ESRC Centres Competition 2023 Outline – Community Participation and Connectedness Highlight Notice Je-S guidance for applicants

Introduction

This guidance is created to assist applicants in the completion of their outline application. It is specific to this outline 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 application'](#)
- **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) jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org Telephone: 01793 444164

If you experience difficulties using Je-S or have questions regarding its use, helpdesk staff can be contacted between Monday to Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm, Fridays 8.30am - 4.30 pm ` (excluding bank holidays and other holidays). Out of hours: Please leave a voice message.

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

- **Scheme-specific guidance**
  https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/centre-in-community-participation-and-connectedness/

For further information contact:
- ESRC Centres Team
  Email: ESRC.Centres@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 applications under this scheme must be completed and submitted through UKRI's Joint Electronic Submissions system (Je-S). To be able to do this the organisation must be registered (or self-registered) for Je-S, and the applicants must hold Je-S accounts.

There are two categories of organisations from which proposals can be submitted:

- UK higher education institutions and some other independent UK research organisations are already **recognised institutions** on Je-S (including any recognised Independent Research Organisation*). A list of these organisations is available from the Je-S login page. The organisation will have set up the Je-S submission process and will therefore be available within the Je-S searches.

**IRO eligibility policy now includes Public Sector Research Establishments (PSREs). Such organisations that have been awarded eligibility status are treated as normal Research

*Organisations from an eligibility point of view. They can apply as the lead RO and will be funded under full Economic Cost (fEC) rules (i.e. 80%) whether relevant applicant is PI or Co-I status Also, please note that applicants based in UK NHS Trusts, Hospitals, Boards or GP Practices that are considering applying as the lead applicant to this call should contact the Je-S Helpdesk (jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org or 01793 444164) to ensure that their organisation is correctly registered on the Je-S system. If the organisation is not correctly Je-S registered, an e-mail request for Je-S registration will be required from the organisation. **Please allow at least six weeks for the Je-S registration process, prior to the closing date of the call**. Additionally, please ensure that all personal Je-S accounts associated with individuals expected to be named on the proposal have been requested at least seven working days before the proposal will be submitted.*
.
- **Overseas organisations** which have previously registered for Je-S to submit to international focused schemes (but would not be eligible to apply for other responsive mode schemes). A list of these organisations is available from the Je-S login page. The organisation will have previously set up the submission process and will therefore be available within the Je-S searches.

Je-S accounts for applicants

All principal and co-investigators must have a Je-S account which has been verified by a third party before they can be found in searches within the Je-S System and added as an applicant. To get you started on creating an account please refer to the [Je-S helptext](#).
Please ensure that applicants select the 'Account Type: Research Proposal' and the option: 'An Applicant on a Standard or Outline Proposal' - see [helptext](#). Je-S accounts should be created as soon as possible once the call opens to allow sufficient time for the account(s) to be verified.

Before creating your application

Research applications may **only** be made on Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) forms.

Please note that **the deadline for Research Organisation submission of proposals is 16:00 on 17 May 2023. You should allow sufficient time for completion of the Research Organisation submission process checks/ authorisation. It will not be possible to submit proposals after the set deadline.** You can view all Je-S registered organisations via page https://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/, to ascertain whether the proposed submitting organisation is registered. However, eligible HEIs are not listed on this page

Creating your proposal

To create your proposal:
1. Log in to [Je-S](#).
2. From the Home Screen, Select Documents to the left of the screen and then select New Document
3. On the Add new document screen: Select 'Call search' (highlighted at top of screen). When prompted type in the outline call title "ESRC Centres Competition 2023 Outline Community Connectedness Highlight" Outline and select from the list created. The remaining selection fields will be automatically populated.
4. Select the 'Create Document' button.

Organisation internal submission structure

If your organisation is registered it is recommended that applicants forward their application to the submitter pool at least 24 hours before the call deadline to allow sufficient time for the approval and final submission process. This does not apply to self registered organisations, who submit direct to Council. The proposal must be submitted through Je-S 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 the ESRC cannot accept responsibility for any delay which may occur at this stage. We strongly advise applicants check that they receive an email confirmation from the Je-S System confirming that the proposal has been submitted to the research council.

