

## **ESRC DigitalFootprints Senior Strategic Fellowship 2022**

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## **Call summary**

### **Call type:**

Research Fellowship

### **Closing date:**

16:00 on 08 March 2022

### **Funding available:**

ESRC Contribution £426,000 80% Full Economic Cost (fEC)  
£532,500 100% (fEC)

### **How to apply:**

Proposals are invited via Je-S attracting the standard 80% fEC funding model

### **Special requirements:**

#### **All applicants are required to attach the following as a mandatory document:**

A Head of Department Statement (see page 13 for further details). The statement should:

- if the fellow is not currently hosted at the RO, confirm that the fellow would be accepted into the department for the purpose of undertaking the proposed programme of work.
- explain how the proposed programme of work would fit in with the department's wider research programme.

**Please note that there are restrictions on eligible costs for this call** (see page 9 and 10 for further details).

#### **The DigitalFootprints Senior Strategic Fellowship will:**

- Provide scientific leadership to the DigitalFootprints Prototype Coordinating Hub: coordinating, convening, developing, build capacity and develop a thriving interdisciplinary Digital Footprint Data (DFD) community
- Support the scoping and development of commissioning opportunities for the Accelerator Programme. This is a rolling programme of investment over 24 months totalling £2.5M
- Act as a 'thought leader' and champion for ESRC's DFD ambitions and consider how ESRC and UKRI more broadly can support researchers using these data in the future
- Provide strategic advice on the development of related programmes of work within and beyond ESRC, for example capacity building and training provision and or research

- Provide social scientific, strategic and technical advice, in combination with the ESRC / UKRI advisory groups, to support the development of a potential longer-term DigitalFootprints infrastructure by:
  - Identifying and leading engagement with potential research users, data service practitioners and policy makers
  - Identifying new opportunities for investments
  - Building enduring connections with key stakeholders (including within academia, government, industry and the third sector)
  - If recommended for funding, developing and drafting key parts of the longer-term DigitalFootprints business case, in particular the strategic case
  - Ensuring that ESRC plans for DigitalFootprints meet the current and future requirements of the UKRI data landscape and beyond as articulated in relevant published strategies and stated objectives (e.g. the UKRI Digital Research Infrastructure Strategy, National Data Strategy and other similar publications)
  - Contributing to synthesis, reviews and any other such activities that add value to the programme and the business case development
  - Identifying broad requirements for data services that in the future will support delivery of the DigitalFootprints network; and liaise with the Future Data Services Strategic Fellow and the Future Data Services Senior Strategic Fellow to ensure these are fed into the separate Future Data Services programme of work

### **Assessment process:**

Assessment will have two stages. All applications will be assessed and shortlisted by a panel of staff and academics. A shortlist of applicants will be invited to attend an interview with staff and academics.

Interviews are expected to take place in **week commencing 25 April 2022** via an online communications platform. Once the call closes, all applicants will be informed of the final interview date.

### **Key commissioning dates:**

- Fellow and RO webinar – w/c 07 February 2022
- Deadline for proposals – 08 March 2022
- Shortlisting panel – w/c 28 March 2022
- Interviews – w/c 25 April 2022
- Funding decision – May 2022
- Senior Strategic Fellowship role commences – June 2022

## Contacts:

- Kristina Mussnug Barrett/Molly Williams/Layla Adams/Bruce Jackson  
Email: [fds.df.fellowships@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:fds.df.fellowships@esrc.ukri.org)

Please read the [full funding finder specification](#) for guidance before submitting your proposal.

## Introduction

This guidance is created to assist applicants to this scheme in the completion of their proposal. It is specific to this scheme and should be used in conjunction with the following information:

- [ESRC Research Funding Guide](#)
- ESRC guidance on [‘How to write a good research grant proposal’](#)
- **Je-S help text** is available in every page of your Je-S form, simply click on the question mark against any section (or on the word ‘Help’ in the top right hand corner of each page)

## Je-S helpdesk (for all Je-S system enquiries)

If you experience difficulties using Je-S or have questions regarding its use, please contact the Je-S helpdesk by emailing [JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org](mailto:JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org)

For all phone enquiries, please telephone 01793 444164

Office operating hours are Monday to Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm, Fridays 8.30am - 4.30 pm (excluding bank holidays and other holidays).

