**Stirling Social Science Impact Acceleration Account**

**Impact Acceleration Funding Programme**

CALL ANNOUNCEMENT

Stirling Social Science IAA is pleased to announce its first call for proposals to support acceleration of social science research impact across the University. We are funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to enable the impact and influence of our social science research to benefit others and bring change. Funding research impact activities with non-academic collaborators is a key area of IAA focus.

The deadline for proposals is **Monday, 4 December 2023, 5 pm**. Funding is available under a number of different pathways aimed to support impact development from an early exploratory phase to its maturity:

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| **Funding pathway** | **Award size and duration** |
| Rapid Response, Exploration and Engagement Awards | up to £5K, up to 6 months duration |
| Impact Acceleration Awards | up to £10K, up to 12 months duration |
| Knowledge Exchange Placements | up to £10K, up to 12 months duration, part time |
| Long-term Exchange Fellowships | up to £20K, up to 24 months duration, part time |
| Postdoctoral Impact Fellowships | up to £5K, up to 6 months duration, part time |

We invite proposals for activities including non-academic user engagement, impact acceleration, innovation and commercialisation as well as knowledge exchange and people movement. Please note that IAA cannot fund primary research.

Full Guidance to Applicants is available on the [IAA Sharepoint site](https://stir.sharepoint.com/sites/SocialScienceIAA).

**What IAA is Looking for**

The IAA funding programme sets out key requirements that applications must respond to and a range of considerations that we encourage applicants to consider.

Requirements:

* Eligible applications must be within the social science remit, as [defined by ESRC](https://www.ukri.org/councils/esrc/guidance-for-applicants/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-funding/). This includes applications where underpinning research and its outputs are interdisciplinary as long as most of the research and the impacts are within social science. Please note that the underpinning research does not require to be funded by the ESRC, we will support research and impacts from a range of funding sources. IAA is open to social science researchers across the University irrespective of the Faculty they are based in.
* We expect applicants to respond to IAA Themes and Focal Points in 2023-2024 (published on the [IAA website](https://www.stir.ac.uk/about/faculties/social-sciences/our-research/stirling-social-science-impact-acceleration-account/)) in their proposals.
* We expect that at least one external, non-academic collaborator or beneficiary will be centrally involved in an application. This could be from government, parliament and public sector, business, third sector and social enterprise, or communities, campaigners, and the wider public. They could be situated within a context that is local, regional, national, transnational or global.
* We expect applications to demonstrate potential for enabling and accelerating at least one (but preferably a range) of research impacts: for example, social and societal impact; cultural impact; legal, policy or political impact; impact on services, workforces or practices; technological impact; impact on the environment or quality of life; impact on behaviours and health; economic impact; conceptual and methodological impact and innovation; capacity building, training and professional development on impact and knowledge exchange. Here, impact means influence and effect on, change or benefit to.

We encourage applications that:

* align with the University’s strategic priorities and missions as well as UN Sustainable Development Goals.
* provide opportunities to build and develop research and impact teams. These teams should include academics from a range of career stages, involving at least one early career (ECR), or mid-career (MCR), or PhD (PGR) researcher at Stirling. We are particularly keen to support teams led by women, including at early and mid-career stages.
* benefit and improve outcomes for people who share protected characteristics.
* promote public scholarship and influential communications, where appropriate. For example, reframing debates, building public engagement and awareness raising, contributing through media and press releases, social campaigns, policy briefings and parliamentary evidence submissions, toolkits, community events, or professional, sectoral and system-wide platforms and networks.
* encourage co-production with users and beneficiaries of our research, doing so with due regard for their needs and the ethics of enabling participation.
* demonstrate a contribution of matched funding or leveraging of ‘in kind’ opportunities, resources and benefits from partners external to the University. There are no minimum threshold parameters on this, as what may be contributed by a large partner in the private sector may be different to what may be expected of community groups or the third sector.
* demonstrate potential for commercialisation and entrepreneurial (including for profit and non-profit or social entrepreneurship) opportunities and partnerships, licensing, or new intellectual property (IP).

We would like to encourage applicants to think of these issues when they develop their proposals and address as many of them as is relevant and appropriate. There is no expectation that all of these considerations will be addressed within one application.

**Eligibility and Funding**

IAA funding schemes, except postdoctoral fellowships, will be open to all academic and research staff from across the University, irrespective of their Faculty, provided the research underpinning the proposed activities and outcomes falls under the remit of the ESRC.

With exception of Postdoctoral Impact Fellowships, PhD students are not eligible to apply to the IAA directly. However, they may be members of the team and funded as Research Assistants and exchange staff, if appropriate.

Applications will be expected to demonstrate confirmed commitment from at least one external non-academic partner. A statement of support from the external partner must be submitted in conjunction with the application. Partners can be based in any suitable (non-academic) external organisation in any part of the world, subject to due diligence requirements. Inward exchange placements and fellowships can involve any relevant employee of a user organisation.

Expenses for items such as travel, accommodation, subsistence, consumables, events etc. will be eligible for inclusion in IAA applications as long as they are appropriately justified. Directly Incurred costs for staff are eligible for inclusion where it can be demonstrated that the activity directly supports the project.

Project costs should be calculated using Worktribe ‘Stand alone budget’ function. Applications to all IAA funding pathways in the first IAA funding call should be submitted via the MS Form. Please see [Guidance to Applicants](https://stir.sharepoint.com/sites/SocialScienceIAA/SitePages/IAA-Funding-Guidance.aspx) for details.

As we expect IAA funding to be very competitive, we encourage applicants to focus on the quality of the applications, making sure that they present a well-defined project plan with specific impact aims and anticipated outcomes. Applications must include a statement of support from all involved partners and evidence of endorsement from applicants’ divisions and units. Applications for Postdoctoral Impact Fellowships should also include a statement of support from the Co-Investigator/Mentor.

**Contact**

For any queries regarding this call for proposals please contact IAA team on [impactaccelerator@stir.ac.uk](mailto:impactaccelerator@stir.ac.uk). If you have any misgivings about the eligibility of your proposal, we recommend discussing your proposal with our team before submitting the application.