

UKRI Safer Streets

Trust and Confidence in Policing: Research & Innovation Consortium

Frequently Asked Questions

Useful links

- [UK research organisations eligible for UKRI funding](#)
- [UKRI International project co-lead policy](#)
- [Project co-leads from UK business, third sector or government bodies](#)
- [UKRI terms and conditions for research grants](#)
- [AHRC research funding guide](#)
- [ESRC research funding guide](#)

Scope

Q: Will we be able to undertake the work solely in Scotland and use this as an exemplar (if not, with support from UKRI, potentially, could we roll any work out into other areas of the UK?)

A: The focus is on trust and confidence in UK policing; Scotland is therefore within scope. Applicants are required to undertake at least four pilots with UK police forces in areas of their choosing. While there is no restriction on where flexible fund activity can take place, applicants should consider that limiting opportunities solely to Scotland may constrain the consortium's reach and impact. The flexible fund must be awarded competitively and is intended to support additional pilots and activities that enable scaling, wider implementation, and roll-out efforts across different locations and policing contexts.

Q: The Call Guidance document writes that "the challenge aims to increase trust and confidence through pilots in at least four areas which identify and test specific policing interventions...". What do you mean by 'areas' - topical or geographical, for example?

A: Topical and geographical. We would not expect to see all four pilots tested within one police force. Applicants are advised to keep scalability in mind, so for example testing with a range of different sized forces.

Q: Should the proposal just be for the work of the consortium, with a costing allocation made for the flexible fund? Or does the proposal need to include the work of the flexible fund?

A: Your application must include plans and costings for both the consortium and the flexible fund. We do not expect applicants to provide a fully developed plan for the flexible fund at the point of submission, however you must outline and justify your objectives for the fund, how it will be managed and governed, and the types of activities and projects you expect the fund to support.

Q: When the bid talks about 'real-time' data, how instantaneously is it envisaged that you would want to see any data?

A: The purpose of the measures will be to provide police forces with feedback on specific police activity or interventions. The measures, and the timeliness of the data gathered should be designed with this objective in mind.

Q: I understand that the emphasis is on trialling techniques and pilots. Is there a role for validation of these techniques?

A: By the end of the programme, we expect the consortium to have developed tools and approaches that are robust, meaningful and practical for real-world use. Time should be dedicated not only to developing these tools, but also to testing and refining them in operational settings to understand what works, what does not, and what factors contribute to building, influencing and sustaining public trust and confidence in policing. Real-world implementation and the sharing of learning will be critical to strengthening the evidence base and improving our understanding of the drivers of trust and confidence. Project timelines should therefore include appropriate plans for implementation and evaluation.

Q: We are predominantly interested in aim 2 (testing new and innovative approaches), but potential collaborators we have spoken to see this as primarily focussed on aim 1 (gaining real time feedback). I was wondering if you had any view which you could share on the relative priorities of these two aims and the approximate proportion of the budget you might expect to be directed to each.

A: We have not laid out an expectation of the budget proportion that we'd expect to be placed against each of the aims, however, the specification intention is that priority should be given to both aims (and in fact that they are reliant on one another). At the end of the project, we'd hope that the consortium would be able to demonstrate examples of activity to increase trust and confidence, and that this has been evidenced through the innovative measures.

Costs

Q: It would be good to have guidance about how best (beyond project co-lead) to cost in or meaningfully involve communities/3rd sector/tech firms (as well as policing partners) where possible in the core funding and or flex fund?

A: The roles available depend on the specific role the individual or the organisation is playing in the project and their eligibility. Please see our [guidance on roles in funding applications](#).

Q: What are eligible costs for the 60% of the grant remaining after the 40% FF is set aside?

A: You can find out what costs are eligible for UKRI funding [here](#).

Q: Is the expectation that the flexible fund will fund the projects to develop and test tools or can some of the 60% left of the budget be used for projects, and fund Post Doctoral Researchers?

