Apply for funding to support research that exploits existing data resources for social and economic research, created by ESRC or other agencies.

Proposals can draw from the wider sciences, as long as the social sciences are more than 50% of the research focus and effort.

Applications are via the UKRI Funding Service and will run as consecutive rounds with closing dates.

The full economic cost of your project can be up to £300,000. ESRC will fund 80% of the full economic cost.

Who can apply

Before applying for funding, check the following:

- the ESRC eligibility guidance for applicants
- the eligibility of your organisation
UKRI is introducing new role types for opportunities being run on the new Funding Service from 22 May 2023. For full details please see eligibility as an individual

Who is eligible to apply

The project lead for this funding opportunity can be based at any organisation eligible for ESRC funding throughout the duration of the grant.

Applicants can be at any stage of their academic career; but the project team must have a level of skills, knowledge and experience that is appropriate to the proposed project.

Applications may be submitted jointly by more than one applicant. In such cases, one person must be regarded as the project lead taking the lead responsibility for the conduct of the project and the observance of the terms and conditions. Correspondence regarding the proposal and grant will be addressed to the project lead only (and in the case of any offer letter, to their research office).

Additional applicants making a significant contribution to the conduct of the project should be identified as Project co-lead(s).

See the ESRC Research Funding Guide for further information on costs that can be included on ESRC grants.

International applicants

Project leads from non-UK organisations are not eligible to apply for funding for this opportunity.

Project co-leads based in non-UK research organisations can be included in research grant applications. Read project co-lead (international) policy guidance for details of eligible organisations and costs.

Business, third sector or government body project co-leads

Business, third sector or government body project co-leads based in the UK can also be included on research grant proposals as a Project co-lead. Read Including project co-leads from business, third sector or government bodies for details of eligible organisations and costs.

Resubmissions

We will not accept uninvited resubmissions of projects that have been submitted to UKRI or any other funder.

Find out more about ESRC’s Resubmissions policy.
Equality, diversity and inclusion

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

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

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

Find out more about equality, diversity and inclusion at ESRC.

What we're looking for

Scope

This funding opportunity supports research that exploits existing data resources for social and economic research. Applicants have considerable flexibility to focus on any subject area or topic providing that it falls within the ESRC’s remit.

Proposed research is not required to use ESRC-funded data resources, though this is encouraged.

This funding opportunity also aims to develop the capacity and skills of social sciences communities in using large and complex existing data resources. We encourage partnerships with non-academic stakeholders to ensure generation of high-impact, policy- and practitioner-relevant research.

Proposals can draw from the wider sciences, but the social sciences must represent more than 50% of the research focus and effort. We will work with other research councils to ensure that applications close to remit boundaries are assessed by the most appropriate lead council. For a full list of ESRC disciplines, or if you are unsure whether your project is suitable for ESRC funding, please check the eligibility of your proposal.

Ambitious and novel research proposals addressing new concepts and techniques are encouraged, as are those with the potential for significant scientific or societal and economic impact. Fresh ideas from new researchers are also encouraged, and proposals are welcomed from early career researchers.

Duration

The duration of this award is up to two years (24 months).

Funding available
The full economic cost of your project must not exceed £300,000.

We will fund 80% of the full economic cost.

What we will fund

Funding can support:

- research projects that use qualitative or quantitative data from at least one existing UK or international data resource
- methodological development
- researchers at different career stages

What we will not fund

Applications cannot be accepted under this funding opportunity for:

- primary data collection
- unspecified research work
- research that will have been carried out before the grant start date
- writing up previous research
- literature surveys
- conference attendance, other than within an award
- travel for general study
- expeditions
- requests to hold conferences, workshops or seminars
- preparation of books and publications
- preparation and production of materials such as curriculum materials and software development where these constitute the primary project component

Associated studentships cannot be funded under this funding opportunity.

Supporting skills and talent

We will be looking for evidence of a strong commitment to supporting the development of researchers at all stages of their career. We encourage you to follow the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and the Technician Commitment.

We expect this to include a strong career development programme, shaped to suit the stage of the researchers’ career and providing increased opportunities for professional development. This should include, but not be limited to, the early career stage. Increasing capacity contributes to the quality and impact of the research. We encourage you to consider how you can support capacity building for all members of the project team.

