research takes place
- demonstrate an awareness of the social and ethical implications of their research, beyond usual research conduct considerations, and take account of public attitudes towards those issues
- engage actively with the public at both the local and national levels about their research and its broader implications

- identify potential benefits and beneficiaries from the outset, and through the full life cycle of the project(s)
- maintain professional networks that extend beyond their own discipline and research community
- publish results widely – considering the academics, user and public audiences for research outcomes
- exploit results where appropriate, in order to secure social and economic return to the UK
- manage collaborations professionally, in order to secure maximum impact without restricting the future progression of research
- ensure that whilst working on AHRC grants, all research staff and students develop research, vocational and entrepreneurial skills that are matched to the demands of their future career paths
- take responsibility for the duration, management and exploitation of data for future use
- work in partnership with the Research Councils for the benefit of the UK

The expectations clarify the position of the Research Councils with respect to impact, rather than introducing a new approach. Many of these expectations are already incorporated into Research Council processes and guidance, for example;

- exploitation is addressed within Grant Terms and Conditions;
- continuing professional development (CPD) of all staff working on AHRC grants in line with the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers is a recommendation

The AHRC recognises that not all research will have direct dissemination but aims to encourage researchers to maximise potential impacts where they occur. The nature of your research may mean that identifying potential impacts or beneficiaries outside academia is not straightforward at the time of application. Where this is the case you should explain the reasons throughout the application, in the same way as demonstrating impact identifying how the research will be beneficial should also be evidenced throughout the application. Excellent research without obvious or immediate dissemination will continue to be funded by the AHRC and will not be disadvantaged as a result of the introduction of these sections to applications.

Access to Research Outputs

If one of the proposed outputs is a journal article then the applicant must ensure that they comply with the former UKRI position on Access to Research Outputs <https://www.ukri.org/our-work/supporting-healthy-research-and-innovation-culture/open-research/open-access-policies-review/>

AHRC subject remit and proposal classification

In order for a proposal to be eligible to be submitted to the AHRC, the majority of the research, i.e. the main focus of its Research Questions/Problems, must lie within the Arts and Humanities.

For proposals that cross Research Council boundaries the Research Councils have put in place the following agreement: <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/preparing-to-make-a-funding-application/if-your-research-spans-different-disciplines/>

Proposal classification

You are required to classify your proposal as part of the application. This activity serves partly as a confirmation that the proposal sits within the remit but more importantly as tool to help identify the most appropriate peer reviewers to assess the proposal. It is therefore very important to complete this section accurately.

AHRC disciplines

In order for a proposal to be **eligible for consideration by AHRC**, the choice of **Primary Research Area must** come from the list below.

Histories, Cultures and Heritage

Level 1 - Archaeology

Level 2

- Prehistoric Archaeology
- Archaeology of Literate Societies
- Archaeology of Human Origins
- Archaeological Theory
- Maritime Archaeology
- Landscape and Environmental Archaeology
- Industrial Archaeology

Level 1 – Classics

Level 2

- Classical Literature
- Classical Reception
- Philosophy, Thought and Religion

- Epigraphy and Papyrology
- Languages and Linguistics

Level 1 – Cultural and Museum Studies

Level 2

- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- Museum and Gallery Studies
- Cultural Studies and Pop Culture
- Policy, Arts Management and Creative Industries
- Cultural Geography
- Heritage Management
- Conservation of Art and Textiles

Level 1 – Development Studies

Level 2

- Development Studies

Level 1 – History

Level 2

- Cultural History
- Political History
- Imperial/Colonial History
- History of Science/Medicine/Technology
- War Studies
- Religious History
- Economic and Social History
- American Studies
- Post-Colonial Studies

Level 1 – Human Geography

Level 2

- Historical Geography

Level 1 – Information and Communication Technologies

Level 2

- Information and Knowledge Management

Level 1 – Law and Legal Studies

Level 2

- Jurisprudence/Philosophy of Law
- Human Rights
- Criminal Law and Criminology
- International Law
- EU Law
- Public Law
- Comparative Law
- Common Law, including Commercial Law
- Law Regulated by Statute
- Law Relating to Property
- Legal History

Level 1 – Library and Information Studies

Level 2

- Archives
- Records Management
- Information Science and Retrieval
- Library Studies
- Information and Knowledge Management
- Computational Studies