When reporting problems by email or telephone, please give your name, organisation and user ID, the date and time, what part of the form or system you were working on, and the nature of the problem.

- **Scheme-specific [guidance](#)**

For further information contact:

- Kristina Mussnug Barrett/Molly Williams/Layla Adams/Bruce Jackson  
Email: [fds.df.fellowships@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:fds.df.fellowships@esrc.ukri.org)

**Important:** Where information and guidance issued in this document differs from the general guidance offered in these sources, you should adhere to the guidance in this document.

## Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S)

All proposals under this call must be completed and submitted through the Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system. To be able to do this the organisation must be registered for Je-S, and the applicants must hold Je-S accounts.

UK higher education institutions and some other independent UK research organisations (including Public Sector Research Establishments) are already **recognised institutions** on Je-S. A list of these organisations is available via <https://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/>

## Je-S accounts for Fellows

All applicants must have created a fellowship 'applicant' Je-S account (if you already have a Je-S account you can contact the Je-S Helpdesk to ask them to upgrade it to a fellowship account). Please refer to the [Je-S helptext](#) if setting up a new account.

## Before creating your proposal

Fellowship proposals may **only** be made on UKRI's Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) forms.

Please note that the **deadline for research organisation submission of proposals is 16:00 on 08 March 2022**. You should **allow sufficient time for completion of the research organisation submission process checks/authorisation**.

Your proposal will actually be sent to Je-S/ESRC from the submitter pool at your research organisation. **There is a further layer of administration between your submission of the proposal and the proposal being submitted to the ESRC, via Je-S**. The research organisation's submission route usually includes both an approver (i.e., head of department) and submitter pool (i.e., central finance office), and the ESRC cannot accept responsibility for any delay which may occur as a consequence. We strongly advise applicants to secure confirmation from their relevant administrator that the proposal has been successfully submitted to the Je-S team (see also 'Tracking your proposal').

## Organisation internal submission structure

It is recommended that applicants forward their proposal to the organisation submitter pool in good time before the call deadline to allow a sufficient period for the approval and final submission process. The proposal must be 'submitted' through the Je-S System to ESRC by the institution's nominated contacts. Once the applicant completes and submits the proposal, notification is then sent to their organisation's 'submitter' to action. The 'submitter' is the person in that organisation authorised to approve the proposal and do the final stage of submission.

The applicant will receive an email confirming that the proposal has been submitted to the Submitter Pool - this means the proposal is still with the organisation but is **not** yet submitted to the research council. The final submission process is the responsibility of the

host institution, and we cannot accept responsibility for any delay which may occur at this stage. We strongly advise applicants to check that they receive an email confirmation from the Je-S System confirming that the proposal has been submitted to UKRI.

**Use of your personal information** – UK Research and Innovation capture and process personal information in line with current data protection legislation; General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and any amendments by the UK Data Protection Bill and/or relevant acts of parliament.

## **COVID-19 Guidance for Applicants**

### **Accounting for the unknown impacts of COVID-19**

UKRI acknowledges that it is a challenge for applicants to determine the future impacts of COVID-19 while the pandemic continues to evolve. Applications should be based on the information available at the point of submission and, if applicable, the known application specific impacts of COVID-19 should be accounted for. Where known impacts have occurred, these should be highlighted in the application, including the assumptions/information at the point of submission. There is no need to include contingency plans for the potential impacts of COVID-19. Requests for travel both domestically and internationally can be included in accordance to the relevant scheme guidelines, noting the above advice.

(Reviewers will receive instructions to assume that changes that arise from the COVID-19 pandemic, post-submission, will be resolved and complications related to COVID-19 should not affect their scores. Where an application is successful, any changes in circumstances that affect the proposal will be managed as a post-award issue.)

## **Creating your proposal**

To create your proposal:

1. Log in to Je-S at <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx>
2. From the Home screen, select Documents, then select 'New Document'
3. On the Add new document screen, select 'Call search' (highlighted at top of screen). When prompted type in the call title (**ESRC DigitalFootprints: Senior Strategic Fellowship 2022**) and select from the list created. The remaining three selection fields will be automatically populated.
4. Select the 'Create Document' button.

