Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Caucus (EDICa) Flexible Fund

Flexible Fund Call 3: The Organisation of Work: Creating enabling workplaces

If your question or query has not be answered via the webinars, drop-in session, or the FAQs below, please contact us at EDICaucus@hw.ac.uk.

Frequently Asked Questions

What qualifies as an early career researcher (ECR), and do ECRs have to be the principal investigator on the project?

To be considered an ECR, applicants must have a minimum of two of the following five criteria:

1. Have not previously been a PI or lead on an externally funded project or led a significant programme of work in a commercial or non-academic setting.

2. Precariously employed, e.g., currently employed via a temporary contract of employment.

3. Recent returner from a career break (1–2-year timeframe), e.g., maternity, caring responsibility, sickness, unpaid sabbatical.

4. Change of career track or returning after substantial administrative responsibility.

5. Recent change in career, e.g., industry to academia or academia to industry.

When you are completing the application, we recommend that you be really clear as to why you feel you meet the definition of ECR.

While we will prioritise projects where ECRs serve as the Principal Investigator, this is not a strict requirement. If your institution does not allow an ECR to be a Principal Investigator, please contact the EDICa team (EDICaucus@hw.ac.uk), so that we can discuss this with you individually. If the Principal Investigator is a more experienced researcher, we strongly encourage the inclusion of ECRs as Co-Leads.

Can ECRs participate as a co-investigator and will this be considered as being the lead applicant?

The principal investigator is the person with the overall responsibility and is the named lead applicant. The co-investigator's role is to support the lead investigator to ensure the work is undertaken and would not be considered the lead applicant. ECRs can participate as a co-

investigator. However, an ECR taking on the role of principal investigator would strengthen the proposal.

Is it possible to have an EU partner on a project?

We follow the UKRI eligibility criteria. According to these criteria, you can have an international partner, but they would not be able to be the lead applicant.

How is the research and innovation ecosystem defined in terms of the types of workplaces? Any suggestions as to what organisations might be in scope or out of scope?

There is no definitive list or definition of what is and what is not part of the research innovation ecosystem. In case of uncertainty, we would encourage you to submit your expression of interest sooner rather than later so that we can provide you with feedback. If an organization does research or innovation as a primary function of its existence, whether that's publicly funded, privately funded, or some combination of both, it would normally come under research and innovation ecosystem.

Is open data a requirement or an advantage?

It is never a requirement. It can be advantage, if, and only if the choice for open data matches the questions asked and the type of interventions proposed.

How are you going to assess whether or not a researcher is marginalised?

We have an assessment rubric on the website where you can see how the reviewers will assess marginalisation.

What do you mean by co-design?

We appreciate that there are various concepts of co-design. We don't subscribe to any narrowly conceived view, but we would expect applications to be clear and explicit about their chosen approach. We also have co-design materials on the website that can be used to support an application.

Is it permissible to do secondary data set analysis of existing survey data?

Yes, if it fits the research question and the objectives.

Do you have a target for how many researchers you want on a team?

No. The goals for each individual application will vary, but teams are realistically more likely to be limited in size.

Can professional services staff be principal investigators?

Yes. We do support professional services staff to lead projects. When submitting your application, it is important to demonstrate your experience and capacity to lead the project effectively. We encourage you to highlight the relevant skills and contributions of your team members, even if they don't identify strictly as 'researchers'.

Our project aims to support staff who mainly enable research and may not consider themselves researchers. Does this fit within the scope of this call?

Yes. We recognise that many individuals within the Research & Innovation sector contribute to research without being directly involved in conducting it. This includes professional services staff, lab technicians, etc. These groups are crucial to the research ecosystem and are considered eligible under this call. We encourage you to highlight the relevant skills and contributions of your team members, even if they don't identify strictly as 'researchers'.

Do Early Career Innovators need to be based in a university or large research institution?

Whoever leads the project will need to be employed in an institution eligible to receive UKRI funding for the duration of the project. The standard ESRC rules apply around the inclusion of Co-Leads from UK Business or Third Sector Organisations.

Is the suggested £55-60K budget the 100% or the 80% full Economic Cost figure?

The suggested £55-60K budget represents the 100% full economic cost.