 

**The University of Manchester**

**ESRC Impact Acceleration Account**

**Background**

The ESRC has awarded The University of Manchester £1 million to deliver round two of the Impact Acceleration Account (IAA2) until 31 March 2023. The IAA2 will continue the work of IAA1 and will be used to fund knowledge exchange activities to accelerate the impact of research in the social sciences, across the University.

The aims of IAA2 are:

* to consolidate existing strengths that emerge from the first phase of ESRC IAA funding (IAA1) and the broader University of Manchester research context;
* to encourage innovative, risk-taking impact and KE activities;
* to continue to enhance the rigour of all KE and impact activities, including doctoral training;
* to continue to cultivate an environment where impact and KE are core elements of HE activities, alongside the traditional pillars of research and teaching;
* to secure the long-term sustainability of impact and KE activities;

**ESRC IAA schemes** cover potential impact activities at all stages of the research process, from setting up networks to help inform or scope new research projects, to the development of activities designed to apply previous research. The panel will be keen to see how applications support the development of Early Career Researchers at the University of Manchester and link with previous research conducted by the PI.

**Strategic Stream**

* ***Relationship building-*** Flexible support for building relationships with non-academic partners. This call encourages initiatives that increase our engagement with commercial businesses since these have been under-represented in Round 1 calls. Proposals that include a direct cash contribution from one or more commercial businesses will be particularly welcomed. Particularly innovative proposals to develop relationships that include in-kind contributions will also be considered, where the lack of a direct contribution is justified*.* Funding available – £10-£20k per project.
* ***Research into practice-*** Activity to translate research evidence for use by research users/ practitioners. The scheme is flexible and open to innovative projects and activities may include policy or evidence seminars, knowledge exchange or co-produced research etc.Funding available – £10-£20k per project.
* ***Staff exchanges/placement-*** Flexible support for secondment-out of academics to external partner organisations or enabling secondment-in of external partners. This scheme is to increase the exchange of knowledge through mobility of people, enhance external links and provide the secondee with experience of working in a partner organisation. Funding available – £10-£20k per project.
* ***Training –*** Competitive opportunity for high impact researchers to deliver training for non-HE stakeholders based on their research findings, or deliver training for early career/PGR researchers based on reflective learning, in order to develop and communicate best practice from impact activities. We would particularly welcome applications from previous IAA award holders for training events which share expertise and best practice. Funding available - £2-5K per event

**Breakthrough Stream**

This new stream will fund several projects per year (£10-20K each) which take unusual, speculative routes to KE and impact, fostering a creative approach to tackle real world problems with ambitious delivery strategies. Examples might include video blogs, podcasts, plays, artwork, and games, although this is by no means an exhaustive list and the panel are receptive to any novel ideas.

Our current Breakthrough projects have focussed on pathways such as apps and international podcasts, and link with other key strategic priorities for the university such as our [Digital Futures Campaign](http://www.digitalfutures.manchester.ac.uk/) (as an example.)

**Rapid Response call**

Open from May 2019 until funds are exhausted for the financial year (£15K pa available, project value £1K). This will fund activities such as events, visits, website support, or AV pieces developed with a view to fostering user engagement. Applications will be assessed on an ad-hoc basis and funded via IAA Chair’s Action.

**Eligibility**

The ESRC IAA is open to academic staff across The University of Manchester and the academic project team should normally be University employees with a contract of employment which lasts the duration of the proposed IAA project. Schemes will fund the activity of academic colleagues from other HEIs, provided the lead applicant is from The University of Manchester and collaboration is demonstrated.

ESRC IAA funding is to support knowledge exchange with a range of sectors and publics and for activity relating to any area of social science research within the [ESRC’s remit](http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding-and-guidance/applicants/proposal-classifications-ESRC-disciplines.aspx). Interdisciplinary projects with a major social science component are also eligible for funding.

The following are ineligible for support through ESRC IAA funding:

* 1. Basic research that does not include substantive user engagement.
  2. Large ESRC investments (e.g. centres, large grants, infrastructure investments) during their term of ESRC funding.
  3. Ongoing ESRC funded projects where the activities should have been costed into the application’s ‘Pathways to Impact’.
  4. Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs).
  5. Those on Research Council-funded studentships or internships; the ESRC IAA cannot be used to fund studentships.
  6. Applicants who have held an ESRC IAA award within the last two years will need to demonstrate exceptional impact building on previous projects.
  7. Applicants must apply via the correct internal channels and where possible, work with their schools Knowledge Exchange and Impact team to form an application.

**Application process**

Outline Application forms are available for staff exchanges/placements; relationship building; research into practice; and training. An Expression of Interest form is available for the new Breakthrough Stream. A full application form is available for the Rapid Response stream.

