Public Engagement Fund scheme notes
Deadline 4 December 2023 at 11.59pm

This document contains important information about the Public Engagement Fund. Please read it carefully before submitting your application.

This guidance includes:
1. **Overview**
2. **What is this funding scheme?**
3. **Who can apply?**
4. **How applications are judged**
5. **Completing your application**
6. **Information on next steps**
7. **Application guidance notes**

We encourage all applicants to get in touch to discuss their ideas before submitting an application and members of the Public Engagement team are available for phone or video consultations at any point during the application process. We would also encourage you to use your institution's public engagement expertise when drafting your application.

If you have applied for the scheme previously and been unsuccessful, please do get in touch with us before you submit a new application.

If you have any queries about the scheme or would like to discuss your application, please get in touch: public.engagement@royalsociety.org / 0207 451 2696.

1. Overview

The Public Engagement Fund provides between £500 and £10,000 for Royal Society Research Fellows to create and lead public engagement projects based on their research. The minimum amount you can request for this scheme is £500 and the maximum amount is £10,000 over two years. Up to £5,000 can be requested for a one-year project.

2. What is the funding scheme?

The scheme is designed to support Society-funded scientists to undertake public engagement projects based on their research, and to increase the knowledge, skills and confidence of researchers.

Funding is available for any public engagement activity designed for a non-scientific, public audience that meets the application criteria.

Projects should have clear aims, target specific audiences and provide an opportunity for open dialogue and two-way communication between scientific researchers and the project's target audience.

All funded projects should:

- Be based on Royal Society-funded research
- Involve scientists interacting with a public group outside your institution
- Target specific audiences based on the aims and rationale of the project

- Encourage open discussion between scientific researchers and your project's target audience
- Aim to produce benefits for the public, the researcher and any partners or collaborators

We are particularly interested in projects that:

- Reach people that are currently underrepresented in the Society's public engagement work, including:
  - Those without a science degree
  - Those from geographically remote locations
  - Those from culturally and demographically diverse backgrounds, including BAME and low-income backgrounds
- Encourage collaboration between science and the arts
- Enable possibilities for digital engagement, either as a main feature or as part of a contingency plan

Whilst we welcome applications working with children and school groups, we would be particularly interested in projects that target wider age groups and demographics and collaborate with local creatives and organisations such as artists, writers, libraries, arts and community organisations. If you wish to submit a project working solely with schools, please check first whether the Partnership Grants scheme is more suitable.

Please note, applications for project activities based outside of the UK are possible within the scheme but must demonstrate strong impact and connection to UK research and audiences.

The minimum amount you can request for this scheme is £500 and the maximum amount is £10,000 over two years. Up to £5,000 can be requested for a one-year project. The total amount of funding available for this round is £60,000.

Projects must begin on or before 30 June 2024 and all funded activity, not including evaluation and reporting, must be completed by 31 March 2026.

We will endeavour to inform applicants of the funding decision on or before Friday 9 February 2024.

3. Who this funding scheme is for?

The applicant must be a current Royal Society University Research Fellow or Dorothy Hodgkin Fellow who completed the first year of their fellowship on or before 31 October 2023.

4. How applications are judged

The assessment panel will judge the applications using the following criteria:

- **Relevance and suitability (40%)**
The extent to which the project meets the scheme's criteria.

- **Impact and significance (40%)**
The potential effect of the project on the researcher, audience and any partners involved.

- **Planning and evaluation (20%)**
The coherence and feasibility of the proposed timeline, budget and evaluation plan.

The assessment panel consists of a member of the Public Engagement Committee, a member of the Summer Science Exhibition Committee, a school educator and a Senior Public Engagement Officer. Funding decisions are approved by the Chair of the Public Engagement Committee.

5. Completing your application

All applications must be submitted via the Flexi-Grant system. Below you can see the questions that will be asked and guidance on how to approach them.

If you have queries or would like any advice on your application please contact the Public Engagement team at public.engagement@royalsociety.org or on 0207 451 2696. We encourage all applicants to get in touch to discuss their ideas before submitting an application and members of the Public Engagement team are available for phone or video consultations at any point during the application process.

Using Flexi-Grant®

Applications can only be submitted online using the Royal Society's Grants and Awards management system (Flexi-Grant®) via **grants.royalsociety.org**. Support, FAQs and troubleshooting can be found via **royalsocietyapplicantsupport.fluenttechnology.com/support/home**. If you have not previously used Flexi-Grant®, please follow the registration process from the Flexi-Grant®, homepage. **Paper-based applications will not be accepted.**

Before completing the online form, all applicants should check that they comply with the eligibility requirements and ensure all necessary information is presented in the application. These requirements are strictly adhered to and applications without all the necessary information will be rejected.