Please note that **it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the proposal document is created and submitted against the correct call** (and consequently correct scheme). We will **not accept** proposals for processing that are not submitted using the above call route.

## Completing your proposal

The initial Je-S document instructions page will give you general guidance on the navigation layout, specifically icon descriptions.

The left-hand column 'Document Menu' lists all the sections associated with this call and clearly identifies which ones are mandatory (red cross, turning to green tick when completed).

The details below are not exhaustive step-by-step guidance, and we recommend that you refer to the Je-S helptext for additional information.

Please note you may return to edit saved documents at any time.

### Project details

- Select organisation and department from drop-down lists (e.g., the research organisation where the fellowship will be held)
- 'Your Reference' should be supplied by your research organisation (consult your Research Office). If your administration office does not have a system for referencing grant proposals, a suitable reference of your own choice will be acceptable. Use 'Your reference' to help distinguish easily between proposals in users' Current Documents lists. The reference is intended to be a unique identifier for the proposal and is unrelated to the reference that the organisation would be asked to provide if a grant were awarded.
- Enter Project Title: 'DigitalFootprints: Senior Strategic Fellowship' (maximum limit of 150 characters)
- For Proposal Call, select **ESRC DigitalFootprints: Senior Strategic Fellowship 2022**. Please note that the option will only be available once the call is live (this may have already been pre-populated into the form).
- Your start date should not be before **01 June 2022**. Your grant should be a proposed duration of no more than **24 months**.
- Submission route – It is recommended that once this initial section is completed and saved, check the submission path (via Document Actions tab) to see if the proposal has to be signed off by submitters and approvers, in which case please make sure they will be available to process the document on the day you intend to submit it to Council.

### Applicant

The Senior Strategic Fellow will be appointed on a part time basis (minimum 0.4 FTE to a maximum 0.8 FTE) on a 24-month grant starting June 2022.

There should be a single applicant (the fellow) for each proposal, to whom correspondence will be addressed. Enter the name of the fellow and details of the fellow's research organisation and department.

On submission of the proposal the fellow does not necessarily have to be located at the organisation that will administer the grant, however the administering organisation will be required to submit the fellowship proposal. The fellow will take intellectual leadership of the project and manage the fellowship; this individual will be the contact person for ESRC correspondence. The named fellow is responsible for ensuring that successful proposals are undertaken and completed in the manner specified.

### **Objectives**

List the objectives of your fellowship. *(4,000 character limit)*

If this is not relevant to your application, please enter 'N/A'.

### **Summary**

Provide a plain English summary of the research you propose to carry out in a language that could be publicised to a general, non-academic audience. Please note that this section will be made available on the Gateway to Research database, therefore applicants should ensure confidential information is not included in this section *(4000 character limit)*

### **Staff duties**

Where required, the fellow may apply with a post-doctoral researcher. Together a minimum of 0.6FTE must be allocated on the grant by the Senior Strategic Fellow and post-doctoral researcher.

Summarise the duties of the staff members that will be involved in your project, including the applicants. Ensure that it is clear why it is necessary for this person to perform this role at the resource level you have requested. *(2,000 character limit)*

### **Ethical information**

This section must be comprehensively addressed. *(4000 character limit)*

Applicants must ensure the proposed research will be carried out to a high ethical standard and must clearly state how any potential ethical and health and safety issues have been considered and will be addressed ensuring that all necessary ethical approval is in place before the project commences and all risks are minimised.

The [ESRC's Framework for Research Ethics](#) contains a full explanation of the ESRC's approach, with guidance for applicants.

### **Other support**

Enter details of any support sought or received from any other source for this or other research in the same field in the past three years. Complete all fields for support either received or pending a decision. The full economic costs (i.e., 100 per cent costs) of such support should be identified.



Please indicate if other support is not relevant to your application.

## **Staff**

Where required, you may apply with a post-doctoral researcher, and can therefore include associated costs. Together a minimum of 0.6FTE must be allocated on the grant by the Senior Strategic Fellow and post-doctoral researcher. Where required, you may apply for administrative support, and can therefore include associated costs.