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.

Where an application is successful, any changes in circumstances that affect the proposal will be managed as a post-award issue.

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 (green tick).

The details below are not an 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
- 'Your Reference' should be supplied by your research organisation (consult your Research Office). If your administration cannot provide a reference, a suitable reference of your own choice will be acceptable.
- Enter Project Title (maximum limit of 150 characters)
- For Proposal Call, select "ESRC Centres Competition 2023 Outline Community Connectedness Highlight". Please note that the option will only be available once the call is live (this may have already pre-populated into the form).
- Please enter desired start date and duration of research

Investigators
Enter the name of the principal investigator (PI) and any co-investigators if applicable. Investigators may be from more than one research organisation, but the PI must be from the organisation that will administer the grant. The PI will take intellectual leadership of the project and manage the research; this individual will be the contact person for ESRC correspondence. All named investigators are responsible for ensuring that successful applications are undertaken and completed in the manner specified.

Post will outlast project
Select Yes or No. Please note, there is an expectation that the PI's post will be in place for the duration of a funded project. This means if this question is answered with "No" then a pop-up message will display, confirming that if the proposal is successful at a subsequent full call stage, it is the research organization(RO)'s responsibility to ensure the PI's post will be extended to match the project end date. By submitting the proposal, the RO is taking collective responsibility to comply with this request.

Third party data protection - Applicants must ensure that they have obtained the permission of any other person named on the proposal form (for example any Co-Investigators or Project Partners) for the provision of their personal information to UKRI and the processing of their data by UKRI for the purpose of assessing the application and management of any funding awarded.

UK co-investigators in business, civil society or government bodies
Please note that any researcher from an established business, civil society or government body based in the UK will be eligible to be listed as a **co-investigator** under ESRC Centres Competition 2023 Outline.
UKRI will fund 100% of justified costs, however, the project costs associated with these types of Co-I contributions must not exceed 30% of the overall cost of the grant (at 100% fEC). Please note that costs cannot be claimed from government bodies.

The lead research organisations of proposals which include co-investigators from the UK business sector or from third sector organisations that engage in economic activity[1] must

---

[1] Economic activity' means putting goods or services on a market. It is not necessary to make a profit to be engaged in economic activity: if others in the market offer the same good or service, it is an economic activity. Engagement in economic activity relates to an organisation's activity rather than its legal form, therefore commercial companies, non-profit organisations, charities, public bodies and research organisations can all act as enterprises, depending on the activities they are involved in.

ensure that the involvement of these organisations complies with any legislation applicable in the United Kingdom on or after 1 January 2021 that regulates the granting by a public sector body of any advantage which threatens to or actually distorts competition in the United Kingdom and/or any other country or countries ("UK Subsidy Control Framework"). Under UKRI grants terms and conditions RGC 2.3.1 it is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to ensure their use of the grant complies with such legislation and any breach of the UK Subsidy Control framework (or EU State Aid law if applicable) may require UKRI to recover some or all Grant funding, together with interest. For further information please refer to the BEIS guidance for Subsidy Control.

Proposals which include co-investigators from third sector organisations that are deemed **not** to engage in economic activity must provide evidence of this status in the Justification of Resources section of the proposal form.

On receipt of the proposal, eligibility of business, civil society or government body will not normally need to be checked if it is reasonably clear that they are appropriate to conduct the work. Where there is doubt, checks will be carried out should a positive funding decision be taken.

It is recommended that potential UK co-investigators from business or civil society should create Je-S accounts as soon as possible once the call opens to allow at least 7 working days for the account(s) to be verified.

The costs that can be claimed for business, third sector and government body Co-Is is dependent upon the organisational sector and whether or not the organisation is engaged in economic activity, as set out in the <u>UK business, third sector or government body co-investigator guidance</u>. The lead research organisation must ensure that any costs they request are compliant with UK Subsidy Control Regulations and evidence this in the Justification of Resources.

