Frequently Asked Questions

The frequently asked questions for this research call will be updated on an on-going basis to help applicants with their proposals to the call.

Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead Project Investigator (LPI)</td>
<td>The coordinator of a proposal and main contact person of the Project Consortium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Investigator (PI)</td>
<td>Researcher in a Project Consortium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation process</td>
<td>UK terminology - Peer Review process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remote evaluation by independent experts</td>
<td>UK terminology - postal peer review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Expert Committee (SEC)</td>
<td>UK terminology - Expert Panel</td>
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I. General questions about the call

How much can applicants apply for via this call?

The UK funding agency for this call is the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) as part of United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI). The UK budget for this call is €1.5 million Euros total contribution and it is anticipated that from this, three to six projects with UK components will be funded.

ESRC will meet 80% of the full economic costs on proposals submitted and the host institution is expected to support the remaining 20%. All funding to successful UK applicants will be paid in pounds sterling, at the exchange rate of 1 GBP equalling 1.15 EUR. It is critical that the amount of funding applied for from each country is appropriate, adequately balanced and justified. No one partner may represent more than 50 per cent of the overall contribution to the consortia project. The duration of projects is up to 36 months.

Will my proposal be accepted if it is submitted after the closing date?

No. Proposals should be submitted via the SOLSTICE Electronic Submissions Platform on SOLSTICE website by the timelines outlined below.

An outline proposal must be submitted by 9 January 2020 at 17:00 CET. The outline proposal consists of a brief outline of the project (capped at 2000 characters), the topics it addresses, duration as well as keywords and the option to list contact information of experts (up to 4) who should not be contacted by the Call Secretariat to assess the proposal as potential reviewers due to a conflict of interest.
The outline proposal will not be evaluated, but serves only to speed up the evaluation process by enabling the Call Secretariat to source the right expertise for evaluating the proposal in advance of the closing of the call. The outline proposal should be submitted by the LPI. If a proposal is not preceded by an outline proposal, it will be rejected by the Electronic Submission Platform. Please note that the outline proposal will not be able to be edited following submission.

The closing date for **full proposals** is **17.00 (CET) on 03 February 2020**. Proposals submitted after the deadline or by any other means other than the **SOLSTICE Electronic Submissions Platform** will be discarded from the evaluation procedure and shall not be considered further.

**Is it possible to apply for funding from this call if a proposal builds on previous research?**
Yes, although to enable transformational change, novel interdisciplinary collaborations across social sciences and humanities and potentially beyond are required. Contributions have to be led by social sciences and humanities; cross-disciplinary collaboration in unusual and innovative combinations is encouraged. Submissions can also originate from disciplines that have already worked together successfully. Through these novel approaches, this call gives special attention to societal aspects of change in order to enable and accelerate positive transformation in the face of climate change.

**Should I include the costs for the UK component in Euros or £ Sterling? If Euros, how do I calculate the exchange rates?**

UK applicants should include costs for the UK component in Euros on their main proposal form which is submitted via the **SOLSTICE Electronic Submissions Platform** on the SOLSTICE website.

All funding to successful UK applicants will be paid in £ Sterling, at the exchange rate of 1 GBP equalling 1.15 EUR so please use this exchange rate when including your cost information.

In order to be compliant for receipt of UKRI funding, please note that UK applicants, in **addition**, are also required to complete and submit a ‘UK Expenditure Form’ (Excel Document) which provides a summary and breakdown of UK resources required for the project. Applicants should provide these summary figures in both £ Sterling and Euros.

- A template for the ‘UK Expenditure Form’ can be found under the Call Documents section on the **ESRC JPI Climate SOLSTICE** web page. The ‘UK Expenditure Form’ can be completed and then uploaded under the ‘Additional Documents’ section only on the SOLSTICE Electronic Submissions Platform. Please note that a max of 10 additional documents can be uploaded in the “Additional Documents” section. All additional UK attachments titles **must** be prefixed with “UK”.

