

UKRI Gambling Harms Research Coordination Centre (GHRCC)

FAQs and Additional Guidance

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

Q. Where should queries about this funding opportunity be sent?

A. All queries regarding this call should be sent to: operations@ahrc.ukri.org

General Queries

How many centres will be funded through this opportunity?

One centre will be funded.

What is the starting date for the centre?

The successful Centre must start on 27 April 2026

Interview panels are scheduled for w/c 16th February, which is a half term, what should applicants do if they are not able to attend that week?

UKRI will endeavour to be as flexible as possible regarding interview dates, including scheduling interviews for the following week (w/c 23rd February) if necessary

Where can I find a list of relevant data sources as mentioned in the UKRI Webinar?

In Annex A, at the bottom of this FAQ document.

Application Queries

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

Individuals can only be Project Lead on one application, but Project Leads may be listed as Project Co-Leads on a different application.

Can someone be included on a GHRCC application and a Gambling harms research and innovation partnership (GHRIP)?

Individuals may not be named as project lead on both a GHRCC and GHRIP applicant, however individuals can be named as project co-lead on applications to both opportunities, provided they have the required available FTE to work on both projects if successful.

Can institutions submit applications to the GHRCC and GHRIP funding opportunities?

Yes. Limitations on submitting bids to both opportunities apply to individuals, institutions may submit bids to both opportunities.

Can project partners and collaborating institutions be named on both GHRCC and GHRIP applications?

Yes. Limitations on applying to both opportunities only apply to core project team members.

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

There are no fixed expectations about the size of the centre'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.

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

Whilst UKRI expects the successful centre 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.

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.

Will unsuccessful applicants to the GHRCC opportunity be eligible to join Phase 2 GHRIP bids?

Yes. Unsuccessful applicants to the centre will be eligible to join Phase 2 GHRIP bids as appropriate.

Are Early Career Researchers eligible to act as project lead for the GHRCC?

Yes, there are no career stage requirements for the project lead, applicants will be expected to demonstrate the capacity to lead and manage a large-scale project.

Can project partners be named on multiple GHRCC applications?

Yes. There are no limits on the number of applications a project partner can be named in.

Can several universities join to form the GHRCC?

Yes. UKRI expects a broad consortium of institutions to be involved in each application. Only one institution may host the GHRCC.

Is it possible to seek funding for Post-Doctoral Research Assistants (PDRA) working on the centre?

Yes, funding for PDRAs is an eligible cost.

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 relevant experience and will be drawn from the breadth of UKRI's research and innovation community (including UKRI's interdisciplinary peer-review college).

As part of its standard process UKRI requires peer reviewers and assessors to declare any potential conflicts of interest. In addition to this process all peer reviewers and panellists for UKRI RPG programmes will be required to complete a bespoke declaration of interest form in advance of engagement with the programme.

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. Feedback will be provided to applicants, and shortlisted applicants will be given an opportunity to respond to questions at the interview stage of assessment.

How should project co-leads from civil society, community, government or UK business be costed?

As co-leads are from outside the HEI sector, their eligible costs can be added as exceptions in TFS, which means they are funded at 100% FEC as opposed to 80%.

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 centre to establish networks across the wider research landscape.

What different things are you looking for between the “ethics and responsible research and innovation section” and the “research involving human participation” sections?

The Ethics and Responsible research section is more broadly focussed on ethical considerations, responsible innovation practices, environmental, social and governance arrangements and open access and data sharing – it should contain details of ethical considerations that concern the entire proposed project.

The Research Involving Human Participation should go into specific detail about any human involvement in the proposed work, including recruitment methods, informed consent and safeguarding and risk mitigation. Details on ethics approvals, GDPR compliance and interaction with vulnerable groups should also be included here.

Are applications eligible from Northern Ireland?

Yes, applications based in Northern Ireland are eligible for this funding opportunity provided applicants meet the other eligibility criteria.

Theme Queries

How have the research themes been identified and how will they be refined?

Indicative research themes have been identified in consultation with other commissioners under the gambling levy and wider stakeholders. The themes listed are indicative and not exhaustive.

It is expected that the successful centre will build in the flexibility to be able to respond to emerging themes over the course of the levy, particularly through engagement with other commissioners and DCMS.

Must each application cover all research themes highlighted in the funding finder guidance?

UKRI is open to applications across all the themes highlighted and beyond.

It is recognised that some themes may generate more research interest than others, so coverage does not necessarily need to be equally spread, and it is up to applicants to make a convincing case for the way they envision the focus of the centre.

Part of the centre’s role is to explore where the appetite for research and innovation into gambling harms is strongest and most needed.

