

Inclusion of UK business, third sector or government body co-investigators on ESRC proposals

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Who is eligible to be listed as a business, third sector or government body co-investigator?

Any researcher from an established UK business, third sector or government body will be eligible. There is no requirement for the UK business, third sector or government researcher to hold a PhD or equivalent qualification. On receipt of the application, eligibility of business, third sector or government body will not normally need to be checked if it is reasonably clear that they are appropriate to conduct the work. Where there is doubt checks will be carried out.

How do business, third sector or government body co-investigators register with Je-S?

All research proposals to ESRC must be made electronically through the Joint electronic Submission system (Je-S). The principal investigator (PI) will be unable to add a UK coinvestigator (Co-I) from a business, third sector or government body to an application unless they have first registered with Je-S. To do this, the Co-I will need to go to the [Je-S website](#), select 'Create an Account', and complete their details.

If, when they reach the organisation screen, their Organisation details are not listed, the Co-I will need to contact the Je-S helpdesk (email jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org or telephone 01793 444164) and provide details of the project with which they wish to be associated (reference number, title, PI). Once the details are complete the Je-S Helpdesk will register the Co-I, allowing the PI to add them to the proposal. Eligibility of business, third sector or government body will not normally need to be checked if it is reasonably clear that they are appropriate to conduct the work. Where there is doubt checks will be carried out should a positive funding decision be taken.

Applicants should ensure that, if they are submitting a proposal to a closed call (ie working towards a specific deadline after which time the call will close and further submissions will not be possible), the Co-I applies for registration with Je-S as soon as possible, and no later than seven working days prior to the date of submission.

What costs can be associated with a business, third sector or government body co-investigator?

When a PI includes a business, third sector or government body Co-I on their application they must ensure that all associated costs are fully justified within the Justification of Resources attachment. The ESRC will fund 100% of justified costs, however, the project costs associated with these types of Co-I contributions must not exceed 30% of the overall cost of the grant (at 100% fEC).

It is important to note that the **combined** costs for international co-investigators, and UK business, third sector and government body coinvestigators must not exceed 30% of the total fEC of the grant application.

Applicants **please note:**

- All costs associated with the business, third sector or government body co-investigators must be included in the Je-S form.
- Costs associated with a business, third sector or government body co-investigator's contribution to a project (regardless of how many Co-Is are included) must never exceed 30%, of the overall cost of the grant at 100% of fEC, and would normally be lower than this.
- Where a proposal includes UK business, third sector or government body co-investigators and international co-investigators the combined costs of all co-investigators must not exceed the 30% maximum limit.
- Businesses or government bodies cannot claim overheads and other indirect costs on any element of the grant.
- For business or third sector organisations the combined salary costs of all research staff for the duration of the project (this includes the Co-I, Researchers, RAs, Post-docs etc.) must not exceed the equivalent of 1 year FTE. No salary costs will be covered for co-investigators from government bodies.
- Travel and subsistence costs will be allowable if appropriately justified for business, third sector or government body co-investigators.
- Administrative support and fieldwork costs may be permissible, where appropriately justified, for third sector co-investigators and exceptionally for business co-investigators. Fieldwork costs should be split into 'T&S' or 'Other Direct Costs' as appropriate. Administrator salary costs should be costed as 'Other Direct Costs'.
- Virement between co-investigator costs and other directly incurred costs requires prior permission from ESRC, and must not result in the co-investigator costs exceeding 30% of the overall cost of the grant.
- All costs associated with the business, third sector or government body co-investigators will be assessed in the context of the proposal as a whole and the justification of support.
- Please see the table on the following page for a summary of eligible costs,

Eligible costs for business, third sector and government body Co-Is

	Business	Third Sector	Government
Staff - Salary	Yes	Yes	No
Staff - NI/Superann	No	Yes	No
Total Research Staff - FTE Limits	1 year FTE	1 year FTE	No
T&S	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Direct Costs	No	Yes	No
Overheads	No	Yes	No
Rules/Constraints	Costs must be less than 30% of total application costs	Costs must be less than 30% of total application costs	Costs must be less than 30% of total application costs

How do I show costs on the Je-S application form?

When completing the Je-S application form, the PI must clearly show which costs will be incurred by UK research organisations and which will be incurred by partners in business, third sector or government body.

The budget limits on grant applications refer to the total cost of the research project - this is known as the Full Economic Costs (fEC). For UK Research Organisations the fEC cost is not the actual cash contribution paid by the ESRC. The actual cash contribution, known as the 'ESRC contribution', is 80% of the fEC.

The ESRC will fund 100% of justified costs relating to business, third sector or government body co-investigators, however, the Je-S form automatically calculates the 80% 'ESRC Contribution'. Therefore details of the business, third sector or government body co-investigator should be entered as usual via the co-investigator screen on Je-S, but all associated costs must be entered in Je-S under 'Other Directly Incurred' and marked as an 'Exception' using the tick box, to identify that these should be paid at 100%.

Applicants are reminded that the costs for business, third sector or government body co-investigators (regardless of the number) must not exceed 30% of the full 100% fEC cost of the grant.

It is essential that all UK and business, third sector or government body organisations involved in the grant proposal are named in the application form (this does not mean that they will necessarily need to be registered on Je-S unless they are the research organisation of the principal investigators or the partnering organisations of the coinvestigators).

For all costs included in your application a statement justifying the resources requested to undertake the research project is required. Where you do not provide sufficient justification for any item it is likely to be cut from any award made. All costs must be entered in pounds sterling (£).

Can business, third sector and government partners be included under the heading of consultants rather than co-investigators?

In principle, the answer is yes. However, inclusion of consultants would be expected to be subject to competitive purchasing requirements.

How will funds associated with a business, third sector and government co-investigator be disbursed?

Payments on all grants are made in arrears in accordance with a specific payment schedule, as agreed with the ESRC at the time the grant is awarded. In all cases, funds are transferred to the PI's Research Organisation in the first instance. It is then the responsibility of that institution to disburse funds to the business, third sector or government body. Particular attention should be paid in the Case for Support to the management and communication protocols in place to enable this to happen smoothly.

Can a business, third sector or government collaborator be listed as a co-investigator if they have secured their own source of funding?

Yes, they can be included as a co-investigator. They should also be included in the Project Partners section of the application, where details of their funding source should be provided.

Can co-investigators be included in cross-council applications?

In the case of cross-council schemes, each participating council will be consulted over the inclusion or exclusion of business, third sector or government body co-investigators. Please refer to the call specific guidance for further information.

Further information may be found in the [ESRC Research Funding Guide](#).