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Centres Competition 2020

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
Funding type:	Grant
Publication date:	1 April 2020
Opening date:	1 April 2020
Closing date:	6 October 2020 16:00 UK time

Last updated: 21 September 2020

[Start application](#)

Research Centres are major ESRC strategic investments. In addition to taking forward an ambitious research agenda and making significant economic and/or societal impact, they add value by increasing research infrastructure, building capacity, encouraging interdisciplinary working in social science and beyond, and enabling research collaboration in the UK and internationally.

[RO contributions update – August 2020](#)

Research Centre funding is aimed at experienced research leaders who require longer-term or extended support for research groups, inter-institutional research networks, programmes of research, medium to large surveys, other infrastructure or methodological developments, or any related larger-scale projects. Research Centres also have a distinct role in supporting the development of early career researchers and building new research capacity. They are expected to be high-impact investments over the longer term.

The Centres 2020 competition is open to applications of excellent quality in any area of social science within the ESRC remit. The call also includes a highlight notice in the area of Changing Populations, in particular ‘Connecting Generations’.

The ESRC will be investing up to £45m 100% full economic cost (fEC) over five years through the open element of this Centres Competition, with up to a further £10m 100% fEC for the highlight notice. The competition is for proposals ranging from £2.5 million to

£10 million 100% fEC with a term of up to five years. ESRC will meet 80% of the full economic costs on proposals submitted. It is anticipated that ESRC will fund up to five Centres under the open call and a further Centre under the highlight notice. All proposals to this call must be led by a researcher at an eligible UK Research Organisation (RO) and will need to be submitted through the Research Councils' Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system.

We anticipate considerable interest in this competition which will be run as a two-stage application process and, as in previous competitions, we have asked ROs to limit the number of applications to support the most competitive bids. We will be looking for evidence of long-term institutional commitment, including additional financial resources from the RO to extend the work programme beyond the 100% fEC funding requested.

Highlight notice

Dedicated funds are available to support a Centre in the area of Changing Populations, in particular 'Connecting Generations'. It is our expectation that the successful Centre will seek to address aims set out under the Changing Populations priority area of the [ESRC 2019 Delivery Plan](#) and specifically fulfil our commitment to a Connecting Generations programme that stimulates excellent research that will inform policy and practice by expanding the evidence base on how changes in our population, society and economy influence the connections and inequalities between generations.

Further details can be found in the Call Specification.

Timetable

Full guidance on eligibility, closing dates, how to apply to the call and assessment criteria are detailed in the documents listed below. A timetable is also shown below.

- Call published – April 2020
- Deadline for submitting outline proposals – October 2020
- Deadline for submitting full proposals – March 2021
- Interviews – July 2021
- Award start date – October 2021

Call Documents

- [Call Specification \(PDF, 173Kb\)](#)
- [Je-S Call Guidance \(Version 2, updated 2 July 2020\) \(PDF, 195Kb\)](#)

Additional Guidance

- [Frequently Asked Questions \(Version 2, update August 2020\) \(PDF, 101Kb\)](#)
- [Research Funding Guide \(PDF, 375Kb\)](#)
- [Equality Impact Assessment \(PDF, 163Kb\)](#)
- [Eligible Centres \(PDF, 90Kb\)](#)

Further information

Enquiries about this call can be sent to ESRC.Centres@esrc.ukri.org.

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