Research Fund

Guidance for Applicants

The following document provides guidance in respect of the **2 June 2025 – 7 July 2025** application round of the Royal Society of Chemistry ("RSC") Research Fund.

Please read the following guidance for applicants before making an application.

1. About the grant

1.1 Up to £5000 GBP ("**Grant**") will be awarded by the RSC to the successful applicant ("**Recipient**") to undertake a new chemical sciences research project at a university, higher education institute or research institute.

2. Duration and start of award

2.1 Funding is available for a period of up to 12 months.

2.2 Recipients will be able to request a no cost extension of up to 12 months at any point within the duration of the grant.

3. Eligibility

3.1 Applications should be made by one person "**Lead Applicant**". The Lead Applicant is responsible for the overall delivery of the Project. They are the main point of contact for the RSC and are responsible for the use of the Grant and submission of the Final Report on completion of the Project.

3.2 Applications may also involve a co-applicant. A co-applicant should be involved in developing the project proposal as well as making a significant and essential contribution to its delivery.

3.3 Each Lead Applicant and co-applicant ("**Named Applicant**") must be either an Associate Member (AMRSC), Member (MRSC) or Fellow (FRSC) of the RSC before they submit their application and for the duration of the Grant Period. This means that the Named Applicant's RSC membership must have been confirmed by the RSC – it is not sufficient to simply have a membership application in process. Please see our [frequently asked questions](#) for more guidance.

3.4 Each Named Applicant must be employed in a position that allows for independent research at a university, higher education institute or research institute at the time of application and duration of the Grant Period.

3.5 Applications are limited to one per department and must be authorised by the head of the Lead Applicant's department prior to submission.

3.6 Any given activity may not receive more than one RSC grant. Lead Applicants must inform the RSC if an activity is successful in multiple RSC grant applications.

3.7 Each Named Applicant must not be a Recipient of another active RSC Research Fund Grant (i.e. previous Research Fund Grant Recipients must have completed and submitted their Final Reports before they can apply for another Research Fund Grant).

3.8   Each Named Applicant is solely responsible for ensuring they are not under any obligation which prevents them from applying for or receiving the funds, whether the obligations are imposed by the home organisation or otherwise.

4. Application timelines

4.1 The application timelines are:

  4.1.1 Applications open: 2 June 2025

  4.1.2 Application close: 7 July 2025 14:00 UK time

  4.1.4 RSC funding decisions: Late September 2025

5. Application requirements

5.1   Lead Applicants must make their applications through the RSC's online application system, SurveyMonkey Apply. Before completing the online form, all Named Applicants should check that they comply with the eligibility requirements that are stated in section 3.

5.2   Lead Applicants must use their own SurveyMonkey Apply account, under their own name and email address. Applications made under another person's account will not be considered.

5.3   The application form will ask the Lead Applicant to provide:

  a) Information on the research project for which they seek funding, and the expected outcomes.

  b) The approximate costings of the research project and a breakdown of how the awarded Grant will be used. This should include quantities and approximate costs for each item.

  c) Sources of any financial assistance normally available to the Applicant(s) for research, whether these are available in this instance and to what value.

  d) A CV for each Named Applicant (if relevant). Maximum one side of A4 (at font size 10) for each document.

  e) A document of maximum two sides of A4 (at font size 10) on the proposed project.

  f) A referee report assessing the scientific content of the proposed research proposal (see section 7).

  g) Approval from the Lead Applicant's Head of Department (see section 8)

7.1   Applications will not be considered for funding if any part of the application exceeds length limits specified in the application form.

6. Eligible costs

6.1   Lead Applicants may apply for costs directly needed for their research project. These can include:

  a) Chemicals and/or equipment

  b) Consumables

  c) Licences for specialist software required for the project

d) Equipment repairs not covered by University funds

e) Equipment access, for example at a synchrotron facility

6.2   Funding should not replace or reduce institutional or funding agency support.

6.3   Lead Applicants may not seek funding for the following within their RSC Research Fund application:

a) Travel costs, such as conference attendance or networking visits, are not permitted. Direct costs essential to the delivery of the project may be included (e.g. travel to obtain environmental samples). Such costs must be justified in your applications.

b) Salary contributions

c) Departmental overheads (including administration costs and office equipment)

d) Costs for the dissemination of work (including conference attendance and publication costs)

7. Inviting a referee to provide a scientific reference

7.1   Lead Applicants must include a scientific reference as part of the application. Your referee will be asked to comment on the scientific quality of your application and should be working in a similar field of research to yourself. They will be asked to comment on:

a) How this work fits in the wider context of the field;

b) The novelty/impact of this work in its field of research;

c) How reasonable the project is given the resources available to the Named Applicants;

d) Whether the expenses listed in the application are appropriate and essential for the project;

Please note referees will not be asked to comment on you as a researcher.

