

Policing Academic Centres of Excellence (P-ACE) frequently asked questions

This document brings together questions regarding the P-ACE opportunity sent to UKRI and raised at the applicant webinar held at 10am 16th October 2024. Subjects covered are listed below and responses to questions have been grouped together where there is overlap. Applicants who were unable to attend the webinar are encouraged to watch the webinar recording in full before submitting to this opportunity.

1. Main functions, P-ACE status, and covering the Policing ARIs

Main functions

This activity is about engaging with the policing Areas of Research Interest (ARIs) by mobilising and making accessible existing work and expertise and engaging with policing to develop new activities supported by the flexible fund.

P-ACE status

P-ACE status will be held by all Research Organisations (ROs) involved in a successful PACE application, and held at the whole organisation level, rather than be associated with particular groups, departments or centres within an RO.

Policing ARIs

A P-ACE must demonstrate critical mass and national leadership in the ARI domains it proposes covering, and make clear how its expertise aligns with these ARIs. We require every P-ACE to demonstrate expertise and existing activity against the Building and Maintaining Public Trust and Crime Prevention ARIs. This could be broad or focused around particular policing research areas or crime types. Applicants should also select two or more from the remaining ARIs and again evidence their critical mass and national leadership in these areas. Applications can also highlight expertise held by the RO/ROs involved that is relevant to other ARIs but does not meet the required scale for P-ACE status.

We recognise that experts in these ARI domains may not have applied their expertise in a policing context previously, and where this is the case, we encourage you to include information of where technologies have been applied previously and how you might develop them for application in policing.

2. Project leads, Co-leads, Students, the flexible fund and other Funding Queries

Leadership team expertise and composition

The leadership team (project lead and co-lead/co-leads) should comprise expertise covering all the ARIs that the P-ACE will cover, including social science expertise. No stipulation is made about the expertise of the Project Lead as an individual. Please consult the [ESRC research funding guide](#) (RFG) for more information on eligibility of business, public and third sector organisations.

P-ACEs should synthesise and mobilise all relevant work and industry engagement from the RO or ROs involved, irrespective of whether the individuals involved in this work will be funded directly through the P-ACE award. The P-ACE funding is to support ROs in organising and integrating their work, and although we need to see expertise included in the leadership team relevant to each area the P-ACE will cover, the P-ACE application does not need to include everyone who was involved in the work originally. Where other funding has supported work or is supporting the ongoing knowledge

exchange efforts of those involved in included work, applications must make clear how the P-ACE funding would add to and enhance existing activity.

Funding the leadership team

The leadership team should have their core time contribution covered for the duration of the award through the 50% of the funding ringfenced for activity focused on the P-ACE's existing work. Individuals in the leadership team might have additional time funded through the flexible fund if they are involved in an activity supported through this fund that is developed with policing and delivered during the award. But time required to oversee and deploy the flexible fund comes under the leadership of the P-ACE, which should not be funded through the flexible fund. There are no stipulations on time commitments made by the leadership team, or by the DA/DI staff proposed to support the P-ACE, but these must be sufficient for delivering the objectives of the P-ACE.

How to use the flexible fund

The flexible fund should be used to ensure the P-ACE can respond to the evolving needs of policing, build on its existing activity, and provide opportunities for academic staff at all career stages involved in the P-ACE to grow their experience and develop professionally. Activities supported by the flexible fund could involve individuals outside of the P-ACE, but those outside the P-ACE cannot use the P-ACE status that comes with the award. By default, the flexible fund would be held by the lead RO, unless an alternative arrangement is proposed at application stage. Knowledge exchange activities that mobilise existing work can be proposed at application stage (and so be supported by the funding focused on existing work), whereas knowledge exchange activities covering new activity developed through engagement with policing can be supported through the flexible fund. Applicants should make clear what the process will be for managing and deploying the flexible fund.

Studentships and involving students

Studentships are not funded through this opportunity, but rather we expect to see existing PhD students involved in the P-ACE's activity. UKRI and NPCC intend to offer policing placement opportunities to PhD students involved in the P-ACEs and in the wider doctoral training network. Other students could be involved in the P-ACEs activities where appropriate and permissible through our funding rules.

Eligible costs and other finance queries

The RFG provides information on all eligible and ineligible costs, and where costs are covered by UKRI at either 80% or 100% of the full economic cost (fEC). There is no expectation for financial contributions to be made by ROs beyond the required 20% fEC contribution, but ROs should draw attention to any wider investment in policing research to illustrate how they are developing a positive research environment and wider community.

3. P-ACEs working together, working with policing and other partners, and geographic coverage

Partners, costs, and letters of support

A project partner organisation can be involved in multiple bids. When partnering with police constabularies, we expect P-ACE applications to make clear existing partnerships and the achievements these have enabled rather than attempt to forge new partnerships during the application's development. Inclusion of this information will provide sufficient evidence of existing partnerships, and letters of support from police constabularies in an existing partnership are not required. Please do not approach NPCC about involvement in bids as they cannot be involved in this capacity.

Project partners outside of policing and international involvement

Organisations outside of policing are required to provide letters of support if included as project partners. Details for all project partners should be included at Question 13 of your application, and letters of support included at Question 14.

Although there is not a requirement for applications to come with pre-existing partnerships with industry, these types of existing partnerships would help evidence your ability to deliver as a P-ACE. While international project co-leads are not permitted, P-ACE applicants can consider whether involving other international partners in their activities in order to enhance UK policing would be beneficial. Staff costs for project partners cannot be included. For further information on project partner and non-academic project co-lead eligibility and costs please refer to the RFG.

Working with policing nationally

Partnership with policing nationally will be facilitated for P-ACEs through the Police National Research and Innovation Network, which will promote connections between the whole P-ACE and policing and not just the project lead. NPCC will provide more information on how national coordination will be supported when the awards are made and are committing resource to this. Applicants are not expected to build their own national links separate to this. If activities arise where data sharing agreements are required, they will need to be put in place.

Geographic coverage

P-ACEs should be able to demonstrate their track record of working with policing partners in their part of the UK and their potential to engage nationally with policing through the Police National Research and Innovation Network. We want to support activity and researcher development across a diverse range of research organisations across the UK, and avoid situations where funding is disproportionately concentrated in one part of the UK, so these things will be considered alongside application quality in the assessment process.

P-ACE long-term vision and broader effort

The long-term vision for the P-ACEs is that the initiative continues beyond this three-year period, but this will be subject to funding and decision making. The P-ACEs are part of a broader effort to improve connections between UK policing and academic research, which many organisations and initiatives are part of. UKRI is supporting work led by the College of Policing to map the UK's existing research and expertise against the evidence needs that currently exist in policing, and instructions on how to engage with the College's research map and crime reduction tools are on the College's website. We're also considering ways in which unsuccessful P-ACE applicants and others with relevant expertise could be invited to opt-in to knowledge sharing activities which we would facilitate with the Police National Research and Innovation Network and the Research and Innovation leads in police constabularies. We will share more information on this after the funding decisions are announced.