

The UKRI logo consists of the letters 'UK' stacked above 'RI' in a white, bold, sans-serif font, set against a dark blue square background.The Arts and Humanities Research Council logo features a stylized yellow and orange graphic element to the left of the text.

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The word 'Welcome' is written in a large, bold, dark blue, sans-serif font, centered horizontally across the middle of the image. The background is a festive scene of a city street with buildings, trees, and a large amount of red and yellow confetti falling from the sky.

**UKRI Translation:
AHRC Proof of Concept**

5th March 2026, 10:30-11:30am

Please submit any questions using the Q&A function

Agenda

1 Introduction & welcome

Leo Springate, Head of Funding Operations, AHRC

2 Context and aims

Dr Jaideep Gupte, Director of Research, Strategy and Innovation, AHRC
Professor Ruth Livesey, AHRC Advisory Board member

3 About UKRI Translation: AHRC Proof of Concept

Paris Seager, Senior Investment Manager, AHRC

4 Q&A

Open to all

5 Wrap up and Thank you

Leo Springate, Head of Funding Operations, AHRC



Context and Aims

Dr Jaideep Gupte,
Director of Research, Strategy and Innovation
AHRC

Context: AHRC's ALM Journey



In 2022, AHRC started the transformation of our Responsive Mode/Applicant Led mode (ALM) opportunities.

In 2023 we launched Curiosity and Catalyst Opportunities

In 2024 AHRC paused the Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement Opportunity, we conducted an external review which produced an evaluation report and recommendations.

In 2025, we published an update to the community following the external evaluation of FoF in the form of an AHRC blog *'Evolving Follow-On Funding to Realise New Possibilities'*

In January 2026, AHRC launched UKRI Translation: AHRC Proof of Concept, which replaces Follow-On funding.

Context: What we learned from the Follow-on Funding (FoF) Evaluation

FoF Has Been Highly Effective

- **Valued and impactful:** The evaluation confirmed FoF is a well-regarded and effective scheme within the A&H community.
- **Strong leverage:** Between 2015-2024, FoF projects generated £193m in further funding, more than comparable schemes.
- **REF visibility:** 20% of FoF awards were reference in the 2021 REF impact case studies, highlighting significant real-world influence.

But There Is Untapped Potential

- Evaluation showed **opportunities to strengthen economic and commercial impact**
- A need for **bolder pathways** to impact, including more support for commercialisation and venture creation

Why We're Evolving the Opportunity

- To build on FoF's strengths **while updating the opportunity for today's research landscape.**
- To align with UKRI's wider translation and commercialisation strategy
- To ensure the scheme support transformational, measurable outcomes across society, culture, the economy and policy

What This Means for Applicants

- Clearer expectation on impact pathways, translation activity and real-world outcomes.
- A modernised funding route designed to unlock new possibilities for A&H research.

Context: UKRI Wide Nomenclature

Simplifying UKRI Translation & Commercialisation Funding

Why the change?

- UKRI is streamlining all its translation and commercialisation funding to make it **clearer and easier to navigate**.

What's Changing?

- **Replacing numerous legacy schemes:** simpler routes, less confusion
- **Councils can still tailor opportunities:** responsive to discipline-specific needs.
- **AHRC is first to adopt the new naming:** via the AHRC PoC opportunity.

Four core programme models



Translational Collaborative R&D



Impact Acceleration – enabling engagement, knowledge exchange, exploratory translation and early commercialisation



Proof of Concept (PoC) – supporting development of new ideas into products, processes or services



Entrepreneurial Schemes – including new UKEI enterprise fellowships to build researchers' skills and confidence

Aims

The UKRI Translation: AHRC Proof of Concept (PoC) aims to :

- facilitate **ambitious** arts and humanities projects to **realise measurable, real-world change**
- provide **flexible support** for **innovative pathways to impact**, whether projects are pivoting to new contexts and collaborations, amplifying existing impact activity or at the early stage of developing commercialisation outcomes
- sustain and maximise excellent models of **co-design, co-development** and **partnership** working to deliver tangible outputs that demonstrate the transformational benefits of arts and humanities research
- encourage and enable a **range of pathways to impact** between arts and humanities research and a variety of user communities, including business, third sector and heritage sector, public policy, voluntary and community groups, or the general public.
- **celebrate and support** meaningful arts and humanities contributions to economic growth and government priorities.