**Do I include the costs for the UK component at 100 per cent or 80 per cent of Full Economic Cost (FEC)?**

All costs included in the UK component of the proposal should be included at **100 per cent FEC**. **ESRC** will meet 80% of the full economic costs on proposals submitted and the host institution is expected to support the remaining 20%.
Is it OK to work with researchers from disciplines outside the social sciences?
Yes, we are keen to encourage inter/multi-disciplinary working where it is appropriate to the research questions posed. However, to be eligible to apply to this call the proposal must be social science led and at least 50 per cent of the proposed UK research must be within ESRC's Social Science Remit.

The LPI (UK Equivalent = PI) must be a researcher in the social sciences and humanities. The LPI will coordinate the project, be responsible for its internal scientific management and will be the main contact person of the project consortium with the BELSPO – the Call Secretariat.

It is expected that any UK Project Investigator will also be a researcher in the social sciences, however the wider team can draw on disciplines within and beyond the social sciences.

2. Questions about eligibility

Does the consortium’s Main Applicant (Lead Project Investigator [LPI]) need to be from a UK Research Organisation?
No. The consortium’s LPI can be from any of the partner organisations within a consortium. The lead for the UK component of a consortium must be either a LPI or PI on the full consortium proposal. This person must be employed at an UK Research Organisation eligible to receive ESRC funding. This is a fundamental criterion that must be fulfilled if a proposal is considered eligible for funding.

Please see the Eligibility for ESRC Funding Guidance for more information.

Can one organisation submit multiple proposals?
Yes. However, an individual/applicant can be involved with no more than two proposals and can only be named as the LPI on one proposal. If an applicant is associated with two proposals this must be declared within a covering letter and must confirm that the applicant will be able to meet all proposed time commitments.

It is our expectation that applicants will seek to improve the quality and regulate the volume of proposals coming from the same Research Organisation in the UK before they are submitted to this call, ensuring that only those deemed to have the highest chance of success are submitted. Funders expect applicants to use internal institutional pre-submission review and quality control mechanisms to achieve this.

Please see our guidance on Demand Management for more information.

Is there a limit or expectation in regard to the number of partners?
A project consortium should consist of at least three eligible applicants from at least three SOLSTICE participating countries (UK, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Latvia and Norway). There is no upper limit on the number of partners that can be involved in a consortium, but a medium size proposal might comprise three to five partners across the whole consortium.
Can I include international co-investigators within the UK component of the proposal?  
Yes. International Co-Investigators are allowed as part of the UK component of a consortium. Their inclusion should adhere to the rules in the ESRC Inclusion of International Co-Investigators Policy and take up no more than 30 per cent of the costs requested for the UK component of the bid. UK International Co-Investigators could include academics and experts from countries not participating in this call, or that are not directly eligible for funding from participating funding agencies. It is important to note that the combined costs for international co-investigators, and UK business, third sector and government body co-investigators must not exceed 30% of the total FEC of the UK component of the grant application.

Can the Project Consortia consist of non-eligible researchers, i.e. belonging to a Country that is not participating to this call or not eligible according to the national rules of participating Countries?  
Yes. Non-eligible researchers must secure their own funding and state it’s origin in advance of proposal submission (Please see ‘Funding’ under ‘Profile’ section of the submissions platform) on the SOLSTICE Electronic Submission Platform.

Can I include non-academic organisations as partners in my project?  
Non-academic partners and consultants can be included in the UK component of the bid, provided they adhere to the rules and regulations established in the ESRC Funding Guide.

Costs relating to business, government and civil society involvement in the project are regarded by the ESRC as ‘exceptions’ and therefore will be funded at 100 per cent Full Economic Cost (FEC). Please note that cumulatively all costs relating to business, government and civil society involvement in a project should not exceed 30 per cent of the overall grant costs. Further guidance can be found here.

Government co-investigators are only eligible to claim costs relating to travel and subsistence. Business co-investigators can claim costs relating to salaries (up to one year FTE) and travel and subsistence costs, but not costs relating to NI/superannuation, overheads or other direct costs. Third sector/civil society co-investigators can claim all costs relating to co-investigators except for a maximum salary limit of one year FTE.

