
Last updated: February 2020

Details about the ESRC Research Methods Development Grants (2020) call, including the call specification and Je-S guidance notes for applicants, can be found on the ESRC website.

Please refer to those documents in the first instance for all queries.

Please note that this document may be updated to reflect those questions most frequently raised with the ESRC. It is highly recommended that potential applicants review the online version of this document on the ESRC website (rather than a saved or cached version) before contacting the ESRC for advice.

ADR UK Strategic Steer

What is ADR UK?
Administrative Data Research UK (ADR UK) aims to transform the way researchers access the UK’s wealth of public sector data. By joining up the abundance of administrative data already being created by government and public bodies across the UK and making it available for researchers, ADR UK is enabling vital research that has the potential to lead to better informed policy decisions and more effective public services, in areas from improving education and healthcare to tackling crime. ADR UK’s work plays an important role in bridging the gap between government and academia, enabling government policy to be informed by the best evidence available.

ADR UK are working in partnership with ESRC and are interested in supporting proposals that address a methodological challenge related to their core mission. An additional £440k (100% fEC) is available to support grants under this strategic steer and ESRC will pay 80% of the costs.

Further information on ADR UK’s mission can be found on its website.

What is the end date for projects applying to the ADR UK strategic steer?

Grants funded through the strategic steer must end by 31 March 2022.
General information

Can third sector, business and government body co-investigators be included?
ESRC welcomes inter-institutional proposals and strongly encourages partnerships with non-HEI organisations. Please refer to the business, third sector and government co-investigators policy for further information. Please note: the combined costs of international, business, third sector or government body co-investigators must not exceed 30% of the full 100% fEC cost of the grant. Where applicable, the 30% rule refers to the total costs of all Co-Is on the grant who fall under these categories, regardless of the number included or combination of types.

Can applications include associated studentships?
No. Associated studentships are not permitted on this call.

What is the difference between a seminar series and strategic network?
Seminar groups meet regularly to exchange information and ideas with the aim of advancing research within their fields. Strategic networks have the central aim of generating and developing innovative, interdisciplinary and user collaborations focused on potential new priority areas. Networks are built through a wider range of activities than seminars.

Impact

Do I need to submit a ‘Pathways to Impact’ attachment?
From 1 March 2020, applicants to all UKRI calls and schemes will no longer be required to provide a ‘Pathways to Impact’ attachment, nor to complete an ‘Impact Summary’ within grant applications. For further information on this change, please see the associated UKRI news item.

Please note, that from 17 February to 28 February 2020, the ‘Impact Summary’ section of the application, and the ‘Pathways to Impact’ attachment will still be visible on the Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system. After 28 February 2020, the ‘Impact Summary’ will vanish from Je-S; any text appearing in this section of the application will no longer be visible or retrievable. Please refrain from completing the ‘Impact Summary’ section to avoid unnecessary work.

The ‘Pathways to Impact’ attachment will still be visible in Je-S but applicants will be unable to submit their application unless this attachment has been removed. Please refrain from completing the ‘Pathways to Impact’ attachment to avoid unnecessary work. Apologies for any confusion this may cause, as we transition our systems to the new way of working. Further information is available on the Je-S login page.

Where do I discuss impact in my application?
Impact remains a key element of both the application and assessment process across all ESRC calls and schemes and will be assessed as part of the Case for Support.

In line with the UKRI position on Excellence with Impact, we expect that our
researchers will have considered the potential scientific, societal and economic impacts of their research. In describing plans to maximise impact, applicants should consider what is achievable and expected for research of this nature.

The ESRC’s Impact Toolkit gives you detailed advice on how to achieve the maximum impact for your work. The toolkit includes information on developing an impact strategy, promoting knowledge exchange, public engagement and communicating effectively with your key stakeholders.

Application and assessment

How and when should I apply for this call?
All proposals should be submitted through the Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system no later than 16:00 on 14 May 2020.

Do I need to attach a list of my publications to my proposal?
The bibliography for references cited in the proposal should be attached under the ‘List of publications’ document: this should only include publications cited in the proposal. A list of the most relevant and recent publications by the research team members should be included in the applicant CVs.

Can you provide more detail regarding eligible costs that can be claimed?
We have allowed a two-page Justification of Resources (JoR) attachment to ensure applicants have enough space to fully detail, explain and justify costs claimed. The JoR is a free text document. In order for you not to miss any costings from the Je-S form or any justifications for the items requested, we recommend that you match the costs to the proposal headings in the Je-S form; see the Je-S help guidance on how to write a good JoR for more information. ESRC will check all costs claimed on the successful proposal before this is awarded; it is therefore critical that all costs claimed are fully justified in the Justification of Resources document. Where ESRC determines that full justification is not provided, these costs will be cut.

Support for items expected to be found in a RO department and covered by estates and indirect costs requested for the grant (for example non-specialist computers for unnamed researchers) should include justification both for why they are required for the project, and why they cannot be provided by the research organisation’s own resources (including funding from indirect costs from grants).

When completing Je-S sections such as Staff ‘Duties’ or ‘Other Support’ sections, the information is relevant to applicants. Could you please clarify if this is for investigators alone or investigators/ named research staff?
Staff duties – This is a generic section for all Je-S applications to ESRC. Please provide a brief description of the duties and periods of involvement of each individual for which salary is being requested and summarise the responsibilities of all named applicants (PI and Co-Is).

Other support - Enter details of any support sought or received from any other
(not ESRC) source for this or other research in the same field in the past three years. Complete all fields for support either received or pending a decision. The full economic costs (ie 100% costs) of such support should be identified. Please note contributions from project partners should not be entered here. They should be detailed in the project partners section.

Costings

**What level of institutional support is required?**
No additional institutional support above the standard 20% of fEC is required for this call.

**Other questions**

I have a question not answered in any of the call documents – who should I contact?
The full specification and a range of supporting guidance documents for this call are available on the ESRC website. All queries about this call should be addressed in the first instance to: MethodsDevelopment@esrc.ukri.org

The Je-S Helpdesk may be contacted by email (JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org) or telephone (+44 (0)1793 444164). Operating hours are Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm and Fridays 8.30am to 4.30pm (UK time, excluding public and other holidays).