A: The balance between activities delivered by the core consortium and those funded through the flexible fund will depend on the expertise already present within the consortium, how workstreams are designed and delivered, and the added value and expertise that flexible fund projects can bring.

The flexible fund may be used to address skills, knowledge or delivery gaps, or to bring in additional expertise and perspectives not already present in the core team. For example, the funding competitions could be completely open, thematically steered, targeted at activities with specific communities, or to deliver the required pilots, while the core consortium focuses on developing and refining the tools/approaches.

Applicants should clearly articulate their overall vision for the consortium, the role of the flexible fund, and how funding is expected to be distributed across activities. We would expect to see strong collaboration between the core consortium team and those supported through the flexible fund, ensuring that expertise and experience are effectively combined and that all activities contribute coherently to the consortium's overarching objectives.

Post-doctoral researchers can be included in the core consortium team as well as in flexible fund projects as a project lead, researcher co-lead or visiting researcher.

Q: Where would Charities or not for profits, social enterprises etc get the additional 20% from (on 80% fEC), or are they being effectively excluded?

A: UKRI will fund 100% of all eligible and justified costs relating to project co-leads from UK business, third sector or government organisations.

Please read our guidance on [including project co-leads from business, third sector or government bodies](#) – in particular, Annex A, the eligible costings table on page 5, and information relating to subsidy control.

Flexible Fund

Please note that the flexible fund and the projects or activities it funds are governed by UKRI funding rules. Please refer to the research funding guides and terms and conditions documents linked above.

Q: Could you please clarify whether organisations and individuals within the core consortium would be eligible to bid for activity supported by the flexible fund or would they be automatically excluded?

A: While project leads and project co-leads are not *excluded* from applying to flexible fund calls, they are strongly encouraged to use other avenues open to them to contribute to the overall consortium. The rationale for their inclusion in flexible fund applications will need to be strongly justified, and robust governance and assurance processes will need to be developed and followed (including making the Safer Streets team aware of the applications).

Applications into flexible fund calls that are led by or include individuals based at the same organisation as a project co-lead are permitted. Governance and decision-making for the flexible fund will need to clearly set out how conflicts of interest will be managed and mitigated.

Q: If an organisation is a partner, can they be a beneficiary of the flexible fund?

A: Yes, project partners can be beneficiaries of the flexible fund. Applications into flexible fund calls that are led by or include individuals based at an organisation named on the consortium application as a project partner are permitted. Governance and decision-making for the flexible fund will need to clearly set out how conflicts of interest will be managed and mitigated.

Q: Will the flexible fund be able to fund directly allocated costs (e.g. investigator and overhead costs) even though it is awarded as directly incurred?

A: Flexible fund costs should be included in applications under the 'Directly Incurred: Other' subheading. This is because the detailed fund headings for the subsequent flexible fund projects are not known at the point the consortium submits their application and an award is made.

While the flexible funding pot is awarded to the consortium as a DI: Other cost, these funds do not have to remain as DI costs when awarded to the subsequent flexible fund projects: they can be awarded as DA, DI and Indirect costs as applicable. This will not be considered a virement of

funds because a separate funding contract has now been made between the consortium and the organisation leading the new flexible fund project.

Project leads for flexible fund projects are responsible for managing the finances associated with their award. At the end of each flexible fund project, expenditure should be reported to the consortium in accordance with the original funding profile, including Directly Allocated (DA), Directly Incurred (DI) and Indirect costs, where applicable. When submitting the Final Expenditure Statement (FES) to UKRI, the consortium must report all flexible fund expenditure under Directly Incurred: Other costs.

Q: Could flexible funds be awarded to proposals led by industry partners and if so, would they still be awarded at 80% FEC?

A: [UKRI eligibility rules](#) apply to funding awarded through the flexible funding pot, meaning that individuals from [UK business, third sector or government bodies](#) would not be eligible to lead a flexible fund project, but they can be included as project co-leads. The same rule applies to individuals not based in the UK ([international project co-leads](#)).