ESRC-funded data infrastructure

We support a range of data infrastructure. We encourage applicants to consider whether the use of these resources could add value to their project. Please find more details about the datasets available across the UK on Facilities and resources.
Details of datasets and infrastructure to be used in your project should be given in the Facilities section.

**New datasets**

Primary data collection will not be funded under this opportunity. However, where new datasets are created by the linkage of existing resources (which is permissible under this opportunity), applicants are required to include a data management plan which discusses how this data will be stored and shared.

**Impact, innovation and interdisciplinarity**

We expect applicants to consider the potential *scientific, societal and economic impacts of their project*. Outputs, dissemination and impact are a key part of the assessment criteria. We also encourage applications that demonstrate (projects combining approaches from more than one discipline).

**Knowledge exchange and collaboration**

We are committed to knowledge exchange and encouraging collaboration between researchers and the private, public and civil society sectors. Collaborative working benefits both the researchers and the individuals/organisations involved. Through collaboration, partners learn about each other’s expertise, share knowledge and gain an appreciation of different professional cultures. Collaborative activity can therefore lead to a better understanding of the ways that academic research can add value and offer insights to key issues of concern for policy and practice.

Knowledge exchange should not be treated as an ‘add-on’ at the end of a project but considered before the start and built into a project.

**Equitable partnership principles**

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

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

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

Read [UKRI’s guidance on research in a global setting](https://www.ukri.org/).  

**Trusted Research**

If your application includes international applicants, project partners or collaborators, visit [Trusted Research](https://www.trustedresearch.org.uk) for more information on protection of those...
working in our thriving and collaborative international research and innovation sector.

**Research ethics**

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

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**How to apply**

We are running this funding opportunity on the new UKRI Funding Service. You cannot apply on the Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system.

The project lead is responsible for completing the application process on the UKRI Funding Service, but we expect all team members and project partners to contribute to the application.

Only the lead research organisation can submit an application to UKRI.

To apply:

1. Select ‘Start application’ near the beginning of this page.
2. Confirm you are the project lead.
3. Sign in or create a UKRI Funding Service account. To create an account, select your organisation, verify your email address, and set a password. If your organisation is not listed, email support@funding-service.ukri.org.
4. Answer questions directly in the text boxes. You can save your answers and come back to them, or work offline and return to copy and paste your answers. All questions and assessment criteria are listed in the ‘How to apply’ section on this Funding finder page.
5. Send the completed application to your research office for checking. They will return it to you if it needs editing.
6. Your research office will submit the completed and checked application to UKRI.

Watch our [research office webinars about the new UKRI Funding Service](#).

**Deadline**

We must receive your application by 4.00pm UK time on 28 September 2023.

You will not be able to apply after this time.

Make sure you are aware of and follow any internal institutional deadlines.

Previously, this funding opportunity was open for applications on an ongoing basis. From June 2023, there will be consecutive rounds with opening and closing dates for applications.
The subsequent responsive mode round on the UKRI Funding Service will open on 29 September 2023.

ESRC, as part of UKRI, will need to collect some personal information to manage your funding service account and the registration of your funding applications.

We will handle personal data in line with UK data protection legislation and manage it securely. For more information, including how to exercise your rights, read our privacy notice.

ESRC, as part of UKRI, will publish the outcomes of this funding opportunity at What ESRC has funded.

If your application is successful, some personal information will be published via the UKRI Gateway to Research.

UKRI Funding Service: section guidance

Summary

In plain English, provide a summary that can be sent to potential reviewers to determine if your proposal is within their field of expertise.

This summary may be made publicly available on external facing websites, so please ensure it can be understood by a variety of readers, for example:

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

Guidance for writing a summary

Succinctly describe your proposed work in terms of:

- its context
- the challenge the project addresses and how it will be applied to this
- its aims and objectives
- its potential applications and benefits

Word count: 550

Core team

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

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

Only list one individual as project lead.

Find out more about UKRI’s new grant roles.

Section: Primary discipline classification

Question: Enter the primary discipline for this project

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Select the primary area of research from the list of social disciplines below and enter into the text field. This information is used to determine eligibility for ESRC funding and to assist in the selection of appropriate reviewers.

