

Inclusion of non-academic partners as project co-leads on Design Generators

Who is eligible to be listed as a non-academic co-lead on Design Generators?

To be eligible to be a non-academic co-lead on this call applicants must be based at the following, which include but are not limited to: a UK business; public sector organisation or third sector; civil society or community organisation. There is no requirement for the non-academic co-lead to hold a PhD or equivalent qualification.

On receipt of the application, eligibility of the non-academic co-lead 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.

Applicants based at Independent Research Organisations (IROs) which have gained UKRI eligibility may apply as project leads or project co-leads. These applicants are not subject to the requirements and restrictions set out in this document but will be funded under standard fEC rules (i.e. 80% fEC).

Applicants must ensure that the name of the non-academic co-leads organisation is clearly stated in the proposal. Where any Project Partners are included in the application the name of their company or organisation must also be provided.

Do non-academic co-leads need to register on The Funding Service?

No. Once the project lead has registered the application on The Funding Service, they can add the non-academic co-lead to the project as part of the core team. The project lead can manage which collaborators should have full visibility of the application. This can include core team members or administrators at a partner organisation.

Further information about how to use the UKRI Funding Service can be found here - [How applicants use the UKRI Funding Service – UKRI](#).

What costs can be associated with a non-academic co-lead?

When a project lead includes a non-academic co-lead on their application they must ensure that all associated costs are fully justified within the Justification of Resources section. AHRC will fund 80% of eligible costs where these have been sufficiently justified. However, the project costs associated with these types of co-lead contributions must not exceed 30% of the overall cost of the grant (at 80% fEC).

Applicants please note:

- All costs associated with non-academic co-leads must be included on The Funding Service form.
- Costs associated with a non-academic co-lead's contribution to a project (regardless of how many co-leads are included) must never exceed 30%, of the overall cost of the grant at 80% of fEC and would normally be lower than this.
- Co-leads from businesses, public sector and third sector organisations which engage in economic activity or government bodies cannot claim overheads and other indirect costs on any element of the grant.
- No salary costs will be covered for co-leads from government bodies where their role on the project is part of their usual duties for their employer, i.e. funding their time through the AHRC grant would result in public funds paying for their time twice.

- Travel and subsistence costs will be allowable if appropriately justified for non-academic co-leads.
- All costs associated with non-academic co-leads will be assessed in the context of the proposal as a whole and the justification of support.

How do I show costs on The Funding Service application form?

Please find a guidance video on inputting resources and costs information on The Funding Service here - [The Funding Service: Resources and Costs information for grant applications \(corrected\) - YouTube](#).

The budget limits on grant applications refer to the total cost of the research project - this is known as the Full Economic Costs (fEC). For UK Research Organisations the fEC cost is not the actual cash contribution paid by the AHRC. The actual cash contribution, known as the 'AHRC contribution', is 80% of the fEC. AHRC will fund 100% of all eligible and justified costs relating to non-academic co-leads.

Non-academic co-lead salary costs should be marked as 'Exception' to identify that these should be paid at 100%.

Other Research Staff costs related to the non-academic co-lead organisation should be entered on The Funding Service form under Staff – Researcher and marked as an 'Exception' costs.

Other non-academic co-lead related costs whether, fieldwork, equipment or travel and subsistence should be entered in the 'Other DI' section as exceptions and marked as co-lead costs.

Applicants are reminded that the costs for non-academic co-leads (regardless of the number) must not exceed 30% of the 100% fEC cost of the grant.

For all costs included in your application a statement justifying the resources requested to undertake the research project is required. Where you do not provide sufficient justification for any item it is likely to be removed from any award made. All costs must be entered in pounds sterling (£).

How will funds associated with non-academic co-leads be disbursed?

Payments on all grants are made in arrears in accordance with a specific payment schedule, as agreed with AHRC at the time the grant is awarded. In all cases, funds are transferred to the PI's Research Organisation in the first instance. It is then the responsibility of that institution to disburse funds to the non-academic co-lead. Particular attention should be paid in the Case for Support to the management and communication protocols in place to enable this to happen smoothly.

Can non-academic partners be listed as co-lead if they have secured their own source of funding?

Yes, they can be included as a co-lead. Details of their organisation and funding source should be provided in the Justification of Resources.

Can business, public sector or third sector organisations be included under the heading of consultants rather than co-leads?

In principle, the answer is yes. However, inclusion of consultants would be expected to be subject to competitive purchasing requirements.