



Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en  
sciences humaines du Canada



# Open Research Area (ORA) for the Social Sciences ANR-DFG-ESRC-SSHR Sixth Call for Proposals 2019/2020

## Frequently Asked Questions

Version: May 2019

This document sets out answers to a range of frequently asked questions which potential applicants may have. It may be updated while the call is open to elaborate or supplement answers, in response to received queries. However, the FAQ is a supplement to, not substitute for, the details provided in the call specification and associated guidance documents. These are available at the [call webpage](#).

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## I Questions on who can apply to the call

### I.1 Who can submit a proposal to ORA six?

Since eligibility criteria are subject to national regulation, these criteria are described in the country specific requirements ([Section 11 of the Call Specification](#)). If you are unsure, please contact the relevant national contact officers prior to submitting a proposal.

### I.2 Can I be involved in more than one ORA application?

Any project participant (Principal Investigator, Co-Investigator, Team Member; for definitions see ([Je-S Guidance for Applicants](#))) can only be involved in **ONE proposal** in the current round, in any capacity. In case an applicant appears in two applications, both applications will be declared ineligible and rejected by the call Secretariat.

### I.3 Can any organisation submit a proposal?

The call is open to proposals from eligible applicants from three or more of the subscribing countries ie Canada, France, Germany and UK. All applicants should check institutional eligibility rules of each participating agency and/or contact national contact person for further details. Proposals with a cooperation partner in Japan do not count against the three country minimum.

### I.4 Are investigators from outside of the four countries eligible to be included in the scheme?

Some of the partner agencies allow for other international collaborations to be included within the terms of their normal research grants. These policies will apply to Co-Investigators outside the four countries if the work of these investigators is most closely aligned with the national research team for which such collaborations are allowed. For example, for ESRC, the policy on international [Co- Investigators](#) will apply, provided that these investigators work most closely with the UK research team. For DFG, regulations for cooperation with developing countries will apply.

For SSHRC, researchers from international postsecondary institutions can participate as co-investigators, while any international individual can participate as a collaborator. You will need to check the eligibility rules of the national agency with which researchers outside the four countries are most naturally aligned for confirmation of eligibility.

If you have researchers from outside of the four countries whose costs are not covered by the funders' national terms and conditions (as above) but who have agreed to cooperate with your project, you should list their details in the Cooperation Partners sections on the application form and on the application website. Please note that no funding can be requested to cover research from Cooperation Partners, but some funders may cover essential travel costs.

For this round there is a special opportunity for cooperation with projects in Japan with the aim to strengthen cooperation between researchers in Japan and ORA six partners. JSPS as the national funding organization of Japan has established a funding scheme to support projects which are associated with ORA. Any project wishing to apply for JSPS funds to support Japanese researchers on their application should ensure they apply to the JSPS

associate call and tick the Japanese associated partner box on the [Project Participants](#) attachment.

### **1.5 How many Principal Investigators may be included in a proposal?**

Each national party will have a Principal Investigator (PI) in that country, which must be clearly identified in the *Project Participants* attachment. PIs will act as national contact points with their national funding agencies and fulfil the role of a PI as defined in the rules of their agency. Apart from the national PI there might be other applicants who also request funding. These applicants are per definition Co-Investigators (Co-Is). There is not supposed to be any sort of hierarchy between PI and Co-I but depending on national rules, PIs might be accountable for specific duties with regard to their funding agency.

There is no limit to the number of participants that can be involved in the project, but all team members must make a significant contribution to the conduct of the research.

### **1.6 Why do we need to name a Main Applicant?**

For the electronic application process, one of the Principal Investigators will act as Main Applicant and submit the online and full proposals on behalf of all project partners. The ORA partners will direct communications about the progress of the application to this person only, and they are therefore responsible for informing the other parties in the application.