- area studies
- demography
- development studies
- economics
- education
- environmental planning
- history
- human geography
- law and legal studies
- linguistics
- management and business studies
- political science and international studies
- psychology
- science and technology studies
- social anthropology
- social policy
- social work
- sociology
- tools, technologies and methods

Word count: 5

Section: Vision and Approach

For this round we will ask you to submit a single six-page PDF attachment covering the ‘Vision’ and ‘Approach’ sections of the application and enter the words ‘attachment supplied’ in the text box below. The document must have single line spacing, margins of at least 2cm and be typed using Arial 11pt, or another ‘sans serif’ font with an equivalent size to Arial 11pt. Unless specifically requested, do not include any personal data within the attachment. Upload details are provided within the service on the actual application.

Question: What are you hoping to achieve with your proposed work and how will you deliver it?

What the assessors are looking for in your response
For the Vision, explain how your proposed work:

- is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
- has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
- is timely given current trends, context and needs
- impacts world-leading research, society, the economy or the environment

Within the Vision section we also expect you to:

- consider potential beneficiaries and users of the proposed research, including the relevance of the research to these beneficiaries
- indicate the expected outputs, both academic and those orientated to users

For the Approach, explain how you have designed your work so that it:

- is effective and appropriate to achieve your objectives
- is feasible, and comprehensively identifies any risks to delivery and how they will be managed
- if applicable, uses a clear and transparent methodology
- if applicable, summarises the previous work and describes how this will be built upon and progressed
- will maximise translation of outputs into outcomes and impacts
- describes how your, and if applicable your team’s, research environment (in terms of the place, its location, and relevance to the project) will contribute to the success of the work

Within the Approach section we also expect you to:

- clearly describe both the framework and specific analysis methods proposed and explain the reasons for their choice. You should particularly mention any innovation in this or how different methodologies or methods may be combined
- explain what steps you will take to provide opportunities for users to benefit from your research, and to ensure that your research has maximum economic and societal impact

All applicants planning to generate data as part of their grant must complete the separate Data management question.

A list of references used to support your application can be added in the References question.

**Word count: 5**

**Section: References**

**Question:** List the references you’ve used to support your application.

**What the assessors are looking for in your response**

All references should be included in this section of the application and not in any other application question.
Section: Applicant and team capability to deliver

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

What the assessors are looking for in your response

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

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

The word count for this section is 1,500 words, 1,000 words to be used for R4RI modules and, if necessary, a further 500 words for Additions.

Use the Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI) format to showcase the range of relevant skills you, and if relevant your team (investigators, researchers, other (technical) staff for example research software engineers, data scientists and so on, and partners), have and how this will help to deliver the proposed work. You can include individuals’ specific achievements but only choose past contributions that best evidence their ability to deliver this work.

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

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

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

You should complete this as a narrative and you should avoid CV type format.
Section: Project partners: contributions

Question: Provide details about any project partners’ contributions using the template provided.

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you do not have any project partners, simply add ‘N/A’ into the text box, mark this section as complete and move to the next section.

If you do have project partners, download and complete the project partner contributions template (DOCX, 52KB) then copy and paste the table within it into the text box below.

Ensure you have obtained prior agreement from project partners that, should you be offered funding, they will support your project as indicated in the template.

Word count: 1,000

Section: Project Partners: letters (or emails) of support

Question: Upload a single PDF containing the letters or emails of support from each partner you named in the table in the previous ‘contributions’ section.

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you do not have any project partners, simply add ‘N/A’ into the text box, mark this section as complete and move to the next section.

If you have named project partners in the previous ‘contributions’ section, enter the words ‘attachment supplied’ in the text box below.

Each letter or email you provide should:

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

Other accepted letters of support include those confirming access to datasets, or confirming access to or use of the facilities provided by named collaborating organisations.

Letters of support may only be included where they confirm a specific contribution to the project as described above.

Letters of support from host or project co-lead’s research organisations will not be accepted.

Unless specifically requested, do not include any personal data within the attachment.

Upload details are provided within the service on the actual application.
For audit purposes, UKRI requires formal collaboration agreements to be put in place if an award is made.