Please see the table below for a summary of eligible costs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Third Sector</th>
<th>Government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff – Salary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff – NI/Superannuation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff – FTE Limits</td>
<td>One year FTE</td>
<td>One year FTE</td>
<td>Ineligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T&amp;S</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Direct Costs</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overheads</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules/Constraints</td>
<td>Costs must be less than 30 per cent of total application costs</td>
<td>Costs must be less than 30 per cent of total application costs</td>
<td>Costs must be less than 30 per cent of total application costs</td>
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Can consultants be included in a project?
Yes. However, it is strongly recommended that a consultancy should not constitute more than 20 per cent of the cost of a research project. Clear justification should be provided for consultancy costs, and why the use of a consultant(s) is appropriate and represents good value for money. Consultancy costs should be included under ‘Other Directly Incurred’ costs.

Are Public Sector Research Establishments (PSRE) eligible for the JPI Climate SOLSTICE call?
Currently a PSRE is only eligible for apply to Strategic Priority Fund (SPF) calls. A PSRE may participate in the JPI SOLSTICE Call as a subcontractor to an eligible organisation.

3. Questions about developing a research proposal

Does the research have to have a particular geographical focus, and does the research need to be relevant to the UK and Europe?
We would expect the research to have relevance to the countries in which consortium partners are located, and to have potential application across Europe.

Who should I provide a CV for?
A CV for each UK applicant and named research staff member must be included and not exceed 2 pages of A4 per person.

Do I need to complete a Data Management Plan?
Yes, it is a requirement of the ESRC Research Data Policy that all applicants planning to generate, access, utilise and/or exploit data as part of their grant must include a Data Management Plan. Please refer to the ‘Additional Documents Guidance_UK Applicants’ located under the ‘Call Documents’ section of the ESRC JPI Climate SOLSTICE webpage for more information.

4. Questions about submitting a proposal

How do I submit my proposal? Do I need to submit a separate proposal via Je-S for the UK funding?
An outline proposal must be submitted via the SOLSTICE Electronic Submissions Platform by 9 January 2020 at 17:00 CET. The outline proposal contains a brief outline of the project and the topics it addresses, as well as a few keywords and the mention of any potential reviewers with whom Project Investigators may have a conflict of interest. The outline proposal will not be evaluated, but serves only to speed up the evaluation process by enabling the Call Secretariat to source the right expertise for evaluating the proposal in advance of the closing of the call. The outline proposal should be submitted by the LPI. If a proposal is not preceded by an outline proposal, it will be rejected by the Electronic Submission Platform. Please note that the Outline Proposal cannot be amended once submitted.

A full proposal must be submitted via the SOLSTICE Electronic Submissions Platform website by 3 February 2020 at 17:00 CET. The Full proposal should be submitted by the LPI, and include all relevant consortium details and additional information required by each funding body.
In order to be compliant for receipt of UKRI funding, please note that UK applicants are expected, in addition to the information requested in the SOLSTICE Electronic Submissions Platform, to provide the LPI with additional documents (as outlined in 1-7 below) for submission as part of the full proposal.

These additional documents should be submitted via the SOLSTICE Electronic Submissions Platform under the “Additional Attachments” section only and by the closing date of 3 February 2020 at 17.00 CET. Further guidance for these documents is available in the ‘Additional Information Form_UK Guidance’ under the Call Documents sections of the ESRC JPI Climate SOLSTICE webpage. All additional UK attachments titles must be prefixed with “UK”.

1) Ethical Information (1 page A4 max)
2) UK Expenditure Form (Excel): Please provide a financial breakdown of the funding requested from the ESRC in both £ Sterling and Euros. A template is provided under the Call Documents section on the ESRC JPI Climate SOLSTICE webpage.
3) Justification of Resources (2 pages A4 max).
4) Pathways to Impact (2 pages A4 max)
   Please note that this can be the same information that has been included in the SOLSTICE Submissions Platform, however the statement should be no more than 2 sides of A4.
5) Data Management Plan [for grants planning to generate data] (3 pages A4 max)
   Please note that this can be the same information that has been included in the SOLSTICE Submissions Platform, however the Data Management Plan should be no more than 3 sides of A4.
6) Letters of Support (from the collaborating research institutions and any other collaborating organisations – academic and non-academics) (1 page A4 each max).
   Please note that these may be merged into a single pdf document prior to uploading.
7) Institutional Letter of Support (1 page A4 max).

