

# APEX Public Engagement Grant

## Scheme notes

Deadline: 31 July 2022

This document contains important information about the APEX Public Engagement Grant. Please read it carefully before submitting your application.

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If you have any queries about the scheme, please contact [public.engagement@royalsociety.org](mailto:public.engagement@royalsociety.org).

If you decide to make an application, we strongly encourage you to discuss your idea with the Royal Society Public Engagement Team before submitting it, and to use your institution's public engagement support when drafting your application.

## 1. Background

The Leverhulme Trust and Academies are keen to encourage and facilitate public engagement activities within the APEX (Academies Partnership in Supporting Excellence in Cross-disciplinary research award) programme. We are therefore pleased to offer an opportunity to apply for additional support via the Public Engagement Grant, to those recently recommended for an APEX award and who are keen to engage the public on their proposed research. Successful recipients will also benefit from expert review and advice on their proposed public engagement plans.

## 2. Overview

In partnership with the British Academy, the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Royal Society ('the Academies') and supported generously by the Leverhulme Trust, the APEX awards offer established independent researchers, with a strong track record in their respective area, an exciting opportunity to pursue genuine interdisciplinary and curiosity-driven research to benefit wider society. Award holders work in collaboration with relevant researchers from other disciplines.

## 3. What is this funding scheme?

The APEX Public Engagement Grant is an additional fund that successful APEX award holders can apply for, in addition to their APEX grant. The fund aims to support successful APEX award holders in undertaking public engagement projects based on their research, and to increase the knowledge, skills and confidence of researchers undertaking public engagement projects.

Funding is available for any public engagement activity designed for a non-scientific, public audience that meets the application criteria.

Projects should have clear aims, target specific audiences and provide opportunity for open dialogue and two-way communication between scientific researchers and the project's target audience.

All funded projects should:

- Be based on research funded by the Royal Society's APEX award
- Involve scientists interacting with a public group outside their institution
- Target specific audiences based on the aims and rationale of the project
- Encourage open discussion between scientific researchers and your project's target audience
- Aim to produce benefits for the public, the researcher and any partners or collaborators

We are particularly interested in projects that:

- Encourage collaboration between science and the arts
- Reach people that are currently underrepresented in the Society's public engagement work, including:
  - Those without a science degree
  - Those from geographically remote locations
  - Those from low income backgrounds

The minimum award is £500 and the maximum award £10,000, split across two years.

APEX Public Engagement Grant projects must begin before 1 March 2023 and must either co-terminate or finish before the end of your APEX award.

We will endeavour to inform applicants of the public engagement funding decision by September 2022.

#### **4. Who can apply to this fund?**

The applicant must be a successful awardee of the 2021 or 2022 APEX awards.

Applicants may only submit one application for the APEX Public Engagement Grant. If applicants have received an APEX Public Engagement Grant in the first year of their APEX project, they cannot apply for another in the second year.

If applicants applied for an APEX Public Engagement Grant in the first year of their APEX project and were unsuccessful, they can apply again in their second year with a different or substantially revised project.

#### **5. How applications are judged**

The primary considerations in the assessment process will be:

- **Relevance and suitability (40%)**  
The extent to which the project meets the scheme's criteria.
- **Impact and significance (40%)**  
The potential effect of the project on the researcher, audience and any partners involved.
- **Planning and evaluation (20%)**  
The coherence and feasibility of the proposed timeline, budget and evaluation plan.

The assessment panel consists of representatives from the Royal Society, the Royal Academy of Engineering and the British Academy. Funding decisions are approved by the chair of the Royal Society's Public Engagement Committee.

## 6. Completing your application

All applications must be submitted via the Flexi-Grant system, and section 8 covers guidance on the questions that will be asked and guidance on how to approach them.

If you have queries or would like any advice on your application, please contact the public engagement team at [public.engagement@royalsociety.org](mailto:public.engagement@royalsociety.org).