How will UKRI ensure that the failures that have led to the implementation of a statutory levy won't be repeated or continued e.g. a focus on individual behaviours, "safer gambling" and industry-led narratives permeating research and initiatives.

UKRI has expanded the list of example research areas in order to encourage the widest range of applications. As part of the levy system we are engaging with other commissioners to ensure that all relevant areas of research are incorporated across the research programme.

The programme will conduct high-quality independent research across individual and structural issues to ensure that neither dimension is neglected and deliver a major and lasting contribution to the UK's understanding of gambling and gambling related harms.

The lived experience of people who have been impacted by gambling will be crucial to shaping the research agenda and outcomes of the centre, which intends to address both treatment and prevention.

Centre Activities Queries

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 centre to undertake. UKRI does not have a predetermined view on how this aspect of the funding opportunity should be delivered.

Can the centre fund MA or doctoral/PhD studies?

Supporting a PhD cohort is a requirement of this opportunity. Funds from this opportunity *cannot* be used to support MA research projects.

Does PhD funding count towards the overall limit of £10m for this award?

Yes. Costs listed to support the cohort of PHD students are expected to make up part of the overall fund for the award (up to £10m FEC). Once successful, UKRI will remove studentship costs from the main GHRCC award into a separate training grant via TFS, which will be hosted by the lead institution.

As this opportunity 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 breadth of UKRI's research and innovation community.

To what degree should lived experience be considered?

The GHRCC is expected to involve and call upon the expertise of people with lived and learned experience from gambling related harms.

To what extent is the centre expected to be stand alone and self-contained, and what extent directly linked to UKRI's wider Research Programme on Gambling (RPG)?

Whilst the centre is expected to provide some stand-alone research capacity, it also has a key responsibility to provide a coordination function across the funding landscape, via the cohort of GHRIPs and engagement with the wider suite of research and innovation activities that UKRI will be commissioning under the levy

Is collaboration with partners from the UK Gambling Industry mandatory for this opportunity?

No, partnerships across a range of sectors are essential for the centre, including industry, but this is meant in the broadest possible sense and does not have to include representation from the UK Gambling Industry.

Please see the "Overlap/Wider Levy Queries" section for specific guidance on conflict of interest.

Will the centre be part of the final decision-making process for the GHRIP Phase 2 funding opportunity?

No. The centre will be expected to support Phase 1 GHRIP awards in developing their Phase 2 bids, as such they will not be included in the final decision-making process due to the potential for conflicts of interest.

What is your expectation on sustenance beyond the funding period?

The [government White Paper consultation](#) commits to a 5-year review stage of the gambling levy as a whole. As UKRI funded programmes come towards their end, we will evaluate progress and success, and in collaboration with DCMS develop plans for the next phase of the levy. UKRI's long term ambition is to create a sustainable research and innovation ecosystem.

Devolved/Flexible Funding Queries

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 centre and GHRIP programme.

UKRI will work with the successful Centre to develop devolved funding plans once the award is underway.

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.

Is there a maximum number of devolved projects that can be funded by the centre via the flexible funding pot?

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.

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

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

Can institutions/investigators involved in the centre also be involved in research activities covered by the flexible funding pot or will they be excluded?

In principle, institutions and individuals involved with the centre will be eligible to apply for flexible funding. The centre 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 flexible funding guidelines will be issued to the successful centre to provide more clarity on issues of this sort.

My organisation is concerned that running flexible funding calls will be a staff-time intensive activity.

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

Can funds allocated to flexible funding include administration and staff costs?

No, all administration costs (including running and administering the flexible funding) must come from the non-devolved portion of the funds.

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

Only the actual funds allocated to fund devolved activities and 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.

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 UK's eligibility criteria including the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

The successful centre will be required to administer a similar conflict of interest process to UKRI when managing devolved funding, including adherence to its declaration of interest and prevention of harm in research policies, particularly with regards to engagement with the gambling industry.

UKRI will work with the project team to assist in navigating this process.

Wider Levy Queries

Has evidence from the experience of other levies on harmful industries been used to inform the structure of the levy board and the governance of the funding calls?

Wider levy governance structures are administered by the Department for Media, Culture and Sport (DCMS). We would recommend all questions of this nature be directed to enquiries@dcms.gov.uk

Have the levy program board and levy advisory board been appointed?

Where can I find info about their aims, view the minutes of meetings, members and the process of appointing or selecting them?

Wider levy governance structures are administered by the Department for Media, Culture and Sport (DCMS). We would recommend all questions of this nature be directed to enquiries@dcms.gov.uk

Is a part or all of the levy fund allotted to the research strand to be spent through the centre?

