

BY EMAIL

05 November 2019

Re: Allocations from the 2019-20 QR Strategic Priorities Fund

I am pleased to inform you of an additional allocation of QR funding that is now available to your institution for research activity that supports evidence-based policy making. For 2019-20, Research England's Strategic Priorities Funding (SPF) is being targeted at this specific activity, which is one of the central aims of this UKRI fund.

In his letter to Research England, Minister Chris Skidmore wrote: 'Alongside their global and national roles our universities have a wide range of expertise focussed on local challenges. All our HE institutions can play an important role in addressing the particular economic and social issues facing different local areas. I encourage you to support universities in doing more about local issues and priorities, and in deploying their intellectual assets for the benefit of people in every part of the country'.

We consider that, in putting this into practice, an additional allocation of QR funding, titled Quality-Related SPF (QR-SPF), should be provided to support universities in undertaking research with local, regional, national and international structures (including parliament, central government, devolved administrations, local government, health and education bodies, the justice system and other regulatory organisations).

We recognise that important research work with these organisations is taking place in many institutions, and we wish to encourage and support the scaling up of activity, the pursuit of new directions and particular attention to local challenges.

Relevant research activity which might be funded includes:

- New research activity working in partnership with policymakers, particularly to better understand local, regional or national challenges;
- Extending existing related research activity;
- Facilitating the use of existing research and the exchange of knowledge between universities and policymakers;
- Activity aimed at improving the dialogue between universities and policymakers;

- Activity and training to better equip academics, including postgraduate researchers and early career researchers, to communicate effectively with policymakers;
- Partnerships and collaborations aimed at supporting evidence-based policy making;
- The exchange of people, e.g. staff secondments, contributing towards professional doctorates in policy, joint PhDs, etc.

Funds must be spent by **31 March 2020**. We recognise that this is a challenging timetable, so allocations may be used to build on activity already underway, and to build capacity for future activity. It is our expectation that further funding for this activity will be available in financial year (FY) 2020/21.

A total of £29.1 million is being distributed to institutions eligible to receive funding from Research England in proportion to their research income from UK central government bodies, local authorities and health and hospital authorities. The calculation is based on an average of research income for years 2014-15 to 2017-18 reported in the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Finance record. To ensure that funds are of sufficient scale to have an impact, we will allocate £50,000 to those institutions for which the formula-driven allocation is less than this amount (but where the HESA Finance record indicates that they have some existing activity in this area). There is a maximum allocation of £1m for any single institution.

The allocation for your institution is:

Institutions will receive payment of funds in December 2019.

We are asking all institutions with an offer of funding to either accept or decline the funding based on the criteria below. We are also asking institutions to indicate whether they can spend more than their original allocation. In the case of an uplift or a reallocation of any remaining funds, these would then be redistributed to those institutions.

To monitor the use of funds and to evaluate effectiveness, we will expect a short report from each recipient institution promptly at the end of the spending period. A template for this report will be shared with recipient institutions in early 2020.

Action required

To enable receipt of this funding please confirm, using the form provided at Annex A, that you can meet the following conditions:

1. That funding will be spent by 31 March 2020.
2. That funds will be used for the purposes as set out in the letter above.
3. That you will undertake the monitoring requirements for this funding as set out above.

Please send all responses to researchpolicy@re.ukri.org by **15 November 2019**.

If we **do not** receive a response by 15 November 2019, we will consider that the funding has been declined.

Should you have any questions about this funding, please contact researchpolicy@re.ukri.org

Yours sincerely



David Sweeney
Executive Chair

Annex A: Research England SPF allocation form for completion

Name of Institution	
Head of Institution or Principal	
<p>I confirm that we can meet the conditions of funding and wish to accept this allocation</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>I confirm that we can meet the conditions of funding but wish to accept a lower allocation of £ (please indicate a suitable additional amount)</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>I confirm that we are unable to meet the conditions of funding and wish to decline this additional allocation (delete as applicable)</p>	
<p>Could your institution spend an increased allocation in accordance with the conditions of funding?</p> <p>Yes / No (delete as applicable)</p> <p>If yes, please indicate the maximum additional amount you could spend within the terms and conditions of funding: £</p>	

I agree to the terms and conditions of the funding outlined in the letter attached.

Signed (by Head of Institution or Principal)	
Print name	
Date	

Please return by email to researchpolicy@re.ukri.org by **5pm on 15 November 2019**.