## **2 Questions on what can be applied for in this call**

### **2.1 How much can be applied for in this call?**

All budget items must conform to the national rules relevant for each applicant. The total value of proposals requested from each national agency should not exceed the funding limit for that agency. The following funding limits will apply:

<b>ANR</b>	Up to €450,000 per project
<b>DFG</b>	No maximum limit per project
<b>ESRC</b>	Up to £600,000 at 100% fEC (£480,000 at 80% fEC) with a minimum of £200,000 (100% fEC) per project
<b>SSHRC</b>	Up to \$400,000 per project, with a maximum of \$135,000 per year per project

### **2.2 How long can a grant last?**

This call allows proposals for projects between 24 and 36 months. What the research is focused on and how it will be conducted will determine the most appropriate length for a grant. Value for money will be a criterion of assessment in reaching funding decisions.

### **2.3 Should costs be broken down in detail or proposed as a lump-sum amount?**

In outline stage 1 applicants should report the total amount of funds requested for the project per agency, using the *Total budget and a short summary of costs* attachment. These amounts must be fully justified in the Stage 2 in the Justification of Resources (JoR) and *National Financial Forms*.

In the JoR attachment, you are required to provide a detailed breakdown and explanation

of why the indicated resources are needed. The JoR should explain why the resources requested are appropriate for the research proposed, taking into account the nature and complexity of the research proposal. It should not be simply a list of the resources required, as this is already given in the specific *National Financial Forms* or the *Total Budget and a Short Summary of Costs Template*. Where an itemised breakdown and justification is not provided, these costs will be removed from any grant made.

#### **2.4 Can project management time and costs be included in the proposal?**

Yes, if this is appropriate for your proposal you must justify time and cost within your proposal.

### **3 Questions on general research eligibility**

#### **3.1 Are there certain types of research that are considered more suitable for this call?**

No. All projects must focus on substantive research and feature an integrated work programme demonstrating clearly the added value of transnational collaboration. The funding partners expect that each partner contributes substantially to the common project topic, including taking responsibilities for the project organization. These contributions should also be reflected in a reasonable amount of requested funds by each partner.

Proposals may be submitted in any area of the social sciences within the remit of the relevant national agencies concerned (please see section II in the [Call Specification](#) for additional information concerning each agency).

#### **3.2 Are scientific infrastructure or networking activities allowed?**

Scientific infrastructure or networking activities can only be funded within projects with a substantive research focus. As stand-alone projects, infrastructure or networking projects will **not be eligible and will be rejected**.

#### **3.3 What type of research can be funded?**

Applications can be for basic research and national agencies are keen to encourage fresh ideas from early career as well as from established researchers. However, research proposals cannot be accepted for the following: unspecified research work, research already carried out, writing up previous research, stand-alone literature surveys, conference attendance, travel for general study, unsolicited requests to hold conferences, workshops or seminars, preparation of books and publications, or primarily for the preparation and production of materials such as curriculum materials and software development.

However, within a research application the inclusion of literature surveys, conferences, seminars, workshops, and preparation of books and publications and other types of output are acceptable as long as the need for any of these is fully justified and these activities clearly support and/or disseminate the production of new research.

#### **3.4 Can disciplines outside of the social sciences be included in the project proposals?**

Yes, they can if they are an integral part of and support the research questions and theme. However, the proposal should be predominantly within the social sciences. If you have any

doubt as to whether your proposal is predominantly within the social sciences, please contact the agencies to which your proposal will be submitted for confirmation. Note, also, that the disciplinary coverage varies according to the involvement of the national agencies. If you have any doubt, check to ensure the disciplinary scope of your proposal is eligible with all agencies involved.

### **3.5 Are proposals which are linked to projects that have been funded by other organisations acceptable?**

Yes, although such proposals must be a discrete piece of work that can be judged on their own merits and does not duplicate previous work. It is important that the proposal still proposes new and cutting-edge research of the highest quality. It would be expected that in such instances applicants will demonstrate where there may be added synergies and added value between the two projects.

