

## Frequently asked questions from the webinar – Resilient UK Coastal Communities and Seas (02 May 2023)

Application .....	1
Disciplines .....	2
Geographical .....	2
Participants .....	3
Themes.....	4

Please note:

- The slides and the recording from the webinar are available on our website [here](#)
- For any specific questions or queries, please contact [environment@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:environment@esrc.ukri.org) and a UKRI colleague will be in contact

### Application

Q: The guidance states that you are after a self-contained case for support that should complement the Résumé for Research and Innovation format; should the Case for Support also follow the new (TFS) core application question set format (vision, approach... etc.)?

A: The case for support should cover the main features of the research. As it's only 4 sides of A4 we expect applicants to utilise the Resume for Research and Innovation (R4RI) to build the evidence for the team's ability to carry out what is proposed in the case for support.  
The case for support should include details of the project team and how their skills and expertise will be utilised in the project. This call is being run through the Joint-Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system, rather than the TFS system. Please follow the guidance for applicants in the 'How to apply' section of the [opportunity webpage](#) for information on what to include in the case for support.

Q: It is still not so clear to me to what extent we should detail the research expertise of the proposed team in the case for support and how much of that should instead go into the R4RI.

A: It is suggested that the research expertise of the team be predominantly featured in the R4RI and the case for support be used to highlight the alignment of the team to the project's core objectives and work packages.

Q: Would applying for the opportunity as an investigator or co-investigator preclude the applicant from applying for the EPSRC responsive mode new investigator award?

A: New Investigator Schemes usually follow similar rules regarding eligibility. In the case of ESRC and NERC we would consider an applicant that has been previously funded as a Principal Investigator ineligible for a New Investigator

award. However, we do not apply the same restriction to awards held as a co-investigator.

However, EPSRC rules may differ, and you would need to check with them directly for guidance on this.

Q: Will submissions be limited to one per HEI?

A: No, we are not limiting applications by Institution or Organisation. However, we would only allow an applicant to be involved with a maximum of two bids and only one of these can be as a Principal Investigator.

## **Disciplines**

Q: How can we prove that a discipline is not 'bolted on'? Or what percentage of the project should be influenced/dedicated to each discipline?

A: For transdisciplinary research we would expect to see a holistic, challenge led approach rather than designed around specific disciplines and would not dictate a percentage dedication of research themes within applications. However, it is important that proposals include meaningful elements which represent research within all three of the funding Research Councils.

Q: Does the Principal Investigator (PI) have to be from a discipline in the lead Research Council? i.e., the ESRC?

A: No, the Principal Investigator is not limited to the remit of ESRC. We would expect the Principal Investigator to be from a discipline that is in the remit of AHRC, NERC or ESRC.

Q: Given that health is one of the four key areas, why isn't there any MRC funding?

A: The research programme is co-funded by the Creating Opportunities, Improving Outcomes strategic thematic UKRI funding, which includes the Medical Research Council (MRC). One of the sub-themes of the funding is health inequalities, to understand the causes and effects of disparities in population health across the UK and identifying sustainable and cost-effective solutions.

Q: What explains the lack of sustained interest from academics, development agencies and policy makers in economic and social decline in coastal communities - despite compelling evidence of multiple problems affecting the latter?

A: This research programme builds on previous investments and production of knowledge in this area, it will be an opportunity to expand understanding and inform future transformation for resilient UK coastal communities and seas.

## **Geographical**

Q: What is the extent of the geographical area?

A: The focus should be on UK coastal communities. By UK we mean Great Britain, Northern Ireland and islands covered within the British Isles. It does not extend to overseas territories.

