



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council

Impact & Process Evaluation of AHRC Responsive Mode Follow on Funding

Final Evaluation Report

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The AHRC FoF Scheme: Driving Impact Beyond Academia

The **Follow-on Funding (FoF) scheme** was launched in 2010 to support Arts and Humanities (A&H) researchers capitalise on the sometimes-unforeseen impact emerging from their grants. Since 2015, the AHRC FoF scheme has awarded a total of 304 grants worth a total of £21.3m.

The FoF scheme sits within a funding environment in which there is an increasing desire to generate ‘impact’ (beyond academic impact) from publicly funded research.

FoF grants intend to support impact in different ways

The FoF scheme includes support for classic commercialisation activities, but also funds knowledge exchange, public engagement and co-creation, which often requires creative ways to work with stakeholders through media, exhibitions, performances, community-based projects, and other methods.

Grants are based on previous or currently funded research (across UKRI) in which impact activities **could not have previously been foreseen or expected at the initial research proposal stage**.

The scheme has two strands for applicants:

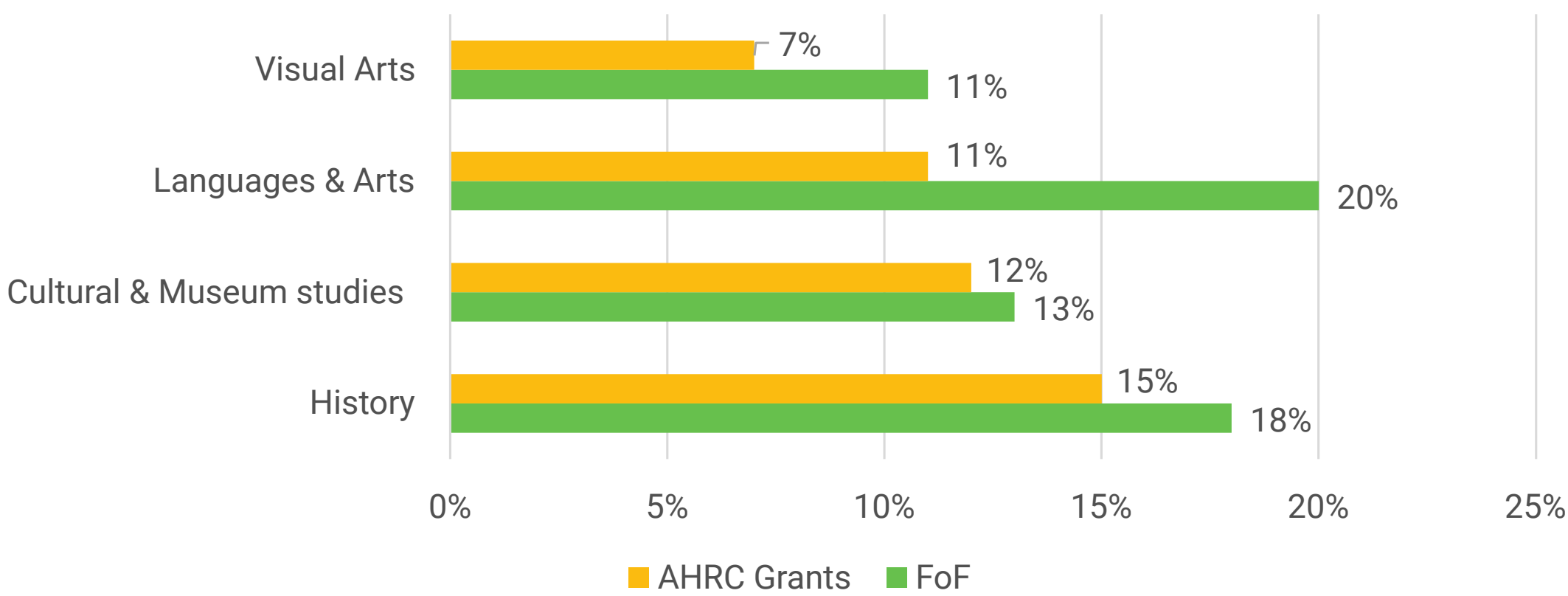
- Small grants (<£30k) for shorter or higher-risk activities
- Large grants (between £30k and £100k) for up to a maximum of one year of activities

Since 2015, the scheme has awarded mostly large grants (88%), with an average grant size of £76k. The remaining proportion of smaller grants awarded are, on average, £23k.

Most grants have been awarded to higher education institutes (HEIs) (98%), but three grants have also been awarded to research and technology organisations (RTOs) (e.g. the Science Museum Group).

FoF was designed to be open and flexible across subjects and disciplines

In practice, the FoF scheme has attracted mostly A&H researchers, showcasing the demand for this type of support among the community. Most recipients (**98%, n=111**) previously held an AHRC grant. Compared to broader AHRC grants, FoF has provided more support to Language & Arts, History, and Visual Arts. The four most frequently supported disciplines are compared to wider AHRC funding patterns below.



The most frequently supported grant activities include:

- Participation in an activity or workshop or similar (43%)
- A talk or a presentation (30%)
- A formal working group expert panel or online publication (8%)

and have supported collaboration and engagement (within the sector and across different disciplines) between academics and charities, co-operatives, industry, GLAM, nonprofits and other cultural practitioners. **FoF grants have had a significant focus on engaging schools and public audiences. Compared to the original UKRI grant and other AHRC grants, FoF grantees are more frequently engaging these audiences (when compare against AHRC investment).** (See slide 4).

