Expression of interest: emergency route for time-critical COVID-19 research

Opportunity status: Open

Funders: Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), Medical Research Council (MRC), Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC)

Funding type: Grant

Maximum award: £80,000

Publication date: 5 January 2021

Opening date: 5 January 2021

Closing date: Open - no closing date

Last updated: 5 January 2021

Apply for funding to support short term time-sensitive collection of data or samples or rapid turn-around research or analysis to either:

- inform urgent policy or national decision making
- secure data for future research use.

This is a rarely awarded emergency route for exceptional circumstances.

To apply you must be able to meet strict criteria, including, but not limited to:

- demonstrating the time-critical nature of the research or data/sample collection
- demonstrating a clear and rapid route to impact through existing partnerships
- showing how a normal grant timeframe is unsuitable
- justifying why you did not apply through any of the previously available UKRI COVID-19 funding schemes
- having a clear plan to take this research forward including, if necessary, using normal grant routes.

Support can be available for projects lasting 3 to 6 months.

Applicants must be based at research organisations eligible for UKRI funding. Business-led proposals are not eligible for this funding.

The normal route to apply for support for COVID-19 research is through existing standard funding opportunities.

Search other funding opportunities

Who can apply

Applicants must be based at UK research organisations eligible for UKRI funding.

Find more information about eligible research organisations

Business-led proposals are not eligible for this funding.

See Innovate UK opportunities for businesses in the funding finder.

What we're looking for

We expect that this emergency route will only be valid in exceptional situations.

There are strict criteria defining what is considered to be urgent. Only proposals that fully meet all of the criteria will pass the expression of interest stage.

Therefore, to make sure the internal and external review process is not put under continued pressure, research organisations should actively triage ideas before applications are written.

There is no specific funding allocation for this scheme. All applications will be prioritised by research councils and will be tensioned against their existing budgets.

The normal route to apply for support for COVID-19 research is through existing standard funding opportunities.

Search other funding opportunities

Scope
Proposals submitted under this route are expected to focus on rapid turnaround research, urgent data or sample collection, and essential initial analysis only. Before applying, you should check the details of projects that are already funded to avoid duplicating existing work. You can also check our current priority areas to see what we think is important.

**Find UKRI-funded COVID-19 projects and current priority areas.**

**Criteria**

To be considered by a council through this route, your proposed research must meet all of the following criteria:

- you have evidence that this research will inform urgent policy decisions or secure data for future research
- you can demonstrate the time-critical nature of the research and how a normal grant timeframe is unsuitable
- there is a rapid route to impact, for example, you’re already working with the bodies making urgent policy decisions who need your data, samples, or findings
- your project must be able to start within a month of the decision
- you have a clear plan to take this research or data/sample collection forward including, if necessary, through normal grant routes.

We will not consider:

- projects that could have been funded by any previous UKRI COVID-19 funding scheme, for example, the rolling [UKRI Agile Research and Innovation Response to COVID-19 scheme that ended 15 December 2020](#)
- projects that could be funded through a standard funding opportunity from any council
- research that duplicates existing funded research, [check what’s already been funded](#)
- funding to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on specific institutions and businesses and longer-term research that addresses the COVID-19 emergency or future pandemics
- business-led projects; instead see [Innovate UK opportunities for businesses](#).
- Resubmissions of previously submitted proposals.

In addition, extensions to current activities (for example, already funded COVID-19 activities) will not normally be accepted through this emergency route.

**Funding available**

The maximum funding that may be sought is £80,000 (80% full economic cost) and includes any facilities costs. The usual duration will be 3 months, with a maximum of up to 6 months when necessary.

**How to apply**
Stage one: expression of interest

Send your expression of interest as an email attachment to CV19researchinnovation@ukri.org.

Your attached document must be no longer than one side of A4 and should include:

- name of principal investigator
- phone number and email of lead contact
- name of lead research organisation and all partners
- lead research council that should review your proposal
- brief description of proposed data or sample collection or research
- evidence of its time-sensitive nature and how it will inform urgent policy decisions or secure data for future research
- explanation of why your project cannot be funded through a normal funding opportunity from any council, or another UK research funder
- explanation of why you did not apply to any of the previous UKRI COVID-19 funding schemes
- evidence of your rapid route to impact through already established partnerships
- assurance that you already have in place all the institutional resources and approvals (for example, ethical approval) you need to carry out your project
- brief description of how this work would be taken forward.

Your expression of interest document will be passed to a research council for review.

Stage two

If your expression of interest is accepted, a research council will contact you to inform you of the next steps.

Contact details

CV19researchinnovation@ukri.org

NOTE This is the first phase of our new website – let us know if you have feedback or would like to help us test new developments.