- Q: Is there a minimum geographic area to be covered in the application (e.g., town, county)?
- A: There is no minimum geographic requirement, but we would advocate that the research develops actionable, scalable tools and solutions that can be applied to other geographical regions within the UK.
- Q: A UK-wide and place-based approach is advocated in the call. Is it Ok to focus on a region and scale up?
- A: Provided the region falls within the UK, by that we mean Great Britain, Northern Ireland and islands covered within the British Isles, there are no restrictions on regional focus. We would encourage outputs to be scalable, and an expectation of the opportunity is that applicants apply a place-based approach to designing the research.
- Q: Do case study places have to be in England or can they include Wales, NI and Scotland?
- A: The focus should be on UK coastal communities. By UK we mean Great Britain, Northern Ireland and islands covered within the British Isles. It does not extend to overseas territories.
- Q: Can place mean several places with similar attributes/challenges?
- A: Place-based approaches are defined for this programme as approaches whereby characteristics and meanings of a certain geography (the 'place') is fundamental to the project proposed. We would advocate that the research develops actionable, scalable tools and solutions that can be applied to other geographical regions within the UK. Applicants are welcome to utilise multiple case study locations to address the themes of the research programme.

## **Participants**

- Q: Would be interested to know if bids from mixed assemblages of institutions would be eligible - e.g., universities, fisher's organisation and industry funded organisations?
- A: Yes, absolutely we would encourage projects to take this approach in formulating their application to address the need for transdisciplinary research. However, please note the guidance found on the funding opportunity for involving third sector, business or government within research applications.
- Q: Are local authorities eligible for the funding, either jointly with others or on their own?
- A: The Principal Investigator must be based at an organisation eligible for UKRI funding. Local authorities are not eligible to apply directly for funding, but can be included in research applications, please refer to ESRC guidance on how to do this.

- Q: Can Defra be a partner/co-investigator (Co-I) in a bid given they are a co-funder?
- A: No, as a co-funder in the call we would not accept Defra as a partner or Co-I in a bid, or provide letters of support to applications. However, Defra's Arm's Length Bodies who are an approved UKRI public sector research establishment are eligible to apply.
- Q: Regarding Defra involvement, some PSREs are now eligible but would the ones under the Defra group (e.g., EA, ...) be eligible to be included in proposals for this call?
- A: Defra's Arm's Length Bodies who are an approved UKRI [public sector research establishment](#) are eligible to apply.
- Q: At the outline stage are we required to mention all partners we plan to work with? Can we add more industry, community partners and/or research partner at the full proposal stage if we pass the outline stage? Or should all collaborators be defined clearly at the outline stage?
- A: It is up to the Principal Investigator to convey partnerships within the application, and there will be an opportunity to build upon this between the outline and full stage. It may be good practice to mention in the outline that you will be reaching out to further collaborations for the full stage of the application, where gaps have been identified. It is important to have the core team clearly defined, so the assessment panel have sufficient information to get a clear picture of how the main elements of the proposal could be developed.

## Themes

- Q: Is a focus on business communities within the scope of this call?
- A: Yes, providing that the research application addresses at least two of the main thematic areas of the call, and the other requirements (coastal focus, place-based approaches, transdisciplinary, research remit etc). Applicants should also note the [ESRC guidance](#) on including UK business, third sector or government body co-investigators on proposals.
- Q: Does this cover habitat restoration based on seagrass?
- A: Yes, providing that the research application addresses at least two of the main thematic areas of the call, and the other requirements (for example, coastal focus, place-based approaches, transdisciplinary, research remit, etc).
- Q: Will the study be integrated with land use issues - nutrient runoff etc?
- A: Yes, providing that the research application addresses at least two of the main thematic areas of the call, and the other requirements (coastal focus, place-based approaches, transdisciplinary, research remit etc). It is also worth considering the [Land use for net zero – research \(LUNZ-Research\) – UKRI](#) opportunity to decide which best suits your research interests.



- Q: Do proposals have to include all 3 aspects of natural capital - i.e., economics, societal and environment?
- A: It is for applicants to decide how to address natural capital and other approaches as part of this call.
- Q: Are coastal city environments included and is there scope to look for innovations and adaptation measures for large urban communities and their associated governance issues?
- A: The programme does not define 'coastal communities' so a coastal city environment would be an eligible, providing it is suitable for addressing the core themes of the programme.
- Q: Are project's focused on communities around rivers or estuaries eligible for this funding?
- A: The focus of the research programme is on UK coastal communities and seas, and we would therefore expect projects to be based around coastal areas and communities.  
There may be links to communities further inland (i.e., around estuaries) but we would not generally expect these to be the primary focus of the proposal, and applicants would need to clearly outline their inclusion, and link to the coastal focus of this opportunity.