The successful centre can apply for funding of up to £10M which is drawn from the wider levy funds allocated to UKRI as part of the research stand of the levy. The centre will *not* have responsibility for the entire research strand budget. However, outputs and recommendations from the centre may influence how UKRI decides to allocate future levy funding.

Please can you expand on the role of the GHRIPS and the Centre? Please can you explain the model as a whole and how you anticipate that this will create the change needed?

It is expected that the centre and partnerships will support the research programme's ambitions to widen the evidence base on gambling harms and build capacity in the research and innovation sector. The centre will become a focal point to coordinate and inform research across the levy system, working with UKRI and the other commissioners.

Has UKRI issued any policy guidance regarding the management of conflict of interests for these awards?

UKRI is committed to the establishment of an independent and trusted research and innovation ecosystem for gambling harms. UKRI has established policies on declaration of interest and prevention of harm in research. Under the Research Programme on Gambling, UKRI has placed particular exclusions on Gambling Commission licence holders and associated industries whose core business can be associated with harm. Engagement with these companies is only permitted for time-limited, purpose-specific interactions deemed essential to achieving legitimate and high-quality research objectives. These interactions must be approved by UKRI in advance. UKRI would not expect individual researchers to concurrently hold funding from licence holders subject to the levy while receiving funding from the Research Programme on Gambling. We also asked applicants to declare in their applications that they are compliant with these requirements and outline clear and robust governance arrangements in their proposals.

As part of its standard process UKRI requires peer reviewers and assessors to declare any potential conflicts of interest. In addition to this process all peer reviewers and panellists for UKRI RPG programmes will be required to complete a bespoke declaration of interest form in advance of engagement with the programme.

If applicants have further queries, they are encouraged to get in touch with the UKRI team directly.

Why have you chosen not to prohibit partnership with industry including those they fund, not just licence holders? What is the purpose of being open to partnerships with broader industry (with UKRI permission)?

In order to maximise the impact of the research programme UKRI are seeking to engage with stakeholders from across the system, including academics, policy makers, third sector, and industry.

Engagement with the gambling industry will only be permitted for specific, time-limited interactions that are deemed essential for the research programme. UKRI recognises that prior to the introduction of the statutory levy funding specifically related to gambling harms has been limited, and do not feel it to be appropriate to exclude organisations purely based on these previous funding arrangements. However, restrictions have been placed on concurrent funding from industry, as well as requiring robust governance arrangements to be outlined in applications.

Host Organisation Queries

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 centre will be expected to contribute 20% of the non-Exceptions costs. (See UKRI [FEC guidelines](#))

Devolved Nations Queries

Is it a mandatory to include project members from devolved nations?

It is not mandatory to involve team members from all devolved nations. However, the successful Centre will be expected to coordinate research across the UKRI and consider the different context in which the strands of the levy will be operating.

Does UKRI have a preference for UK regional representation in the core centre 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

International Queries

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

Any International Co-Investigators should adhere to UKRI's [International project co-lead guidance](#). Combined costs from international project co-leads, project co-leads from UK business, civil society, community, or government bodies should not exceed 30% of the overall cost of the award.

What is the role envisaged for 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](#).

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](#).

Research undertaken outside of the UK is expected to tie back into the UK context and contribute the issue of tackling gambling harms in the UK.

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.

Annex A – List of relevant data sources

Longitudinal & Survey Data

- CLOSER: Millennium Cohort Study (MCS), British Cohort Study (BCS70)
- Understanding Society: Gambling and Problem Gambling Module
- Health Survey for England (HSE): Gambling prevalence and health correlations
- Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey (APMS): Mental health and gambling behaviours
- Gambling Survey for Great Britain (GSGB): Conducted by the Gambling Commission; includes behavioural, attitudinal, and harm-related data - available via the UK Data Service

Administrative Data

- Local morbidity rates (e.g., alcohol-related conditions, Global Burden of Disease)
- Education, employment, and health service usage records
- Licensing Authority Statistics: Gambling Commission data on local licensing and compliance activity, and market data

Smart Data

- Smart Data Donation Service (SDDS): Gaming and social media activity
- Financial Data Service (FINDS): Income volatility, financial resilience, consumer banking data
- Geographic Data Service/ Healthy and Sustainable Places Data Service: Footfall, synthetic populations, geographic and demographic indices, consumer behaviour and vulnerability

Other Data (Including Qualitative & Public Engagement)

- Qualitative Studies:
 - GSGB Follow-up Interviews (NatCen): Case studies of gambling harms
 - Stigma and Discrimination Study (GambleAware, NatCen, Wolverhampton): Lived experience of stigma
- Public Engagement Datasets:
 - GambleAware Lived Experience Guidelines: Ethical framework for co-production
 - Mass Observation Archive: Gambling in households and communities