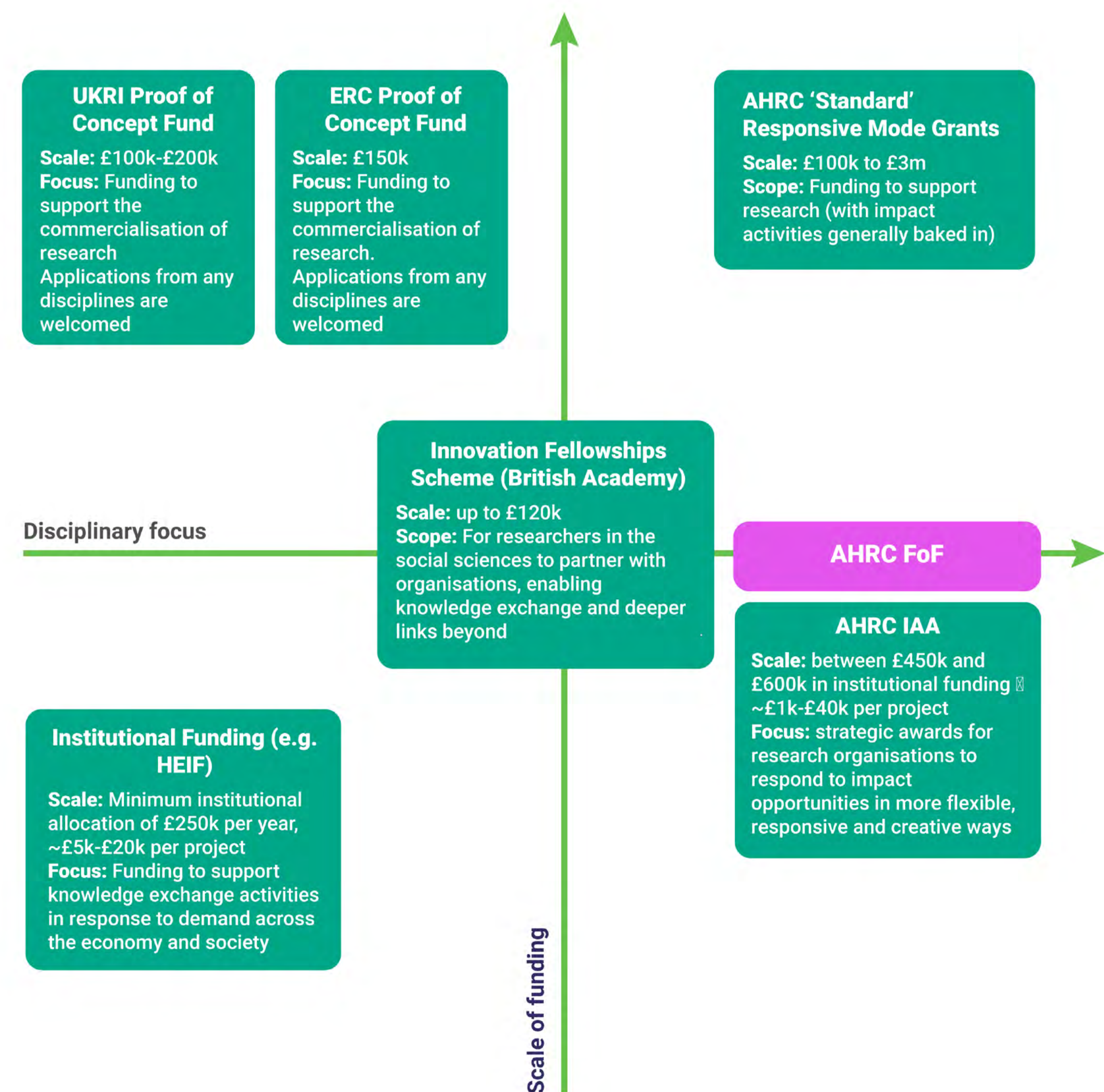
FoF occupies an important place in the funding landscape

FoF’s singular focus on impact within the A&H is distinct

- FoF is unique, as it occupies a distinct space within the wider R&I ecosystem and is in line with AHRC strategic objectives (coherence).
- 72% (n=69) of surveyed award holders strongly agreed that FoF’s focus, design and scale make it distinctive within the funding landscape.¹
- Although HEIF and FoF have a similar focus, the key distinction lies in their scope: while FoF is tailored specifically to A&H researchers, HEIF is discipline agnostic. This can create a competitive disadvantage for A&H researchers, who must compete for funding alongside disciplines such as STEM, where research impacts are often more linear and easier to quantify. As a result, even when HEIF is technically available, it may not be readily accessible or well-suited to the nature of A&H research. For those without access to HEIF, FoF becomes an even more critical source of support.
- The allocation of HEIF is based on a formula that considers in large part income from activities such as contract research, consultancy and IP (as well as number of academic staff and research quality). This model tends to favour institutions with strong commercial or STEM-oriented partnerships. Funding for A&H-focused institutions is variable. For example, the University of the Arts London secured £3.46 million in HEIF funding.² Conversely, the University for the Creative Arts (who successfully secured FoF funding) did not receive any HEIF allocation in 2024-2025. Some institutions have internally allocated funding to A&H researchers (e.g. the University of Sussex), but this is rare and requires specific institutional commitments.

The scale of FoF funding enables researchers to pursue more ambitious projects, with higher potential impact

FoF grants are significantly larger than typical institutional awards (four times greater, on average) and nearly double the size of IAA-funded grants. Researchers and stakeholders see this scale as critical for achieving deeper, longer-term impact. However, they also noted that smaller funding pots can be more agile and better suited for targeted, short-term needs.



1. 116 unique grant recipients responded to the survey, with a 39% survey response rate (including complete and partial answers)
2. Research England grant allocations to HEPS 2024 to 2025

FoF has leveraged £193m in further funding, higher than comparator schemes

FoF grants are more successful at leveraging further funding than comparator grants

FoF grants have leveraged a total of £193m in further funding (2015-2024), which is more than comparator grants (the original grant, other strategic and responsive mode AHRC grants and AHRC IAA awards). This is significantly more funding leveraged (per £1m of AHRC investment) than comparators and suggests grants are supporting high-potential outcomes with wider relevance for audiences.

Funding	From AHRC FoF grants	From original UKRI grants*	From Strategic AHRC grants**	From Responsive Mode AHRC grants**	From AHRC IAA awards
Total funding leveraged	£193m	£144m	£35m	£49m	£5.8m
Average funding leveraged (per project)	£2.7m	£0.76m	£0.18m	£0.19m	N/A
Funding leveraged per £1m of AHRC invested	£9.2m	£1.78m	£2.02m	£3.33m	£0.59m