Use of Application Data

If successful, the Royal Society will contact you regarding the administration of your award throughout the course of your funding and after its completion. You may also be contacted by the Royal Society for reporting and evaluation purposes throughout the course of your funding and after its completion.

6. Information on next steps

We will endeavour to inform applicants of the funding decision on or before Friday 9 February 2023.

If you are successful, you and your organisation will need to accept the offer via the Flexi-Grant system.

Part of the requirement of the grant will be to complete a short, end of project report, a template for which will be sent to you.

If you have queries in the meantime please contact the Public Engagement Team at public.engagement@royalsociety.org or on 0207 451 2696.

7. Application guidance notes

Please read these guidance notes carefully as you complete the form.

Summary	
Summary table	The summary page of the application form provides an overview for each section of your application form, including the approximate length of time it will take to complete each section. **Note:** you will only be able to submit your application once all sections of the form have been completed.

Contact details	
Primary applicant contact details	Review and complete your personal details accurately. Errors in this section can cause difficulties in processing your application. The primary applicant should be the Royal Society funded researcher.
Co-applicant contact details	As above, please review and complete the personal details for your co-applicants accurately.

Proposal	
Provide a brief description of your project and its relationship with your research	Please describe the project you plan to use the grant for, including how it will develop alongside the research your fellowship is funding. This section should concentrate on what you plan to do and deliver, as opposed to what you want to achieve, as this can be covered in the next question. This description may be used or adapted for use on our website, so please make sure it can be understood by non-scientists.
What are the aims of your project?	Here we want to know why you are doing the project. What will be different when you've finished? What are the drivers or needs for the project, from your own perspective and that of the public? Try to be as specific as possible and distinguish between your aims (what you hope to change as a result) and objectives (the things you will do to realise those changes). You could answer this question as a series of bullet points.
Who are the public group you are seeking to reach or involve?	Please provide as much detail for this question as you can. High quality applications will have clearly articulated audiences that are relevant to the project aims. Consider how your audience might be defined. For example, by an age group, profession or shared interest. Staff, students and alumni groups from your institution do not count as public for this scheme. Please include details of how your project will encourage open discussion.
How do you plan to reach this public group?	Consider why the group you've identified will be interested in what you're doing, and how you will make them aware of your project. If you have worked with similar groups before, or have relevant contacts, please mention them here.

Personnel	
Please provide details of the project team and their experience	Please provide details of the project team and their experience In this section, please tell us who will help deliver the project, what experience they bring and how they will be involved. This will help the panel decide if you have the right team to deliver the project. Please don't list publications or research achievements unless they are relevant to your public engagement project. The scheme is designed to support you to deliver projects, so you can budget to improve the skills of you and your team, if required.

Planning and evaluation	
Project start and end dates	Your project must have a start date of no later than 30 June 2024 and an end date of on or before 31 March 2026. In the timeline, please list all project activity, including planning and evaluation. Please provide a brief timeline for your project detailing all project activity, including planning and evaluation.
How will you assess whether you have achieved the aims of your project and reached your intended audience?	You will be asked to complete a short report on the outcomes of your project, so you should think about evaluation from the outset. Think about the aims and objectives you have set and how you will effectively measure them. How will you collect evidence from the public and your team? Guidance on evaluating your public engagement activity should be sought from your university's public engagement team. Guidance is also available here: publicengagement.ac.uk/plan-it/evaluating-public-engagement

Project costs	
What is the total amount you are requesting?	The minimum amount you can request for this scheme is £500 and the maximum amount is £10,000 over two years. Up to £5,000 can be requested for a one-year project.
Define the proposed budget for your project in the table below	Please itemise individual costs as accurately as you can. Where feasible, any items that cost more than £200 should be accompanied by evidence of market research (such as a link to a website selling the item) or a quote. Estimates are acceptable for smaller items but, if successful, you will be expected to return any significant amounts remaining to the Royal Society at the end of the project. You may budget for costs associated with acquiring additional expertise or support to deliver your project, including consultants, artists, designers and those helping to deliver public-facing activities. You should follow your institution's guidelines when costing for these aspects. You cannot claim for the time of university employees, including post-docs, research assistants and faculty members.
Supporting evidence	You will be able to upload any supporting evidence on the Flexi-Grant system.