

## ESRC-MOST UK-Taiwan Networking Grants

### Call Specification

#### Summary

The UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Taiwan Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) are pleased to invite proposals for the ESRC-MOST UK-Taiwan Networking Grants call. This call is aimed at fostering the development of relationships between British and Taiwanese social researchers, with a view to ESRC and MOST's continuing aspirations for deepening collaboration in the social sciences.

This call is co-funded between ESRC and MOST. Proposals should contain a UK component, to be funded by ESRC and a Taiwan component, to be funded by MOST. Proposals must reflect a programme of work that has been jointly developed between UK and Taiwan colleagues. ESRC and MOST will run a parallel application process to fund the UK and Taiwan components respectively. The following call specification is for the UK component of the proposal. A corresponding Taiwan component of the proposal must be submitted to MOST. See MOST website [link](#) for more details.

**These two separate applications must contain a common document detailing the jointly developed programme of work (see Je-S Guidance for details).**

The total budget for the UK component of this call is £250,000 (with ESRC meeting 80% of the full Economic Costs (fEC)) and an amount of NT\$12,400,000 is available from MOST for the Taiwan component of the call (with MOST meeting 100% of costs). The UK component of a proposal may be a maximum of £31,000 (100% fEC – ESRC will meet 80% of fEC) and the Taiwan component of the proposal has an equivalent limit of NT\$1,240,000 (funded at 100%). The maximum proposal length is 18 months. The deadline for applications is Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

#### Background and Scope

ESRC is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and is the largest funder of social science in the UK, supporting independent, high quality research which has an impact on business, the public sector and civil society. UKRI is eager to support the UK research community in expanding its global engagement. With this in mind, ESRC is aware of potential untapped collaboration opportunities between the UK and Taiwan in the social sciences. Recent analysis has shown that Taiwanese co-applicants were among the most under-represented when considering the volume and quality of social science being undertaken in Taiwan.

MOST is a Taiwanese agency for scientific and technological development. It is the largest funding agency for academia and supervises the national science parks as well as national laboratories and centres for research. MOST is also the largest funding agency for social sciences in Taiwan. With the joint support from its Department of Humanities and Social Sciences and Department of International Cooperation and Science Education, MOST considers the UK an ideal but under-

explored international partner that has complementary expertise while sharing a lot in common in the social sciences.

This is the largest UK-Taiwan call in the area of social sciences and both funders have a continued aspiration for deepening collaboration in the social sciences, which can capitalise on the links built through this networking call. This Networking Call has been commissioned to expand the level of engagement with Taiwan to lower the barriers faced by UK social science researchers seeking to collaborate with Taiwan counterparts. These networking grants are intended to provide flexible support for a programme of activity addressing the broad objective of establishing sustainable collaborations.

Proposals may be submitted in any area of the social sciences. The funders will be looking to support a portfolio of projects which spans a good disciplinary range. Applicants must ensure that their proposal is within the remit of both ESRC and MOST. For the ESRC at least 50% of the proposed programme of research must fall with their remit – please see [here](#) for a full list of research areas. Further details of MOST's remit can be found [here](#).

## Call details

This call seeks to improve the connectivity between UK and Taiwan social science research communities, by providing funding to groups of researchers to foster new connections, identify common interests, build networks and develop common research agendas, helping to lay the groundwork for future collaborative research activity. The intention is that the networking activities supported through these grants will enable new relationships between UK and Taiwan researchers to be formed; for existing relationships to be strengthened; and for the overall level of connection between the UK and Taiwan social science communities to be enhanced.