If your project requires staff other than the Fellow, their details should be entered here. 'Directly Allocated staff' are those who will be working directly on the project, but whose involvement on the grant can only be based on an estimate of the time the work will take (e.g., investigators). 'Directly Incurred staff' are those whose time on the project is actual, auditable, and verifiable (e.g., researchers, research assistants or personal assistants).

The DigitalFootprints Senior Strategic Fellowship call also allows the inclusion of visiting researchers. Support may be requested for visits by researchers of acknowledged standing, from within the UK or abroad, to the investigator's organisation. Funding is limited to 12 months per individual. Each visiting researcher should be entered on the proposal once only. If they are making several visits their time and cost should be averaged over the dates between their first and last visit. Details of individual visits should be described in the Case for Support. Visiting researchers who continue to be paid a salary by their parent organisation should show their effort attributed to the project but with a zero-salary cost request. Travel and subsistence costs should be included under the Travel and Subsistence section.

The DigitalFootprints Senior Strategic Fellowship call **does not** allow the inclusion of non-UK based investigators and business, third sector or government body co-investigators.

The DigitalFootprints Senior Strategic Fellowship call **does not allow** for the inclusion of associated studentships.

## **Resources**

All resources requested must be fully justified in the 'Justification' attachment.

The DigitalFootprints Senior Strategic Fellowship call will provide up to 24 months of funding with an overall limit of £532,500 (100% fEC) per grant. If successful, ESRC will meet 80% (£426,000) of the full economic costs on proposals submitted and the host institution is expected to support the remaining 20%.

The Senior Strategic Fellow will be appointed on a part time basis (minimum 0.4 FTE to maximum 0.8 FTE) on a 24-month grant starting May 2022. Where required, the fellow may apply with a post-doctoral researcher, and can therefore include associated costs. Together a minimum of 0.6FTE must be allocated on the grant by the Senior Strategic Fellow and post-doctoral researcher.

Of the total cost, a combined budget for administrative support and travel and subsistence

can be included for up to a maximum of £10,000 (value at 100% fEC – ESRC would meet 80% of this).

Please budget for a **minimum** of four trips to Swindon per year, travel restrictions permitting.

An explanation of the cost headings can be found in the Je-S helptext under the Costings heading within Standard Proposals:

<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/pages/GuidanceonCompletingaStandardG/Costings.htm>

The following paragraphs provide guidance on how to enter different types of resource within the Je-S proposal, and any supporting documentation that may be required. For more detailed guidance see the relevant Je-S helptext.

**T&S** – the funding available for this grant includes a £10,000 budget for administrative support and travel and subsistence. Please note this budget is valued at 100% fEC, so ESRC would meet 80% of this.

Please budget for a **minimum** of four trips to Swindon per year, travel restrictions permitting.

Add each item of travel and subsistence required for your project. This includes travel for both research activities and for those contributing to knowledge exchange and the delivery of impact activities. You should indicate the calculations upon which this figure is based in the 'Destination and Purpose' box. Please note that prior to travel overseas the grant holder must check with the Finance Office at the hosting Research Organisation to ensure that travel is permissible, and not against the advice of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office ([www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)).

**Equipment** – The DigitalFootprints Senior Strategic Fellowship call does not allow the inclusion of equipment costs.

**Social surveys** – The DigitalFootprints Senior Strategic Fellowship call does not allow the inclusion of social survey costs.

**Other directly incurred costs** – including justified project specific consumables, consultancy fees, equipment costing less than £10,000, recruitment and advertising costs.

**Other directly allocated costs** – the funding available for this grant includes a £10,000 budget (valued at 100% fEC) for administrative support and travel and subsistence. This can include support staff salaries, a share of the costs of departmental support staff and the costs of access to major research facilities.

### **Estates and indirect costs**

Your Research Office will be able to assist with this section. Estate and indirect costs are specific to each research organisation, and do not require justification in your case for support.

Research organisations that have implemented the TRAC costing methodology and have passed the Quality Assurance process should apply their own estate and indirect costs. Non-research organisations that are not required to implement TRAC must have a robust

costing methodology in place that has been validated in order to apply their own estates and indirect cost rates. The standard default rates should be used where research organisations have not yet developed their own rates.

