ESRC INCLUSIVE AGEING 2021 CALL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This document may be updated to reflect those questions most frequently raised with the ESRC by potential applicants. This document should be referred to in conjunction with the call specification and JeS guidance.

Last updated: 27th April 2021

Further Information:

- ESRC Inclusive Ageing call: Research into inclusive ageing – UKRI
- ESRC Research Funding Guide here. Eligibility for this call can be found here.

Q: Are projects focussed on neurodegenerative diseases, including dementia, in scope?

A: Adults that have developed neurodegenerative conditions or other impairments in mid to later life (e.g. dementia) are out of scope of this call. Adults that have acquired disabilities in mid to later life are also out of scope. Note that the call specification states that projects must improve understanding of 'disabled adults with lifelong physical and learning impairments (from birth or developed in early life) including those with conditions which meant limited lifespans in the past but who are now living longer. Therefore, neurodegenerative conditions that manifest in early life would be in scope, where they fit other requirements of the call specification. If unsure about the scope of the project, please send through a summary paragraph to: ESRCInclusiveAgeing@esrc.ukri.org

Q: What is meant by 'interdisciplinarity'?

A: This call is looking to support interdisciplinary programmes of research. Projects which combine different social science disciplines would fulfil the interdisciplinary requirement. We welcome projects that collaborate with discipline/s outside of social science too, so long as at least 50% of the overall project focus is social science. Leadership team members can be from across subject areas/disciplines however we anticipate that the team will collectively have social sciences experience. The rationale for the inclusion of each discipline should be clearly explained and justified to demonstrate the added value of the interdisciplinary approach for the research questions. Proposals should avoid tokenism.

Q: What is meant by the 'lifecourse approach'?

A: A life course approach challenges the tendency to view old age as an isolated or static phase of life. It acknowledges that earlier life experiences affect later outcomes and provides a framework for challenging commonly held assumptions about older people where the interrelationships between phases of life are emphasised. Taking a lifecourse approach means that projects should take into consideration the different critical stages, processes, transitions and settings of the specified under-researched groups when undertaking their research. It is not a requirement for projects to use longitudinal data (although this is welcomed), however projects must address the role of experiences and situations earlier in life in shaping inequalities in later life.

Q: What is meant by the term 'intersectionality'?

A: 'Intersectionality' refers to the interconnected nature of social categorisations. For example: ethnicity, gender, religion, class and sexuality as they apply to a given individual or group, are regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. Projects must take account of these varied experiences when approaching their research questions.

Q: What counts as 'collaborative'?

A: Projects must demonstrate collaboration across disciplines as well as other sectors (business, third sector or government) in their proposals. Organisations do not need to be named as Co-Is on the bid for it to be counted as 'collaborative', for example organisations could be listed on the proposal in the Project Partner section. Projects will need to demonstrate that the input from all collaborators will be meaningful and mutually beneficial.

Q: Can people with lived experience be involved in projects?

A: Yes, we encourage people with lived experience to be involved and collaborate in meaningful ways across the span of the project, where appropriate.

Q: The call aims to reduce inequalities in later life, how is later life defined?

A: Projects must find a balance between concentrating on the experiences of ageing populations while at the same time considering other key life stages as part of the lifecourse approach. For the purposes of this call including participants aged from later mid-life onward is permissible, recognising definitions on what this constitutes might change depending on the group/s being studied. Proposals should be primarily focused on impacting older people, and using a lifecourse approach is essential.

Q: Does the call require that participant cohorts proposed in projects be comprised of only older adults who have lived with a lifelong health condition?

A: There is no requirement to use particular cohorts/types of cohorts or to focus on health. Projects must select primary research areas and secondary data sources suitable for your research questions. Projects must improve understanding of at least one of the 3 under researched groups outlined in the specification and should take a lifecourse approach – meaning they can include a wider age range; however the primary focus of research questions and impact should be older people.

Q: Is it a requirement to use existing datasets? Could these be used in addition to primary research?

A: A number of existing datasets provide high quality and in-depth information relevant to ageing (e.g. Understanding Society, English Longitudinal Study of Ageing, Healthy Ageing in Scotland). As an organisation, ESRC encourages secondary analysis of these types of datasets. It is not a requirement to use these, but it is encouraged. Note that projects proposing primary research that duplicates information found in existing accessible datasets are unlikely to fare well in review. Projects combining secondary analysis and primary research are permissible, but projects should not make the creation/enhancement of new datasets their only focus.

Q: Our question is around the focus on one of the three under-researched groups identified in the call. Is a proposal that includes one of these groups as a component of a broader study about inequalities acceptable?

A: Yes, it is acceptable. However, projects must convincingly demonstrate they are improving evidence and understanding on at least one of the under-researched groups specified and take an intersectional approach to any of the themes selected. Please note the call assessment criteria states **"proposals should demonstrate an innovative research agenda and potential to generate new knowledge, leading to new insights on under-researched groups".**

Q: How do we define 'practical/policy interventions'?

A: Projects must show how their proposals plan to go beyond identifying issues and demonstrate direct and tangible outcomes that will primarily benefit older people by either reducing inequalities and/or improving inclusivity. Depending on project focus this could be e.g. the development of practical tools and resources that will benefit people or working with numerous stakeholders to change attitudes and policies.

Q: Are resubmissions permitted?

A: Resubmissions of previously unsuccessful proposals are not permitted. Please see the ESRC policy on resubmissions and what constitutes as a new proposal [here](#).

Q: Can I be involved in more than one proposal?

A: Yes, as a Co-Investigator, providing you have sufficient time to be able to commit to all projects were they to be successful. However, you cannot be a Principal Investigator (PI) on more than one proposal. It is permissible to be PI on one application and a Co-I on another and there is no limit to the number of applications that can be submitted from any one institution; however, we are anticipating a high volume of interest in this call and an institution might wish to co-ordinate applications internally to minimise duplication of research ideas.

Q: Can Early Career Researcher (ECRs) be included in proposals?

A: The appropriate involvement of post-doctoral/early career researchers in the research projects is strongly encouraged, either as a Principal Investigator, Co-Investigator, or other role. Principal Investigators are ultimately responsible for the project's management and so will need to demonstrate on the application that they have the necessary skills required to successfully lead the project. PhD students are not eligible for funding through this call.

Q: Are projects focusing on international case studies eligible?

A: Projects should primarily be focused on issues relevant to the UK. International case studies within a primarily UK focussed proposal would be permitted, where they enhance UK understanding. International collaborators are permitted - see JeS guidance on how to cost these in.