

**ESRC Impact Acceleration Account (IAA)
Futures Fund**
Open Call for Applications
From 8 January 2024

Background

The ESRC has awarded Newcastle University a £1.25m Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) grant for 2023-2028. This funding is intended to maximise the social and economic impact of social science research.

The overarching aim of our ESRC IAA is to mobilise our social science researchers, working in equal collaboration with our partners in a broad range of sectors, to determine and drive future solutions to economic and societal challenges on the local, national, and global scale.

Futures Fund Call Details

This fund will support a small number of highly ambitious projects that focus on responding to urgent real-world problems.

Applications should be co-produced, with research teams encouraged to propose a cutting edge and innovative programme of work with the potential to create a ‘first step’ towards a bold solution to a specific societal and/or economic challenge. Proposed projects should also have the potential to catalyse new work and partnerships.

The fund is not aimed at early stage or pilot activity. Instead, it is focused on bringing additional momentum to existing knowledge exchange activities and partnerships, driving solutions ‘from the ground up’. Applications should outline what impacts have been achieved to date, and how the additional funding will increase the range and depth of the activities. Reaching larger numbers of research users, particularly those from traditionally excluded groups is a core ambition.

It is expected that applications will be for up to £15k and projects will last for 12-24 months (projects longer than 12 months will be asked to submit interim reports on outputs and outcomes). In exceptional cases, we may consider applications of more than £15k and/or projects for more than 24 months, but these will be expected to be ambitious.

How to Apply

This is a rolling call with no set deadline. Potential applicants can express their interest in the Futures Fund by completing the online [Expression of Interest Form](#). A member of the HaSS Research and Innovation Team will then get in touch to discuss next steps.

Applicants are required to develop their project ideas and application in conjunction with the appropriate member of the HaSS Research and Innovation Team. There will be a high level of competition for these awards, and we will not accept applications where discussions have not taken place.

Eligibility Criteria

Applications are invited from any member of staff active in social science research (whether or not they are ESRC grant holders) who, at the point of application, holds a current contract of employment with Newcastle University. Applications are welcomed from staff across all three Faculties. Applications involving interdisciplinary teams are encouraged, where the underpinning research overall is at least 50% social science.

Applications must include co-produced programmes of work that offer a ‘first step’ towards a bold solution to urgent, real-world problems. We’re looking for innovative and ambitious projects from research teams that can show a track record of effective partnership working with partner organisations and/or communities, demonstrating how the proposed activity will drive solutions ‘from the ground up’.

Other calls within the ESRC IAA scheme will be able to support applications for high-risk, high-reward pilot activities, including testing concepts and new collaborations, that may be needed in order to develop a programme of work for this fund.

Enquiries

Please email esrciaa@ncl.ac.uk with any questions.