

Inclusion of UK business, third sector or government body co-investigators on ESRC proposals

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Who is eligible to be listed as a business, third sector or government body co-investigator?

To be eligible for this Co-Investigator role applicants must be based at an established UK business, third sector or government body. There is no requirement for the UK business, third sector or government Co-Investigator to hold a PhD or equivalent qualification. On receipt of the application, eligibility of business, third sector or government body will not normally need to be checked if it is reasonably clear that they are appropriate to conduct the work. Where there is doubt checks will be carried out.

Applicants based at Public Service Research Establishments (PSREs) which have gained UKRI eligibility may apply as Principal or Co-Investigators. These applicants are not subject to the requirements and restrictions set out in this policy but will be funded under standard fEC rules (i.e. 80% fEC). Please see the UKRI list of [eligible Public Service Research Establishments](#).

Applicants must ensure that the name of the co-investigator's company, third sector organisation or government department is clearly stated in the proposal. Where any Project Partners are included in the application the name of their company or organisation must also be provided.

UK Subsidy Control Framework

Proposals which include co-investigators from the UK business sector or from third sector organisations that engage in economic activity¹ must ensure that the involvement of these organisations comply with any legislation applicable in the United Kingdom on or after 1 January 2021 that regulates the granting by a public sector body of any advantage which threatens to or actually distorts competition in the United Kingdom and/or any other country or countries ("UK Subsidy Control Framework"). Under UKRI grants terms and conditions RGC 2.3.1 it is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to ensure their use of the grant complies with such legislation and any breach of the UK Subsidy Control framework (or EU State Aid law if applicable) may require UKRI to recover some or all Grant funding, together with interest. For further information please refer to the [BEIS guidance for Subsidy Control](#).

Proposals which include co-investigators from third sector organisations that are deemed not to engage in economic activity¹ **must** provide evidence of this status in the Justification of Resources section of the proposal form.

How do business, third sector or government body co-investigators register with Je-S?

All research proposals to ESRC must be made electronically through the Joint electronic Submission system (Je-S). The principal investigator (PI) will be unable to add a UK

¹ 'Economic activity' means putting goods or services on a market. It is not necessary to make a profit to be engaged in economic activity: if others in the market offer the same good or service, it is an economic activity.

coinvestigator (Co-I) from a business, third sector or government body to an application unless they have first registered with Je-S. To do this, the Co-I will need to go to the [Je-S website](#), select 'Create an Account', and complete their details.

If, when they reach the organisation screen, their Organisation details are not listed, the Co-I will need to contact the Je-S helpdesk (email jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org or telephone 01793 444164) and provide details of the project with which they wish to be associated (reference number, title, PI). It is important that the name of the Organisation (the Co-I's company, third sector organisation or government department) is included in the registration details. Once the details are complete the Je-S Helpdesk will register the Co-I, allowing the PI to add them to the proposal. Eligibility of business, third sector or government body will not normally need to be checked if it is reasonably clear that they are appropriate to conduct the work. Where there is doubt checks will be carried out should a positive funding decision be taken.

Applicants should ensure that, if they are submitting a proposal to a closed call (ie working towards a specific deadline after which time the call will close and further submissions will not be possible), the Co-I applies for registration with Je-S as soon as possible, and no later than seven working days prior to the date of submission.

What costs can be associated with a business, third sector or government body co-investigator?

When a PI includes a business, third sector or government body Co-I on their application they must ensure that all associated costs are fully justified within the Justification of Resources attachment. The ESRC will fund 100% of eligible costs, see **Table I** below, where these have been sufficiently justified., However, the project costs associated with these types of Co-I contributions must not exceed 30% of the overall cost of the grant (at 100% fEC).

It is important to note that the **combined** costs for international co-investigators, and UK business, third sector and government body coinvestigators must not exceed 30% of the total fEC of the grant application.

Applicants **please note**:

- All costs associated with the business, third sector or government body co- investigators must be included in the Je-S form.
- Costs associated with a business, third sector or government body co-investigator's contribution to a project (regardless of how many Co-Is are included) must never exceed 30%, of the overall cost of the grant at 100% of fEC, and would normally be lower than this.
- Where a proposal includes UK business, third sector or government body co-investigators and international co-investigators the combined costs of **all** co-investigators must not exceed the 30% maximum limit.
- Co-Is from Businesses, third sector organisations which engage in economic activity or government bodies cannot claim overheads and other indirect costs on any element of the grant.