Level 1 – Philosophy

Level 2

- Political Philosophy
- Philosophy of Mind
- Aesthetics
- Metaphysics
- History of Ideas
- Language and Philosophical Logic
- Epistemology
- Ethics
- History of Philosophy
- Philosophy of Science and Mathematics and Mathematical Logic
- Philosophy of Religion

Level 1 – Political Science and International Studies

Level 2

- Diplomacy and International Relations

Level 1 – Theology, Divinity and Religion

Level 2

- Old Testament
- Modern Theology
- Judaism
- Islam
- Liturgy
- Systematic Theology
- Church History and History of Theology
- New Testament
- East Asian Religions
- Buddhism
- Hinduism
- Jainism

- Sikhism
- Alternative Spiritualities/New Religious Movements
- Atheism/Secularism
- Inter-faith Relations
- Contemporary Religion

Creative and Performing Arts

Level 1 – Dance

Level 2

- History of Dance
- Dance Performance
- Dance Notation
- Social Dance
- Choreography

Level 1 – Design

Level 2

- Architecture History, Theory and Practice
- Design History, Theory and Practice
- Digital Art and Design
- Product Design

Level 1 – Drama and Theatre Studies

Level 2

- Theatre and Society
- Dramaturgy
- Scenography
- Performance and Live Art
- Theatre and History
- Theories of Theatre
- Drama and Theatre - Other

Level 1 – Media

Level 2

- Media and Communication Studies
- Journalism
- Publishing
- Television History, Theory and Criticism
- New Media/Web-Based Studies
- Film History, Theory and Criticism

Level 1 – Music

Level 2

- Traditional Music
- History of Music
- Music and Society
- Popular Music
- Composition
- Classical Music
- Musical Performance
- Musicology

Level 1 – Visual Arts

Level 2

- Fine Art History, Theory and Practice
- Photography History, Theory and Practice
- Art Theory and Aesthetics
- Community Art including Art and Health
- Installation and Sound Art History, Theory and Practice
- Ethnography and Anthropology
- Digital Arts History, Theory and Practice
- Applied Arts History, Theory and Practice
- Art History
- Design History, Theory and Practice

- Film-based media (History, Theory and Practice)
- Time-based media History, Theory and Practice

Languages and Literature

Level 1 – Languages and Literature

Level 2

- American Studies
- Interpreting and Translation
- Life writing
- History and Development of the English Language
- Literary and Cultural Theory
- Post-Colonial Studies
- Scandinavian Studies
- Asiatic and Oriental Studies
- Middle Eastern and African
- Italian Studies
- Hispanic, Portuguese and Latin Studies
- English Language and Literature
- Creative Writing
- Comparative Literature
- French Studies
- Celtic Studies
- Medieval Literature
- Ethnography and Anthropology
- Australasian Studies
- Comparative Studies
- German, including Dutch and Yiddish
- Russian, Slavonic and East European Languages and Literature
- Gender and Sexuality

Level 1 – Linguistics

Level 2

- Textual Editing and Bibliography
- Syntax
- Semantics and Pragmatics
- Phonetics
- Language Variation and Change
- Lexicon
- Linguistic Theory
- Morphology and Phonology
- Applied Linguistics
- Linguistics (General)

Subjects where the AHRC and the ESRC share interests and responsibilities

The following is a list of some of the main areas of study where the AHRC and the ESRC share interests.

Area studies

AHRC supports research that is concerned with the culture, history, language and religion of specific regions. ESRC supports research that is concerned with the society, economy, politics and human geography of specific regions.

Communications, cultural and media studies

AHRC supports research that seeks to understand communications, culture and media through the study of phenomena such as the visual arts, film and television, history, language, literature and performance. ESRC supports research that approaches communications, culture and media through the study of sociology, social theory, social anthropology, politics and economics. Note that there is also an important interface between AHRC, ESRC and EPSRC in this area where proposed research projects include a significant engagement with, or advancement of, communication technologies. In the case of relevant research applications, the AHRC and/or ESRC will liaise with EPSRC when consulting reviewers and making funding decisions.

Cultural policy and management

AHRC supports historical, comparative and empirical research that addresses questions of human value in creativity and culture, including both the individual and collective experience of creativity and culture. AHRC also supports research in museum studies. ESRC supports research into the psychological processes involved in creativity and the social and economic influences on and consequent impacts of creativity and culture, and public policy and management in this area.