Where an individual will be working away from the Research Organisation on long-term secondment for a period in excess of six months during the project, estates costs should not be charged for the period of secondment. No reduction should be made for shorter term absence.

### **User involvement**

‘Users’ are individuals, groups or organisations who have an interest in or may benefit from the research. Users may be from the public sector, commercial private sector, civil society or the wider public in general. Engaging users in your research from its conception and development and throughout the research lifecycle is likely to increase the impacts achieved. Applicants should expand upon how the proposed work will be managed to engage users and beneficiaries in the Case for Support attachment.

If ‘Users’ have been/will be engaged with your research project, please specify the nature of their engagement by selecting from the drop-down list:

- Design • Execution • Dissemination • Training

There is also an option to record a ‘not applicable’ selection. It is a mandatory requirement that at least one option is selected.

### **Attachments**

It is important that applicants **only submit the supporting attachments specified in this document**. We reserve the right to reject applications that do not include the required attachments or include attachments not specified in this guidance. Attachments should be uploaded in PDF (rather than Word) format, to reduce document corruption issues. Attachments should be in font size 11 with 2 cm margins.

The following are mandatory Je-S attachments for this call:

- Case for Support
- Justification of Resources
- CV, including one-page publication summary list
- Head of Department statement

List of Publications, Proposal Cover Letters/Letters of Support and Technical Appendices are optional and should be included where necessary.

\*Please note guidance against these specific attachment types below, as to when submission is considered mandatory/appropriate.

**Important note:** If you are unclear about whether you can include a specific attachment please contact [fds.df.fellowships@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:fds.df.fellowships@esrc.ukri.org) for advice as unrequested attachments can

hinder the processing of your application. ESRC reserves the right to return or reject applications that include attachments not permitted on this call.

### **Mandatory attachments:**

#### **Case for Support - (maximum of six sides of A4)**

This is the body of your fellowship proposal. It must not exceed six sides and must include the following sections:

- **Skills and experience**  
Provide details of the relevant knowledge, skills and experience of the PI/main applicant and how these are relevant to the Digital Footprints Senior Strategic Fellowship.
- **Vision and planned activities**  
Outline a clear vision of how the PI/main applicant will utilise their role as Senior Strategic Fellow to help to deliver the various aspects of the role including the proposed approach to undertaking the core activities required. Include details of how they plan to work with the ESRC Office in the first months of the award to agree a timetable for activities and outputs to be delivered throughout the grant.
- **Conflict of interest**  
To avoid a conflict of interest, the Fellow should not be already be a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator on an existing UKRI data services infrastructure investment (see the recently published [DARE-UK Landscape Review](#) for examples).
- **Leadership/management of team**  
Provide a sustainable leadership and management plan for the proposed Fellowship including the management of any planned activities and any additional staff. If you intend to include the involvement of a post-doctoral researcher in the proposal, please include a clear operational plan setting out how the proposed team will work together to deliver the requirements of the grant.
- **Staff**  
Clearly provide descriptions of the staff role(s) involved in the Fellowship application (if applicable).
- **Host institution contribution**  
Provide confirmation of the host institution 20% contribution to the proposed Fellowship along with any additional support provided.

Proposals containing a Case for Support exceeding 6 sides of A4 or not adhering to the specified format will not be considered.

The bibliography for references cited in the proposal, including the Case for Support, must be attached under the 'list of publications' document. A list of the most relevant and recent publications of applicants should be included in the applicant CVs.

The case for support should be a self-contained description of the proposed work with relevant background and references and should not depend on additional information such as the inclusion of external links. Peer reviewers are advised to base their assessment on the information contained within the application and are under no obligation to access such links (so they should not be used to provide critical information).

### **Justification of Resources (maximum of two sides of A4)**

A two-side A4 statement justifying that the resources requested are appropriate to undertake the research project.

The justification of resources should explain why the resources requested are appropriate for the research proposed, taking into account the nature and complexity of the research proposal. It should not be simply a list of the resources required, as this is already given in the Je-S form. Where you do not provide explanation for an item that requires justification, it will be cut from any grant awarded.

