

Building a Secure and Resilient World (BSRW) Research and Coordination Hub

FAQs and Additional Guidance

Please note that this document will be revised and expanded as necessary

1 Where should queries about this funding opportunity be sent?

All queries regarding this call should be sent to: support@funding-service.ukri.org

2 How many hubs will be funded through this call?

Only one hub will be funded.

3 Must each application cover all five BSRW sub-themes?

Yes, the coordination function of the hub requires all five BSRW sub-categories to be included within the hub's wider remit. However, it is recognised that some sub-themes may generate more research interest than others, so the coverage does not necessarily need to be equally spread. Part of the hub's role is to explore where the appetite for research and innovation into security and resilience is strongest and most needed.

4 What is the starting date for the hub?

The successful Hub must start before 1 February 2024

5 Can someone be included on more than one application to this call?

Individuals can only be Principal Investigator (PI) on one application, but PIs may be listed as Co-Investigator (Co-I) on a different application.

6 Can applications involve multiple institutions/organisations, or do you expect single-institution bids (but spanning different departments)?

Either is acceptable: both single and multi-partner bids are eligible.

7 Is there an expectation about the number of researchers and staff funded by the hub?

There are no fixed expectations about the size of the hub's team. It is up to applicants to decide what they feel is the optimum number to achieve their aims, and to provide justification within their submission.

8 Are researchers based outside of the UK eligible to be funded through the hub?

Any International Co-Investigators should adhere to UKRI's [International Co-Investigators guidance](#). There is no specific minimum/maximum funding cap within this opportunity for international costs.

9 Should the application use UKRI's new award roles?

As UKRI's revised list of grant/award roles were introduced after the launch of the BSRW Hub funding opportunity, applicants should continue to use the previous role titles (Principal Investigator, Co-Investigator, Researcher, etc) provided within the application form.

10 How many project partners and collaborating organisations should be included in the application?

Whilst UKRI expects the successful hub to include active participation from project partners and collaborating organisations, there is no mandatory requirement regarding the minimum/maximum number. It is up to applicants to decide what they feel is the optimum number to achieve their aims, and to provide justification within their submission.

11 How much direct research would you anticipate the lead organisation completing themselves on this call?

It is up to each applicant to make the case for the level of direct research they believe is appropriate for the hub to undertake. UKRI does not have a predetermined view on how this aspect of the funding opportunity should be delivered.

12 Can the hub fund MA or doctoral/PhD studies?

No, funds from this opportunity *cannot* be used to support MA or doctoral research projects.

13 Can the application include images or hyperlinks?

No, it is not currently possible to include images within applications. All relevant information should be included within the application text without the need for including external links.

14 How novel and innovative can the development and implementation of devolved funding be?

It is up to applicants to decide how devolved funding will be spent and to provide narrative justification. At this stage it is recognised that devolved spending plans are likely to be provisional and will respond to events across the duration of the Hub.

15 Does UKRI have a preference for UK regional representation in the core hub team?

Whilst there are no specific regional requirements for the hub, UKRI is required to consider the UK Government's [levelling up agenda](#) within all funding decisions.

16 How will other awards and projects funded through the BSRW theme collaborate and liaise with the hub?

A key part of the hub's coordination role will be reaching out and collaborating with existing research projects within the wider BSRW theme. UKRI will help facilitate this process.

17 What is the role envisaged for the international partners?

It is up to each applicant to define what (if any) role there may be for international partners within their proposal. All international spending must adhere to standard UKRI [international funding policies and guidelines](#).

18 To what extent will applications be permitted to fund international components (such as collaboration with international co-investigators and research teams based outside the UK)?

It is up to each applicant to define what (if any) role there may be for international partners within their proposal. All international spending must adhere to standard UKRI [international funding policies and guidelines](#).

19 What are the policies surrounding funding for projects involving EU and international partners?

Standard UKRI [international funding guidelines](#) will apply to all non-UK based partner organisations, research staff and recipients of devolved funding.

20 Can applications address international research questions outside of the UK, such as ODA research in lower and middle income countries (LMIC)?

Within the broad context of the five BSRW sub-themes, it is up to each application to define what (if any) scope there is to address research issues in overseas geographies/LMICs. Whilst this is not an ODA funding opportunity, there is certainly scope for applicants to address topics and themes that intersect with ODA concerns, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

21 What should be the balance of disciplines across virtual/physical environments and the human/societal/economic aspects? Which aspect should take more of a centre stage?

Applications are expected to take a 'human-centred approach' but it is up to applicants to decide how that is interpreted within the aims, ambitions and scope of their project. UKRI does not have a predetermined view on how this aspect of the funding opportunity should be framed.

22 Is a part or all of the £75 million allotted to the BSRW theme to be spent through the hub?

The successful Hub can apply for funding of up to £5.5M which is drawn from the wider BSRW £75m funding allocation. The hub will *not* have responsibility for the entire £75m BSRW budget. However, outputs and recommendations from the Hub may influence how UKRI decides to allocate future BSRW funding.

