**ESRC Impact Acceleration Account – Applicant Guidance**

1. **Background**

The Economic and Social Research Council Impact Acceleration Account (ESRC IAA) was awarded to the University of Glasgow (UofG) to support the generation and development of non-academic impact from social sciences research.

The ESRC IAA supports projects with the potential for all types of non-academic impact across public, private or third sectors. The IAA does not fund new research, but projects should be rooted in University of Glasgow research and aim to enhance the impact of research through knowledge exchange.

Deadlines for all ESRC IAA schemes are available on the [College webpages](https://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/socialsciences/research/researchsupport/impact/fundingimpact/esrcimpactaccelerationaccount/). It is expected that there will be Open Calls for IAA funding in the Spring and Autumn of each year.

Guidance is provided within this document, however additional advice on eligibility and support with the drafting of applications is provided by the College’s KE & Impact Team. To access support, please contact: [socsci-esrc-iaa@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:socsci-esrc-iaa@glasgow.ac.uk). It is strongly recommended that applicants take up this support.

Funding is currently available under two streams: the User Engagement Fund and the Follow on Fund. Projects that involve a mobility element such as an inward or outward placement are welcome within either stream. ECR mobility is an area of particular focus, and we explicitly encourage applicants to consult with the KE & Impact Team to explore ECR placement as a Knowledge Exchange pathway.

1. **The User Engagement Fund**

The User Engagement Fund has been established in recognition of the idea that high levels of user engagement lead to more productive collaboration and effective, sustainable outcomes for academic and non-academic partners. The User Engagement Fund therefore supports early-stage engagement or scoping activities with new or existing user-partners to co-develop projects with clear impact potential.

Projects are normally expected to cost up to a maximum of £5000, although this upper limit may be reassessed at the discretion of the ESRC IAA Panel in exceptional circumstances. Projects funded in this round are expected to be completed within 12 months.

If successful, applicants are encouraged to apply to one of the other ESRC IAA schemes within 12 months of completion of the User Engagement project.

1. **The Follow on Fund**

The Follow-on Fund supports the development of innovative and experimental forms of knowledge exchange from existing or ongoing research (not just those projects previously funded by the ESRC). Typically, follow-on fund projects build on existing researcher-user partnerships. However, it is not a requirement to obtain User Engagement Funding to apply for Follow on Funding.

Projects are normally expected to cost **up to a maximum of £15,000**, although this upper limit may be reassessed at the discretion of the ESRC IAA Panel in exceptional circumstances. Projects funded in this round are expected to be completed within 12 months.

1. **Eligibility**

ESRC IAA funding is open to all academic staff from across the University of Glasgow, provided the research underpinning the activities proposed falls under the remit of the ESRC. Details of the breadth of disciplines eligible are available via [the ESRC website](http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/is-my-research-suitable-for-esrc-funding/discipline-classifications/).

Interdisciplinary projects with a major social science component are also eligible for funding.

Collaborative projects with other HEIs are welcome but University of Glasgow ESRC IAA funds cannot directly fund the activity of academic colleagues outside of this institution.

In the case of proposals linked to live UKRI funded research, there is an expectation that grant awards will include provision for KE activity. Applicants for funding from the IAA based on such projects will therefore have to demonstrate that work they are proposing to undertake using IAA funding is beyond the scope anticipated at the time the original research proposal was submitted.

Expenses for items such as travel, accommodation, subsistence, consumables, events etc. are eligible for inclusion in IAA budgets, and should be appropriately justified in your application.

Costs for staff are eligible for inclusion where it can be demonstrated that the activity directly supports the project. For detailed advice about staff costs, please contact Project Coordinator: [Jonathan.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk).

Expenditure will be expected to commence within 2 months of the project’s start date, with final submission and payment of expenses, salaries or invoices within 2 months.

Award recipients may not hold more than one ESRC IAA grant concurrently.

1. **Ineligible costs, activities and applicants**

Post-graduate researchers are not eligible to apply to the IAA directly. However, they may be funded as Research Assistants (see 2.7 above).

The IAA is not intended to fund:

* + Direct buy-out of time for existing academic or professional services staff
  + Estates and indirect costs
  + Attendance at academic conferences or networking events
  + PhD fees
  + Publisher costs associated with Open Access
  + The preparation of research grant applications
  + Activities already covered by prior ESRC awards
  + Projects with limited potential for knowledge-exchange or impact beyond academia

1. **How to apply**

The application form can be downloaded from the same location as this guidance note. We strongly recommend that applicants contact [socsci-esrc-iaa@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:socsci-esrc-iaa@glasgow.ac.uk) for a discussion on eligibility before applying. The CoSS KE and Impact team can support applicants with all aspects of proposal development.

It is the responsibility of the applicant(s) to ensure that all proposed activities are in accordance with the University’s Code of Ethics and Code of Practice for Research.

Application forms should be submitted via email to [socsci-esrc-iaa@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:socsci-esrc-iaa@glasgow.ac.uk).

All applications will be reviewed and scored independently by three reviewers from our pool of reviewers. Scores will be collated and final decisions on funding will be made by our panel, chaired by Professor Graeme Roy (Dean of External Engagement).

Applicants will normally be notified of the decision within five weeks of the closing date.

Decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

1. **Assessment Criteria**

Applications will first be assessed for eligibility, and then considered according to the following criteria:

* The potential to generate impact of reach and excellence. It is understood that not all forms of impact would be achievable within the timeframe of the IAA project, but the proposal should demonstrate a long-term vision of how impact will be achieved.
* The clarity of the workplan and the probability of achieving the aims and objectives within the timeframe and with the resources requested.
* The quality of the activities and the likelihood that planned outputs will achieve the target outcomes.
* The quality of the evaluation plan and the likelihood that impact will be captured and demonstrated through the planned evaluation method.
* The visibility of the non-academic partner and their commitment to the project and the likelihood that the project would lead to a sustainable collaboration.

Reviewers will also consider whether projects constitute good value for money, with a clear justification for resources requested.

1. **Reporting**

Award recipients will be required to approve a Final Expenditure Statement and submit a written report detailing, activities, outputs and outcomes within 4 weeks of the conclusion of the project.

Additional reviews may be conducted at further intervals after the conclusion of projects to track impact leverage over time.