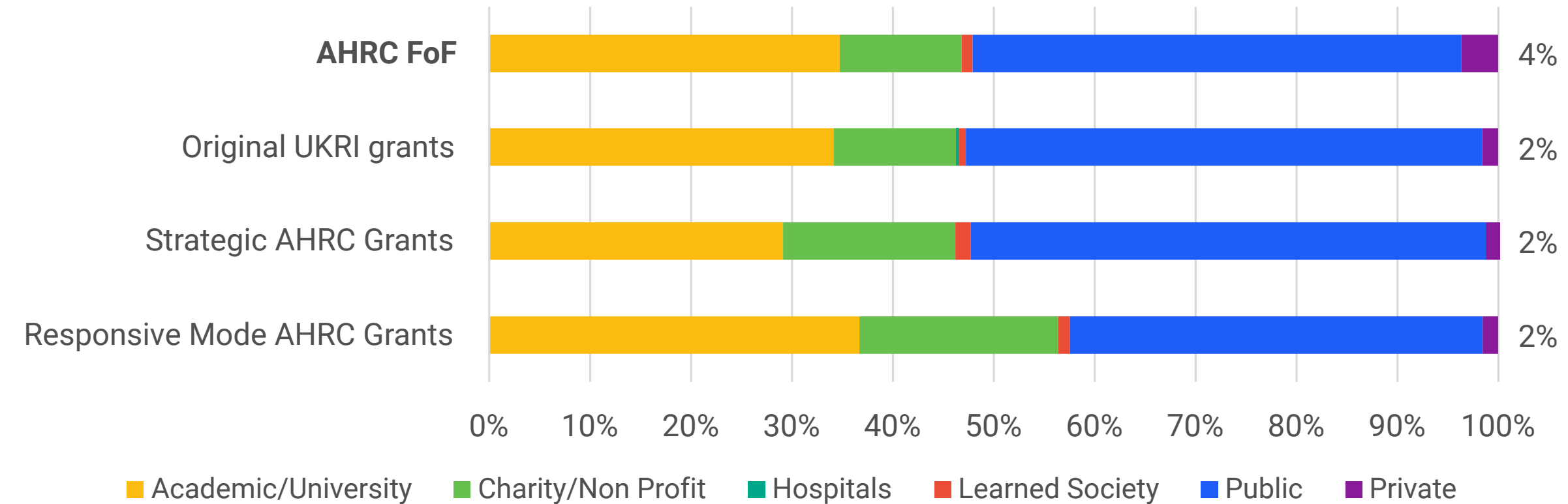


Case Study: New Leadership Programmes

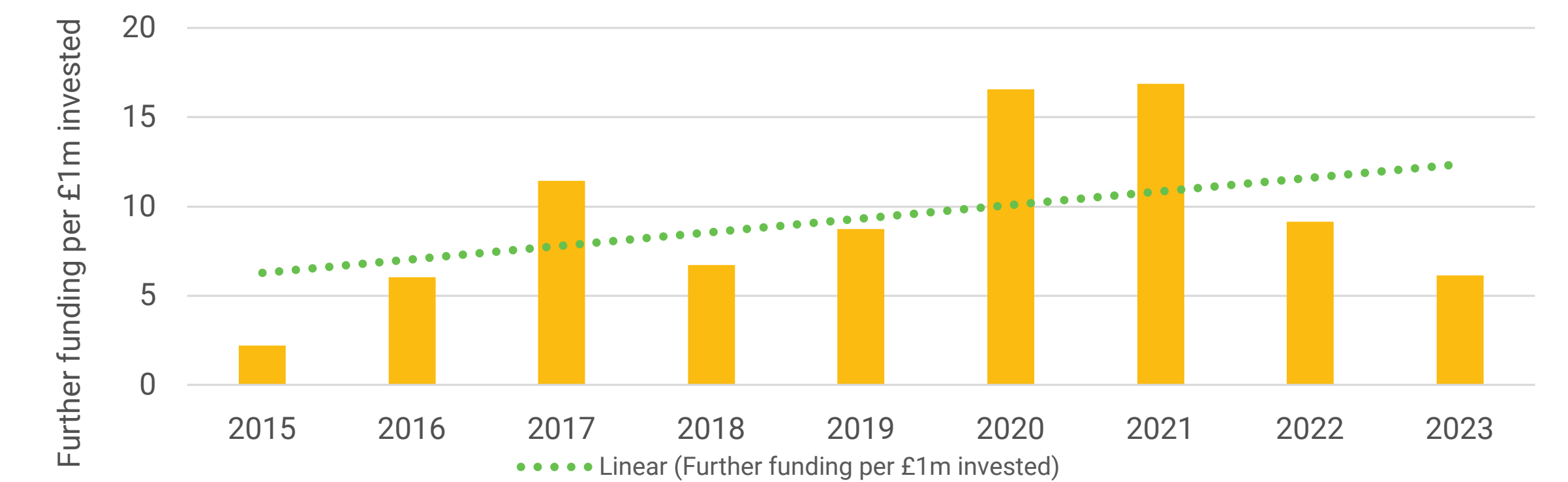
Changing the Story (the original UKRI grant) led to three FOF awards that deepened academic-NGO collaboration, notably with Hope and Homes for Children. These projects co-developed a leadership programme for Deaf youth and piloted new educational models, improving partners’ capabilities. Insights culminated in a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (2025-2027) worth a value of £270k to co-develop youth accountability tools, engaging non-academic audiences and influencing child welfare policy in South Africa and beyond through inclusive, youth-led service design.

University of Leeds | Paul Cooke | Multiple FoF awards

FoF grants more often leverage private funding (but public funding still dominates)+



FoF funds have steadily increased further funding leveraged per £1m invested



* noting that the original grant is likely to report FoF as a source of further funding
** other AHRC grants between £30k and £100k for direct comparison with FoF grants
+ comparing further funding reported by grant holders via GtR/ResearchFish

Five main types of outputs & outcomes have emerged from FoF funding

Most prevalent types of outputs & outcomes are knowledge exchange, engagement activities and capacity building

Of grant beneficiaries reporting outputs and outcomes:



1

New or strengthened partnerships and collaborations

70% of award holders (n=79) reported outputs and outcomes relating to **collaboration and partnerships** for individual grant holders and their organisations. These related to new collaborations between academia and other organisations (charities, schools and industry) at the local, national and international scale.



Example: Grant holders at the University of Bristol reported working with **international partners** in Australia, Italy and Ethiopia to host augmented reality exhibitions to increase the impact of their "Transnationalising Modern Languages" work.

30% of award holders (n=34) also reported outputs and outcomes for the wider community. These related to collaborations which have developed a renewed sense of purpose in both the wider A&H community and collaborators.



Five main types of outputs & outcomes have emerged from FoF funding

2 Engagement with wider audiences (beyond academia)

65% of award holders (n=75) engaged with teachers, educators and schools as part of their research, providing inputs to student training opportunities and to curricula materials.

37% of award holders (n=42) reported benefits related to engagement and community audiences. This includes new or increased visitors for the GLAM sector and heritage sites (which could in turn lead to economic benefits for those organisations).



Example: The **Science Museum Group** brought to life rarely heard historical instruments and their ‘lost’ sounds, attracting new visitors and performing Time Loop at the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford

3 Improved skills and capabilities

63% of award holders (n=73) reported **skills and capability outputs and outcomes**. These mainly related to the training and upskilling of grant holder and partner staff, particularly in new professional skills (e.g. leadership, managing cross-sectoral projects). Co-production skills and capabilities (e.g collaborative communication) were also reported, with leads working alongside non-academic partners throughout all project stages.

46% of award holders (n=53) reported outputs and outcomes for the wider community. Through knowledge exchange activities, members of the community better understood the resources available to study and better understand local issues.



Example: The **University of Birmingham** cultivated skills in writing and delivering powerful speeches in a theatre company. Project leads improved skills in co-production with non-HEIs. Participants were upskilled in public speaking skills and reported improved confidence as a result.

4 Influencing policy and wider society

27% of award holders (n=31) reported outputs and outcomes relating to policy and the wider society. Most (90%) involved direct interactions- workshops, public talks, training sessions- with policy officials or contributing to policy documents and resources. Over half of these projects also reported increased or improved public engagement through co-production and engagement activities. Additionally, three projects supported a change in attitudes amongst the local community.