Please make the nominated referee aware of this before entering their details into the application system.

7.2   Please note that someone cannot act as a scientific referee if they are closely related to the Named Applicants (e.g. if you are a spouse or sibling) or if they are the head of department for Named Applicant. Referees will also be required to declare any of the following in their reference:

- if they previously had a close working relationship to any Named Applicant in industry, academia or research institutions etc., e.g. PhD/post-doctoral supervisor, co-workers on the same project, collaborators etc.

- if they are a Named Applicant on another Research Fund application in this round.

- if they are a close collaborator with any Named Applicant, e.g. co-author of papers, joint funding co-bidder.

- if they are the current supervisor or line manager for a Named Applicant.

7.3   Once a Lead Applicant enters the details of the referee, the SurveyMonkey Apply system will send the referee an email, which includes a link to the application. Clicking this link will allow the referee to login (or sign up) to confirm their support. If

they have not received a link, it may have gone to their junk folder. Please contact funding@rsc.org if there are any problems.

7.4 **The scientific reference needs to be completed by the grant deadline.** The RSC will recommend to the referee that this needs to be done in advance of the Grant deadline. The Lead Applicant will not be able to submit their application form until the status for the declaration shows as 'complete'.

8. Inviting your Head of Department to provide their support of the application.

8.1 The Lead Applicant must include confirmation of support from the Lead Applicant's Head of Department. ***Please make them aware of this before entering their details into the application system.***

8.2 The Lead Applicant is required to complete all sections of the application form before the Lead Applicant can access the declaration of support section of the application form.

8.3 Once the Lead Applicant enters the details of their Head of Department, the SurveyMonkey Apply system will send them an email, which includes a link to the application. Clicking this link will allow the Head of Department to login (or sign up) to confirm their support. If they have not received a link, it may have gone to their junk folder. Please contact funding@rsc.org if there are any problems.

8.4 **Confirmation of support needs to be completed by the Grant deadline.** You will not be able to submit your application form until the status for the task shows 'complete'. The RSC will recommend to the nominated person making the declaration that this needs to be done in advance of the Grant deadline. The Applicant will not be able to submit their application form until the status for the declaration shows as 'complete'.

8.5 If the Lead Applicant needs to make any final edits after submitting their application before the application deadline, they should contact funding@rsc.org for guidance.

9. Assessment Criteria

9.1 The assessment criteria are:

a) **Quality of science**

Reviewers will assess novelty and scientific impact of the proposed project.

b) **Feasibility of proposal**

The proposal must be clearly written and costed and must be feasible to complete in a 12-month timeframe.

c) **Situation of the applicant**

We will prioritise Applicants with limited access to research funding or a short-term gap in funding which is impacting a specific project.

d) **Impact of the funding**

Reviewers will assess how completion of your project will benefit the Applicant's career. Examples include promotion/new position prospects or chances for further funding.

10. Review process

10.1 All applications will be checked by RSC staff. Applications will not be considered for

funding if:

a) The Named Applicant(s) does not meet our eligibility criteria (please see section 3);

b) The application was submitted using a SurveyMonkey Apply account that does not belong to the Lead Applicant (see section 5);

c) the application is incomplete (see section 5);

d) the application does not adhere to the length limits (see section 5);

e) the funding request exceeds £5000 limit (see section 1);

f) the application includes ineligible costs (see section 6);

10.2 All remaining applications will undergo peer review by members of our Researcher Grants Peer Review Group and final funding decisions will then be overseen by:

Professor Andy Cammidge, University of East Anglia

Dr Sarah Horswell, University of Birmingham

Professor Gavin Miller, Keele University

Dr Veronica Sofianos, University College Dublin

Please note that due to the volume of applications received, we are unable to give personalised feedback to applicants.

11. Successful applications

11.1 Lead Applicants will be notified by email of any funding decision.

11.2 The funding offer is conditional on RSC receiving in writing from the Recipient the details of the bank account the Grant is to be paid into and agreement to all of the conditions set out in the Standard Conditions of Grant within fifty (50) working days of the date of the RSC's letter confirming the Grant is being awarded ("**Award Letter**").

11.3 The Grant will be paid in a single payment to the Lead Applicant's organisation. No funds will be paid directly to individual Applicants.

11.4 The Recipient shall submit to the RSC a report ("**Final Report**") on competition of the project.

12. Contact information

If you have any questions about the Research Fund please contact funding@rsc.org. Before contacting us please check the Frequently Asked Questions document for the grant in case this answers your question.