

UK in a Changing Europe: Brexit Priority Grants Call specification

Summary

The ESRC is inviting proposals from leading researchers for Brexit Priority Grants as part of the Council's UK in a Changing Europe initiative. These are to support a range of activities including research synthesis, user engagement and new short-term research activity related to the process of the UK leaving the European Union.

The grants will be between £100,000 and £300,000 (100 per cent fEC, with the ESRC contributing 80 per cent fEC) and for a duration of up to 18 months. We require grants to commence on 1 April 2017.

Whilst grants under the call will be able to support new research, grant holders will be expected to undertake stakeholder and public engagement activity throughout the grant's duration. Grant holders will also be expected to work in partnership with the UK in a Changing Europe initiative, led by Director Professor Anand Menon, in communicating the research.

Proposals should be submitted by **16.00 on 25 January 2017**. We expect to fund up to 10 grants under this call.

Background and scope

Since 2014, the UK in a Changing Europe has supported rigorous, high-quality and independent research into the complex and ever-changing relationship between the UK and the European Union (EU). The initiative provides an authoritative, non-partisan and impartial reference point for those looking for information, insights and analysis about UK-EU relations that stands aside from the politics surrounding the debate.

The initiative's work is tailored to be easily accessible to policy makers, businesses, journalists, civil society organisations, educational institutions and the general public who are interested in the UK's relationship with the EU. This is being overseen by Anand Menon, Professor of European Politics and Foreign Affairs at King's College, London as Director of the initiative.

The UK in a Changing Europe initiative is centred on an evidence hub, headed by the Director which is supported by a number of senior research fellows. In addition to the senior fellows, the initiative has held several calls under a Commissioning Fund. This has provided small awards to researchers pursuing dissemination and impact-focused activities related to the overall aims of the initiative. Further information about the initiative and the activity supported under it can be found at www.ukandeu.ac.uk.

Since the referendum on 23 June 2016, the initiative has been focused on the referendum outcome and the practicalities of implementing the UK's decision to leave the EU and what

this might look like. This call for Brexit Priority Grants forms part of the initiative's ability to deliver this objective.

Call details

Call objectives

The grants funded under this call are designed to support research synthesis or potentially new, short-term, research activity. We also welcome proposals based around adding value to existing research (which could include some new research that complements or supports existing findings).

Proposals must focus specifically on the process of the UK leaving the European Union ie the implementation of Brexit and its consequences. Further details of the priority areas can be found below.

Stakeholder engagement and impact

In addition to academic outcomes, grant holders will be expected to emphasise engagement activity and getting research outcomes to policy makers throughout the grant's duration. This is particularly relevant to parliamentarians and policy makers involved in negotiating the UK's exit from the EU, or who are charged with scrutinising the work of the government in this respect. However, it is also crucial to those who stand to be affected - eg businesses, third-sector organisations, or the general public.

Given the significant policy uncertainty in this area, applicants will need to demonstrate the resilience and flexibility of their Pathways to Impact plans.

Grant holders will also be expected to work fully in partnership with the UK in a Changing Europe's Director (Professor Anand Menon) in communicating research outcomes. This includes activities at short notice - such as media appearances.

Grant holders are expected to have relevant experience of communicating research findings to a policy audience and in achieving impact.

Priority areas

As noted above, proposals must focus on the process of the UK leaving the European Union, primarily (though not exclusively) connected with the Article 50 process which is scheduled to be enacted in spring 2017. Proposals should therefore be policy-focused and centre on the implementation of Brexit and its consequences under one or more of the following priority areas:

- Changing political contexts in Europe and the positions of other member states;
- Citizens' expectations on Brexit outcomes
- Brexit and UK party politics
- Legal issues and the transfer of competencies (eg environmental/climate, energy, agricultural and fisheries policies etc)

- Implications for migration
- Economic impact of Brexit and future trade arrangements. This includes the impact on the economy overall and/or particular sectors of the economy or regions (eg on UK cities, rural areas, devolved administrations)

Proposals should not duplicate work already funded by ESRC or other funders.

Funding

The call is for proposals ranging between £100,000 and £300,000 (100 per cent full economic costs - fEC) for a period of up to 18 months.

Detailed information on eligible costs can be found in the ESRC's Research Funding Guide (www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-funding-guide/).

Proposals will need to show 100 per cent of full economic costs of the proposed research. The ESRC will meet 80 per cent of the full economic costs on proposals funded, with the host research organisation expected to cover the remaining 20 per cent.

The ESRC requires all successful proposals to commence on 1 April 2017.

Successful principal investigators will be expected to attend an ESRC- funded one-day senior media training course to be held in London. This will form part of an induction day for all principal investigators funded under the initiative and will be an opportunity to meet with Professor Menon and other members of the initiative. Applicants should budget within their proposal for their travel to this event.

It is expected that resources to cover eligible costs associated with impact-related activities will be requested. It is anticipated that grant holders will attend an annual conference organised by Professor Menon and travel and subsistence costs should include costings for this event also.

Eligibility

Applicants must be based at a research organisation eligible for Research Council funding; for a list of recognised organisations please see the RCUK website: www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforrcs/

In addition, we welcome the inclusion of international co-investigators and project partners. For information on the ESRC International Co-Investigators policy, please see www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/inclusion-of-international-co-investigators-on-proposals/

Demand management

We anticipate that this call will receive significant interest, so, in accordance with our demand management strategy, we encourage research organisations to consider carefully the number and quality of proposals that are submitted. For further information: www.esrc.ac.uk/about-us/strategy-and-priorities/demand-management/

Knowledge exchange and collaboration

We are committed to knowledge exchange and encouraging collaboration between researchers and the private, public and civil society sectors. We encourage academic teams to link with bodies that can help ensure their research has real impact, particularly with government departments.