Eligible Exceptions costs (as specified in the [Research Funding Guide](#)) and eligible costs related to project co-leads from [UK business, third sector or government bodies](#) and [International project co-leads](#) can be included in flexible fund projects and funded at 100% FEC.

Q: Who is expected to provide the remaining 20% contribution towards the flexible fund's FEC?

A: The consortium will provide 80% FEC funding to the projects/activities they commission through the flexible fund. The remaining 20% will be funded by the recipient organisation leading the flexible fund project. This means that the research organisation hosting the consortium will not bear the cost of the 20% matched funding for flexible fund projects.

Q: Does access to the flexible fund need to be advertised and will flexible fund competitions be advertised via UKRI?

A: Flexible fund competitions will not be advertised through UKRI funding channels or published on the Funding Finder website, but the consortium is expected to find appropriate routes to promote opportunities that are made available using the flexible fund. The Safer Streets team will support dissemination through relevant internal and external networks.

Q: Does the flexible fund need to be granted competitively in open competitions or are the core team at liberty to decide which organisations to offer the funds to?

A: While the thematic area and/or targeted communities might be shaped by specific steers, we expect all flexible funding calls to be openly competitive. Applications for flexible fund opportunities must undergo a competitive process that is consistent with the principles of fair and transparent review and be proportionate to the size of the award. Processes should align with [UKRI's approach to assessment and decision-making processes](#) and must be fully documented.

Equality, diversity and inclusion must be embedded at all levels and in all aspects of research and research funding practice. See further Information on [UKRI's EDI Strategy](#).

Q: Will the Safer Streets team be involved in the review/allocation/award process for the flexible fund?

Yes. UKRI expect to play a role in shaping the commissioning and assessment process, including through representation on the decision-making panel itself. The team will provide support and advice on best practice with regards to commissioning and assessment processes and answer the team's policy and process queries. It is expected that the consortium will establish an advisory board that can also support the design and development of flexible fund activities.

Q: Can the allocation of flexible funds be decided in advance (for example at application stage), or would it be expected for the funds to only be used for emergent opportunities?

A: The flexible fund may be used to support a combination of planned and emerging activities. Applicants may submit an application with a clear vision for the types of projects, opportunities or areas of activity they intend to support through the flexible fund. Equally, not all future opportunities will necessarily be known at the application stage, and the fund may be used to respond to emerging needs, priorities or innovative ideas as they arise.

At a minimum, applicants must clearly articulate the objectives of the flexible fund and describe how it will be managed, governed and allocated to ensure funding is distributed transparently and in line with the aims of the consortium.

Q: Funding cannot be vired out of the flexible fund - could it be vired in?

A: Funding cannot be vired into the flexible fund. Funding allocated to the flexible pot is not eligible to be vired to cover other costs related to the core funding of the consortium award. Any underspend on the flexible fund cannot be used for any other purpose.

Eligibility

Q: Is it expected to have academic partners as a lead/co-lead, or can a charity or NGO be the lead? Does that affect the fEC rules?

A: This opportunity is open to organisations with standard eligibility. The lead organisation for the consortium and any flexible fund projects must be [eligible to receive UKRI funding](#). NGOs may have this eligibility if they are registered [independent research organisations \(IROs\)](#), but we are not able to process applications applying for eligibility as part of this funding opportunity.

Q: How can organisations such as industry, third sector organisations, or technology providers, become involved in a consortium? What routes are available for participation and funding?

A: The project lead must be based at a [UK research organisation eligible for UKRI funding](#).

There are several role-types available to individuals and organisations participating in an application. The most appropriate role will depend on both the type of organisation and the nature of its/the individual's contribution to the project. Applicant teams should decide which role is most appropriate. Please see our guidance on [roles in funding applications](#).

Individuals from business, third sector or government body organisations based in the UK can be included as part of the core consortium team as a project co-lead. They may also participate in flexible fund projects as project co-leads.

Please read the [project co-leads from business, third sector or government bodies policy guidance](#) for details of eligible organisations and costs, as well as our guidance on [roles in funding applications: eligibility, responsibilities and costings](#).