All project costs relating to UK business or civil society co-investigators must be prefixed as 'UK Co-I's business or civil society costs' and must be entered into the costs section on Je-S as follows:

Co-investigator 'time' allocation must be entered under the standard Co-I section, but the salary rate must be entered as one. The co-investigator salary costs must then be entered under 'Other Directly Incurred Costs', as should all other claimed staff salaries and related costs associated with the UK Co-I's business or civil society body.

All costs must be specifically justified, and applicants must explain why such costs are required to achieve the aims of the research project. Applicants must also state clearly in the 'Justification of Resources' attachment of the Je-S form which costs in the proposal relate to the UK co-investigator's business, civil society or government body. Please note that UK co-investigator's business or civil society salary costs should only be claimed where clear justification is provided as to why this cost cannot be met by the UK co-investigator's business or civil society organisation.

Host/submitting institutions are reminded that for calls that encourage non academic Co-I's, that a suitable support structure should be in place to assist such individuals in registering for Je-S accounts and contributing to the research case.

The ESRC 'Business, Third Sector and Government Body' Co-I policy does not apply to eligible PSRE organisations (see page 3 for eligibility ruling). Such organisations can apply under the standard fEC rules.

International co-investigators
Please note that any academic researcher (PhD or equivalent) from an established International Research Organisation of comparable standing to an UKRI-eligible UK research organisation will be eligible to be listed as an international co-investigator under this call. Applicants are reminded that international costs must not exceed 30% of the full 100% fEC cost of the grant. However, the total of these costs and the costs for UK co-investigators in business, civil society of government bodies must not exceed 30% of the full 100% fEC cost of the grant.

It is recommended that potential overseas based co-investigators should contact the ESRC Centres team in the first instance if their organisation is not selectable as part of the Je-S person account registration process.

Applicants must also state clearly in the 'Justification of Resources' section of the Je-S form which costs in the application relate to international research organisations.

Objectives
The objectives of the proposed project should be listed in order of priority, and should be those that the investigators would wish UKRI to use as the basis for evaluation of work upon completion of any project grant awarded. *(4000 character limit)*

Resource summary
The outline call will be subject to the full Economic Cost (fEC) funding model. If successful, UKRI will meet 80% of the full economic costs on proposals submitted and the host institution is expected to support the remaining 20%.

All costs expected to be covered by UKRI funding should be included in this section; however, it is not expected that financial details will be precise at this stage. All prices and salaries should be calculated at current rates. Costs will need to be broken down as described in the ['Resource Summary' section of the Je-S help text for outline proposals](#).

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. *(4000 character limit)*

Project partners
If you have secured a commitment from another funding body or organisation to provide additional resources for this project, please give details of the organisation.

Notes and comments
Please note that this section is purely for use in drafting the proposal. Any notes/comments added will *not* be included in data submitted with this proposal.

Attachments

Attachments should be uploaded as PDF (rather than word) to ensure automated conversion does not cause problems with maximum length. Attachments should be in font size 11 with 2cm margins.

The mandatory Je-S attachments for ESRC Centres Competition 2023 Outline are:
- Case for support
- Justification of resources
- Institutional letter of support
- CVs.

Case for support *(maximum of six sides of A4)*

Please refer to 'What we are looking for' section of the call specific guidance for requirement of a centre.

The case for support should be a self-contained description of the proposed project, and should not depend on additional information.

The case for support should:
- introduce the topic of research and explain its academic and wider context
- identify the overall aims of the proposed centre
- describe how the centre's proposed programme will respond to the aims and objectives of the funding opportunity
- detail the methodology to be used and justify this choice
- explain why the proposed centre is of sufficient timeliness and novelty to warrant consideration for funding
- explain how the project will be managed.

Applicants **must also** include the following information in the case for support:
- Plans for developing capability including career and skills development
- Evidence of user engagement, with plans for engaging, collaborating with, and meeting the evidence needs of core audiences
- Plans for maximising use of existing data where appropriate
- A brief management plan including leadership and management of a proposed centre and its activities, demonstrating consideration of EDI and environmental sustainability
- Using up to one page of the six sides in the 'Case for Support' attachment, applicants are required to include a logic model. A logic model should demonstrate the changes the Centre intends to bring about to respond to their challenge, and how and why their programme of research will bring about those changes.