### **3.6 Is it possible to apply for funding from this call if a proposal builds on previous research?**

Yes, although it is important that the proposal still proposes new and cutting-edge research of the highest quality. Such proposals must be a discrete piece of work that can be judged on their own merits and does not duplicate previous work. It would be expected that in such instances applicants will demonstrate where there may be added synergies and value between the two projects.

### **3.7 Is it acceptable to include researchers from disciplines outside the social sciences?**

Yes if this is relevant to the research project.

### **3.8 Do proposals have to be multi-disciplinary?**

No. Mono-, multi- and inter-disciplinary proposals are all welcome. What is important is that the disciplinary approach is appropriate to address the specific research questions.

Where research teams do cut across disciplines, it is important that enough time and resource are allocated to make sure that strong working partnerships can be built up and maintained, and that collaboration is meaningful and productive. It is advisable for these teams to have a proven record of joint inter- or multidisciplinary work.

## **4 Questions on Je-S system**

### **4.1 Does an individual need to be registered with Je-S to apply if their institution is already registered?**

Yes, both an individual and their institution must be registered with the Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system to submit a proposal. Applicants can now self-register themselves and their organisation. Information on how to do this is set out in the Je-S Guidance for Applicants available on the [call webpage](#). But remember, only the “Main Applicant” and their institution needs to be registered.

### **4.2 How I can check if my organisation is already registered in Je-S?**

To be able to submit an application through Je-S, the Organisation being applied through will need to ensure they are registered in Je-S. A list of Je-S registered Organisations is available

on the [Je-S homepage](#). If your Organisation is not in this list you can [self-register your Organisation](#). Please note you must accept the User Terms and Conditions first to add the Organisation.

#### 4.3 I've never used Je-S before and don't have an account. How do I get one?

Je-S is the online electronic submission system for the Research Councils UK and the Main Applicant for your proposal needs a Je-S username in order to apply to the ORA six call. The Main Applicant simply needs to go to <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/> and register for a User ID, which is then emailed to them after their institution has checked their eligibility.

#### 4.4 I have forgotten my Je-S username and password. What should I do?

If the Main Applicant has forgotten their user ID and password, they should go to the Je-S website and select the 'Retrieve User Name / Password' link which appears under the Existing Users log in section. The Main Applicant should enter their user name and select Send Hint or enter their email address and select Send User Name. They will receive an email containing their user ID, password hint and two links. If the hint is helpful, they should log in using the first link. If the Main Applicant would like to set a brand new password, they should select the second link.

#### 4.5 How long the registration process takes in Je-S system?

Timings on various processes to be completed in Je-S system are provided below.

Applicants are **strongly advised to register as soon as the call is open; and submit** Outline and Full proposals in advance of the above time frames, to allow for any potential issues to be resolved in a timely manner.

<b><u>Application stages</u></b>	<b><u>ESRC recommended timeline</u></b>	<b><u>ESRC comments</u></b>
Organisation and Main Applicant registration on Je-S	As soon as the call opens	Organisation registration should take effect immediately, Main Applicant registration can take up to five working days.
Submission of Stage 1 Outline	Strongly recommend you aim to submit 10 days prior to the call closing deadline.	Depending on your Research Organisation, there may be additional steps in place which you and your Research Office will need to consider upon submission.

Receive Outline ES/XXXX/I Number	The number is generated by the system as soon as the Outline Je-S form has been submitted. Electronic acknowledgement will be sent to the Main Applicant (if self-registered) or submitting organisation (if a proposal has been submitted via the Submitter Pool at applicant's research organisation). If the latter, we strongly advise applicants to secure confirmation from their relevant administrator that the proposal has been successfully submitted to the Je-S team.	Once the Outline Je-S form has been submitted you should receive the ES/XXXX/I number to enter in the Full proposal form. If you have submitted your outline via your research organisation this might take slightly longer.
Submission of Stage 2 Full	Strongly recommend you create as soon as the outline has been submitted. Alternatively, aim to submit both the Outline and Full proposals no later than five days prior to the deadline	Depending on your Research Organisation, there may be additional steps in place which you and your Research Office will need to consider upon submission.