We will not be hosting a consortium-building or networking event for this opportunity. Any discussions regarding potential collaboration would be a matter for applicants to pursue independently.

Q: Will police forces be eligible to be involved as governmental project co-leads?

A: Individuals from police forces can be included as [project co-leads from business, third sector or government bodies](#). As per the policy, salary costs are not covered, unless in exceptional circumstances where the salaried post of the government project co-lead is to be backfilled, the salary for the government project co-lead can be claimed.

Police forces, particularly those involved in the required pilots, may be included as project partners. Letters of support should be provided by the police force and other organisations involved in the consortium. The letter should detail the role of the organisation, any support or contribution being provided to the project and the history, and the nature of the partnership (that is, new or existing).

Project partner letters should be uploaded in a single PDF containing the letters or emails of support from each partner you named in the project partners section.

Q: Can international partners be included in the core consortium?

A: International researchers can apply as 'project co-lead (international)'. You should include all other international collaborators (or UK partners not based at approved organisations) as project partners.

Please see the [UKRI international project co-lead policy](#).

Other

Q: Will there be any consortium building activity?

A: We will not be hosting a consortium-building or networking event for this opportunity. Any discussions regarding potential collaboration would be a matter for applicants to pursue independently.

Q: Are we expected to have the full consortium already named in the application or can we build it up as part of the work we do from Feb 2027?

A: Members of the core consortium team, such as the project lead and project co-leads, must be named in the application. Some positions may be left unnamed and recruited once the consortium commences.

As the consortium is required to deliver at least four pilots with UK police forces, applicants must demonstrate a track record of collaboration with police forces. Such collaborations should be established by the point of application submission and evidenced by project partner letters of support. Where formal partnerships are not yet in place, applicants must provide a credible plan demonstrating their ability to rapidly develop relationships and secure police partners if successful.

Q: If an organisation has to include match or in-kind contributions to fit within the £1.6m budget, will that be penalised? (e.g. extra % FTE?)

A: Applications with matched or in-kind contributions will not be penalised.

There is no requirement for matched funding from the institutions hosting the project lead, project co-leads or other staff employed on the application, beyond the standard 20% fEC. Expert reviewers and panels assessing UKRI funding applications must not consider levels of institutional matched funding as a factor on which to base recommendations. However, direct and in-kind contributions from third party project partners are encouraged.

Q: You aim to complete the assessment within 4 months of the application. i.e. end of February. But the project must start on 1 February 27? How will this work?

A: This is an indicative timeline designed to manage expectations and ensure decisions are communicated before February 2027. All consortium applications should list 1 February 2027 as the project start date. We will keep applicants informed should the assessment timeline change.

In some cases, UKRI may issue a statement of project commitment to allow funded activity to commence before the official offer letter has been received by the lead Research Organisation.

Q: Can the same organisation participate in different proposals?

A: Yes, organisations can be listed as part of the core consortium team in more than one application submitted to this funding opportunity.

Please note that the maximum amount of time that one applicant can request for funding, across all UKRI projects, is 1,650 hours a year, equivalent to 37.5 hours a week, 44 weeks a year. It is the responsibility of the research organisation to have a process in place which monitors the time claimed by any applicant to ensure that no more than 100% of full time equivalent (FTE) is claimed as salary for any individual across all grants funded by UKRI.

Q: Can you elaborate on the demand management statement? What exactly does that mean and how might it be implemented?

A: Demand management is not currently being applied to this funding opportunity. However, should the level of interest exceed what can be managed within the assessment process, UKRI may introduce limits on the number of applications that can be submitted. Further details will be clearly communicated where this is the case.

Q: What is the rationale for funding a single consortium?

A: The consortium model allows for the core team to retain control over the overall direction of funded research and innovation activities, while allowing skills, expertise and engagement to be sought from the widest possible community of individuals and partners without these relationships needing to be built in advance of submitting an application.