Example: Bangor University’s project uncovering travel writing from European travellers in Wales reported influencing local tourism strategy and policy as a result of engagement with new audiences. Support to local tourism could in turn generate longer term economic benefits (visitor economy).

5 Innovation and economic outcomes

26% of award holders (n=29) of projects reported outputs and outcomes relating to innovation and the economy. Most highlight **long-term benefits for innovation and the economy, including skills training to strengthen the workforce**. Some projects also explored commercialisation opportunities leading to new spin-outs as a result, that built on previous grant funding.

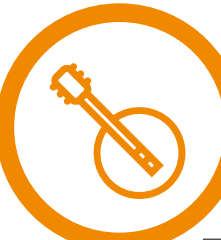


Example: **Royal Holloway, University of London** reported a sell-out event during the Coventry City of Culture; a professional theatre production that involved ex-homeless participants. Along with economic benefits from the ticket sales, participant benefit included re-thinking how to tell stories that are valued by diverse audiences and stakeholders.

FoF grants also contributed to wider impacts

FoF grants have contributed to REF Impact Case Studies

One measure of the reach and impact of grants funded through the FoF scheme is the degree to which they are referenced in 2021 REF Impact Case Studies. Such case studies, by definition, focus on the most outstanding examples of impact. **28% (n=84) of AHRC FoF grants are referenced in 2021 REF Impact Case Studies.** This is a good result (although is challenging to benchmark). One of these projects, and a focus of a case study for this evaluation, is presented below.



Case Study: CHAGOS

The CHAGOS: Cultural Heritage Across Generations worked with the Chagossian community in Mauritius and the UK to preserve, revive and promote endangered cultural heritage threatened by forced displacement. The project promoted community empowerment, skill development, and cultural pride while also influencing policy and international discourse. The project has contributed to the Mauritian government’s nomination of local music to the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

University of Edinburgh | CHAGOS – Cultural Heritage Across Generations

Limited evidence of commercialisation outcomes

Most interviewees stated that commercialisation activities are not a central focus for FoF award holders. If commercialisation is a desired outcome for AHRC within the FoF scheme, interviewees shared that they believe it will require more dedicated support structures: business advice, training and cultural shifts.

Interviewees also shared that the language of commercialisation doesn’t resonate across the sector. Some A&H researchers may not see their role to commercialise knowledge, especially when their work is rooted in public good or heritage.

A&H can create real economic value – but often in indirect or long-term ways

Despite the challenges relating to commercialisation, many interviewees pointed to the value of A&H research in drawing visitors to a location through cultural attractions (e.g. festivals and historical landmarks) and in turn generating local revenue. These kinds of impacts are diffuse, delayed and difficult to measure, but are important economic benefits.



Case Study: Maritime Trail App

AHRC funding supported the scanning of Irish heritage fishing vessels to create 3D images, mapped onto locations around Ireland and linked with stories and existing audio tracks to create a Maritime Trail App. While the app’s commercial potential has since been supported separately by a small InvestNI grant for business skills training, the primary economic aim is to boost tourism, increase museum and site visits, and support local food, retail, and craft sectors across coastal Ireland.

University of Ulster | Improving International Tourist and Local Visitor Experience along the Coast of Ireland: Maritime Trail app

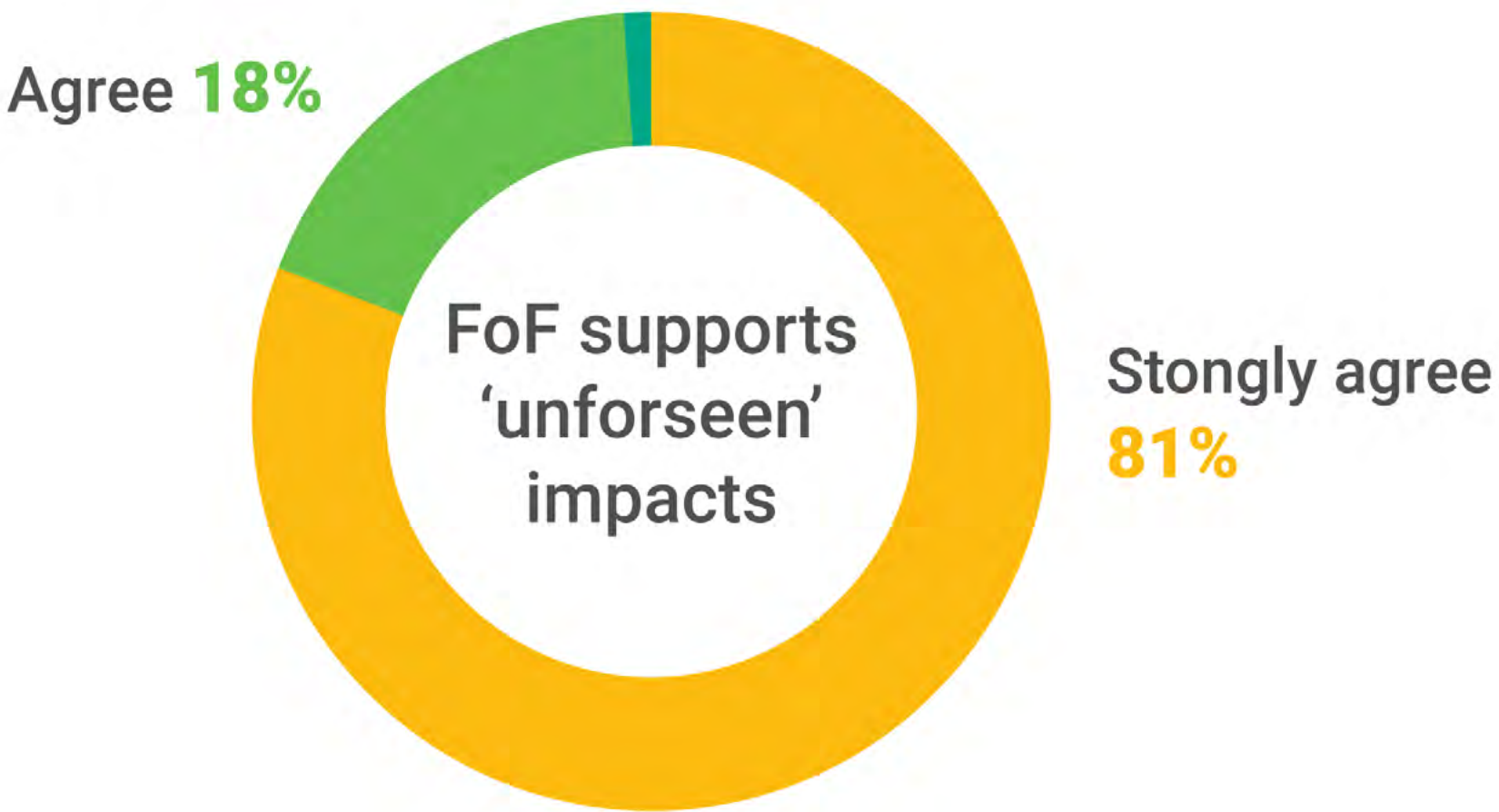
Laura Jeffery, “Sega dancing performance,” CHAGOS: Cultural Heritage Across Generations, accessed January 22, 2025



Funding Unforeseen Impacts: A Key Aspect of FoF, Achieved to Some Extent

A key aim of FoF funding is to support **unforeseen pathways to impact**, rather than impact activities that are already captured in the original UKRI grant.