Collaborative working benefits both the researchers and the individuals/organisations involved. Through collaboration, partners learn about each other's expertise, share knowledge and gain an appreciation of different professional cultures. Collaborative activity can therefore lead to a better understanding of the ways that academic research can add value and offer insights to key issues of concern for policy and practice. Knowledge exchange should not be treated as an 'add-on' at the end of a research project, but considered before the start and built into a project.

For further information on the RCUK principles for knowledge exchange please visit www.rcuk.ac.uk/ke/policies/

Research ethics

As the principal funding agency for UK social science research we require that the research we support is designed and conducted in such a way that it meets certain ethical principles, and is subject to proper professional and institutional oversight in terms of research governance.

As an important source of public funds for social science research and as a body charged with encouraging, supporting, undertaking and advising on such research, the ESRC recognises that it has a special obligation towards the general public and academic community to ensure that the research which it funds is carried out to a high ethical standard. We have agreed a Framework for Research Ethics that all submitted proposals are expected to comply with.

Open access

We are committed to ensuring that our research community makes the outputs from ESRC-funded research publicly available. The Research Councils UK (RCUK) open access policy came into force on 1 April 2013, and ESRC-funded researchers are expected to comply with this policy. The payment of article processing charges (APCs) and other publication charges related to ESRC-funded research are supported through RCUK open access block grants which are provided to eligible research organisations.

Reporting requirements

Principal investigators (PIs) must ensure that all outcomes from their grant are recorded in the online Researchfish system as soon as possible - this may be delegated to co-investigators. Once a year during the grant period, and up to five years after end date, grant holders are required to confirm that outcome information on Researchfish is accurate and up-to-date. In addition to reporting outcomes through Researchfish, once a grant has ended

a Key Findings and Narrative Impact report must be completed on Researchfish as directed by ESRC.

The grant holder is required to ensure that all outcome submissions comply with intellectual property rights held by other parties than the ESRC.

For further information on grant reporting please see our reporting guidance: www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-grant-holders/reporting/

How to apply

Proposals must be submitted by **16.00 on 25 January 2017** using the Research Council's Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system at <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk>. The Je-S form will be available from 8 December 2016. Proposals must be costed and approved by the relevant research organisation before submission.

There will be no opportunity to change the proposal through Je-S, once submitted. If the proposal exceeds page limits specified, additional pages will be discounted. If the application omits any required documents, the proposal will be judged only on the information provided. If additional material is provided, the commissioning panel will be instructed to ignore it.

Detailed guidance on required application information can be found in the Je-S Guidance for Applicants. The call is open to all research organisations approved by the RCUK - see www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforrcs/ for more information.

All applicants should consult the ESRC Research Funding Guide (see www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-funding-guide/).

Assessment process

Once accepted, full proposals will be sent to at least two members of the specially convened expert panel for assessment. Due to the tight time constraints the call is being commissioned under, applicants will not be asked to provide nominated reviewers, nor will there be an opportunity for peer review response for applicants.

The panel will then meet to consider the proposals and agree successful proposals at the end of February 2017. Panel membership will be drawn from the UK and international academic community across a range of relevant disciplines and from relevant user groups.

We reserve the right to reject proposals which fall outside the remit/priority areas and scope of this call, without reference to peer review. You are advised to contact the ESRC if you are unsure whether your proposal will be suitable for this call; contact details are found below.

Assessment criteria

Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Scientific excellence is the primary criterion for selection and is essential; ESRC may make a strategic decision on the proposals supported, within this criterion to ensure a range of grants across the priority areas;
- Relevance of proposal to the priority areas. The proposal is expected to clearly address one or more of the priority areas listed in this call specification. Proposals which do not meet these criteria will not be accepted.

Within this the proposal will be expected to demonstrate:

- Willingness to engage with the activities of the UK in an Changing Europe initiative
- Ability to undertake engagement and impact activity throughout the grant duration
- Relevant experience of effectively communicating research findings to a policy audience and in achieving impact
- Innovative research questions (relevant to one or more of the priority areas detailed above)
- Potential contribution towards advancing the research field (eg in terms of conceptual understanding, theoretical or methodological development, application of research-based knowledge to policy or practice and/or development of inter-disciplinary approaches etc)
- Value for money:
 - Justifiable and reasonable financial support sought
 - Justification for a research assistant or assistants (if sought)
 - Appropriate and justified time commitment
 - An overall assessment of the likely value for money for the sum sought
- A flexible and resilient outputs, dissemination, engagement and impact strategy.

Only those proposals which demonstrate they meet the selection criteria are likely to be successful.

Commissioning timetable

- Call announced December 2016
- Closing date for proposals - 25 January 2017
- Decisions announced - 8 March 2017
- Grants commence - 1 April 2017

Contacts

For enquiries about this call email: esrceuropeinitiative@esrc.ac.uk

For enquiries about Je-S:

- Je-S Helpdesk
Email: jeshelp@rcuk.ac.uk
Telephone: 01793 444164

The Je-S Helpdesk is staffed Monday to Friday 9.00 to 17.00 (excluding public and other holidays).