Please refer to the Je-S helptext for further guidance.

Justification of resources *(maximum of one side of A4)*

This statement should be used to justify the resources required to undertake the research project. Explain why the indicated resources are needed, taking account of the nature and complexity of the research proposed.

Proposals which include co-investigators from third sector organisations that are deemed **not** to engage in economic activity must provide evidence of this status within the Justification of Resources statement.

Please refer to the [Je-S helptext](#) for further guidance.

CVs *(maximum of two sides of A4 for each)*
Summary CVs for the PI, co-applicants and named researchers may be attached. It should contain basic information about education, employment history and academic responsibilities.

Institutional Letter of Support (1 A4 page max)
UKRI will be looking for evidence of long-term institutional commitment, both strategic and financial, to the proposed Centre application through the provision of grant-associated parallel activities and capacity-building. Our current funding model expects the host RO to contribute a minimum amount to demonstrate the UKRI/RO joint strategic commitment to the centre over the longer term.

This funding model is intended to help Centres establish a self-sustaining funding model beyond the life of UKRI funding and, in particular, establish a new relationship between UKRI and ROs, in recognition of mutual benefits, in supporting these high-profile and high-impact Centres of excellence over a longer period. The Centres policy explicitly aims to embed Centres in the higher education funding landscape and host ROs are expected to play an important part in providing this longer term strategic and financial support to the Centre beyond the life of the centre grant. In particular, there will be a normal expectation that, if successful, the host RO will plan to provide the minimum RO contribution required (25% of the full economic costs of the proposed centre grant) for the centre to apply for transition funding towards the end of the centre grant.

We recognise that the centre competition grant already requires an RO contribution of 20% (as UKRI funds 80% of the full economic costs of the proposal) and we would encourage ROs to offer commitments appropriate to their plans for the Centre.

Some examples of institutional commitment may include (but are not limited to):
- studentships
- equipment
- refurbishment of facilities to specifically support the centre activities
- seminar and summer schools
- administration of the Centre
- the appointment of new lectureship posts
- support through the institution's existing knowledge exchange, impact and/or international strategies

UKRI would particularly welcome commitments to cover costs that are not eligible under the Centres scheme. If successful, the contribution to the centre's outcomes and impact of these additional strategic RO commitments will be reviewed as part of the SRCs standard investment management during the grant, and through the Transition review process on application for transition funding.

Outline proposals must include a substantial Institutional Letter of Support from the Pro-Vice chancellor of research (or equivalent role) from the lead organisation that confirms the RO's (and any Partner ROs') commitment to the Centre application.

If you intend to apply as an existing centre, Please note this in the institutional letter of support, stating the name of the existing centre and grant reference.

List of publications (optional)
The bibliography for references cited in the proposal only should be attached. Please note publications not cited in the proposal should not be added here. A list of the most relevant and recent publications by the applicant should be included in the applicant CV.

Proposal classifications
The information provided in this section will be used by us to identify appropriate reviewers.

It would therefore assist us greatly if you could populate the Research Area/Qualifiers/Keyword sections to provide a comprehensive description of your area of expertise.

The Proposal classification area is a harmonised (and expanded) structure agreed with all UKRI councils. Therefore, if your area of expertise crosses the remits of more than one council you will now only need to provide the information once.

Submit your proposal

Please ensure that you have completed all attachments that are mandatory requirements against this specific call, although they may not be standard mandatory attachments on Je-S. After all mandatory sections have been completed, the submit button will appear across the top menu bar. 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 17 May 2023.**

<Commissioning timetable (*if applicable*)>
- Call for proposals issued   February 2023
- Deadline for submitting outline proposals   16.00 on 17 May 2023
- Shortlisting meeting for outline proposals   July 2023
- Full call open (invitation only)   August 2023
- Full call close   November 2023
- Decisions to applicants   May 2024
- Grants commence   October 2024

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) - eg owner, approval pool, submitter pool, or submitted to Council.

Further enquiries

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

- ESRC Centres Team
  Email: ESRC.Centres@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
  Telephone: 01793 444164
  Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm and Fridays 8.30am to 4.30pm (excluding bank holidays and other holidays)