The UK components of the proposals that are successful at the full proposal stage will be administered by the ESRC, via the Electronic Submissions System (Je-S). Therefore all UK academic LPIs PIs (please see definitions on Page 1 for clarity around role descriptions) will need to be based at a Research Organisation eligible to receive funding from ESRC. Applicants should ensure they meet ESRC funding guidelines as set out in the ESRC Research Funding Guide. Submission of the UK Component of successful proposals to the Je-S system will not be required until May 2020 and further guidance will be made available following funding decisions May 2020.

5. Questions about the assessment process

How will my application be assessed?
Research proposals that are eligible to be evaluated will undergo a two-stage evaluation procedure:
   (i) a remote evaluation by independent experts followed by
   (ii) a meeting of a Scientific Experts Committee (SEC).

There will be no PI response stage in the assessment process. The SEC is composed of prominent researchers in the field of the call, with the addition of two non-scientific stakeholders of the Transdisciplinary Advisory Board of the JPI Climate.
Please refer to page 9 of the ‘Guidelines for Applicants’ document on the SOLSTICE website for more information on the assessment and evaluation criteria.

**How will I know if my proposal has been successful?**

It is anticipated that funding decisions will be communicated in May 2020. LPIs of successful and unsuccessful proposals will be informed by the Call Secretariat (BELSPO) of the outcome of the evaluation and funding process. Successful LPIs with a UK component will then be contacted by ESRC and invited to submit their proposal through the Je-S System (further guidance for Je-S submission will be provided at that time).

**If successful, is it possible to extend my grant beyond 36 months?**

Standard ESRC funding rules apply in regard to the duration of the research grants for this call. Applicants must not request any longer than 36 months within the proposals.

Under certain circumstances ESRC may allow extensions (but with no added costs) to the duration of the grant. These will only be considered in the following instances: extended sickness absence (more than six weeks); maternity leave; death; termination of employment of the grant holder or a co-investigator where there is more than three months remaining on the grant; or of someone employed on the grant more than 50 per cent time with more than three months of their employment remaining; and where data gathering or fieldwork has been unavoidably delayed for reasons wholly beyond the control of the research team.

A formal request with justification will need to be submitted to the ESRC if an extension is required. Please see the [ESRC Funding Guide](#) for further guidance.

**What are the reporting requirements for this call?**

In terms of reporting, funded projects will be asked to provide an initial, mid-term and final report. The LPI will be responsible to organise a kick-off meeting at the start of the project and submit a mid-term and a final report to JPI Climate within two months of the mid-term and the end of the project respectively. Applicants are expected to share these reports directly with ESRC when submitted to JPI Climate. Applicants may be asked to provide an impact assessment report two years after their project ends.

The ESRC uses [Researchfish](#) to collect information on the inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes that have resulted from the research that they fund. Award holders will be expected to provide information through this system during the course of the award, and 5 years after the award ends.

The LPI is also required to submit a Final Expenditure Statement when the grant comes to an end. Financial sanctions apply if this is not completed. Please see the [ESRC Funding Guide](#) for further guidance.

### 6. What is the Call timetable?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call launch</td>
<td>28 October 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for submitting proposal <strong>outline</strong></td>
<td>17:00 CET 09 January 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call closing date for <strong>full</strong> proposals</td>
<td>17:00 CET 03 February 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transnational eligibility check</td>
<td>04 February - 11 February 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>National eligibility check by Funding Organisations</td>
<td>12 February - 26 February 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scientific Experts Committee (SEC)</td>
<td>15 April 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Announcement of Funding Decisions</td>
<td>May 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission of successful proposals to Je-S</td>
<td>May 2020</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
7. **Who should I contact if I have further questions?**
For all general call enquiries and technical enquiries relating to proposal submission via the SOLSTICE website:

BELSPO Secretariat: Tel: +32 (0)2 238 36 40 Email: secretariat.solstice@belspo.be

For UK general enquiries:
Economic & Social Research Council: Lynette Preston - Research Portfolio Manager
Tel: 01793 444357 Email: jpiclimate@esrc.ukri.org