Scheme Guidance Notes for BA/Leverhulme Small Research Grant Scheme

2024 Competition

Funding

In January 2018 the British Academy (BA) announced the continuation of the partnership with the Leverhulme Trust to support the funding of the Small Research Grants scheme. The awards are co-sponsored by the Leverhulme Trust with funding for five years adding to the public funding deriving from the grant made to the Academy via the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology. In addition, the Academy continues to be able to offer some awards derived from funds generously donated by other funders including the Society for the Advancement of Management Studies, the Sino-British Fellowship Trust, British Accounting and Finance Association, Journal of Moral Education Trust, Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain, the Honor Frost Foundation, EY, and the Wellcome Trust. The Academy also expresses its partnerships with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS).

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)

The British Academy has partnered with the **Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)** who will co-fund two Small Research Grants for this round.

- UK applicants should submit an application for a British Academy Small Grant and ensure that their Chinese co-applicant submits an application to CASS in English and Chinese (on its prescribed application form) at the same time.
- China-based applicants must be of postdoctoral (or above) status and have a permanent position (spanning the duration of the project) at a CASS institute.
- China-based applicants must first submit an expression of interest, together with a written recommendation letter issued by their CASS institute to the Bureau of International Cooperation of CASS (http://www.bic.cas.cn/) before submitting a proposal to the British Academy in the same year.
- Applications will be considered by each side, who will jointly agree the final list of successful applicants to receive co-funded awards.
- The application to the British Academy must indicate the total cost requested (up to £10,000) and if the award is recommended for co-funding, the British Academy will cover costs of the participants from the UK side (up to £5,000) and CASS will cover costs of the participants from the Chinese side (up to RMB 50,000).

Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS)

The British Academy has partnered with **the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS)** who will co-fund two Small Research Grants for this round.

- UK applicants should submit an application for a British Academy Small Grant and ensure that their Chinese co-applicant submits an application to SASS in English and Chinese (on its prescribed application form) at the same time.
- China-based applicants must be of postdoctoral (or above) status and have a permanent position (spanning the duration of the project) at a SASS institute.
- China-based applicants must first submit an expression of interest, together with a written recommendation letter issued by their SASS institute to the Bureau of International Cooperation of SASS before submitting a proposal to the British Academy in the same year.
- Applications will be considered by each side, who will jointly agree the final list of successful applicants to receive co-funded awards.
- The application to the British Academy must indicate the total cost requested (up to £10,000) and if the award is recommended for co-funding, the British Academy will cover costs of the participants from the UK side (up to £5,000) and SASS will cover costs of the participants from the Chinese side (up to RMB 50,000).

Purpose of Grant

Grants are available to support primary research in the humanities and social sciences. The first recourse for funding should be to your own institution (where applicable).

The maximum grant is £10,000 over two years – applications will not be considered for less than £500.

Applications for collaborative or individual research projects are equally welcome under this scheme. Applications from international groups of scholars are welcome, provided there is a UK-based scholar as lead applicant for the duration of the award period.

Funds are available to facilitate initial project planning and development; to support the direct costs of research; and to enable the advancement of research through workshops or visits by or to partner scholars. Applicants may seek support for any combination of eligible activity and cost up to the overall limit of £10,000. The Academy will assess applications equally on their merits, with no preference as to mode of enquiry.

Grants are **not** intended to support interchange between UK and overseas scholars where there is no planned programme of activity to meet a clearly specified research objective (dissemination of results of research conducted under the aegis of the project for which funding is sought is a permitted purpose, but applications purely to organise an international conference, whether held in the UK or overseas will not be considered); nor are grants intended solely to support attendance at open conferences organised by a third party or international organisation.

All applications should demonstrate that funds are sought for a clearly defined, discrete piece of research, which will have an identifiable outcome on completion of the Academy-funded component of the project.

NB - The British Academy welcomes proposals for high-quality research in all its subject areas. While all proposals should be situated in an appropriate field of study, they may vary

considerably in their approach to conceptualisation, methodology and/or outputs, depending on the discipline. In some cases, creative and professional practice may play a significant role in shaping the methods and/or outcomes of research. In all proposals, whether practice-led or not, a clear scholarly rationale is required for the choice of research methods, processes and outputs.

Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Grants are available for research, at postdoctoral or equivalent level, in the fields of the humanities and the social sciences. Equivalent experience may include holding, or having held, an established post, having a record of publications in the field and/or having teaching experience.

- **Postgraduate students are not eligible to apply**.

- Applicants must be ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands (that is, classed as 'ordinarily resident' for tax purposes) **or** currently employed overseas by a recognised UK overseas research organisation.