Word count: 5

**Section: Facilities**

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

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If not, enter N/A into the text box, mark this section as complete and move on to the next section.

If you will need to use a facility (including access to, and use of data, infrastructure and resources), you should follow your proposed facility’s normal access request procedures. Where prior agreement is required, ensure you obtain their agreement that, should you be offered funding, they will support the use of their facility on your project. We encourage the use of secondary and linked datasets.

In the text box below, for each requested facility you should provide:

- the name of facility, copied and pasted from this list
- the proposed usage or costs, or costs per unit where indicted on that list
- confirmation you have their agreement where required

Do not put the facility contact details in your response.

Word count: 250

**Section: Data management**

Question: How will you manage and share data collected or acquired through the proposed research?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Provide a data management plan which should clearly detail how you will comply with our published Research Data Policy, which includes detailed guidance notes.

If you are not generating new data as part of your grant application, you are not required to complete this section. Please enter 'N/A' in the text box, mark this section as complete and move to the next question.

We recognise the importance of research data quality and provenance. Research data generated by ESRC-funded research must be well-managed by the grant holder to enable their data to be exploited to the maximum potential for further research.

Using the text box below you should:

- describe how you will publish your research findings
- demonstrate that you comply with our Research Data Policy and ESRC Framework for Research Ethics. This should include confirmation that existing
datasets have been reviewed. You should cover any legal and ethical considerations of releasing or storing the data, including consent, confidentiality, anonymisation, security and other ethical issues

- explain how data collected, generated or acquired through the proposed research (such as primary input into research and first order results of that research) will be managed, including planning for the research through the life cycle of the award until data is accepted for archiving by the UK Data Service (UKDS). See The importance of managing and sharing data on the UKDS website for further information. Detailed advice on what assessors are looking for in your response can also be found on the UKDS site. We expect you to provide a summary of the points provided

- critically consider any challenges to data sharing (for example copyright or data confidentiality), with possible solutions discussed to optimise data sharing. Most data collected, generated or acquired as a result of economic and social research can be successfully archived and shared. However, some research data are more sensitive than others. It is a responsibility of the grant holders to consider all issues related to confidentiality, ethics, security and copyright before initiating the research.

Word count: 500

**Section: Ethics and Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)**

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

**What the assessors are looking for in your response**

Using the text box, demonstrate that you have identified and evaluated the relevant ethical or responsible research and innovation considerations, and how you will manage them.

All proposals have to comply with the ESRC Framework for Research Ethics which includes guidance for applicants and links to related web resources.

All necessary ethical approvals must be in place before the project commences, but do not need to have been secured at the time of application.

If you are generating new data as part of your project, you should complete the Data management question and should cover ethical considerations relating to data in your response.

If you are not generating new data and have not completed the Data management question you should address any legal or ethical considerations relating to your use of data here.

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

- animals
- human participants
How we will assess your application

Assessment process

We will assess your application using the following two-stage process:

First stage expert review

Following eligibility checks, we will invite experts to review your application independently against the specified criteria for this opportunity.

Applications are sent to three reviewers. Sometimes more reviewers will be approached depending on the nature of the project.

Applicants to opportunities offered through the new UKRI Funding Service will not be able to nominate reviewers for their applications. Expert reviewers will continue to be selected by research councils.

We are monitoring the requirement for applicant-nominated reviewers as we review policies and processes as part of the continued development of the new UKRI Funding Service.

Application sift and applicant response

Applications receiving sufficiently supportive reviewers’ comments (average score of 4.5 or above on a one to six scale) will be invited to respond to reviewers’ comments. You will be given 14 calendar days to provide a response or 10 working days if longer. Applications with an average score below 4.5 will normally be rejected at this stage.

Second stage panel

Applications and reviewer comments, together with the applicant response will be allocated to the two most appropriate members of the grant assessment panels for assessment and scoring.

Each of the grant assessment panels will agree a prioritised list of proposals that it recommends for funding, and these lists will be considered by the Grants Delivery Group, which will make funding recommendations to ESRC. The Grants Delivery Group is chaired by a member of ESRC Council, and its members are the chairs of the grant assessment panels.

ESRC will make the final funding decision.