23 Is there an expectation for financial contributions to be made by host organisation?

In line with standard UKRI FEC guidelines, the research organisation that hosts the hub will be expected to contribute 20% of the non-Exceptions costs. (See UKRI [FEC guidelines](#))

24 What are UKRI's expectations for external partner funding contributions?

It is expected that the hub will secure additional and in-kind funding from partner organisations, but no specific targets have been set.

25 Is it possible to seek funding for Post-Doctoral Research Assistants (PDRA) working in the hub?

Yes, funding for PDRAs is an eligible cost.

26 As this call is led by the AHRC, is there a requirement that the research/work must fall within the remit of the arts and humanities in order to be eligible/successful?

This funding opportunity is being delivered by the AHRC on behalf of UKRI. Whilst there are no specific individual disciplinary requirements, applications are expected to be framed in a multi-disciplinary way that encourages contributions from across the entire breadth of UKRI's research and innovation community.

27 Where will the peer-reviewers/assessors for this call be drawn from?

Applications will be peer-reviewed by an assessment panel. Panel members will be selected on the basis of their subject specialisation and will be drawn from the breadth of UKRI's research community (including UKRI's interdisciplinary peer-review college). Each UKRI Research Council and Innovate UK will collaborate in the panel member selection process.

28 Does the application process include a PI response stage?

No, there will not be a PI response stage as applications will be peer-reviewed directly at an assessment panel.

29 What is your expectation on sustenance beyond the funding period?

At this point no commitment has been made to support the hub beyond its initial five-year duration. However, depending on how the hub's activities, outputs and collaborations develop, it is possible that additional funding may be provided to extend the hub beyond its initial funded period.

30 Are there any best-practice guidelines on how UKRI would like the devolved funding to operate?

At this time there are no case studies or best practice guidelines for devolved funding. However, UKRI will liaise with the successful applicant to discuss how best to approach this element of the project.

31 Is there a maximum number of devolved projects that can be funded by the hub?

No, it is up to each applicant to determine the optimum number of devolved projects it believes will best deliver the aims and ambitions of the hub.

32 Is there a maximum limit to the proportion of the budget that can be used for devolved funding?

There is no set upper limit for the amount of devolved funding. However, UKRI will expect to see evidence that sufficient funds remain to ensure that the hub's non-devolved funding responsibilities (administration, coordination, direct research, etc) are properly covered.

33 Can institutions/investigators involved in the hub also be involved in research activities covered by the devolved funding or will they be excluded?

In principle, institutions and individuals involved with the hub will be eligible to apply for devolved funding. The hub will, however, be expected to ensure that all processes used to award devolved funding are thoroughly scrutinised and demonstrably show an open and fair process that avoids any conflict of interest. Detailed devolved funding guidelines will be given to the successful hub to provide more clarity on issues of this sort.

34 My university is concerned that running devolved funding calls will be a staff-time intensive activity.

UKRI recognise that running funding calls is a complex and time-consuming tasks. As such it is expected that the hub will use the funds provided through this call (from non-devolved funds) to cover the salary costs of administration staff to ensure the proper management of the devolved projects.

35 Can funds allocated to devolved funding include administration and staff costs?

No, all administration costs (including running and administering the devolved funding) must come from the non-devolved portion of the funds. The intention is that a minimum of 40% of the hub's total budget must be channelled directly to the devolved funded projects.

36 Can administrative positions associated with the devolved funding be recovered at 100% FEC, or is this only the projects commissioned themselves?

Only the actual funds allocated to fund devolved awards can be claimed as Exception costs. Any related administration costs will normally fall under the UKRI's FEC guidelines and will in most cases be expected to incur a 20% contribution from the host research organisation.

37 Can the devolved funding be cascaded to businesses via open calls?

Yes, provided this is done through an open, transparent and competitive process, and clear R&I benefits can be articulated. All business recipients of funding must meet [IUK's eligibility criteria including the Subsidy Control Act 2022](#).

38 What sort of engagement might you expect between existing UKRI investments and the Hub?

At application stage only broad synergies need be referred to. However, the successful hub will be expected to engage across the broader BSRW-related landscape and build active collaborations wherever this will prove fruitful.

39 To what extent is the hub expected to be stand alone and self-contained, and what extent directly linked to other BSRW funding programmes?

Whilst the hub is expected to provide some stand-alone research capacity, it also has a key responsibility to provide a coordination function across the BSRW-related funding landscape.

40 Are there any examples of how devolved funding has been used within existing UKRI investments?

The model used in this call is new, so there are no exact parallels with existing UKRI investments. However, it does include elements (such as devolved funding) that have been used in previous programmes such as Network Plus and UKRI Policy and Evidence Centres. Details of these can be found on UKRI's website and Gateway to Research.

41 What sort of matchmaking might UKRI do after submission and assessment of the applications?

At this stage UKRI has no plans to hold matchmaking or networking events for applicants. However, UKRI will support the successful hub to establish networks across the wider BSRW-funded research landscape.

