Warwick Social Science Impact Fund
[ESRC Impact Acceleration Account]

Handbook

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1) Introduction

What is it?
The IAA supports a comprehensive portfolio of activities and resources across the social sciences community to maximise the potential for impact from social science research. Our focus is on the conversion of established research into impact through support for new engagement activities. The IAA does not fund research and expects research to be well established at the time of application (except in the case of secondments, exchanges and rapid response requests). We provide funding through the pathways described below.

The award is worth £760k in total, and runs from 1st July 2014 to 31st March 2018

2) Eligibility

- The ESRC Impact Acceleration Account is open to the social sciences community across the University. This includes the Faculty of Social Sciences, in addition to social scientists based in other faculties who would normally be eligible to apply for research funding from ESRC.
- Lead applicants should normally be a University employee with an employment contract which lasts the duration of the proposed activity for which IAA funding is being applied for.
- Early career researchers who have an employment contract as described above (including those for example, in receipt of a postdoctoral fellowship), are eligible and indeed encouraged to apply for funding from the IAA. PhD students are not eligible to apply for funding, but will be able to access some of the training activities which will be offered as part of the IAA programme.
- Generally, ESRC-managed investments (e.g. centres, large grants and infrastructure investments) are not eligible for IAA funding during their award period (legacy activity for these investments, once their ESRC funding has come to an end, can be supported by IAAs, for example for the maintaining of websites or the continuation of networks.)
- Although other recipients of ESRC funding are able to apply to the IAA, it is not anticipated that the IAA will be used to fund project-specific activities which should have been costed into applications as part of the ‘Pathways to Impact’. Any applications relating to ESRC funded projects must, therefore, take into account the criteria for assessment listed below; in particular those concerning added value for existing projects, leverage from external partners and the potential for the activity to become self-sustaining in the longer term.

All applications should have at least one external non-academic/ HEI partner. The committee requests a letter of support from the external organisation with the application. (If the nature of your project means that working with an external partner is not possible or appropriate, please get in touch with the IAA project manager to discuss this.)
3) Applying for IAA funding: pathways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pathway</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard pathway</td>
<td>Up to £20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rapid-response pathway</td>
<td>Up to £3,000</td>
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Standard pathway
The Warwick IAA welcomes applications for funding to support the following impact activities:

Responsive
Relationship building and networking activities: consolidating and building on existing partnerships or creating new ones. This could include ‘horizon’ events which focus on a particular sector or organisation and enable our social sciences community to understand how research can contribute to the development of solutions.

Collaborative activities: these need to involve at least one external organisation as collaborator/co-researcher. Applications must include a statement from the external organisation articulating their role and the benefits of their involvement, together with a statement about their contribution to the project. This can be a cash, or in-kind contribution.

Follow-up projects: to enable follow up work to investigate the actual impact achieved following knowledge exchange and engagement activities.

Exchanges
Placements, visits, secondments or fellowships: These can be of varying length and can be incoming or outgoing. The length of the exchange will depend on individual circumstances. Placements might be used to synthesise research knowledge which could be applied to the problems and challenges of other organisations in the public, private and third sectors, or to understand another organisation’s challenges/agendas.

(In the case of ‘incoming’ exchanges, non-staff costs only are eligible (e.g. travel, subsistence and accommodation). For ‘outgoing’ exchanges, applications can request a contribution towards direct staff costs, although this request will be considered against the criteria set out below.)

The Warwick IAA has set up secondment opportunities to Whitehall, Business and the Third Sector with the Whitehall and Industry Group. These secondments are arranged through a separate application process. See the [website](#) for further details.

Translation of Knowledge
Support for creative and innovative ways of transforming social science research into engaging content for different audiences through, for example:

- Short documentaries and animations
- Writers-in-residence
- Participatory performance art and exhibitions
- Proof-of-concept funding for commercialisation projects
- Online content for professional development and for broader educational purposes (i.e. not just developed for Warwick)
- ‘Hack day’ or ‘citizen science’ for the social sciences
Knowledge Mobilisation

Getting useful social sciences research knowledge to the right people at the right time.

Rapid-response pathway
An opportunity to enable Warwick researchers to form strategic partnerships with external organisations, hold discussions, organise events and carry out early scoping work for research or other engagement activities in response to current or emerging social issues or events.

4) Further Support for Impact Activities
The Warwick IAA also manages a number of strategic activities to support the dissemination and impact of Social Sciences research. These include the development of a series of policy or practice focussed events through partnership with organisations such as the Industry and Parliament Trust and the organisation of secondments in collaboration with the Whitehall and Industry Group.

We will also offer bespoke training programmes for the social sciences research community which might include:

- Getting research into Westminster and Whitehall
- Developing regional collaborations
- Stakeholder analysis
- Public engagement
- Social media and online writing
- Creative digital approaches to storytelling
- The nature and meaning of impact in various social science contexts
- Impact evaluation approaches

If you have an idea for, or are interested in participating in any of these activities, please send an e-mail to ESRCImpactAccount@warwick.ac.uk.

