

The UKRI COVID-19 Grant Extension Allocation

The UKRI COVID-19 Grant Extension Allocation (CoA) is to provide organisations with resources to sustain UKRI grant-funded research, research and technical staff and research infrastructures during the period of pandemic disruption and its immediate aftermath. Its objective is to ensure that UKRI grant outcomes continue to be met, and the value of its grant investments continue to be realised; and to sustain grant-funded, research skills and capability of UK organisations that will be needed to underpin the post-pandemic, national recovery.

UKRI recognises that the impacts of the pandemic will be many and varied. Organisations are themselves best-placed to determine priorities for additional support to sustain their UKRI-supported research and research staff, capabilities and infrastructure. For this reason, UKRI will award £180 million of additional funding during 2020/21 and 2021/22. The CoA award is an algorithmic allocation calculated by looking at the value of recurrent payments that organisations are profiled to receive between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021 for competitively awarded grants with a planned end date during the same time period. The total CoA funding will be awarded to organisations pro rata to the total value of profiled payments.

While recognising that further funding may be required, UKRI is limited as to the further funding it can provide; however, UKRI also considers that organisations will have incurred savings as a result of reduced activity in the pandemic period from, for example, reduced travel and expenditure on consumables. It will therefore permit a 'change of use' of a further £80 million pro rata drawn from organisations' existing grant portfolio, restricted to grants with an end date after 31 March 2021, to support the objective of the allocation.

UKRI will advise organisations of the value of their organisation's allocation and limit on the change of use of existing funding. The allocation may be used to sustain all grant-funded activities funded by the UKRI Research Councils and Innovate UK which is allowed under non-exceptional UKRI grant cost categories, provided it supports the achievement of UKRI grant objectives or supports research capabilities of which UKRI is a significant grant funder. This includes, to a proportionate degree, UKRI projects that are jointly funded by other parties, and includes indirect and estates costs, which UKRI recognises as essential components of the grant-funded infrastructure. The funding cannot be used in support of activities solely funded by other parties, or to pay salary costs of staff that have been furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). It also cannot be used to support activities which benefit from restricted or uncompetitive renewals, or for which other UKRI mechanisms exist, such as studentships.

Recipients of the CoA will be required to describe a framework and governance with which the organisation will prioritise the use of the allocation before it is confirmed. Funding does not need to be allocated on an existing grant-by-grant or person-by-person basis, but will ensure in broad terms:

- the funding meets the aims of the allocation described in Paragraph 1.2 of the Terms and Conditions¹.
- at least 35% of the allocation is used to fund directly incurred activity.
- cross-Council activities receive appropriate support.

¹ We expect organisations to use CoA funds to ensure that UKRI grant outcomes continue to be met, the value of its grant investments continue to be realised, and to sustain grant-funded research skills and capability of UK research organisations that will be needed to underpin the post-pandemic national recovery.

- the funding maintains the disciplinary balance that is reflected in the distribution of an organisation's 2020/21 grant funding by Council. A maximum of 10% variation of the organisation's disciplinary balance is acceptable.
- the funding maintains the balance of an organisation's 2020/21 grant funding by protected characteristics, and mitigates disadvantages to protected groups incurred through the pandemic and its impacts.
- support for co-funded activities is proportionate to UKRI contributions.

To allow the reconciliation of present grants and the allocation against their respective Terms and Conditions, UKRI will require organisations seeking to change the use of existing grants to make an internal charge against the existing grants and a corresponding internal credit to the allocation. Internal charges can be made against the directly allocated costs, the directly incurred costs (with the permission of the Principal Investigator), and the indirect costs associated with the direct costs. The transfers and charges to the allocation will be subject to UKRI Funding Assurance processes.

Organisations will also need to provide evidence of the appropriate use of CoA funding in a Final Report.