Most grant holders agree that FoF has supported unforeseen pathways to impact



81% of award holders (n=79) strongly agreed that FoF was supporting unforeseen pathways to impact and that this aim was widely understood among researchers. Rather than simply extending their original research projects, many described **co-developing proposals with external partners**.

Other interviewees flagged that the term 'unforeseen' can feel ambiguous. While the exploratory nature of FoF is celebrated, interviewees shared that **there's a need to recognise and amplify work that builds directly on prior research**. They suggested that future schemes might cater for both planned and unplanned impact emerging from grant funding.

Wider stakeholders provide a more nuanced view of the ability to fund unforeseen impacts

Some interviewees disagreed. They suggested that grant holders were often encouraged to "play up" the extent to which the work was unforeseen to strengthen their applications. Additionally, some IAA award holders noted they viewed FoF as complementary to existing impact funding, highlighting that they had used FoF to scale up existing IAA work, and less for funding unforeseen work.

Others suggested that the communication and branding of the fund as "follow on" inadvertently reinforces the idea of continuing existing research. They suggested that clearer language and examples or case studies of funding will help researchers better understand the scope of "unforeseen" impacts and ensure that this aligns with AHRC expectations.

"Unforeseen pathways to impact is a grey area. It's unclear to what extent the fund largely supports activities for broader dissemination purposes as opposed to truly unforeseen activities"
Ecosystem stakeholder

"[The scheme is] hugely beneficial for those projects where unforeseen impact work is evident. There is no other scheme that supports this kind of work."
Grant holder

Aligning FoF and IAA could unlock greater impact for A&H research

Beginning in April 2022, UKRI brought together impact acceleration account funding (IAA) from five research councils (including AHRC), with a harmonised application process. The aim of IAAs is to:

- Strengthen engagement with users
- Support, develop and foster strategic partnerships for knowledge exchange and impact
- Provide early-stage support for progressing research outputs towards the next stages in the impact pipeline (proof of concept, commercialisation, market validation)

Since the introduction of IAAs, nearly half of FoF funding has gone to an organisation with an IAA award

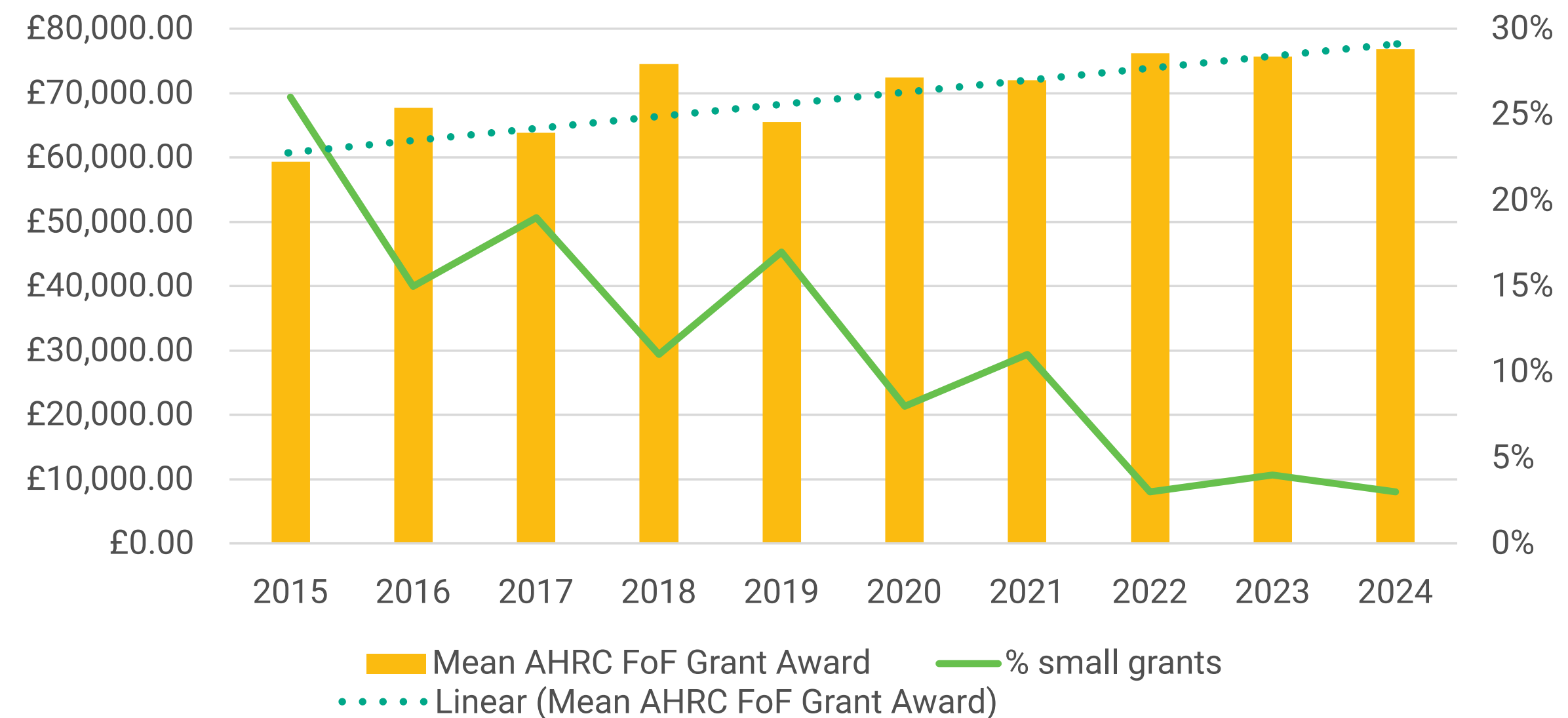
Before the introduction of IAAs, organisations that currently hold IAA awards received 14% of FoF funding. Since the introduction of IAA awards, their share has tripled to 42%. This could signal both an opportunity to better align the two schemes and also suggests a concentration of funding – fewer organisations are receiving a bigger share of FoF funding.



Access to an IAA award changes use of FoF funding

AHRC FoF grants allow researchers to **do more** and to **develop more ambitious projects**. IAA awards are typically between £2k and £35k per project, while the large FoF grants are £76k on average. Grant holders who had accessed both IAA and FoF funding noted that they had used FoF funding to increase the impact of their work. Several grant holders also noted that they had used IAA awards to top up or supplement their FoF grants.