#### 4.6 Who do I contact if I have questions about Je-S or need some help in using Je-S?

If you have any queries relating to the Je-S the Je-S Helpdesk can be contacted by e-mail: [jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org](mailto:jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org) or telephone +44 (0)1793 44 4164; the Helpdesk is staffed Monday to Thursday 08.30 to 17.00, Friday 8.30 to 16.30 (UK time).

## 5 Questions about the application process

### 5.1 Where can I download the application templates?

Outline and Full proposals must be submitted through the UK Research Councils' Joint Electronic Submissions system (Je-S). Please ensure you are using the right template for the correct part of the procedure. For 'Proposal Call' in Je-S you need to select '**ORA 6 Call 2019 Stage 1 Outline**' for Outline proposal. When completing the Full application you need to select '**ORA 6 Call 2019 Stage 2 Full**'.

German applicants are required to additionally submit their Outline and Full proposals through the DFG [elan system](#).

French applicants are similarly requested to additionally submit their Outline and Full proposals through their own submission system: the ANR platform for French applicants (see "Modalités pour les partenaires sollicitant une aide de l'ANR", forthcoming on the ANR website). The administrative and financial information for partners requesting support from ANR must be submitted on the ANR platform, along with an additional submission of



the Outline and Full proposal. This information will need to meet all national requirements for the proposal to be eligible (please see the call specification for additional information, along with the document “Modalités de participation pour les partenaires sollicitant une aide de l’ANR”).

### **5.2 Are proposals submitted to each individual agency?**

ESRC is the coordinating agency for this round and all applications must be made online through the [Je-S system](#).

German applicants are required to additionally submit their Outline and Full proposals through the DFG elan system.

French applicants are similarly requested to additionally submit their Outline and Full proposals through the ANR submission system, along with the administrative and financial information for partners requesting support from ANR. This information will need to meet all national requirements for the proposal to be eligible (please see the call specification for additional information, along with the document “Modalités pour les partenaires sollicitant une aide de l’ANR”).

Canadian applicants do not need to submit their Outline and Full proposals to SSHRC.

### **5.3 In what language(s) should the proposals be submitted?**

All proposals submitted to Je-S must be written in English, with the exception of proposals including Canadian partners, which may be submitted in French. Applicants wishing to submit in French must get in touch with the national contact at SSHRC for further details.

**5.4 Will we receive confirmation that a proposal has been received?** Yes, this will depend on the research organisation setup in Je-S. If the organisation has been self-registered, the submission confirmation will go to the Main Applicant submitting the proposal in Je-S. However, if the organisation has a submission process in place, the confirmation will go to the Submitter Pool member in the research organisation once they have submitted in Je-S. After the deadline, the agencies will check the eligibility of each proposal and inform applicants about the eligibility of their application by Co-ordinating partner. In case very minor, formal and technical mistakes are detected, you may be requested to fix the Outline proposal within a short period of time. Following the submission, no changes would be allowed to the Full Proposals.

### **5.6 May supplementary information or appendices be added to the proposal?**

Only those specifically requested in the Call Specification. **Word and page limits should be strictly adhered to.** Additional diagrams, charts and tables should not be provided.

### **5.7 Should we include the national financial forms in the Outline proposal?**

No. The national financial forms need only be included in stage 2 Full Proposals. You can refer to them in the outline stage when you are drawing up your budget as guidance for the costs that will be eligible in the *Total budget and a short summary of costs* form. Please note that different rules apply for the DFG and ANR. Financial information for applicants requesting support for both partners will have to be submitted directly on the respective partners’ own submission system.

### **5.8 When can projects start?**

The earliest starting date for successful projects is 1 October 2020, the latest is 31 March 2021. All national research teams within a project will be expected to start at the same time.

### **5.9 What should be included in CVs submitted with proposals?**

Each two page CV should give professional details for the researcher and a list of publications (maximum 10 publications mentioned per researcher). Only CVs for the Main Applicant, the PIs and Co-Is can be included CVs for Team Members are not allowed.