Context: Reflections

Professor Ruth Livesey,
AHRC Advisory Board member

Reflections

- What we learned as an Advisory Board from review of FoF
- The strong value of FoF for the AHRC community
- The importance of learning and taking risks through FoF: speaking from experience
- Why framing our work as innovation and translation matters now.
- The significance of the opportunity's breadth and flexibility
- A chance to demonstrate the transformational power of work across the arts and humanities
- An opportunity to find new ways to articulate the tangible benefits of our work in a context where outcomes need to be clear
- A means to develop new pathways and collaborations for positive impact
- Support to enable AHRC researchers and practitioner to grow and respond to changing worlds

About UKRI Translation: AHRC Proof of Concept

Paris Seager,
Senior Investment Manager
AHRC



The Basics

- UKRI Translation: AHRC Proof of Concept, supports arts and humanities activity that translate previously funded Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) or UKRI projects into real world economic, societal, cultural or policy impact.
- These awards focus on knowledge exchange, translation, commercialisation, entrepreneurial skills and venture building to maximise the reach and application of arts and humanities research.
- Part of AHRCs Applicant Led mode (previously known as Responsive Mode) offering
- Always open opportunity- apply any time
- Funding available: The full economic cost (FEC) of your project can be up to £150,000
- Maximum duration: 5 years

Individual Eligibility

Individual Eligibility

- Project Leads **must be** based at a UK research organisation eligible for AHRC funding (e.g., universities, research institutes, facilities, or centres).
- Project Leads **must** be either:
 - 1 the original project lead of the research the application builds upon
 - 2 a member of the original research team, and it is more appropriate for you to lead the proposed activity
 - 3 working at an eligible research organisation and wish to exploit a piece of research in the absence of the original project lead

Project Eligibility

Project Eligibility

- Applications **must** build upon an existing projects that meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - currently or previously directly funded by AHRC building on previous or current research directly funded by AHRC (excluding masters, doctoral, collaborative doctoral)
 - currently or previously supported by AHRC Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) funding
 - currently or previously directly co-funded or fully funded by another UKRI research council or UKRI scheme. The existing project doesn't need to fall within AHRC remit, provided the focus of your application clearly falls within AHRC remit and you supply strong justification and supporting evidence

Other Roles

Other **Core team** roles that the UKRI Translation: Proof of concept opportunity will support:

- Project co-lead (UK) (PcL)
- Project co-lead (international) (PcL (I))
- Specialist
- Professional enabling staff
- Research and innovation associate
- Technician

We **do not** support project studentships (funding Doctoral study, noting that such qualifications can include DBAs, EdD, LLD , and so on) within this funding opportunity.

What we will fund

Funding can support a **wide range of activities**, including but not limited to:

- Activities that support the development and delivery of impact, such as public engagement, knowledge exchange, and skill development, provided they lead to clearly defined impact outcomes
- Routes to impact, including:
 - Licensing, spinouts, social ventures
 - Commercialisation and policy influence
 - Public engagement
- Costs that build capacity and skills for commercialisation and impact delivery
- Costs supporting meaningful engagement with non-academic audiences and user communities



Critical Requirements

- ★ You **must** clearly demonstrate how your planned activities produce outputs that lead to real-world impact.
- ★ If this pathway is unclear, vague, or missing, your application **will not be competitive**.
- ★ You **must** include a visual **logic model** in the Approach section of your application

What we will not fund

What We Will Not Fund

- Projects primarily outside AHRC's remit
- Grant extensions or continuation of similar/existing work
- Further research or development/extension of existing resources or websites
- Activities linked to research leave or primarily staffing costs
- Principally academic outputs (academic papers, conferences, publications)

Reporting Requirements

Key Points:

- In addition to standard reporting requirements (such as Researchfish)
- AHRC may introduce **bespoke conditions** to support:
 - Development of impact case studies
 - Other strategic outputs
- These conditions will be **proportionate** and **tailored** to the scale and nature of the activity



Aim: to enhance the **visibility, transferability, and long-term value** of funded work

Logic Model

Key Points:

- You **must** include a visual logic model in the **Approach section** of your application.
- The logic model must show how your project's **activities lead to outputs** and, ultimately, to **real-world outcomes**.
- **Format is flexible** – you may use any sensible, clear approach.
- The logic model must be included as an **embedded image** (maximum 5MB).
- Do **not** upload it as a separate attachment.
- Applications without a logic model may be **considered incomplete**.

FoF Evaluation Report: Case Studies



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



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



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



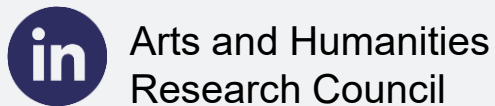
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Questions?

Thank you

- Please contact enquiries@ahrc.ukri.org if you have any queries relating to the funding opportunity.
- Please contact support@funding-service.ukri.org if you have any queries relating to the system or submission of applications.
- Read Paris's recent blog, [Evolving follow-on funding to realise new possibilities](#).
- Read the [funding opportunity guidance](#) including details on how to apply. The Webinar recording will also be added to this page, once available.
- Read [UKRI simplify research translation and commercialisation funding](#) to find out more.