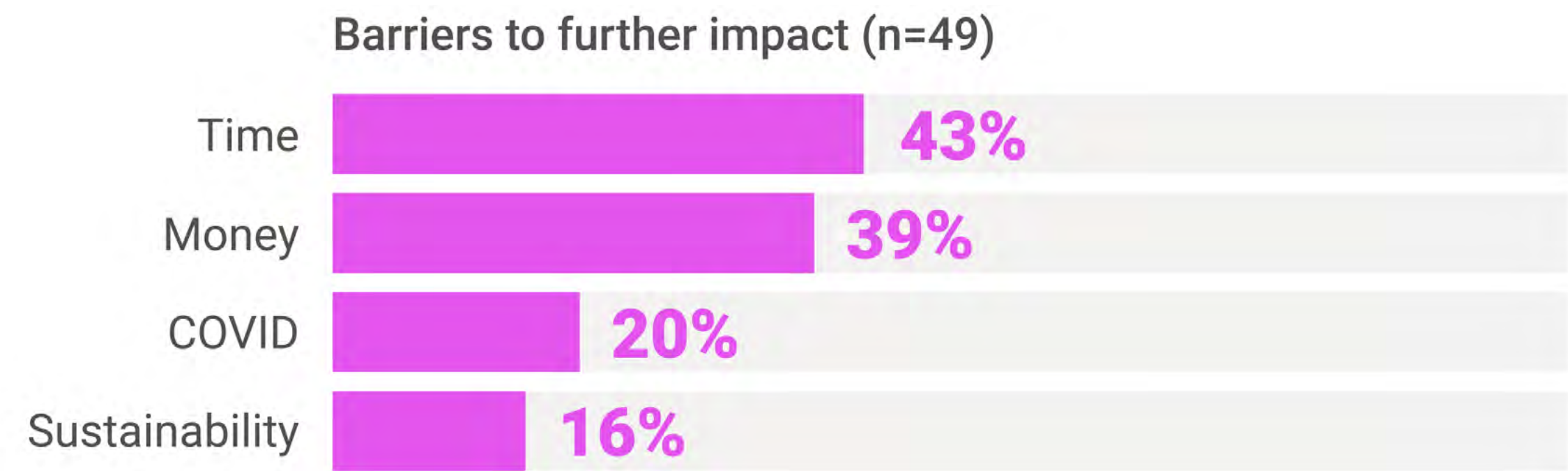
Grant holders reported that it was administratively easier and faster to access IAA awards than through FoF. Because of this view, grant holders shared that they often used IAAs to test smaller, more experimental and riskier projects, suggesting complementarity. Depending on the results of those projects, they then use FoF to accelerate or expand on these results. In turn, this has made smaller FoF grants (<£30k) less appealing for IAA award holders.



Researchers without an IAA award may rely more heavily on FoF funding to deliver impact

For researchers outside of IAA organisations, FoF remains the sole source of impact funding within the A&H landscape. **As a result, some interviewees suggested that this dynamic discourages risk-taking, as the fear of losing access to the only available funding stream may lead to more conservative, less experimental proposals.**

Barriers to further impact from FoF funding



Grant holders identified barriers administrative barriers, limiting the impact of their work



Short timescale for project: Projects are funded across a maximum of 12-months. Nearly half of all surveyed grant holders (43%, n=21) noted that the short timescale limits their ability to achieve substantial impacts. Short projects are also sensitive to small delays and can limit the momentum of a project.



Limit of the funding: Over a third of grant holders (39%, n=19) noted that the £100k grant budget hasn't changed in over decade, despite inflation. Many felt that a higher budget would boost outcomes and long-term impact – echoed in comparisons with IAA and FoF awards, and in the qualitative comparative analysis of schemes.



Administrative burden and timeframes for decisions: Several grant holders highlighted delays in funding decisions, particularly for smaller grants, as a key concern. Given the comparable administrative burden across all grant sizes, many indicated the time and effort required often outweighed the benefits of applying for smaller awards.

There are also barriers related to the wider A&H research ecosystem



Sustainability of the wider A&H sector: Grant holders expressed concern over the sustainability of the wider A&H sector, noting limited funding opportunities makes it difficult to maintain project partnerships and community impact. National arts funding, for instance, has declined by 16% in real terms since 2017.³

Some grant holders noted that it was important that they could use FoF funds to fund their partners activities, as these are often organisations that are very stretched financially.



Commercialisation challenges: Both grant holders and wider stakeholders noted that the A&H face wider barriers to commercialisation and generating direct economic outputs. These are discussed in depth in the next section.

“By far the main barrier for me was financial. The capping of the grant at £100,000 combined with University claw-back meant I only received [a fraction] and the partner organisation took [some] of this. To compensate for this, I successfully applied for internal IAA top up money”

3. Equity, UK arts councils cut funding 16% in real terms since 2017

There are barriers to commercialisation that may require different support

Commercialisation can provide a pathway to make research more sustainable. In turn, this can support researchers to develop their work long-term and reach broader audiences. However, there are barriers to commercialisation that may require different support.

Lack of market fit for some A&H research outputs

39% (n=212) of all creative products reported by FoF are digital artifacts and artistic or creative exhibitions. Many of these outputs (including performances) **are not designed for direct commercial application**. A&H outputs often deliver indirect or long-term impacts (e.g. cultural tourism, social cohesion) that resist traditional ROI metrics, making them harder to package into clear commercial propositions.⁴

In such cases, there are opportunities to support social enterprise models, non-profits or civic partnerships that apply research in non-commercial but socially valuable ways.

Skills gap amongst researchers limits opportunities

Social science and A&H researchers lack business or hybrid skills required to collaborate with commercial partners (e.g. IP strategy, market scoping, business planning). Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) are specialised units within universities that help move research from the 'lab' to the wider world. They often focus on STEM, meaning there is limited access to tailored training for A&H researchers.⁵ The A&H sector might benefit from investments in dedicated advisors within universities who sit at the **intersection of enterprise and A&H research**, as they can help bridge cultural gaps and provide hands-on support for researchers exploring commercial pathways.

4. Pathways to impact and the strategic role of universities: new evidence on the breadth and depth of university knowledge exchange in the UK and the factors constraining its development. Hughes & Kitson (2012)

5. The Dowling review of business-university research collaborations (2015)

6. From productive interactions to impact pathways: understanding the key dimensions in developing SSH research societal impact (Muhonen, 2020)

'Language barriers' between academics and industry limits collaboration

Many researchers present their work in disciplinary or conceptual language, which may not align with how industry defines needs, value or innovation. Researchers may struggle to articulate the real-world relevance of their work or promising research may struggle to articulate the real-world relevance of their work.

Support to mitigate against this might include funded intermediaries who can 'translate' between academic and industry contexts or to **encourage collaboration much earlier** in the research process to align language, goals and expectations.