- For business or third sector organisations which engage in economic activity the combined time commitment of all research staff for the duration of the project (this includes the Co-I, Researchers, RAs, Post- docs etc.) must not exceed the equivalent of 1 year FTE. No salary costs will be covered for co-investigators from government bodies.
- For third sector organisations which have provided satisfactory evidence that their organisation does not engage in economic activity there is no limit to research staff time commitment on a project. However, the Co-I costs associated to a project must never exceed 30% of the overall cost of the grant at 100% of fEC.
- Travel and subsistence costs will be allowable if appropriately justified for business, all third sector or government body co-investigators.
- Administrative support and fieldwork costs may be permissible, where appropriately justified, for third sector co-investigators and exceptionally for business co-investigators. Administrator salary costs and other staff related costs e.g. fieldwork, equipment or travel and subsistence should be entered in the 'Other DI' Section as exceptions and marked as Co-I costs.
- Virement between co-investigator costs and other directly incurred costs requires prior permission from ESRC and must not result in the co-investigator costs exceeding 30% of the overall cost of the grant.
- All costs associated with the business, third sector or government body co-investigators will be assessed in the context of the proposal as a whole and the justification of support.
- Please see the table below for a summary of eligible costs,

Table 1: Eligible costs for business, third sector and government body Co-Is

	Business & third sector which engage in economic activity*	Third sector which do not engage in economic activity**	Government
Staff - Salary	Yes	Yes	No
Staff - NI/Superann	No	Yes	No
Total Research Staff - FTE Limits	1 year FTE	No FTE limit	No
T&S	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Direct Costs	No	Yes	No

Overheads	No	Yes	No
Rules/Constraints	Costs must be less than 30% of total application costs		

- * Proposals which include co-investigators from the UK business sector or from third sector organisations that engage in economic activity must ensure that the involvement of these organisations complies with the UK Subsidy Control Framework.
- ** Proposals which include co-investigators from third sector organisations that are deemed not to engage in economic activity must provide evidence of this status in the Justification of Resources section of the proposal form.

How do I show costs on the Je-S application form?

When completing the Je-S application form, the PI must clearly show which costs will be incurred by UK research organisations and which will be incurred by Co-Investigators in the business, third sector or government body.

The budget limits on grant applications refer to the total cost of the research project - this is known as the Full Economic Costs (fEC). For UK Research Organisations the fEC cost is not the actual cash contribution paid by the ESRC. The actual cash contribution, known as the 'ESRC contribution', is 80% of the fEC. The ESRC will fund 100% of all eligible and justified costs relating to business, third sector or government body co-investigators.

Co-Investigator salary costs should be entered via the 'Co- Investigator' section and marked as 'Exception' to identify that these should be paid at 100 per cent. Detailed instructions of how to complete the Co-Investigator section in Je-S is at **Annex A**.

Other Research Staff costs related to the Co-Investigator organisation should be entered on the Je-S application under Staff – Researcher and marked as an 'Exception' cost.

Other Co-I related costs whether, fieldwork, equipment or travel and subsistence should be entered in the 'Other DI' Section as exceptions and marked as Co-I costs.

Applicants are reminded that the costs for business, third sector or government body co-investigators (regardless of the number) must not exceed 30% of the full 100% fEC cost of the grant.

It is essential that all UK and business, third sector or government body organisations involved in the grant proposal are named in the application form (this does not mean that they will necessarily need to be registered on Je-S unless they are the research organisation of the principal investigators or the partnering organisations of the co-investigators).

For all costs included in your application a statement justifying the resources requested to undertake the research project is required. Where you do not provide sufficient justification for any item it is likely to be cut from any award made. All costs must be

entered in pounds sterling (£).

Can business, third sector and government partners be included under the heading of consultants rather than co-investigators?

In principle, the answer is yes. However, inclusion of consultants would be expected to be subject to competitive purchasing requirements.

How will funds associated with a business, third sector and government co-investigator be disbursed?

Payments on all grants are made in arrears in accordance with a specific payment schedule, as agreed with the ESRC at the time the grant is awarded. In all cases, funds are transferred to the PI's Research Organisation in the first instance. It is then the responsibility of that institution to disburse funds to the business, third sector or government body. Particular attention should be paid in the Case for Support to the management and communication protocols in place to enable this to happen smoothly.

Can a business, third sector or government collaborator be listed as a co-investigator if they have secured their own source of funding?

Yes, they can be included as a co-investigator. Details of their organisation and funding source should be provided in the Justification of Resources.