5) Eligible Costs
- Eligible staff costs: these can include direct staff costs, consumables, travel and accommodation, and all other justifiable items required for the project.
- PLEASE REFER TO THE SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT EACH PATHWAY AS THERE MAY BE SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA ASSOCIATED WITH EACH.
- Please refer also to the criteria for assessment below, regarding the added value for existing projects funded from research grants, leverage from external partners and the potential for the activity to become self-sustaining.
- Estates and Indirect costs are NOT eligible.
- Building and refurbishment costs are NOT eligible.

6) Head of Department Statement
- All applications must be endorsed by the relevant Head of Department (HoD)
- Applications involving more than one department must include a declaration of supporting confirming that the HoDs of each co-applicant also support the application
• It is the Lead Applicant’s responsibility to ensure that HoDs from all co-applicant departments have stated their support for the application. Without evidence of this, the application will not be considered
• The declaration should explain why the project/activity costs cannot be met wholly from existing individual or departmental discretionary funds
• The declaration should also explain how the activity contributes to the departmental strategy for impact (with reference to the REF Impact Template, where appropriate) and must outline the department’s contribution to the activity, whether this is cash or in-kind.

7) Statement and support from external partner
This is an essential part of the application process. The Management Committee will not consider your application unless this statement is included. This statement must:
• Demonstrate that the external partner is a genuine partner in the activity, and can articulate the benefits and potential impact for them of being involved in the activity
• Set out the contribution (either as matched funding, or as a contribution in kind) to the activity.

(If the nature of your project means that working with an external partner is not possible or appropriate, please get in touch with the IAA project manager to discuss this.)

8) Assessment Process
Standard Pathway
Please complete the form and submit to ESRCImpactAccount@warwick.ac.uk.

Applications need to be received by the cut-off dates published online in order to be considered at the next meeting of the Management Committee. In advance of the Committee meeting, your application will be reviewed by members of the Management Committee who will be asked for their judgements on recommendations for funding. The reviewers’ recommendation will be considered and the final decision on whether to fund will be taken by the Management Committee.

Rapid Response Pathway Only
Please complete the form and submit to ESRCImpactAccount@warwick.ac.uk.

Your application needs to state clearly why it is being considered under the rapid response pathway. If insufficient justification is given, the Management Committee may recommend that it is considered at its next meeting.

Your application will be considered by at least two members of the Management Committee. In the event of a disparity of views, the application may be sent to a 3rd Committee member.

We hope to be able to turn around most applications received via this route (and which are deemed ‘urgent’ by the Management Committee) within 10 working days.

9) Assessment Criteria
Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:
1. Proposed engagement activities
   - Clarity of aims and objectives
   - A demonstrable understanding of the potential impact the funded activities may have and the pathways through which this impact may be achieved
   - Clear explanation of how the proposal relates to underpinning research undertaken at Warwick
   - Potential to facilitate co-production of knowledge and maximise impact
   - Benefits to and demonstrable engagement with external partners (in the public sector, civil society, industry (including SMEs, local business and the Technology Strategy Board) and publics
   - Potential for collaboration across the social sciences community
   - Potential to drive culture change, promote knowledge exchange and improve related skill sets and capabilities
   - Particularly where proposed activities link to existing funded research and projects, the ‘added value’ for the project and a sound explanation of why the activity cannot be funded from the project grant. (nb ESRC managed investments are ineligible to apply).
   - Potential for leverage (from external partners) or potential for activity to become self-sustaining
   - Potential contribution to a longer term programme of activities

2. Potential for Impact
   - Clear description of potential impact arising from activities
   - Plans for follow-up and impact evaluation
   - Potential for activities to achieve changes to policy/practice
   - Potential for cost-savings
   - Potential for new bids for funding
   - Potential for new products/processes
   - Potential for further activity or engagement
   - Potential for new co-produced research, secondments, research investors or business engagement

10) Conditions of Funding and Reporting Requirements

Credits

Recipients of ESRC IAA funding must ensure that the University of Warwick and ESRC (quoting grant reference ES/M500434/1) are credited as providing the support for the activity in any outputs.

Extensions

Applicants must include a start and end date for their project. Requests to extend the period of funding must be formally requested by email (with a clear justification for the need for extension) to the Impact Officer and will be considered by the Committee at the Committee meeting. The Committee reserve the right to refuse extension requests and withdraw funds if they are unsatisfied with the progress of the project.
Reporting

Recipients of ESRC IAA funding must complete an online report form providing accountability for the funds spent on the activity and the nature of the impact achieved. Grant holders will be expected to review update the impact sections of the form on an annual basis to feed into ESRC reporting.

Overspends

Any overspend of the grant must be covered by the grant holder’s department.

11) Who to contact

For queries concerning applications, please contact:

Stephanie Seavers
Impact Officer (Social Sciences)
S.Seavers@warwick.ac.uk

Phone ext: 73172 (University House) or 75475 (Social Sciences Hub)