### Use of Application Data

Please note that information regarding your application for an APEX Public Engagement Grant may be shared with the Leverhulme Trust for funding, data monitoring and scheme evaluation purposes. You may also be contacted by selected third parties such as independent evaluators, consultancy groups, and career development organisations. If successful, the Royal Society will contact you regarding the administration of your award throughout the course of your funding and after its completion. You may also be contacted by the Royal Society for reporting and evaluation purposes throughout the course of your funding and after its completion.

### Using Flexi-Grant®

Applications can only be submitted online using the Royal Society's Grants and Awards management system (Flexi-Grant®) via [grants.royalsociety.org](https://grants.royalsociety.org). Support, FAQs and troubleshooting can be found via [royalsocietyapplicantsupport.fluenttechnology.com/support/home](https://royalsocietyapplicantsupport.fluenttechnology.com/support/home). If you have not previously used Flexi-Grant®, please follow the registration process from the Flexi-Grant®, homepage. **Paper-based applications will not be accepted.**

Before completing the online form, all applicants should check that they comply with the eligibility requirements and ensure all necessary information is presented in the application. These requirements are strictly adhered to and applications without all the necessary information will be rejected.

## 7. Information on next steps

Applicants to the APEX scheme will be notified of the outcome of their application in May 2022, at which point they will be invited to apply to the Public Engagement Fund. We will endeavour to inform applicants of the decision for the public engagement funding by early September 2023.

If you are successful, you and your organisation will need to accept the offer via the Flexi-Grant system. Please note, you will have one week to complete this stage.

Reporting for the Public Engagement funding will be part of the reporting of your main APEX award.

If you have queries in the meantime, please contact Judit Agui at [public.engagement@royalsociety.org](mailto:public.engagement@royalsociety.org) or on 0207 451 2513.

## 8. Application guidance notes

Please read these guidance notes carefully as you complete the form.

Summary	
Summary table	<p>The summary page of the application form provides an overview for each section of your application form, including the approximate length of time it will take to complete each section.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> you will only be able to submit your application once all sections of the form have been completed.</p>

Section 1: Contact Details	
Title, Names, address, organisation and country	<p>Review and complete your <b>personal details</b> accurately. Errors in this section can cause difficulties in processing your application.</p> <p><b>Organisation:</b> this table will automatically display details of the intended Host Organisation '<b>marked by a tick</b>' which you selected previously, and your current organisation if different from the organisation where the award will be held and administered.</p>
Email address	<p>This field defaults to the account in which the application has commenced. It is where all correspondence pertaining to the application throughout the application process, and in the event of the application being successful, will be sent.</p>

Section 2: Your APEX award	
What is the title of your main APEX award project?	<p>Copy the title across from your original APEX project application.</p>
Provide the short lay summary of your main APEX award project.	<p>Copy the lay summary from your original APEX award project application here.</p>

<b>Section 3: Public engagement proposal</b>	
What is the proposed title of your APEX public engagement project?	<p>The title need not be the same as your APEX project as long as the public engagement project relates to it in some way.</p> <p>This title should be more geared towards a public audience and should be engaging, with language suitable for a lay audience.</p>
Provide a brief description of your project and its relationship with your research	<p>Please provide an overview of your public engagement proposal and explain how it will relate to your main APEX award.</p> <p>This description may be used or adapted for use on our website, so please make sure it can be understood by non-scientists.</p>
Which of the academies' remit does your project fall within?	Copy the academies whose remit your APEX award project falls within from your APEX award project application here.
What are the aims of your project?	<p>Here we want to know why you are doing the project. What will be different when you've finished? What are the drivers or needs for the project, from your own perspective and that of the public?</p> <p>Try to be as specific as possible and distinguish between your aims (what you hope to change as a result) and objectives (the things you will do to realise those changes) which are covered by a separate question.</p> <p>You could answer this question as a series of bullet points.</p>
What are the objectives of your project?	<p>This section should concentrate on what you plan to actually do and deliver, as opposed to what you want to achieve, as this has been covered in the above question. You should define key milestones in the project</p> <p>You could answer this question as a series of bullet points too.</p>
Who are the public group you are seeking to reach or involve?	<p>Please provide as much detail for this question as you can. High quality applications will have clearly articulated audiences that are relevant to the project aims.</p> <p>Consider how your audience might be defined. For example, by an age group, profession or shared interest.</p> <p>Staff, students and alumni groups from your institution do not count as public for this scheme.</p> <p>Please include details of how your project will encourage open discussion.</p>
Why do you feel these are appropriate people to engage with your research?	Here we want to know why you have chosen the group or groups you want to engage with and why you think they would particularly benefit from engaging with your research.
How do you plan to reach this public group?	<p>Consider how you will make the groups you intend to reach aware of your project and briefly outline your strategy for getting them involved.</p> <p>If you have worked with similar groups before, or have relevant contacts, please mention them here.</p>