Specific objectives that underpin this call are:

- To establish and enhance partnerships and networks between UK and Taiwan social science researchers
- To promote the sharing of best practice and knowledge exchange between UK and Taiwan social science researchers
- To identify and develop social science themes / topics of mutual importance in the UK and Taiwan and where enhanced bilateral collaboration would further world-leading standards in the respective areas
- To pump-prime collaborations between UK and Taiwan researchers

Applicants are encouraged to develop innovative and creative programmes of activity. Examples of activities which might be involved include (but are not limited to):

- Mobility, networking and travel for one or more investigators in either direction
- Scoping studies
- Website and / or digital costs
- Workshops to explore future collaboration opportunities
- Researcher exchanges
- Visiting positions or fellowships for early career researchers or staff exchanges

Collaborative activities should not be limited to the Principal Investigators and applicants are expected to engage a network of researchers from both the UK and Taiwan. We encourage a strong

commitment to supporting the development of researchers (particularly at the early-career stage) within proposals, through their inclusion in activities such as workshops and study visits. Please note that associated studentships or fellowships are not eligible under the UK component of this call.

Due to the ongoing uncertainty surrounding travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the funders recognise that the proposed programme of work may be subject to change. We encourage proposals to consider how they might be flexible in delivery should regulations have changed when the time comes to implement activities.

UKRI recognises that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major interruptions and disruptions across our communities and are committed to ensuring that individual applicants and their wider team, including partners and networks, are not penalised for any disruption to their career(s) such as breaks and delays, disruptive working patterns and conditions, the loss of on-going work, and role changes that may have been caused by the pandemic. Reviewers and panel members will be advised to consider the unequal impacts of the impact that COVID-19 related disruption might have had on the track record and career development of those individuals included in the proposal and will be asked to consider the capability of the applicant and their wider team to deliver the research they are proposing. Where disruptions have occurred applicants can highlight this within their application, if they wish, but there is no requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption.

## Funding

The total budget for the UK component of this call is £250,000. The UK component of a proposal may be a **maximum of £31,000 (100 per cent full economic cost (fEC))**. The maximum proposal length is 18 months. Proposals will need to show 100 per cent of fEC of the proposed research. **The ESRC will meet 80 per cent of the fEC on proposals submitted.** We expect to fund a minimum of 10 grants from this call, depending on the amounts requested and the quality of applications received.

Typically for Networking calls such as this one, the majority of requested costs would comprise travel and subsistence. With the need for flexibility in mind due to ongoing uncertainties surrounding travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ESRC have widened the scope of eligible costs to potentially cover all typical items such as salary, investigator and research assistance costs, **where these are well justified with respect to the objectives of this call**. Detailed information on eligible costs can be found in the Je-S Guidance for this call and the ESRC's Research Funding Guide (<https://esrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-forapplicants/research-funding-guide/>). Grants are intended to support networking activities and are not intended to support substantive research projects. Costs should be well justified with this rationale in mind.

Due to the ongoing uncertainty surrounding travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the funders recognise that proposed activities may be subject to change. Proposals should provide only one set of costings which are costed with reference to their best estimate of what they can deliver in the current circumstances. Proposals should **not** provide different costing options based on different scenarios. We do encourage proposals to consider how they might be flexible in delivery should regulations have changed when the time comes to implement activities. Please note that any changes would need to be managed within the overall budget. Where an application is successful, any changes in circumstances that affect the proposal will be managed as a post-award issue.

In the interests of genuine collaboration, it is expected that the funds requested for the UK and Taiwan components of a proposal are of equivalent value. UK costs should be entered into the Je-S form. Taiwan costs should be submitted to MOST.

Please note that the lead researcher of the Taiwan component should be listed as an international co-investigator.

## Eligible Costs

Detailed information on eligible costs can be found in the Je-S Guidance for this call and the ESRC's Research Funding Guide (<https://esrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-forapplicants/research-funding-guide/>).

This call is aimed at supporting a programme of activity to build long-term sustainable collaborations. It is not intended to provide funding for individual travel grants and/or one-off visits. Such applications will be rejected by office.

Travel and subsistence for UK researchers is eligible and expected to constitute the majority of the requested costs. Though note above guidance regarding flexibility of delivery in response to changing regulations and the flexibility to add other types of costs where these are well justified with respect to the objectives of the call. Conference costs, some consumables, costs for venue hire and setting up websites may also be included. Grant-linked studentship funding may not be claimed as part of any application.

