



Citizen Science Collaboration Grant Frequently Asked Questions

What do you mean by societally-relevant challenge?

We mean a challenge that has relevance beyond academia which multidisciplinary research and citizen science can meaningfully contribute to addressing.

Projects that clearly identify a challenge – and describe how their approach to using citizen science methods will address that challenge – will be a high priority for funding.

Challenges can be broad societal issues, like improving public health or reducing crime, or can be challenges specific to your research area, like improving the quality or analysis of data. However, you must demonstrate why citizen science is the right approach to addressing this challenge.

Is there a restriction on who can be a project partner?

No. Project partners can be any type of organisation, from small charities and community groups to large international corporations. We want proposals to partner with organisations that have a clear reason to be involved in the proposal and that will enhance your ability to meet the call's criteria.

Can international partners be involved?

The expectation is that partners are UK based. When expertise are not available, overseas partnerships will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

As long as the PI and Co-Is are based at UK institutions and the project involves a group or groups of people in the UK, there is no restriction on the location of project partners and collaborators. However, international collaborators should only be included in exceptional circumstances and will require strong justification in your application.

What are the contingency plans for Covid-19?

You should design your project based on the latest available information about the Coronavirus outbreak and the associated social distancing regulations. You should be clear about the levels of uncertainty involved in your approach and about how you will adapt as the situation evolves.

It is a requirement of this grant that you submit your start confirmation by 31 March 2021. However, in exceptional circumstances, no-cost extensions can be requested for a period of up to 12 months in the first instance.

Should projects be involving under-represented groups?

Applications will be assessed on the appropriate identification and involvement of a group or groups of people in the UK. This means that you should consider and explain who your project is designed to involve, or who it is likely to involve. Some projects, due to the nature of their research approach, will seek to involve a very specific group of people (e.g. people employed in a specific job in a specific place), whereas others will have less strictly defined participants (e.g. anyone in the UK with internet access and an interest in biology).

We are particularly interested in projects that involve people from under-represented groups and communities, so this is one of the factors that will be used to assess your proposal. You should also consider how the people involved in your project will benefit from taking part.

You should carefully consider how you plan to recruit participants and particularly whether you are unintentionally excluding certain groups of people; consider what the barriers to engaging with your project are (these could be social, economic or physical) and what adjustments could be made to remove or reduce the impact of these. You can request funding for such adjustments and these should be explained in the Justification of Resources.

We believe that the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to excellence in research and innovation; projects that fail to demonstrate a commitment to these principles will be a low priority for funding.

How many citizens should be involved?

Proposals will not be judged on the number of people that are involved in the project. The number of people you involve is dependent on many factors and you should carefully consider who you want to take part in your project and how many people you need to successfully produce the outcomes your project is designed to deliver.

What does your definition of citizen science include?

We are using the term citizen science to mean any form of public involvement in the process of research. All proposals should satisfy the ECSA's [Ten Principles of Citizen Science](#).

If you have experience in fields such as public engagement, patient involvement, participatory research or community engagement, these are all valid forms of engagement for this call, if your project fits the scope of the call and satisfies the ten principles.

It may also be useful to consult the [ECSA's Characteristics of Citizen Science](#).

Are projects that include participants from multiple countries eligible?

We want to fund projects that engage people in the UK, so projects that involve people not in the UK will be a low priority for funding.

Will you only fund new projects?

Whether a project is new or builds on existing work does not form part of the assessment criteria for this call, so we will not preference one over the other.

Can the project approach be refined with the participants after it has started?

Yes, you can adapt your approach based on the interests of your participants, but you still need to define the societally-relevant challenge you are addressing and the group of participants you aim to involve.

You should clearly explain why you think this approach will be beneficial to your project and its participants and how your project will progress over the course of the funding period.

What counts as multidisciplinary?

The number and range of disciplines involved in your project should be guided by the nature of the challenge you have chosen to address. Some challenges will require expertise from closely related disciplines (e.g. Astrophysics and Computer Science), while others will want to draw on more disparate expertise (e.g. Geophysics and Modern History).

All projects should include some level of multidisciplinary among the PI and Co-Is and should explain in their application why those disciplines are relevant to the challenge being addressed.

How much and what type of experience does the PI or Co-I need to have?

The experience level of the team should be commensurate with the scale and type of approach you plan to take. You will be assessed on the strength of the PI or Co-Is' experience in using citizen science methods, as well as on the appropriateness of the team to deliver the proposed project.

You should use the narrative CVs to demonstrate why the experience of the PI and Co-Is is appropriate for the project.

What do you mean by innovation?

We want projects to explore novel and innovative ways of involving the public in their research. Innovation in this context could mean the way in which the research is framed, who is being involved, or in the tools or methods you use.

Citizen science should be about meaningful, mutually-beneficial relationships so your application should clearly demonstrate how you will achieve this.

Why are BBSRC involved in this call?

This call is being delivered by the UKRI Public Engagement Team. BBSRC, as one of UKRI's funding councils, is providing administrative and technical guidance to ensure that the call follows best practice.

UKRI is working towards delivering a unified funding service during 2020, but until then funding must be delivered through one of UKRI's existing funding bodies, which in this instance is BBSRC.

Proposals do not need to fall into BBSRC's remit to be eligible – the call is open to ALL disciplines.