"Engaging with industry has been the most difficult part of this project and this has inspired me to work further on this aspect of the work. It is clear what the positive possibilities are, but it is difficult to find the ways to explain this to people in the commercial sides of photography as they are all too often unfamiliar with the value of art."

Grant holder

Different cultural orientation to commercialisation

It's often not just a skills gap; it's a cultural or mindset gap. Researchers may view commercial activity as outside of their professional identity or at odds with their research values such as open access and social good.⁶

IAA account holders highlighted that language matters when supporting A&H researchers to explore commercialisation. Using familiar language such as impact pathways, research legacy or sustainable models might resonate more.

Recommendations for the future of FoF (or mechanisms to support impact)

Reimagining application and assessment

- ✓ Broaden the pool of peer reviewers to include experts from non-academic sectors. This would better tie research with real-world impact and better support the translation of outcomes beyond academia.
- ✓ Introduce randomised or partially randomised allocations for grants that meet a quality threshold. This approach could reduce administrative burden (and speed up grant allocations) and create space for unconventional or higher-risk ideas that might otherwise be overlooked. The British Academy has adopted this method for its Small Research Grants and have extended the trial following its success.
- ✓ Broaden FoF eligibility beyond prior UKRI funding to include projects backed by other funders, such as European programmes, and open access to smaller institutions. This would help capture high-potential (and potentially more interdisciplinary) projects currently excluded and support organisations with strong local ties and the ability to deliver meaningful impact.
- ✓ Encourage applicants to engage with Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs), where appropriate, and outline at the proposal stage whether they have done so or how they plan to.

Driving the economic impact of A&H innovations

- ✓ Broaden the definition of economic impact to include social enterprise models and projects generating indirect economic benefits, such as community resilience and contributions to the tourist economy. This would better reflect the diverse ways A&H research contributes to economic and social innovation.
- ✓ Adopt more accessible and resonant language when supporting A&H researchers to explore commercialisation. Terms like impact pathway, research legacy and sustainable models may better align with researchers' values and practices than traditional commercial language.

Redefining FoF's place in the funding landscape

- ✓ Position FoF as an early-stage intervention to enable genuine co-design and co-development between academia and industry. Early partner engagement can help ensure shared values and aligned expectations around impact.
- ✓ Rebrand and reframe FoF to better reflect its purpose as a space for experimentation and risk-taking, rather than merely a continuation of previous research. The current name "Follow on Fund" suggests incremental progression.
- ✓ Strengthen the alignment between FoF and IAAs to build a funding ecosystem. This could include clearer signposting between schemes, coordinated timelines or thematic priorities.

Towards sustainable and scalable impact

- ✓ Reallocate the existing FoF budget to support fewer projects at a larger scale. Concentrating resources in this way could attract more ambitious proposals and enable projects with greater potential for impact, although risks concentrating funding within only successful institutions.
- ✓ Signpost clear pathways for the continued development of impact beyond the 12-month FoF funding period. Provide guidance on securing further investment – whether institutional, UKRI or private funding. This ensures that promising developments are not stalled at the end of the funding period.



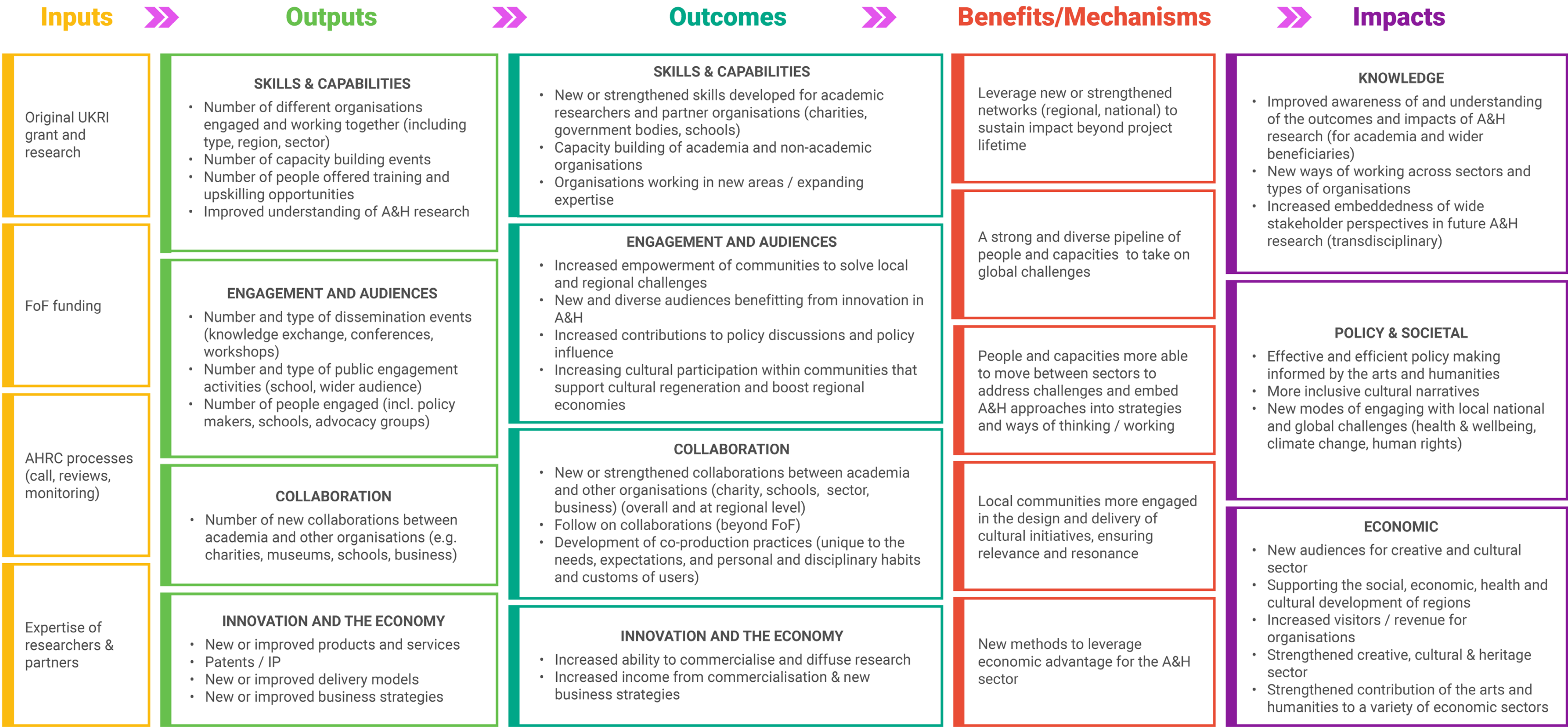
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Annex

The FoF Theory of Change

Rationale:

- Increased pressure on A&H to demonstrate impact of research
- Need to demonstrate impact beyond academic impact
- Assumed gap in A&H funding landscape to capitalise on impact emerging from research



