

RESEARCH INITIATION AWARDS

Supporting Information

Who is eligible?

Research Initiation Awards are only open to people or organisations from outside the university. It is aimed at supporting individual applicants, or community organisations, to build the relationships or help create the conditions that underpin engaged research. A pre-existing connection to the Centre is not required for you to apply for a Research Initiation Award, but if you have one, do let us know.

What is the aim of the award?

Research Initiation Awards are small awards made on a monthly basis for small, community-led research projects. These awards are not for research activities as such but rather are given to support activities that generate the conditions for future research. The award could be used to develop a project idea, formulate a research question or identify issues for further work or subsequent research.

All kinds of creative and imaginative proposals for using the award are welcome. It could be, for example, hosting a workshop to bring together a group to start the development of research ideas, initiating a small artwork or other creative intervention that opens up engagement around cultures and environments of health, reviewing existing literature on particular topics or approaches to researching an issue, working with an academic or other researcher to develop a research idea, generating a small social media campaign to draw people to an issue or topic... we are open to suggestions.

How much can I apply for?

We will make awards in the region of £300 - £500.

How many awards can I receive?

This award is a one-off; you can only receive one award. But you can apply as many times as you have the energy for!

How do I apply?

Apply online [here](#). You can complete the form at any time.

Who makes the decision?

After the last day of the month, the applications will be forwarded to the panel, comprised of the Deputy Director for Engaged Research, one of the Centre's Research Fellows and the Assistant Centre Manager. A decision will typically be made within two weeks of this deadline.

How does the funding come to me?

Please contact us via wcceh-engage@exeter.ac.uk to discuss this.

What can the funding be used for?

The Centre's funding comes from the Wellcome Trust, which is a charitable trust, and is run through the College of Humanities finance systems. This means there are some restrictions on what the money can be used for and how it can be paid.

The funding can be used:

- for people's travel – standard-class train or bus tickets, taxi fares or mileage (but not as cash to buy petrol)
- for room hire
- for refreshments

- for some personal expenses, such as overnight accommodation (these have to be in line with the University of Exeter’s Expenses Policy¹)
- to offer a token of thanks to workshop/focus group/etc. participants for giving their time to take part (this can be as vouchers, or payments into a bank account but cannot be given as cash)
- to pay for a professional research assistant’s time (as long as this doesn’t take them over full-time employment)
- to buy materials or consumables
- for access to research papers
- to pay for special printing, such as a large poster or flyer (but not for ordinary office-type printing or to buy stationery supplies)

For things such as consumables and special printing, it would generally be quicker and easier to use the University’s preferred suppliers, but if you have a reason for using something else, please confirm this with wcceh-engage@exeter.ac.uk before you spend any of your own money.

Please note tax legislation called IR35 means that we are legally obliged to check employment status for all payments to individuals (such as staffing costs, and collaborators). The Operations Team will be able to help with this process and further information. This does not apply for personal expenses or research participants.

Under UK tax laws when the University pays for a service(s), we are legally obliged to check whether those payments can be made gross by paying an invoice, or whether the nature of the work means it is deemed to be employment for tax purposes. If it is the latter then income tax and National Insurance contributions (NIC) would need to be paid. Hence, the route through which someone is paid could also impact the payment amount.

The above are examples - if you are not sure whether what you want to include in your budget is allowable, we strongly urge you to check beforehand. Email us via wcceh-engage@exeter.ac.uk. Please include ‘Research Initiation Award query’ in the subject line and allow plenty of time for us to respond.

Recompense for participants

The University of Exeter has issued guidance on research participation payments. This is based on HMRC guidelines, and the regulations surrounding the administration of finances for a publicly-funded institution:

Payments should cover no more than out of pocket expenses and compensation for the time spent so that the sums received do no more than reimburse the individuals’ reasonable costs of participating in the trial or research, including the costs of travel and subsistence.²

In essence, the guideline amounts are:

Up to one hour:	£25
More than one hour:	£50
More than half a day:	£100

HMRC has agreed that recompense at this level will not be viewed as income and therefore will not affect income tax calculations for people employed outside the University or the income of people who are supported by benefits.

¹ <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/finance/policies/expenses/>

² <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/payandconditions/participationpaymentstoresearchvolunteers/>

Expenses

Reasonable expenses incurred in line with the University of Exeter's Expenses Policy³ can be claimed by research participants. Subsistence expense claims will be allowed, in line with the University policy.

Exceptions to support Equality and Diversity

The University is committed to opening research to participants from diverse backgrounds. This may require us to make exceptions to the standard rules. If this is the case, please discuss with the Centre Operations Team in advance of making arrangements with or on behalf of any participants.

Research ethics

It is important for the Centre's reputation that research conducted with the Centre's support, or in its name, should meet the highest standards of ethical research. If your proposed activity involves the participation of, or gathering of information and data from, human subjects, it is very likely that you will need to obtain ethical clearance before you begin. The Centre will offer guidance and support for obtaining any necessary ethics approvals.

What do you need back from me?

We'd like to know what you did and what happened as a result. So, we ask that within three months of the activity being completed, you send us some feedback. Exactly what this will look like will depend on the activity, but it could be a blog post, photo-journal, short film, or whatever works for you. We aim to post these short reports on the Centre website, as a record of activity and – hopefully – a source of inspiration to others.

³ <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/finance/policies/expenses/>