



Nuffield Foundation Virtual Study Tour

Presentation to ARMA

9 June 2021

Lord Nuffield

The Nuffield Foundation was established in April 1943 by William Morris, Lord Nuffield, the founder of Morris Motors.

Originally endowed with £10 million of Morris Motors shares, the Nuffield Foundation was for some time the largest philanthropic trust in the UK.



About the Nuffield Foundation

- The Nuffield Foundation is an independent charitable trust with a mission to advance educational opportunity and social well-being in the UK.
- We improve understanding of the issues affecting people's chances in life and identify ways to address disadvantage and inequality in our society.

Principles

- **Independent** – politically and financially
- **Societal relevance** - supporting work to examine trends that are shaping today's society (including COVID-19)
- **Connecting disciplines and sectors** – especially between academia, policy, and practice
- **Methodological rigour** - with a focus on impact
- **Reach** - understanding target audiences and how to engage them.

What do we fund?

- **Research and analysis** that informs social policy and has an impact on people's lives. Our focus is on Education, Welfare and Justice but much of our work cuts across these broad domains.
- **Student programmes** that provide opportunities for young people, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds, to develop skills and confidence in science and research.
- **Independent bodies** to examine areas central to our research agenda in more depth: the Nuffield Council on Bioethics, the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory, and the Ada Lovelace Institute.

2017-2022 Strategy

- **Three Domains:** Education, Justice, Welfare
- **Grant Funding**
 - c. 45-50 new grants a year.
 - Median value: c£200k
 - £8m a year
- **Strategic Fund:** £15m (2020-2022)

2017-2022 Strategy

Cross-cutting themes:

- Social impacts of **digital technologies and digital communications**
- Effects of **socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, community and geography** on people's vulnerabilities
- Promoting opportunity and inclusion, and reduce adversity, **between and across generations**
- Social and economic implications of physical and mental **disability and chronic illness**
- **Better use of research and data** for policy and practice

Our approach

- Projects we fund should have **potential to influence** social policy or the practice of the people who implement it.
- Priorities within each of our domains, but we also seek to fund projects that **cut across them** or original proposals that align with our mission to advance social well-being.
- We are **an open, collaborative and engaged funder** and we work with our grant-holders to help maximise the impact of their projects.

Grant-making snapshot

- In 2019 our charitable expenditure was **£20.3 million**. Of this, **£14.9 million** was grants for research, development and analysis.
- Many of the projects we fund are undertaken over a period of several years. We currently have **191 projects** active, with a total value of **£41.3 million**.
- Around three-quarters of the projects we fund are university-based, with smaller numbers in research organisations, voluntary sector, professional bodies, and think tanks.

Size of our grants

- Usually between £10,000 and £500,000. Most are between £50,000 and £300,000 (for our Research, Development and Analysis Fund).
- Grants larger than £500,000 are an exception and often require a bespoke timescale for consideration and decision.
- Also make smaller grants for pilots or projects costing less than £10,000.
- Most projects are between six months and three years in duration.



What are the priorities for our 3 domains?

Education

- All life stages and phases
 - Early years, school, further and higher education, and vocational learning
- All influences on educational opportunity and life chances
 - Educational provision, informal learning, family and home environment, gender, and socio-economic and place-related factors
- Four thematic funding priorities
 - Skills and capabilities
 - Teaching quality
 - Young people's pathways
 - Educational disadvantage

Education – examples of types of projects

- Early years interventions and relationship with EEF (including NELI)
- Student oriented programmes
- Surveys
- Secondary data analyses and syntheses
- Interdisciplinary projects
- Cross national and international

Welfare

- Aiming to improve individual well-being across the life course
- Focus on the sources from which individuals can potentially draw financial/practical/emotional support: self, family, work, community, state
- Interest in the significant and emerging forces that are impacting: technology, demography, economic, climate crisis, COVID
- Variation in risks across groups e.g. ethnicity, gender, living with chronic health conditions, disability, geographies and generations, and the means by which adverse impacts may be mitigated
- Multi-disciplinary, mixed methods
- Impact predominantly through influencing public policy

Welfare – example projects

- Institute of Fiscal Studies. *Deaton Review of Inequalities*
- Valeria Skafida (University of Edinburgh). *Children living with domestic violence: effects on children's well-being*
- Ruth Patrick (York University). *How UK welfare reform affects larger families*
- Helen Kennedy (University of Sheffield). *Living With Data: knowledge, experiences and perceptions of data practices*

Justice

- The role of a modern justice system in underpinning social well-being – what makes for an effective and accessible justice system?
- Family justice particularly (link to FJO), but also: administrative justice & public law; criminal justice; and youth justice. All broadly defined (not just about courts & tribunals)
- Cross-jurisdiction themes: Access to and participation in justice; decision-making; outcomes; impact of reform and new tech
- Often socio-legal research *BUT* all disciplines and methods welcome

Justice – example projects

- Dr Rajnaara Akhtar (De Montfort University) ***When is a wedding not a marriage? Exploring non-legally binding ceremonies***
- Prof. Richard Dorsett (University of Westminster) ***The causes and consequences of youth custody***
- Prof. Penny Cooper (Birkbeck, University of London) ***Principles of participation in Courts and Tribunals***
- Prof. Ruth Gilbert (UCL) ***Understanding the health needs of mothers and children involved in family court cases***

Q & A

Our application process

Opportunities

- One main fund: **Research, Development and Analysis Fund**
- Two-stage process: applicants submit a short **outline application**, and those that best meet our criteria invited to submit a **full application**, which is peer-reviewed and considered by Trustees – they make the final decision .
- We have two funding rounds a year. The next deadline for submission of outline applications will be **mid-September**.
- We tend to receive around 170 - 200 outline applications per round and usually about 15% of these are invited to the full application stage. At full application stage approximately two thirds are funded.

Application timetable

Round 1	Round 2	Application process
Mar	Sept	Outline application submitted
June	Nov/Dec	Successful applicants invited to submit full application
July	Dec / Jan	Full application submitted and peer reviewed (if satisfactory)
Nov	May	Full application considered by Trustees
Dec	June	Applicants notified of decision
Jan	July	Earliest project start date



What makes a good application?

Outline stage - what do we look for?

1. Is the research question relevant?
2. Is there a clear conceptual framework?
3. Is the question researchable and the methodology appropriate and rigorous?
4. Does the team possess appropriate experience, expertise and potential?
5. Is the budget requested appropriate and does it offer good value for money?
6. Is there a clear route to use the output to positively influence future outcomes?

If shortlisted, what do we look for?

- Much fuller and more detailed proposal - responding to feedback and challenge both from our internal reviews and then external reviewers.
- More detail on the proposed activities and how they will achieve the aims of the project.
- Comprehensive descriptions of methodologies employed.

What makes for a good application?

- **DO** read the 'Guidance for Applicants' document on the Nuffield Foundation website before applying – it includes important guidance on eligibility, our priorities, and what information is required, as well as outlining the application process
- **DO** present the application in as accessible, clear, and concise way as possible
- **DO** articulate clearly what the project is aiming to do, why it matters, and what conceptual framework, hypotheses, or assumptions underpin it
- **DO** think about impact and dissemination

For further information

Visit nuffieldfoundation.org/funding

- Guide for Applicants
- Eligibility criteria
- Application timetable



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