### **5.10 What are the National Financial Forms for and at which stage should they be submitted?**

The National Financial Forms summarize the costs directed to each national funding agency.

German and French applicants are requested to submit their Outline and Full proposals through their own respective submission system: the DFG elan system for German applicants and the ANR platform for French applicants (see ORA six on ANR website, forthcoming).

German and French applicants specify their budget requests in the *Total budget and a short summary of costs* form which must be submitted via Je-S.

The ANR financial information for French applicants must be submitted on the ANR platform, along with an additional submission of the Outline and Full proposal, and this information will need to meet all the national requirements for the proposal to be eligible. French applicants are advised to submit via ANR system first to obtain their financial form in the PDF version and then submit it to Je-S. This ANR Financial form is the mandatory attachment in Je-S full stage proposal. In addition to this submission through Je-S system, applicants requesting support from ANR will have to submit directly on the ANR's submission system and the information provided in the financial form will have to be consistent with the information provided in the Outline and Full proposals (please see section 11 in the Call Specification for additional information, along with the document "Modalités pour les partenaires sollicitant une aide de l'ANR").

ESRC and SSHRC *National Financial Forms* need to be attached *only* to the Full Proposals as separate attachments. However, when estimating the costs in the Outline proposal, please take into account the different cost categories of the national funding agencies, which are listed in the *National Financial Forms*. Templates for ESRC and SSHRC can be found on the [call page](#).

All applicants must specify their budget requests in the *Total budget and a short summary of costs* form which must be submitted via Je-S at outline and full stages.

### **5.11 The Je-S Guidance for Applicants states that the 'Case for Support' attachment should include no more than four pages for Outline proposals and ten pages for Full Proposals. Does this include the bibliography and the Justification of Resources?**

No. The bibliography, the budget, and the Justification of Resources should not be included in the page count for the 'Case for Support'. The bibliography – to be included in the

attachment *List of publications/ Bibliography*– should only include works cited in the project proposal.

**5.12 How many national partners should there be in a project? Will a project with a higher number of national partners be treated preferentially?**

As long as there are partners from three or more ORA countries (excluding Japan), the precise configuration should be determined by the research question and project design. There is no ideal number, and applicants should not add partners just to bolster numbers. All partners should have a significant role in the research.

**5.13 Is Japan included in the minimum three or more ORA countries required?**

No, Japan is not included in the required number of ORA countries. You will need to have a minimum of three ORA participating countries ie Canada, France, Germany and UK.

**5.14 What is the difference between the Main Applicant, Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator?**

**The Main Applicant** is the nominated person who submits the application through the Je-S system for the whole project. The Main Applicant also acts as a main contact point with the coordinating agency for all matters related to the proposal as a whole and will need to be entered in the ‘Principal Investigator’ section with their Organisation details listed in the ‘Project Details’ section.

**The Principal Investigator (PI)** is the national head responsible for the funding contracts with their agency. There can be one PI per country.

If your consortium has teams of researchers from different organisations within the same country, **Co-investigators (Co-I)** need to be identified for administrative purposes for teams other than that of the PI. Co-Is typically have a steering scientific role within their team.

**5.15 Do you accept late applications?**

No. All proposals submitted after the deadline of 11 September 2019 will be rejected.

## **6 Questions about the assessment process**

**6.1 How does the assessment process work?**

This call will follow a two-stage procedure consisting of an Outline proposal and a full proposal. Applicants who are successful at outline will automatically progress to full stage. Unlike the previous round, applicants will be invited to submit Outline and Full proposals at the same time, rather than waiting for the results of the outline stage.

Eligible Outline proposals will be reviewed by an international shortlisting panel of assessors, consisting of experts nominated by the four funding agencies. The panel will recommend a short list of proposals to the funding agencies, which will then move automatically to the second stage. Full Proposals will be sent for assessment to external, independent referees for peer review. Based on those reviews proposals will be discussed by a joint commissioning panel.

