



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

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	UK Research and Innovation
Funding type:	Grant
Maximum award:	£80,000
Publication date:	6 January 2021
Opening date:	5 January 2021
Closing date:	Open - no closing date

Last updated: 12 February 2021

This is a rarely awarded emergency route for exceptional circumstances.

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

[Search other funding opportunities](#)

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.

All activities funded through this route **must not overlap with UKRI's portfolio of funded research.**

[Find UKRI-funded COVID-19 projects.](#)

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

- demonstrating how this proposed activity does not overlap with UKRI's existing portfolio
- 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.

Full applications for funding will only be invited at the discretion of the appropriate research council. Resubmissions of rejected applications are not permitted.

[Open all](#)

Who can apply

Applicants must:

- be based at UK research organisations eligible for UKRI funding
- demonstrate host organisation support for their proposal
- meet the standard eligibility requirements for the council submitted to.

[Find more information about eligible research organisations.](#)

Business-led proposals are not eligible for this funding.

Business collaboration will be considered on a case by case basis. However, projects must be academic led and business collaboration is subject to the eligibility rules of each research council.

[Search funding opportunities for businesses with Innovate UK.](#)

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 an expression of interest is written
- ensure it does not duplicate [COVID-19 research already funded by UKRI](#).

There is no specific funding allocation for this scheme. Permissions to submit full applications will be prioritised and at the discretion of the research councils and will be tensioned against their existing budgets.

Applicants can only apply to the following research councils:

- AHRC
- BBSRC
- EPSRC
- ESRC
- MRC
- NERC
- STFC.

Overseas research and international collaboration is not actively encouraged but will be considered on a case by case basis (according to the eligibility rules of each research council).

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](#).

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:

- extensions to current activities (for example, already funded COVID-19 activities) will not be accepted through this emergency route
- research that duplicates existing funded research, [check what's already been funded](#)
- 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
- 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.

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 must 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](#).