

UKRI IAA

Inclusive Innovation Fund Scheme

Guide for Applicants – Open Call: max grant £25k

About - IAA Inclusive Innovation Fund

The strategic ambition of the University's **Inclusive Innovation Fund** is to establish inclusive innovation in purpose and approach and cultivate opportunities for innovation and impact within an equality, diversity, and inclusion (ED&I) framework. The Inclusive Innovation Fund will support:

- Specific training and mentoring opportunities through cohort learning.
- Develop mechanisms for the exchange and dissemination of best practice across the University.
- Encourage new collaborative partnerships to increase under-represented groups within the innovation landscape.
- Targeted support for innovation and impact of technology on disability inclusion, which will include engagement with external representative stakeholders.

About Your Project

Eligibility:

- IAA projects are no longer required to be directly related to previous funded research, but must fall within the remit of the relevant Research Council(s): AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC or STFC. Additionally, the PI and CoI must be able to demonstrate their relevance with regard to leading and supporting the project.
- We welcome applications from early career academics. Fellows may be eligible to apply as PI, please check with your Research Services Team.
- The Inclusive Innovation Fund can only finance activity linked to new initiatives or projects; it must demonstrate additionality. It cannot fund initiatives that are already offered or supported by internal functions within the University

Note: The IAA cannot fund research activities, projects must evidence how they will deliver research impact, for example impact that is instrumental in:

- Influencing the development of policy, practice and/or new ways of working.
- Culture change and enduring connectivity: more people working across Knowledge Exchange and innovation that drive impact and build lasting relationships.

Definition:

An inclusive innovation refers to a product, process, or service that integrates principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion throughout its design and development. Its primary aim is to address specific challenges experienced by underrepresented or marginalised groups within the University.

Focus:

These innovations are created to address systemic challenges faced by underrepresented or marginalised groups. These projects may involve creating new solutions or expanding existing ones to serve broader or underrepresented groups. A key component is the integration of inclusive design methodologies to ensure accessibility and relevance.

Examples of Impactful Projects:

- **Assistive technologies:** Tools that promote independence and improve quality of engagement for individuals with disabilities as they navigate their innovation journey — may be developed in collaboration with an external stakeholder.
- **Inclusive product design:** Innovations informed by diverse user insights, ensuring usability across age, gender, ethnicity, and ability. May be developed in collaboration with an external stakeholder.
- **Equity-driven services:** Services or platforms that enhance representation, foster belonging, and contribute to more inclusive innovation practice within the University.

Impact:

The aim of the Inclusive Innovation IAA is to create demonstrable positive impact for underrepresented groups, while also serving as a model for inclusive innovation practices within the broader University innovation landscape. Projects that have potential for broader impact, e.g., internal and external, are particularly welcome.

For the University, inclusive innovation represents a powerful avenue to translate academic research into real-world impact. It aligns with institutional goals around social responsibility, widening participation, and knowledge exchange. By championing inclusive innovation, the university can:

- Strengthen university-community partnerships by co-creating solutions with those who are often excluded from traditional innovation processes.
- Demonstrate leadership in equity and inclusion, reinforcing the university's role as a civic anchor institution.

Contact the [Knowledge Exchange Partnerships team](#) if you have any queries about eligibility and project alignment.

Duration:

IAA Inclusive Innovation Fund projects will typically be between 3 and 12 months in duration.

Funding Criteria:

Given the early and exploratory nature of the Inclusive Innovation Fund projects, **a direct partner contribution is not mandatory** if the project has an external partner. However, if there is an external partner or collaborator, their contribution should be captured through the provision of in-kind resources (including recording provision of finance, facilities, equipment, consumables and in-house technical expertise). If there is perceived benefit to the external partner, the KEP Team can advise on whether an appropriate direct cash contribution should be made. You are expected to negotiate a deal which minimises the support necessary from the IAA and considers the value to the University and partner.

The maximum contribution from the IAA Inclusive Innovation Fund scheme is £25K towards the project costs. This may be exceeded in exceptional cases for high impact projects, subject to prior approval from KE Partnerships team.