Please refer to the joint Research Council Je-S helptext:

<https://jes.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index.htm> for further guidance.

### **CV (maximum of two sides of A4 per named staff)**

A CV for the Principal Investigator, named research assistants and personal assistants must be included. This should include contact details, qualifications (including class and subject), academic and professional posts held since graduation, a list of the most relevant and recent publications, and a record of research funded by the ESRC and other bodies. This should not exceed two A4 sides.

### **Head of Department Statement (maximum of two sides of A4)**

The head of department at the host research organisation must complete a statement in support of the proposal. This statement must be on headed paper, signed and dated within the last six months. The statement should:

- if the applicant is not currently hosted at the RO, confirm that the applicant would be accepted into the department for the purpose of undertaking the proposed programme of work.
- explain how the proposed programme of work would fit in with the department's wider research programme.

### **Optional attachments**

#### **List of publications**

You must include a list of publications if you have cited publications in your Case for Support. There is no need to include this attachment if you have not cited publications in your Case for Support. Please note publications not cited in the proposal should not be added here. A list of the most relevant and recent publications should be included in the applicant CV.

#### **Proposal cover letter/letter of support (maximum of one side of A4 per document)**

Proposal cover letter attachment type can be used to upload a declaration of interest

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20200929010642/https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/documents/declarationofinterests-applicants-pdf/>, any private, personal or commercial interests relating to an application for funding to the ESRC must be declared.

Exceptionally letters of support can be submitted as part of a proposal; provided they are essential to the successful conduct of the research (e.g., confirming access to datasets, or confirming access to or use of the facilities provided by named organisations). Letters of support can be accepted by email and must be signed and dated within six months of the proposal submission date. General letters of support that are not essential for the successful conduct of the research or do not confirm any specific contribution to the project should not be included.

### **Technical Appendix (maximum of six sides of A4 in total)**

Technical and some limited non-technical information specific to the project may also be submitted as a separate attachment under 'other' attachment. Technical information includes: glossaries of technical terms, charts, diagrams and tables which help to clarify key points within the proposal, statistical formulae, and supporting material on methodological techniques (e.g. sampling methods, survey design). Non-technical information that may be included in other attachments includes bibliographic details, summary approaches to any ethical issues and letters of support that are essential to the successful conduct of the research (e.g., access to datasets, or organisations). Such attachments must not exceed six A4 sides in total. Copies of articles, working papers or general letters of support should not be included.

### **Submit your proposal**

After all mandatory sections have been completed, the submit button will appear across the top menu bar. Please ensure that you have **completed all attachments** that are not standard mandatory attachments for Je-S but are a **mandatory requirement to be completed for this specific call**. The submit button will route your finalised proposal to the authorising facility within your organisation (as explained in the Registration section above). Please note that the proposal must be formally submitted by your organisation before **16:00 on 08 March 2022**.

### **Commissioning timetable**

- Applicant and RO webinar – w/c 07 February 2022
- Deadline for proposals – 08 March 2022
- Shortlisting panel – w/c 28 March 2022
- Interviews – w/c 25 April 2022
- Funding decision – May 2022
- Senior Strategic Fellowship role commences – June 2022

## Tracking your proposal

There are additional document maintenance actions that can be undertaken via the Document actions button. For example, the 'Show submission path' will indicate to you where in the organisation submission chain the proposal currently is located (and who holds current responsibility) – e.g., owner, approval pool, submitter pool or submitted to Council.

## Further enquiries

Enquiries relating to ESRC research funding rules and proposal procedures should be addressed to:

- Kristina Mussnug Barrett/Molly Williams/Layla Adams/Bruce Jackson  
Email: [fds.df.fellowships@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:fds.df.fellowships@esrc.ukri.org)

Enquiries relating to technical aspects of the Je-S form should be addressed to:

- Je-S helpdesk  
Email: [jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org](mailto:jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org)  
Telephone: 01793 444164

Je-S Helpdesk opening hours (excluding bank holidays and other holidays):

Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm UK Time

Fridays 8.30am to 4.30pm UK Time