Education

ESRC is the primary funding body for educational research across all subjects, including the arts and humanities. AHRC supports research where the imperative for the research questions resides in the arts and humanities, but there may be an educational element. Examples include research into the history of education, children's literature, creative art and performance in (but not for) educational environments, religious teaching and scholarship, and the role of education in librarianship and museums practice.

Gender studies

AHRC supports research that is concerned with sex and gender as they relate to the creative and performing arts, language, law, literature, religion and history of all periods. ESRC supports research that is concerned with sex and gender as they relate to society, the economy and politics.

Human geography

ESRC is the primary funding body for human geography. However, AHRC supports research in cultural geography, which includes research into the interpretation of the cultural landscape; cultural constructions of nature and environment; creative and imaginative aspects of geographical thought and practice; relationships between space, place and cultural identity. AHRC also supports research in historical geography, which includes geographical change over time, connecting the local to the global; histories of geography and cartography; and the study of past geographies and their legacies.

History

AHRC supports historical research covering all periods of history from ancient times to modern, and in all parts of the world. Applicants whose research focuses primarily on the very recent past will need to show in their proposal how and why their focus is indeed predominantly historical, for example how the study will focus on change over a defined period of time or will make predominant use of historical modes of analysis.

ESRC supports historical research across all periods that seeks to understand the development of social and economic arrangements over time and applies social and economic theories. Research focusing on contemporary or near-contemporary social, political, economic or geographical themes should normally be directed to the ESRC.

International relations

ESRC is the primary funding body for international relations, but AHRC supports research that is concerned with the relationship between international relations and the culture, history, language and religion of specific countries and regions.

Librarianship and information science

AHRC supports research into the practice and techniques of information and knowledge management as they relate to librarianship, archives and records management, information science and information systems, storage and retrieval, and professional practice in journalism and the media. AHRC also supports research into information use and users in specific organisational environments. ESRC supports research into the broader socio-economic context of information use and policy, information flows within and between organisations, and the shaping, use and potential of information and communication technologies. The ESRC also supports research on knowledge management and on forms and structures of knowledge, as they relate to the wider socio-economic context. Note that there is also an important interface between AHRC, ESRC and EPSRC in this area where proposed research projects include a significant engagement with, or advancement of, technologies dealing with information management. In the case of relevant research applications, AHRC and/or ESRC will liaise with EPSRC when consulting reviewers and making funding decisions.

Linguistics

AHRC supports research into the structure, history, theory and description of language and languages. This includes the development and exploration of theories of language, the elucidation of the historical development of languages and the production of descriptions of languages or features of languages. ESRC supports research in areas of computational linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and interdisciplinary social science research involving linguistics. Both Councils also fund research into phonetics and applied linguistics relating to the areas for which they are responsible.

Law

AHRC supports research into the content, procedures, theory, philosophy and history of the law. This includes studies of legal systems and legislation in all periods of history and in all parts of the world. ESRC supports socio-legal studies, which are concerned with the social, political and economic influences on and impact of the law and the legal system.

Philosophy

AHRC supports research in philosophy, covering all topics, methods and periods. This includes research into ethical theory and applied ethics, for example bio-ethics, professional ethics and environmental ethics. ESRC supports research into the social political and economic influences on and effects of ethical positions of institutions and individuals.

Religious Studies

AHRC supports research into religions and belief systems of all kinds, in all periods of history and in all parts of the world. This includes research into the ethics of religions and belief systems, and their application in socio-economic, scientific and technological contexts. ESRC supports research that is concerned with the social and economic influences on and the impacts of religious beliefs and groups.

Science and technology studies

ESRC is the primary funding body for research on innovation and the interdisciplinary study of science, technology and society. AHRC supports research into the history, law and philosophy of science, technology and medicine, as well as their interface with religion. AHRC also supports research into the interpretation and representation of, and engagement with, science, technology and medicine through art, literature, performance, museums, galleries, libraries and archives.

Social anthropology

ESRC is the primary funding body for social anthropology, but the AHRC also supports anthropological research where the research questions and methods are significantly concerned with arts and humanities phenomena and critical, historical and practice-led approaches. This includes studies of archaeology, history, language, law, literature, the creative and performing arts and religion.

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