



Economic
and Social
Research Council

ESRC International Public Policy Observatory 2020 Frequently Asked Questions

This version: 27/07/2020

Details about the ESRC International Public Policy Observatory 2020 call, including the call specification and Je-S guidance notes for applicants, can be found on the ESRC website: (<https://esrc.ukri.org/funding/funding-opportunities/announcement-international-public-policy-observatory/>)

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.

General information

What is the commissioning timetable?

- Pre-call issued – 14 July 2020
- Call and guidance issued – 27 July 2020
- Closing date for proposals – 15 Sept 2020
- Shortlisting outcomes communicated – by 2 Oct 2020
- Interviews to take place – w/c 5 Oct 2020 (date TBC by call close)
- Decisions to applicants – w/c 12 Oct 2020
- Start date – no later than 23 October 2020

What is the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)?

ESRC is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), an organisation that brings together the UK's seven research councils, Innovate UK and Research England to maximise the contribution of each council and create the best environment for research and innovation to flourish. The vision is to ensure the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation. For more information visit the [UK Research and Innovation website](#).

UK Research and Innovation is a non-departmental public body funded by a grant-in-aid from the UK government.

ESRC is the UK's largest organisation for funding research on economic and social issues. We support independent, high quality research which has an impact on business, the public sector and civil society. ESRC's total budget for 2017-18 was around £202 million. At any

one time ESRC supports over 4,000 researchers and postgraduate students in academic institutions and independent research institutes.

Who should I contact if I have an enquiry?

Please direct all queries about this call to ESRCPolicyImpact@esrc.ukri.org.

Eligibility

Does the lead research organisation have to be based in the UK?

Yes, the principal investigator (PI) must be based at a UK university or an independent research organisation approved by the ESRC. A complete list of eligible research organisations to hold ESRC grants can be found on the [UKRI website](#).

Proposals can be submitted by researchers who are not established members of the proposed host institution. In these circumstances, by submitting the proposal, the research organisation is confirming that, in the event of an award, they guarantee to provide facilities for the PI (as if they were an established member of staff) for the duration of the award.

Who is eligible to be listed as a co-investigator (Co-I) under this call?

Applicants from non-HEI organisations, such as businesses/private sector organisations, voluntary and community/third sector organisations or public sector organisations (for example local authorities, government departments) can be listed as co-investigators. Academic researchers (PhD or equivalent) from an established international research organisation of comparable standing to an ESRC-eligible UK research organisation can also be listed as co-investigators under this call.

Please see the [call specification document](#) and the [Je-S guidance notes](#) for call specific guidance for further information on the inclusion of international and non-academic co-investigators.

Can applications include associated studentships?

No. Associated studentships are not permitted on this call.

Application and assessment

How many co-investigators can be included in an application?

While there is no limit to the number of academic or non-academic co-investigators that can be included in an application, applicants should consider the management challenges involved with large numbers of co-investigators. Applicants should request the level of resources that are required and appropriate for the research, within the expectations of the call, and all co-investigators must make a significant contribution to the conduct of the research. Very small fractions of co-investigator time should be avoided.

Do I need to attach a list of my publications to my proposal?

No. The 'List of Publications' document is not a permitted document for this call.

Do I need to attach a Case for Support?

No. The 'Case for Support' document is not a permitted document for this call.

Do I need to attach a Justification of Resources?

No. The 'Justification of Resources' document is not a permitted document for this call.

Do I need to attach a Data Management Plan?

No. The 'Data Management Plan' document is not a permitted document for this call.

Do I need to attach a CV?

No. CVs are not permitted for this call. You should include hyperlinks to up to date online profiles for named staff in section 4b of your Business Plan.

Do I need to attach Final/Interim Reports?

No. Final/Interim Reports are not permitted for this call.

Do I need to attach a Proposal Cover Letter/Letter of Support?

No. Proposal Cover Letters/Letters of Support are not permitted for this call.

Do I need to complete the Objectives section?

No, this information should be captured in the Business Plan attachment. Please leave this section on the Je-S form empty.

Do I need to complete the Summary section?

No, this information should be captured in the Business Plan attachment. Please leave this section on the Je-S form empty.

Do I need to complete the Project Partner section?

No, this information should be captured in the Business Plan attachment. Please leave this section on the Je-S form empty.

Where can I find the Business Plan template document?

The template for the Business Plan is available on the call website at <https://esrc.ukri.org/funding/funding-opportunities/pre-call-announcement-international-public-policy-observatory/>.

If my proposal is successful, when can the project start?

The Observatory will start activity no later than 23 October 2020. In order to facilitate this, the ESRC will issue a 'Letter of Intent', this will allow the successful applicant to start incurring costs whilst the formal grant offer letter is being processed.

Demand management**Is there a restriction on the number of proposals that my research organisation can submit as the lead organisation?**

No, there will be no restrictions on the number of proposals that one organisation can submit or be involved in, although there is one award so any proposals will be in competition with each other. Organisations may wish to use internal demand management in deciding on proposals to submit.

Resources**What costs can be included as exceptions?**

Some examples include salary costs for UK co-investigators in business, civil society or government bodies and international co-investigators. However, this is not an exhaustive list.

Please note that costs associated with academic staff will be funded in the usual way with ESRC contributing 80% of the costs.

If costs are not marked as an exception, will these be funded at 80% or 100%?

Any costs that are included in the application and are not marked as an exception will be funded at 80% FEC. The research organisation would then need to cover the additional 20% of these costs.

Please note that indirect and estate costs cannot be claimed for any staff listed under exceptions.