<p>How do you intend to evaluate the success of your engagement project?</p>	<p>Evaluation needs to be integral to the project right from the start in order to capture learning from every stage so that this can be used to inform the project's later stages as well as future projects.</p> <p>How will you assess whether you have achieved the aims of your project and reached your intended audience?</p> <p>Think about the aims and objectives you have set and how you will effectively measure them. How will you collect evidence from the public and your team?</p> <p>Guidance on evaluating your public engagement activity should be sought from your university's public engagement team. Guidance is also available here: <a href="https://publicengagement.ac.uk/plan-it/evaluating-public-engagement">publicengagement.ac.uk/plan-it/evaluating-public-engagement</a>.</p> <p>You will be asked to complete a short report on the outcomes of this project as part of your overall APEX award reporting.</p> <p>We look for evaluations that will honestly identify and reflect parts of the project that have not succeeded as well as those that have. We are looking for evidence of reflection and learning, not PR to justify the receipt of grant funding.</p>
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<b>Section 4: Personnel</b>	
<p>Please provide details of the project team and their public engagement experience</p>	<p>In this section, please tell us who will help deliver the project, what experience they bring and how they will be involved. This will help the panel decide if you are the right team to deliver the project. Please don't list publications or research achievements unless they are relevant to your public engagement project.</p> <p>The scheme is designed to support you to deliver projects, so you can budget to improve the skills of you and your team, if required.</p>

<b>Section 5: Planning</b>	
<p>Project start and end dates</p>	<p>Your public engagement project must begin before 1 March 2023 and must either co-terminate or finish before the end of your APEX award.</p>
<p>Provide a timeline for your project</p>	<p>Please provide a brief timeline for your project. List all project activity, including planning and evaluation.</p>

<b>Section 6: Project costs</b>	
What is the total amount you are requesting?	The minimum amount you can request for this scheme is £500 and the maximum amount is £10,000 to be spent over the course of your APEX award.
Define the proposed budget for your project in the table below	<p>Please itemise individual costs as accurately as you can. Where feasible, any items that cost more than £200 should be accompanied by evidence of market research (such as a link to a website selling the item) or a quote.</p> <p>Estimates are acceptable for smaller items but, if successful, you will be expected to return any significant amounts remaining to the Royal Society at the end of the project.</p> <p>You may budget for costs associated with acquiring additional expertise or support to deliver your project, including consultants, artists, designers and those helping to deliver public-facing activities. You should follow your institution's guidelines when costing for these aspects. You cannot claim for the time of university employees, including post-docs, research assistants and faculty members.</p>
Supporting evidence	You will be able to upload any supporting evidence on the Flexi-Grant system.

## 9. Diversity

The Royal Society recognises that diversity is essential for delivering excellence in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The Society wants to encourage applications from the widest range of backgrounds, perspectives and experiences to maximise innovation and creativity in science for the benefit of humanity. We regularly review and revise processes to help ensure that all talented applicants have an equitable chance to succeed as per the assessment criteria. This includes ensuring all panel members are briefed on [unconscious bias in decision making](#) as part of the assessment process.

## 10. Support for applicants with disabilities

The Royal Society welcomes applications from scientists with disabilities and provides adjustments to ensure that they can participate fully in the selection process. If you need an adjustment when accessing the application form, attending interviews, or for any other part of the application process, please contact the Grants team on [apex@royalsociety.org](mailto:apex@royalsociety.org) or +44 20 7451 2666. Adjustments can include, but are not limited to:

- extension of the deadline
- additional support to complete the application form