Dates:

The Inclusive Innovation Funding ends on 31 March 2027 and no extensions will be permitted. IAA project spend must be completed by this date. **Project Costs after IAA deadline cannot be covered by the IAA and must be covered by the partner organisation, if applicable.**

About Your Application

Completing the Application Form:

The Knowledge Exchange Partnerships team can provide active support for your submission. You are strongly advised to [contact us](#) for support and guidance before applying to ensure your potential project is within scope.

- Word limits are strictly applied. If you exceed a section limit, your application may be rejected.
- Applications are anonymised for assessment. **Please include the names of academic project partners on the third page and signature page only.** Use the terms “PI”, “Co-I” or “PDRA” throughout the rest of the application. Do not include hyperlinks to sites where you may be identified, such as grant awards and research profiles.
- Remember to write your proposal for a non-specialist audience. For specific guidance on completing the different sections of the form, please refer to the [IAA Handbook](#).

Costing:

Eligible Costs: Inclusive Innovation Fund projects are expected to be costed on a full Economic Costing (fEC) basis. IAA funding can be used to cover the following:

Cost Type	Allowable Costs
Directly Incurred	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PDRA costs• Equipment and Consumables (max. £2K each, with justification)• Travel and Subsistence (max. £5K, with justification)• Other costs as required, subject to approval from KEP team, with justification

Cost Type	Allowable Costs
Directly Allocated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigator time (minimum 5%, maximum 20%) Technician time (maximum 30%, with justification)

All Estates, Technician IS and Indirect costs are ineligible and must be allocated as Department Sustainability.

Project cost headings that require justification must be included within the budget page at the point of submission. If costs are included without justification, justification will be requested as part of a conditional approval or removed during the grant offer/award process.

<u>Term</u>	<u>Description</u>
BlackDackel Costing Report:	The PI and any Co-I's must be named on the costing. Select appropriate research council as 'funder' and use the ' Standard Template 100% FEC '. The UoM IAA Award is awarded without UKRI Indexation, therefore this template will ensure inflation costs are included, and will not be double counted
Total Project Costs:	The costs directly associated with the project, in the eligible cost headings (above). These include all staff costs, estates, indirect costs, technician IS, travel and subsistence, and consumables
Partner Contributions:	The direct (invoiceable) partner contributions to the total project
In-Kind Costs:	These may include the partner's staff time, access to equipment, provision of consumables, explained within a supporting letter.

Assessment

Applications will be anonymised and assessed by the University's IAA Knowledge Exchange Schemes Panel. Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

1. Potential for impact
2. Quality of the work plan
3. Demonstrable potential for follow-on activity
4. Value for money

The panel will consider:

- The benefits to the University, staff involved and any external partner
- The likelihood that the project plans will deliver the expected outputs and impacts
- The potential for follow-on activity.

Submitting Your Application

This is an open call but we advise that you contact the [Knowledge Exchange Partnerships Team](#) at least one month prior to submitting your application.

All projects should be costed (fEC) and input onto PURE by your Department Research Services Hub, prior to completion of the IAA application.

Completed applications are submitted via email to: kepartnerships@manchester.ac.uk

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Manchester aims to have an inclusive environment for all staff and students, by identifying and removing barriers in our practices. As part of UKRI's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion initiative, completing the monitoring form will help us to achieve this, and also help us to meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010. While it is voluntary to disclose this information, doing so will enable us to better understand the composition of our workforce/student body and examine our practices fully. The ED&I survey is anonymous and can be accessed on the following link: [IAA Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Survey](#)

Data we want to capture includes Gender, Age range, Ethnicity, Disability Status and Sexual orientation. Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence, and all data disclosed will comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. All data is handled in accordance with University Policy and more details can be seen [here](#).

To find out more about the work The University of Manchester is doing to meet the requirements of the Equality Act, please contact equalityanddiversity@manchester.ac.uk or visit the [equality and diversity pages on Staffnet](#).

Application Checklist

- ✓ Signed Application Form in PDF format
- ✓ Signed letter of support from the collaborating partner, confirming their direct and in-kind contribution
- ✓ Evidence of approval authorised by your Head of Department (e.g. a screenshot of the approval on PURE), to confirm that the proposal is supported by your Department and is in line with Department policy for the costing of collaborative research projects
- ✓ fEC BlackDackel Costing
- ✓ We strongly encourage you to complete the [research risk profiler tool](#)
- ✓ Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Survey

Further Information

[FAQs](#)

[IAA Handbook](#)