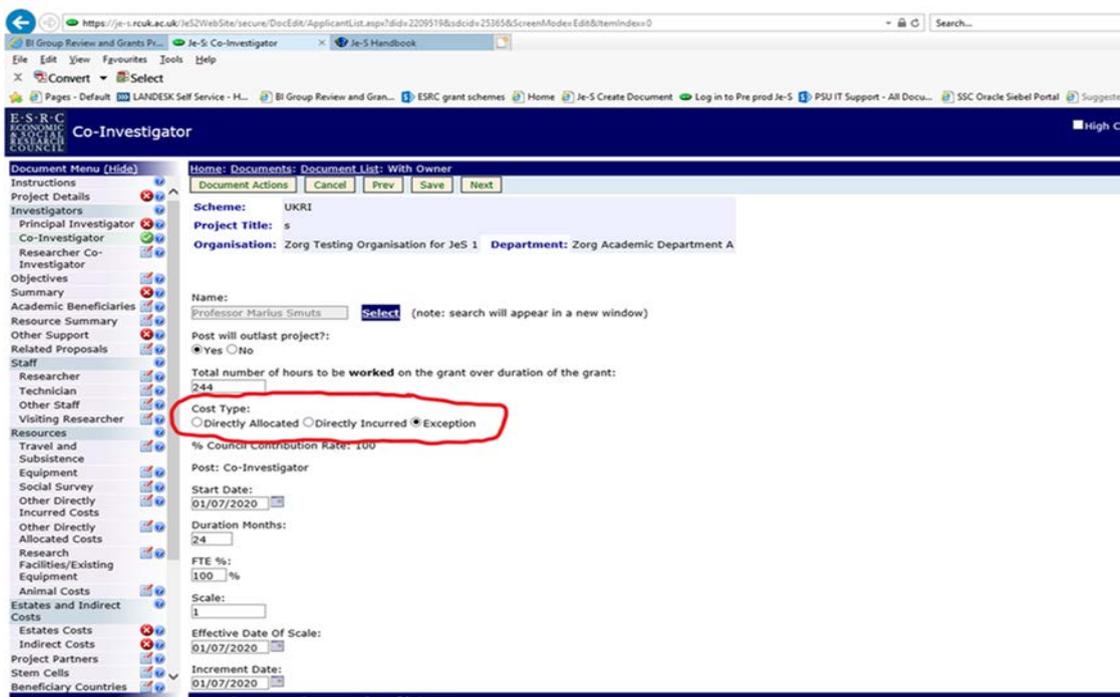
Can co-investigators be included in cross-council applications?

In the case of cross-council schemes, each participating council will be consulted over the inclusion or exclusion of business, third sector or government body co-investigators. Please refer to the call specific guidance for further information.

Further information may be found in the [ESRC Research Funding Guide](#).

Business, third sector or Government Co-Investigator entry on Je-S

When a Co-Investigator is added to the Je-S form, the cost type of that new entry defaults to 'Directly Allocated' cost type. For Business, third sector or Government Investigators the '**Exception**' cost type must be ticked. Costs under the Exceptions cost type are paid at 100% fEC. Please note that salaries cannot be claimed for government sector co-investigators



The following details must be entered on Je-S for a Business or third sector Co-Investigator:

Select Name	The co-investigator name and organisation from the database. All applicants must have a Je-S Account that allows them to be included within the proposal as either PI, Co-I or Researcher Co-I
Will the post outlast the project	Answer should be 'Yes'
Total Number of Hours to be <u>worked</u> on the grant:	Maximum hours per year cannot exceed 1,650
Select Exception	The Exception option is applicable to business, third sector and government co-investigators. Salaries paid under the Exceptions cost type are paid at 100% fEC. NOTE: salaries cannot be claimed for government sector co-investigators

Start Date	The Date will default to the current date. To amend this click on the calendar icon or enter the date in the DD/MM/YYYY format
Duration Months	The period, in whole months to be spent working on the Project
FTE %	This is the percentage of time that the post holder will spend working on the project based on a full-time post. This does not relate to the contracted working hours of the post holder. For example, someone that is contracted to work at their organisation for 50% of full time and will be spending the whole of this time devoted to this project should put 50% as the FTE
Scale	Enter the pay scale. This can be alpha or numeric
Effective Date of Scale	The date on which the scales used came into use. Increment Date: The Date will default to the proposed project start date. To amend this click on the calendar icon or enter the date in the DD/MM/YYYY format
Starting Salary	Annual salary when starting on the project. Enter zero for government sector co-investigators
London Allowance	If in receipt of London Allowance include the £ Value (numeric). Enter zero for government sector co-investigators
Other Allowances	If applicable
Super Ann and NI	Superannuation and National Insurance costs over the duration of the project (numeric). NOTE: Superannuation and National Insurance costs cannot be claimed for business or government sector co-investigators
Total Costs	Enter the total cost of the Post over the period of the project (numeric). Enter zero for government sector co-investigators