- UK research organisations based overseas may apply to be recognised by demonstrating that they satisfy **both** the following conditions:
    1. Organisations which are, or which are constituent parts of, charities registered with the Charity Commission; and
    2. Which must be able to demonstrate an independent capability to undertake research in the field or discipline in which they wish to be funded, and to lead the research for which funding is received.

- Awards will not be made retrospectively: this means that the work for which support is requested **must not** have commenced before the award is announced.

The Academy offers awards in this scheme in two rounds of competition each year.

Please note the earliest point at which research can commence, and to help regulate the flow of applications, the latest starting date also. The Academy is inviting proposals in this round with **the closing date noted below**.

Opening date	Closing date	Research to commence	Result notified by
10th April 2024	**5th June 2024 (5pm UK time)**	**No earlier than 1st September 2024** **No later than 31st March 2025**	**By 30th August 2024**

Eligible Costs

Funds may be sought to cover the direct expenses incurred in planning, conducting, and developing the research, including:

- project planning and development costs (cost of travel for discussion in the UK and overseas; initial workshops with potential partners)
- travel and maintenance for UK scholars; including travel to disseminate results of the research at conferences held either in the UK or abroad
- travel and maintenance for overseas scholars engaged in collaborative research activity with UK partner(s)
- research assistance (based in UK or abroad)
- workshops to advance the programme of research (principally the costs of travel and maintenance for key participants, though organisational costs may be considered)
- consumables
- specialist software
- costs of interpreters in the field

Bids for the cost of child or parent care may be considered if the carer is conducting research away from home and it is not possible to make alternative arrangements. The costs of normal regular childcare whilst at home are <u>not</u> eligible for support. Consumables include the purchase of datasets, photocopies, microfilms, etc, and any other minor items that will be used up during the course of the project. Applicants may apply for short-term consultancy or salary costs for expert staff, or short periods of research assistance.

Provided they are central to the research process and an adequate case is made, the costs of preparing illustrations (including photography, acquisition of images, draughtsmanship and cartography or other bespoke illustrative material) may be considered. The cost of reproduction rights for text or images may be considered provided there is a contract for publication in place. Costs associated with deposit of digital material in an appropriately accessible repository may be considered.

Costs related to conservation may be considered provided there is a clear research context to the work that falls within the remit of the Academy; if an application is purely for technical or practical work with no research objective, it is not eligible for funding. Incidental translation expenses may be considered.

The following items are **not currently eligible** for funding (applicants registered with special needs may consult the Academy about possible exceptions):

Institutional overheads, or any element that should properly be ascribed to institutional overheads
Computer hardware including laptops, electronic notebooks, digital cameras, etc
Books and other permanent resources
Preparation of camera-ready copy, copy-editing, proof-reading, indexing, nor any other editorial task
Subventions for direct production costs (printing, binding, distribution, marketing etc)
Costs of publication in electronic media
Payment to the principal researcher(s) in lieu of salary, or for personal maintenance at home
Replacement teaching costs
Travel and maintenance expenses for purposes such as lecture tours or to write up the results of research

Please note, The British Academy has set aside specific funding to support any additional needs that applicants and award holders may require. Each request will be considered on a case by case basis. Please find further details, and how to apply, [here.](#)

Level and Duration of Award

Applicants should not apply for expenditure that will take place over more than 24 months. (Note that if application includes an element for dissemination of results of research at conferences, the timing of such a conference must be within the 24-month limit and the end date of the award calculated accordingly to include this element).

There is no bar to reapplying for further funding, providing the conditions of award relating to the preceding grant have been satisfactorily fulfilled. Please note, however, that once a pilot project has been successfully completed further applications relating to the main project may be more appropriately directed elsewhere for funding (ESRC/AHRC). There is no guarantee that a re-application will be successful, so applicants with longer-term projects in mind should ensure that their research is so designed that a single phase will have an appropriate and worthwhile outcome, even if further phases are not funded.

Applications to multiple British Academy Schemes

Please note that only one British Academy Small Research Grant or another similar Academy grant may be held, or applied for, at any one time.

An application cannot be accepted if there is a report outstanding on any previous research grant awarded by the Academy to the principal investigator or co-applicant(s) named in the current proposal. Failure to follow this guidance will result in your application being withdrawn from this round of competition.
Duplicate applications for the same purpose to more than one Academy scheme will not be accepted.

Please note the following:
- An International Fellowship co-applicant can apply to this scheme providing there is no duplication of costs.
- You can apply to both this scheme and the Mid-Career Fellowship Scheme but cannot be successful in both as the Mid-Career Fellowship Scheme includes some research expenses and buys 100% of your time.
- You can apply to both this scheme and the Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme providing there is no duplication of costs.
- Providing it is for the same project, it is acceptable to apply for a BA\Leverhulme Senior Research Fellowship at the same time, and to hold both awards if successful in both schemes, provided there is no duplication of costs.