Find out more about the ESRC responsive mode grant assessment process, including the grant assessment panel structure and membership.
**Timescale**

We aim to complete the assessment process by spring 2024.

**Feedback**

Feedback will be provided where available.

**Principles of assessment**

UKRI supports the San Francisco declaration on research assessment (DORA) and recognises the relationship between research assessment and research integrity.

Find out about the [UKRI Principles of Assessment and Decision Making](#).

**Assessment criteria**

The criteria we will assess your application against are Vision, Approach, Applicant and team capability to deliver, Resources and cost justification and Ethics and Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) listed under the ‘Questions and criteria’ heading in the ‘How to apply’ section.

**Section: Vision**

Have the applicants demonstrated how the work they are proposing:

- is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
- has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
- is timely given current trends, context and needs
- will impact world-leading research, society, the economy and/or the environment

**Section: Approach**

Have the applicants demonstrated that they have designed their approach so that it:

- is effective and appropriate to achieve their objectives
- is feasible, and comprehensively identifies any risks to delivery and how they will be managed
- if applicable, uses a clear and transparent methodology
- if applicable, summarises the previous work and describes how this will be built upon and progressed
- will maximise translation of outputs into outcomes and impacts
- describes how their, and if applicable their team’s, research environment (in terms of the place, its location and relevance to the project) will contribute to the success of the proposed work

**Section: Applicant and team capability to deliver**

Have the applicants provided evidence of how they, and if relevant their team, have:
- the relevant experience (appropriate to career stage) to deliver the proposed work
- the right balance of skills and expertise to cover the proposed work
- the appropriate leadership and management skills to deliver the work and their approach to develop others
- contributed to developing a modern research environment and wider community

**Section: Resources and cost justification**

Have the applicants demonstrated how the resources they anticipate needing for their proposed work:

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

**Section: Ethics and Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)**

Have the applicants identified and evaluated the relevant ethical or responsible research and innovation considerations, and how will they be managed?

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**Contact details**

**Get help with your application**

For help on costings and writing your application, contact your research office. Allow enough time for your organisation’s submission process.

**Ask about this funding opportunity**

Email: [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org)

We aim to respond to emails within two working days.

Phone: 01793 547490

Our phone lines are open Monday-Thursday 8:30am to 5:00pm and Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

**Questions about eligibility**

Read UKRI’s [research organisation](https://www.ukri.org) and [applicant](https://www.ukri.org) eligibility guidance.

**Sensitive information**

If you, or a key team member, need to tell us something you wish to remain confidential, email the UKRI Funding Service helpdesk on [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org). You must include in the subject line: <ESRC Responsive mode research grants, sensitive info, UKRI Funding Service application number>
Typical examples of confidential information include:

- applicant is unavailable until a certain date (for example due to parental leave)
- declaration of interest
- additional information about eligibility to apply that would not be appropriately shared in the Applicant and team capability section
- conflict of interest for UKRI to consider in reviewer or panel participant selection
- the application is an invited resubmission (please include reference number of original submission and a brief overview of changes made)

For information about how UKRI handles personal data, see UKRI's privacy notice.

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**Additional info**

**Global Talent visa**

Fellowship holders are eligible for a Global Talent visa under the ‘exceptional promise’ category for future research leaders.

**Research disruption due to COVID-19**

We recognise that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major interruptions and disruptions across our communities. We are committed to ensuring that individual applicants and their wider team, including partners and networks, are not penalised for any disruption to their career, such as:

- breaks and delays
- disruptive working patterns and conditions
- the loss of ongoing work
- role changes that may have been caused by the pandemic

Reviewers and panel members will be advised to consider the unequal impacts that COVID-19 related disruption might have had on the capability to deliver and career development of those individuals included in the application. They 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, you can highlight this within your application if you wish, but there is no requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption.

**Supporting documents**

Equality impact assessment guidance and template (PDF, 415KB)

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**Timeline**
Good research resource hub

Opening date
28 June 2023 9:00am

Closing date
28 September 2023 4:00pm

Expected applicant response invitations
January 2024

Panel Meeting
Spring 2024

Decisions communicated to applicants
Spring 2024

Guidance on good research

Good research resource hub

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