



ESRC/The Alan Turing Institute Joint Fellowship Scheme 2019 Reviewer Guidance

Introduction

These notes are to provide guidance for the assessment of proposals received under the ESRC/The Alan Turing Institute Joint Fellowship Scheme 2019.

Should you have questions regarding the process, please email esrcturing@esrc.ukri.org.

Peer reviewers are asked to return their comments to ESRC by **16:00 on 12 July 2019**. The deadline for comments must be adhered to.

Conflict of interest

Peer reviewers should note that they should not assess proposals where they have a conflict of interest with any applicant or Research Organisation (RO) involved.

Please notify the office as soon as possible if you have been allocated a proposal with which you have a conflict of interest.

Procedure

The purpose of this stage is to identify those proposals with the best potential for progressing to the next stage based on an assessment of their quality and fit with the call specification.

Peer reviewers are asked to review and score the proposal in terms of the overall quality and fit with the call specification. The assessment criteria to be used by peer reviewers in scoring each proposal are provided below.

Your comments should support and justify the score you give and will be used as feedback both to the applicant and the research organisation; please therefore consider the appropriateness and the anonymity of your feedback.

Themes

Research proposals should fall within one of the two themes identified in the call specification, **Public Policy and Government Innovation** or **Urban Analytics**. Applicants should identify under which theme their proposal is directed. Further details can be found in the [call specification](#).

Assessment Criteria

Before you begin your assessment, please read these guidelines in conjunction with the call specification and [Je-S Guidance](#).

Each proposal should be assessed individually on its own merits.

You will see all of the proposals and it will be possible to compare between, but this should not be reflected in your comments, which should focus on the proposal in question only.

The following criteria should be considered by panel members when commenting on the proposals:
The main purposes of the Fellowships are:

- To develop an interdisciplinary research programme and conduct outstanding, creative and innovative research incorporating data science and the relevant social science, to develop internationally-significant outcomes through high-impact publications;
- To collaborate with others across the Turing and the broader data science, artificial intelligence, and social science community, towards outputs and outcomes that yield significant academic, societal or economic impact;
- To play a role in advancing the strategic objectives of the Turing and the ESRC;
- To achieve research excellence as appropriate to the applicant's discipline;
- To help build new interdisciplinary research capacity in data science and relevant social science through training of the proposed Post-Doctoral Researcher;
- To help broaden and deepen the interdisciplinary research base of the Turing through building a critical mass of social scientists at the Turing.

Originality / potential contribution to knowledge

Is the proposed research likely to make an original and significant contribution to theory, methods or knowledge? The ESRC is keen to support ambitious and innovative work which is clearly specified. Is there similar or related work, not mentioned in the proposal, of which the applicant(s) should be aware? If so, please specify.

Design and methods (including data management)

- Does the proposal have clear conceptual and theoretical foundations?
- Are the research methods and framework for analysis suitable to the aims and objectives?
- Are they clearly defined, rigorous and feasible?
- Is the timescale and scheduling of the work appropriate and realistic?
- If the research seems potentially risky, are the risks justified by the scale of the ambition, and/or the innovativeness of the research, and/or its potential impact? Are there appropriate plans for mitigating the risks in carrying out the research?
- Have potential ethical issues been addressed?

Data Management Plan

The Data Management Plan is mandatory in all proposals planning to generate data. Reviewers may wish to consider the following issues:

- Is there evidence that secondary sources of data have been considered and evaluated?
- Have all obstacles to sharing data been considered and strategies developed for dealing with them?
- Is the information on data to be produced adequate and realistic and according to the research and methodology proposed in the application?
- Is the data back-up procedure described fit for purpose?
- Have data management responsibilities been allocated to named individuals?

Research ethics

The ESRC has adopted six key principles of ethical research which it expects to be addressed whenever applicable. (If the application is successful and there are ethical issues, then appropriate approvals will be required, normally before funding commences.)

The [six principles](#) of ethical research and further details of the [ESRC's Framework for research ethics](#) are helpful resources.

Reviewers are invited to comment on whether they feel the application shows sufficient awareness of and adequately addresses the above issues (where applicable) and any other ethical issues that might be raised by the proposed research.

Beneficiaries

Applicants are required to consider carefully how best to build links and contacts at the concept and development stage of the proposal with the potential beneficiaries and users to be involved within the grant and to work towards co-production of knowledge with research users where appropriate. It is vital that the economic and societal impact of all projects funded by the ESRC are maximised. Reviewers may wish to focus on the following issues:

- Is the planned output of the research appropriate?
- Have the applicants made adequate plans to disseminate the results of the research?
- Have appropriate arrangements been made (where relevant) for engaging potential users of the research at relevant stages of the project?
- Have the applicants identified the whole range of potential beneficiaries of the research and how they might be reached?

Outputs, dissemination and impact

The general questions to consider are as follows:

- Is the planned output of the research appropriate?
- Have the applicants made adequate plans to disseminate the results of the research?
- Have appropriate arrangements been made (where relevant) for engaging potential users of the research at relevant stages of the project?
- Have the applicants identified the whole range of potential beneficiaries of the research and how they might be reached?

Value for Money

In looking at value for money it would be helpful if you could focus on the following issues:

Overall value for money: Is the research proposed overall good value-for-money for the total cost involved? The key issue here is whether the potential of the research, and the likely contribution to the advancement of knowledge, understanding and/or methodology which it will make, is likely to be sufficient to justify the inevitable costs involved.

Individual aspects of resourcing the proposal: Are the specific funding requests in the following areas essential and sufficient for the proper conduct and exploitation of the research proposed?

- The amount of time to be devoted to the project by the proposed principal investigator;
- The amount of time for research, technical and support staff proposed (and the level of such staff);
- The level of appointment for such staff;
- The equipment, consumables and other directly incurred costs such as travel and subsistence. Where equipment has been requested please comment explicitly on the viability of the arrangements described to access equipment needed for this project, and particularly on any university or third party contribution;
- Costs of collecting, establishing, providing or organising the necessary data and research materials;
- Resources devoted to maximising the scientific, societal and economic impacts of the proposed research;
- Access to institutional research facilities;
- The overall length of time for the project Please comment individually if you believe any of these might need to be curtailed or expanded.

Areas where you should not comment: You should not comment upon:

- The level of estate costs in different institutions;

- The level of indirect costs;
- Charging rates of institutional or other research facilities which are not open market provisions;
- Specific salary levels in individual institutions;

Your comments should support and justify the score you have given and will be used as feedback to applicants. Your comments will be shared as feedback both to the applicant and the research organisation; please therefore consider both the appropriateness and the anonymity of your feedback.

Capacity building

A key purpose of the Fellowship is to help build new interdisciplinary research capacity in data science and relevant social science. Therefore it is important that the proposal sets out how they will support the professional development of the Post-Doc Researcher, building on the principles set out in the Concordat for Research Careers to which the Research Councils are a signatory.

Overall scoring

Scoring scales for reviewers can be found on the [ESRC website](#).

Key dates

Open date for proposals – 5 March 2019
Closing date for proposals – 16:00 on 6 June 2019
Interviews and panel meeting – 19 September 2019
Fellowship Start Date – by the end of January 2020

Contact

If you have any questions or would like further information about the scheme, contact:

- Claire Dyball
Email: esrcturing@esrc.ukri.org