Assumptions

Outputs, outcomes and impacts are unforeseen at the time of the original responsive mode grant

The grants have sufficient scale to generate the desired effects

Risks

FoF duplicates, rather than complements, existing initiatives

Data Collection and Methods

Figure 1 - Overview of evaluation questions and approach

		DATA COLLECTION						SYNTHESIS	
		Document review	Portfolio analysis	Scoping interviews	Stakeholder interviews	Survey of grantees	Outcome harvesting	Case studies	Comparison with other schemes
OBJECTIVE 1: PROCESS EVALUATION									
Relevance:	How and to what extent do the scheme aims support AHRC's responsive mode strategy?	●		●					
	To what extent, if at all, has the programme funded what AHRC intended – accelerating impact in the arts and humanities?		●			●			
Coherence:	How and to what extent is the funding scheme distinctive and complementary to other funding models designed to accelerate impact?	●		●	●				●
OBJECTIVE 2: IMPACT EVALUATION									
What are the outputs, outcomes and wider impacts of AHRC FoF funding?			●	●		●	●	●	●
To what extent has the AHRC FoF delivered value for money in the context of funding innovative and creative engagement with new audiences and user communities?			●		●	●	●	●	
How and to what extent are the outcomes achieved through AHRC FoF distinctive and complementary to wider AHRC responsive mode funding?			●		●	●			●

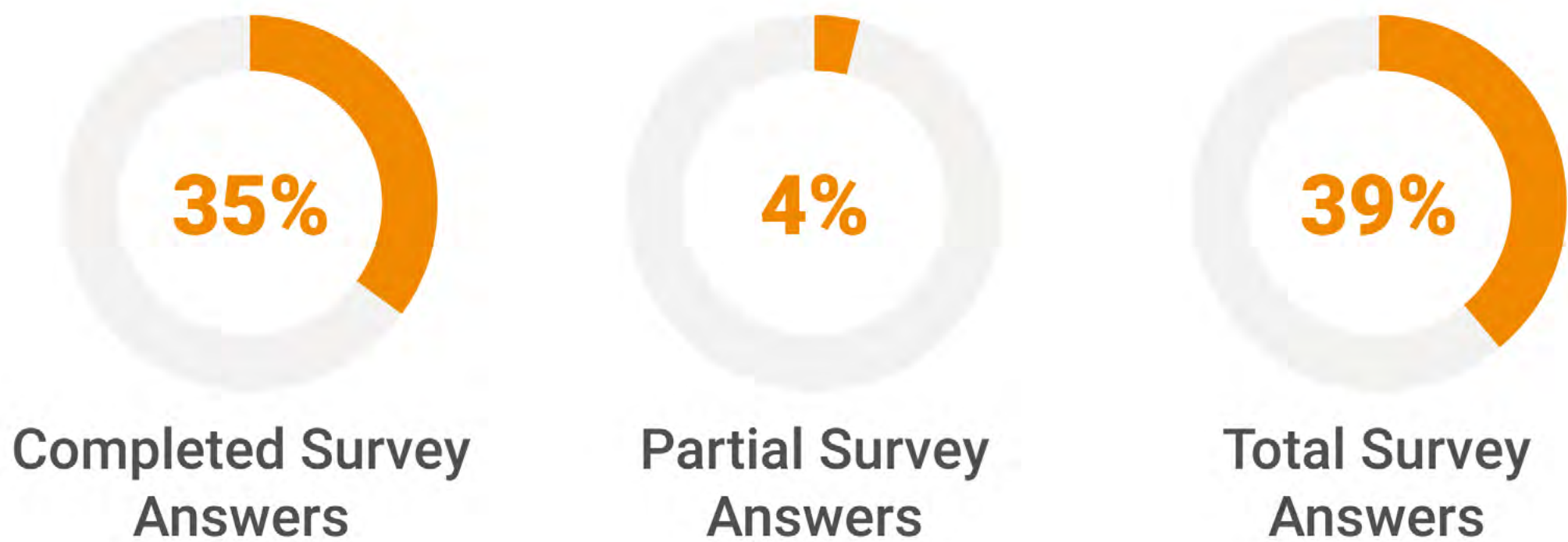
Data Collection and Methods: Survey

The survey questionnaire was addressed to all successful grant recipients (since 2015) and included:

- A series of closed questions to gauge the relative significance of different types of expected benefits (outputs and outcomes) across the portfolio
- Additional open-text questions asking respondents to describe each of the most important outcomes achieved
- A series of questions designed to gauge respondent’s views on the relevance of the scheme and its alignment with other impact generating support available

Response Rates

A total of **116 unique grant recipients** responded to the survey, where some have reported against multiple AHRC FoF grants.

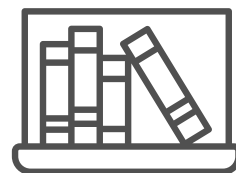


Completed, partial and total response rates are presented above. A total response rate of 39% is not unexpected, as some grants were awarded up to 10 years ago and many grant holders have either moved organisations, retired or were uncontactable.

Profile of Survey Respondents



The Northwest and Ireland had the highest response rate (65%), and the East of England had the lowest (13%). There were at least two survey responses per region.



Linguistics and classics had the most complete survey responses (88% and 80% respectively). Law and legal studies had the lowest survey response rate (11%). There was at least one survey response per discipline.



Of the grant holders who completed the survey, 89% held large grants (>£30k) and 11% held small grants (≤ £30k).



Data Collection and Methods: Stakeholder Interviews

Rationale

It was important to speak to external stakeholders who did not directly benefit from funding or training, to assess their perceptions of the AHRC Responsive Mode FoF investments.

Approach

We conducted 13 in-depth interviews addressing both process and impact evaluation questions with selected individuals who brought a sector-wide perspective on the strategic importance of the AHRC FoF investments.

Interviews were semi-structured, and whilst we made use of an interview discussion guide, we ensured that there was enough opportunity with our approach to allow for adaptation to the specific profile and interests of the interviewee.

Interviewees were asked for their perspectives on a range of topics as appropriate to their profile, including the benefits of investments to users, their observations regarding the impact of investments on the sector and the extent to which the scheme is complementary and distinctive to other offerings.

Stakeholder Interviewed	Role and Organisation
Helen Abbott	Advisory Board Member, AHRC
Tony Soteriou	Head of Commercialisation, UKRI
Mike Collins	Head of Public Engagement, AHRC
Paul Meller	Research Lead, Wellcome
Ellen Bamford	Associate Director of Knowledge Exchange, Data and Evidence, Research England
Alex Lewis	Director of Research, British Academy
Rachel Persad	Head of Research Policy, Guild HE
Huw Vasey	Deputy Director, ESRC
Alannah Tompkins	AHRC FoF Peer Review Panel Member, Keele University
Institutional Impact Accelerator Grant Holders	Glasgow, Bristol, Manchester, Queen’s University Belfast



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