## **6.2 Will the JSPS element of the proposal be assessed?**

The Japanese proposal will be evaluated and decided upon by JSPS, in light of its association with ORA. The ORA-proposal will be evaluated as a stand-alone proposal by the ORA partners and funding decisions will be made independently. There is no strategic advantage or disadvantage to planning a project with Japanese partners.

## **6.3 What happens if the Japanese element to my project is dependent on being funded by JSPS? How will the ORA peer reviews evaluate my proposal if JSPS funding is ultimately declined?**

Both projects will be evaluated separately. ORA proposals will not be dependent on the Japanese component being funded. If the ORA project is assessed positively, the project will be funded by the European partners even if JSPS declines to fund the Japanese teams.

## **6.4 What are the Assessment Criteria?**

Please see the Assessment Criteria in [section 8 of the Call Specification document](#) for details of the criteria according to which shortlisting and commissioning panel members review the proposals. Please **be alerted** that the assessment criteria varies between Outline and Full proposals.

## **7 Other questions**

### **7.1 How many applications were successful in the five rounds?**

In the first round 132 applications were received, 123 of which were eligible; 15 projects were successful and received funding. In the second round 157 applications were received, 142 of which were eligible; 10 of these projects were funded. In the third round 186 were received, 178 of which were eligible; 15 of these were funded. In the fourth round, funding agencies received 188 eligible proposals of which 20 were funded. In the fifth round, 319 proposals were received in the outline stage, 293 of which were eligible; 63 of these advanced to the full proposal stage, of which 16 were funded.

### **7.2 Is there a list of projects funded in the previous round?**

Yes, it is available on the [DFG information page](#).

Please be mindful that due to the open nature of this call, previously funded projects only reflect the topics and quality of applications in that specific round and should not be used as an indication of what might be funded in future rounds.

### **7.3 My application is rather skewed towards one country in terms of funding. Is this imbalance a problem?**

Full justification as to why each aspect of funding is integral to the overall research proposal should be included in the Full Proposal. Assessors of the applications will be informed of the variation in national rules that can cause an imbalance in funding.

### **7.4 Where should Japanese researchers be entered into the proposal?**

Japanese partners should not be listed in the *Project Participants* form, nor should their CVs be attached to the application form. They should be listed in the *Project Participants* attachment. Short references to the Japanese component can be made in the research

description, but applicants should bear in mind that the project will be evaluated as a stand-alone proposal and should be presented accordingly.

#### **7.5 If there are ethical issues, is approval required before submitting a proposal?**

The requirements and timings for ethical approval vary between agencies. Proposals must adhere to the ethical requirements for each relevant national agency.

Applicants will need to complete the 'Ethical Information' tab in the Je-S form in Stage 2 Full. If applicable, German applicants must include an ethics committee vote from the institution within which their research will be carried out. For more information about the conditions under which an ethics committee vote is necessary, please consult the FAQs on the [DFG website](#).

#### **7.6 How will successful ORA projects be monitored by the funding agencies?**

Each national research team will be expected to report to its national funding agency, in accordance with each agency's regulation.

All successful applicants in the ORA six call will be required to complete a joint final report on their project after the grant ends. Further details on the format and deadlines for submission of the final report will be communicated to all successful applicants at contracting stage.

#### **7.7 If my proposal is unsuccessful, can I re-submit under another call?**

All participating partners' national rules will apply for resubmissions. Please refer to the ORA 6 participating partners' websites for further details.

Please note that the normal ESRC restrictions on resubmissions apply to this call. Only proposals specifically invited will be able to re-submit. For more information, please see ESRC [resubmissions policy](#).

#### **7.8 I have a question not answered in any of the call documents – who should I contact?**

In the first instance please refer to the full call specification and the supporting guidance documents that are available on the [call webpage](#).

For any other queries relating to this call please contact the national contact points of the participating funding agencies. Alternatively, you can send your request to the call's Secretariat generic email address on [oraqueries@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:oraqueries@esrc.ukri.org)