All applications/EoIs should be crafted with support from the PI’s Research Support Services, including a full FEC budget.

For all streams (except Rapid Response) a short-listing process will take place and short-listed candidates will be invited to give a 10-minute presentation and 5 minute Q+A with the ESRC IAA Schemes panel (date tbc).

Letters of support from external partners are only required for short listed candidates and should be made available to the panel at least 24 hours before the meeting.

**Funding arrangements and eligible costs**

Applicants should request and justify the project-specific resources needed to achieve their IAA project. All applications are expected to be costed on a full Economic Costing (fEC) basis to allow the University’s contribution to each project, to be reported.

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| The ESRC IAA will provide funding at 100% of the total project costs. | |
| Eligible costs | Directly incurred, for example;   * Staff costs * Travel and subsistence * Consumables including equipment (up to £10k) * Minimal Directly allocated staff costs (secondments only) |
| Ineligible costs | Indirect and estate costs  Equipment (with an individual value of £10k or more) |

For secondment-out staff exchange staff must seek permission to apply from their Head of School.

For secondment-in from an external organisation, the external organisation will be expected to cover the staff costs of their employee and the only eligible costs will be travel and subsistence and small budgets for consumables.

**Application submission**

* Applicants must liaise with their Knowledge Exchange and Impact team prior to submission and adhere to school deadlines
* Completed applications should be sent electronically to [esrciaa@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:esrciaa@manchester.ac.uk) by no later than 5pm on 14th February 2020
* Applications will be evaluated by the ESRC IAA team for eligibility and content before being sent to the ESRC IAA Schemes Panel for consideration.
* Applications received after the deadline will not be eligible for consideration

**Assessment Criteria**

The ESRC IAA Schemes Panel is chaired by Professor Maj-Britt Mosegaard Hansen, Associate Dean for Research, Faculty of Humanities. The Panel will assess applications on a competitive basis, and proposals/presentations that demonstrate alignment with The University of Manchester’s strategic priorities and have strong external partner commitment, will be particularly welcomed.

Successful proposals/presentations will:

* be written for a non-specialist audience with clear aims and objectives;
* explain how the proposal builds upon research undertaken at The University of Manchester;
* demonstrate the benefits to the University and academic team as well as the external partner(s) and/or beneficiary- both immediate and potential;
* present a clearly defined project plan with achievable timescales and stages linked to tasks, outputs and outcomes;
* demonstrate the potential to realise research impact and measures of success;
* show well thought through follow-on activity, building sustainability and opportunities for future external funding capture;
* justify the budget and demonstrate value for money;
* co-funding from external partners is not mandatory, although the ESRC IAA Schemes Panel expects University staff to negotiate with the partner organisation a deal which minimises the support necessary from the IAA. Justification will be required where the partner directly benefits from the project and there is no direct contribution and/or partner costs have been included in the budget.

**Breakthrough Stream Assessment Process and Criteria**

To enhance our portfolio of funding mechanisms we have introduced a new ‘Breakthrough’ Stream for IAA2. This will fund several projects per year (£10-20K each) which take unusual, speculative routes to KE and impact. These may include, for instance, video blogs, podcasts, plays, artwork, and games. This list is not exhaustive; the aim of this stream is to foster a creative approach to impact and KE activities that aim to tackle real world problems.

Following a brief expression of interest, shortlisted applicants will be invited to briefly present their project plan to the IAA Schemes Panel. The Schemes Panel will decide which projects to fund against the following criteria:

1. how creative, innovative and risky the proposed pathway to impact or KE is, with reference to established modes of KE and pathways to impact;
2. clarity and feasibility of the proposed objectives;
3. clear links to existing and future work.

**Conditions of Funding**

Successful ESRC IAA award holders must:

* Credit the ESRC and The University of Manchester as providing the support for the project and outputs.
* Report at the end of the funding and contribute to regular reporting to ESRC and The University of Manchester
* Produce a project poster summarising the work at the end of the project

**Contact**

For more information, contact our ESRC IAA Team at [esrciaa@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:esrciaa@manchester.ac.uk)

Knowledge Exchange and Impact Officers:

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A leaflet containing an overview of the IAA is available [here](http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=42732)

Call timeline (please note that each School will set internal timetables ahead of the IAA Call deadline in order to provide support and approval in advance of the deadline).

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|  | **ESRC IAA Call 2 Opens** | **School EoI Deadlines** | **School Application Deadline** | **ESRC IAA Call 2 Close** | **Expected project start date** |
| **Call 2** | 04/11/2019 | 13/12/2019 | 31/01/2020 | 14/02/2020 | 01/05/2020 – 31/08/2020 |