Applications should be made at current costs in accordance with subsistence and travel regulations at the applicant's institution. For each main activity, indicative costs should be shown. ESRC may index approved costs so awards made will include an allowance for inflation. Any award made will be cash-limited, and whilst funds should be used for the activities requested, the use of funds to allow activities that were not originally envisaged will be permitted as long as they are in pursuit of the overall objectives of the grant and within the guidelines.

**Applications must clearly show how this funding will add value to UK social sciences and facilitate longer-term collaborations between the UK and Taiwan.**

## Eligibility

- Applications must be submitted by a UK research organisation eligible for UKRI funding. If you are in doubt of your institution's eligibility, please check the UKRI website.
- The principal investigator of the UK component must be a UK-based researcher and of postdoctoral level or higher.
- The lead of the Taiwan component should be identified as an international co-investigator on the proposal.
- The application must be within both ESRC's and MOST's remit.

## How to Apply

A reminder that this call specification is for the UK component of the proposal only. A corresponding Taiwan component of the proposal must be submitted to MOST. See MOST website [link](#) for more

details. **These two separate applications must contain a common document detailing the jointly develop programme of work (see Je-S guidance for details). Applications should have exactly the same titles to allow them to be easily matched. A UK proposal with no corresponding Taiwan proposal submitted to MOST will be rejected.**

UK component applications must be made through the UKRI Joint Electronic Submissions System (Je-S): <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx>

Please see the [Je-S guidance document](#) for more details on how to prepare your proposal.

The deadline for proposals to be submitted through Je-S is 16:00 on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

**Please note:** Proposals and associated documentation submitted to this call will be shared between ESRC and MOST for the purposes of funding and joint oversight of the commissioning process. A data sharing agreement will be agreed between ESRC and MOST.

## Assessment Process

The separate but aligned UK and Taiwan applications will undergo separate assessment processes by ESRC and MOST respectively. The ESRC assessment of the UK proposal is as follows.

Proposals will be assessed through an open, competitive process using quality as the primary assessment criterion. A panel of experts drawn from the social sciences will form the UK Assessment Panel, and evaluate all proposals against the following criteria:

- Proposed activities – quality and coherence, scale of ambition and feasibility (eg in addressing language and cross-cultural communication issues)
- Partners' involvement and the strength of collaboration – the level of contribution from Taiwan collaborators will be taken into account
- The added value to UK social science through the partnership
- The benefits and future joint research likely to accrue from the collaboration
- The uniqueness of the opportunity and the expertise of the UK applicants and their Taiwan partner(s) (ie where the collaboration is in an area of particular research strength for one or more of the collaborators)
- The breadth of researchers engaged in the activity and the opportunities for engaging early career researchers
- If the application is to supplement an ongoing partnership, applicants should specify what new aspects will be delivered by this grant
- The expected output(s) of the grant (eg development of joint research proposals, joint publications, joint conferences etc)
- Value for money – the level of contribution made by the UK institution towards development of the grant.

We will be looking to support a portfolio of projects which spans a good disciplinary range. The assessment process will follow ESRC's standard scoring matrix.

Once the separate UK and Taiwan panels have had their separate meetings they will have produced their own separate funding recommendations. Representative(s) from each panel will then come together for a joint meeting, to combine these separate funding recommendations into one final joint funding recommendation.

UK awards will follow the ESRC's general reporting process: <https://esrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-grant-holders/reporting/>

## **Commissioning timetable**

- Call launch – Tuesday 3rd November 2020
- Closing date for submission of proposals – Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- Assessment – January 2021 to March 2021
- Applicants informed – April 2021
- Projects commence from – May 2021

## **Contacts**

For further details please contact: [UKTaiwanNetworking@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:UKTaiwanNetworking@esrc.ukri.org)

If you have any questions on the Taiwan component of this call please contact: [cmtom@most.gov.tw](mailto:cmtom@most.gov.tw)