Resubmissions

The Academy will accept **one** resubmission of an application previously unsuccessful in passing the quality threshold. A fresh proposal must be prepared, and a new statement of support supplied by a referee (who may be either the same or different from that named on

the first application). Applicants should clearly demonstrate if and how the proposal has been modified.

Proposals which have previously passed the quality threshold assessment, but were not selected in the randomisation process, can be resubmitted without modification, however this does not carry a guarantee that they will pass the threshold upon resubmission, and this will still be considered as their second and final submission

Nominated Referee

Applicants are required to nominate one referee and ensure that the supporting statement from their chosen referee is submitted on the British Academy Flexi-Grant® Grant Management System (GMS) by the application submission deadline. Please note this deadline is final.

The reference must be submitted before the application can be approved. Any application without a supporting reference will not be able to be submitted. Please also note that the reference must be submitted in time to allow you to submit the application for approval by your employing organisation for the same deadline.

Your referee has to be drawn from outside your own employing institution and from outside the employing institution of your co-applicant(s), if any.

Before listing your referee on your application form you should seek permission from them that they are happy to provide this by the deadline. It is essential that you enter the correct email address for your referee, otherwise your referee will not receive the automated messages delivered from the British Academy Flexi-Grant® GMS (link).

Your referee must register on Flexigrant first, before you can send them this invitation.

We strongly advise that you complete your application as early as possible to allow your referee enough time to provide their reference in the system. An application cannot be considered for an award unless the proposal and reference have been submitted on time.

Please note that references must be provided through the GMS, they cannot be provided as an email attachment nor sent by post in hard copy. Any references received after the deadline, or outside of the system, or by another academic at the same institution as you or a co-applicant(s) will not be accepted, and your application will be withdrawn from this competition.

Assessment

The British Academy has decided to trial a new approach to the peer review and assessment of British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grants. Applications will be assessed in the normal way by assessors at the initial stage to determine whether an application is fundable or not.

Assessors will be asked to confirm that applications are good enough to be considered for funding against specific criteria – the quality and interest of the research proposal; the ability of the applicant (and any co-applicants) to make a success of it based on their past track record; the feasibility of the methodology; the feasibility of the timescale; and the appropriateness of costs requested.

The primary assessment of quality will be based on the specific research objective of the proposal, and whether the methodology and research programme outlined are likely to lead to successful achievement of the objective. The details of how the objective will be achieved - whether through research visits, use of research assistance, workshops, or any combination of eligible activities/costs - will be assessed only in relation to each individual application. No preference will be shown between individual or collaborative modes of research. There are no quotas for different types of application, and no comparisons will be made across applications on the grounds of their operational and financial specifications. For projects involving partners from other countries, assessors may take into account the availability of partner funding: in cases where partner funding is likely to be scarce, assessors may give priority to those projects which are likely to contribute to capacity building and lead to benefits for the wider scholarly community. In addition, Assessors may consider evidence of language competence where the understanding of material in a foreign language is crucial to the achievement of the research objective.

All applications that are deemed fundable at this stage - i.e. meeting the quality threshold - will then be entered into a random allocation process.

As a result of this revised process, the Academy will be able to give all unsuccessful applicants feedback on their applications. Applicants whose applications are judged not to meet the quality threshold on one or more of the criteria will be informed of this when given the result at the end of the assessment process. Applicants who are entered into the random allocation process but not selected for award will be informed that their applications were fundable and the only reason for being unsuccessful was that there were not enough funds to support everyone entered into the random allocation.

We believe that this approach will have wide benefits. We hope that the transparency and simplicity of the system will improve research culture more generally

- Between the very best applications, we will be removing human bias and partiality, which may be fairer to traditionally overlooked groups.
- Allow us to give applicants feedback on which elements of the proposal did not pass the quality threshold. Please note that we will not be able to enter into correspondence about feedback or provide further detail.
- Overall, we believe that partial randomisation will ease the burden on applicants and research officers without impacting the quality of applications and assessment. An application needs to pass our rigorous quality threshold, but it does not need to be checked and edited time and time again, so more time will be freed up for both applicants and research officers.

Consent

The British Academy is working with researchers at the University of Oxford to evaluate the Partial Randomised Allocation Trial. These researchers are requesting your consent for the British Academy to share some details of your SRG application to enable you to be involved as a study participant. The researchers will use this information to gather data on your past and future research outputs. We will be in touch after you have submitted your application with further details. Your decision to participate or not is entirely independent from the allocation of funding for the Small Research Grants scheme.

Code of Practice

The Academy has a Code of Practice for assessing research applications, setting out the principles of equity, integrity and confidentiality governing the treatment of all applications for research support. The Code of Practice also covers Data Protection, the Academy's ethics policy and the appeals procedure. The Code of Practice may be viewed on the Academy's website at https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/funding/code-practice.