Q+A Summary

We greatly appreciate the high level of audience engagement reflected in the number of Q&A submissions during the live webinar.

Although it was not possible to address them all in the allotted time, the original slide deck has been expanded to include a summary of the additional questions on the slides that follow.

Is there a cut off point from the date of the original grant after which we are no longer able to apply for AHRC PoC funding?

No, the project must build on a previously funded AHRC or UKRI award by no time limit is stipulated.

Do applicants have to be PLs of the original grant?
Could a Co-I institution apply for the AHRC PoC funding as lead?

A member of the original research team or a Co-I institution is eligible to apply but you must seek the original project leads permission

Is there a limit to the number of AHRC PoC awards that could be made based on an existing AHRC or UKRI funded project?

There is no limit to the number of awards that could build on an existing AHRC or UKRI funded project. However, the new proposal must be substantively different from the activities supported by the previous awards. The application should demonstrate a distinct next step rather than a continuation or duplication of earlier work.

Does the AHRC Proof of Concept project have to have commercial outcomes?

The AHRC PoC supports the full breadth and depth of arts and humanities real world impacts, it is not just about commercialisation.

From April 2026, UKRI will distribute the majority of their budget into three buckets that align with their mission to advance knowledge, improve lives, and drive growth. Which "bucket" of funding is AHRC Proof of Concept attributed to?

APOC can broadly be associated with Bucket 3 and the element of UKRI's mission to "Drive Growth". However, the buckets are at their best where we can take research ideas on a journey through them. Translation is the key principle here: AHRC PoC awards take existing knowledge and help convert it into improvements for society, culture, policy, or the economy. The new bucket model is designed so projects can travel across them as ideas mature, from discovery ("curiosity driven"), to translation ("strategic priorities"), and finally to commercial or economic application ("supporting innovative companies").

Can I submit multiple AHRC PoC applications from a single project that has several distinct strands to take forward?

If submitting more than one proposal, you must demonstrate that you will be able to carry out all the projects that are successful. You should describe fully the scope and extent of your involvement in each of the projects, as our reviewers will evaluate the extent to which you, any leaders and members of the research team (as appropriate), are able actively to conduct and manage the research set out in your proposals. Each application could not be the same or substantively similar. Please

also see

our resubmission policy within the AHRC research funding guide.

An AHRC PoC must build upon a previous AHRC or UKRI funded project, would an ESRC funded IAA be an eligible previously funded project?

IAA projects funded by other UKRI councils would not be eligible.

Does the original AHRC or UKRI funded project need to have finished before I can apply to AHRC Proof of Concept?

No, a project does not have to have ended before applying for an AHRC PoC award. It is flexible so that you can apply at the point when your current award is ready for that next step

Please provide an update on AHRC's impact toolkit and advise if development of applications should wait until after it's publication?

The toolkit is in final stages of development and design, with publication due in early April. The toolkit is about additional support and tools.

Will including the Thrive principles make my AHRC PoC application more competitive?

The Thrive principles are not part of the assessment criteria. They will not influence funding decisions. However, they are a helpful resource, particularly for shaping good team culture and ways of working.

Can an unsuccessful application to the previous FoF scheme be repurposed to apply for AHRC PoC?

Yes, providing the AHRC PoC applicant is building on a previously successful UKRI funded project. However, as per the AHRC funding guide, the application must not be substantively similar to any previous application that has been assessed through the AHRC assessment processes.

Does the AHRC PoC scheme specify a minimum award value or maximum project duration?

There is not a minimum project value or duration for eligibility. The size of the project is not prescribed but projects should deliver meaningful real world change through significant economic, social, cultural or policy impact. Funding available is up to £150K (FEC) and can up to five years in duration offering flexibility to suit the scale of the project.

The AHRC PoC will not primarily fund staff time, can costs be included for RA, postdoc, technician?

There is no fixed proportion of staff versus non staff costs required within the AHRC PoC budget. You can request staff time where it is proportionate and directly linked to delivering the proposed proof of concept activities, but the primary purpose of the application must not be to cover salary costs alone. Project staff costs should be fully justified within the resources and cost justification section.

Is a specific logic model format required within the AHRC PoC application?

We do not prescribe a particular format, so you have the flexibility to choose a style that suits your project. The logic model should not be text-heavy or a repeat of your written narrative. Assessors should be able to understand the pathway quickly and feel confident that your activities logically lead to your intended outcomes.

What is the difference between ARHC Proof of Concept and the Impact Acceleration Awards (IAAs)?

The AHRC PoC supports the translation of previously funded AHRC/UKRI research into real world impacts. The IAAs are awarded to research organisations to support a wide range of impact impact focused activities, through smaller grants.