

APEX Awards Frequently Asked Questions

For the purposes of this scheme interdisciplinary research is defined as:

"Interdisciplinary research (IDR) is a mode of research by teams or individuals that integrates information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, and/or theories from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialized knowledge to advance fundamental understanding or to solve problems whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice."

"Successful IDR plans and supports research practices and outputs greater than the sum of their constituent disciplinary parts"

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FAQs for APEX Awards

1.1 The Lead-applicant

1.1.1 I am an engineer who does research. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes, as long as you are based in either a UK University or not-for-profit research organisation for at least the duration of the project and you hold an established academic position, then you are eligible to apply.

If you are an engineer with specific questions regarding your eligibility or the remit of the scheme you can contact the Royal Academy of Engineering (research@raeng.org.uk) as well as the dedicated enquiries inbox apex@royalsociety.org

1.1.2 I work in the humanities and/or social sciences. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes, as long as you are based in either a UK University or not-for-profit research organisation for at least the duration of the project and you hold an established academic position, then you are eligible to apply.

If you work in the humanities and/or social sciences and have specific questions regarding your eligibility or the remit of the scheme you can contact the British Academy (grants@thebritishacademy.ac.uk) as well as the dedicated enquiries inbox apex@royalsociety.org

1.1.3 I see that the APEX Awards are for researchers who want to pursue genuine interdisciplinary and curiosity-driven research and that applicants must collaborate with relevant researchers

from other disciplines. I am a social scientist, and I want to collaborate with someone from humanities, would this be eligible?

No, the scheme aims to promote collaborations that push beyond traditional boundaries and integrate knowledge and approaches from different subject fields covered by the remit of more than one of the Academies. As social science and humanities fall within the remit of the British Academy this would not be eligible.

1.1.4 I am an established researcher, but I don't have a PhD. Am I eligible to apply for an APEX Award?

Applicants who don't have a PhD can apply if they have equivalent research experience (i.e. publication record etc.), and if they hold an established academic/research position at a UK institution. Please make sure your career history is referenced in the 'Personal Statement' part of the application form.

1.1.5 Is there a minimum number of years of research experience for the lead-applicant?

No, there is no minimum or maximum number of years' experience an applicant must have but the scheme is open to established researchers with a strong track record and proven ability to lead collaborative work.

1.1.6 I am on a part-time contract. Can I apply as a lead-applicant, or is this scheme only open to researchers on a full-time contract?

Applications are accepted from researchers currently employed on both full and part-time contracts (i.e. anything less than 1.0 FTE). As the grant covers the cost of providing a teaching replacement, you can apply to cover the time that is specified on your contract.

1.1.7 I am employed by my institution on an hourly contract. Would I be eligible to apply?

If you are employed on an hourly contract, you can still apply. You can apply for costs to provide a teaching replacement for the time you are employed to spend on teaching and administrative duties.

1.1.8 I am on a fixed-term contract. Would I be eligible to apply?

Yes. However, it is essential that the length of your contract covers the whole proposed period of the grant. The purpose of the scheme is to allow the successful applicant to obtain time freed from their normal teaching and administrative commitments. If your current contract ends during the proposed grant period, or before it starts, but there is a commitment from the University to renew the contract, then yes, you would be eligible to apply.

1.2 The Co-Applicant

1.2.1 What is the difference between a co-applicant and a collaborator?

The co-applicant is an individual who is making a significant contribution to the research project and is essential for delivery of the proposed work. They may or may not request teaching relief and/or research expenses. The proposal can include named collaborators: these are individuals whose

contribution is supplementing the delivery of the proposed research but do not play a major role in the project. Costs cannot be claimed for collaborators.

1.2.2 I would like to write a proposal with an international researcher, can they act as co-applicant?

No, both the lead applicant and co-applicant must be based at a UK University or not-for-profit research organisation.

1.2.3 I would like to write an application with a partner based in industry, can they act as a co-applicant or collaborator?

The co-applicant must be based at a UK University or not-for-profit research organisation.

1.2.4 Can I have more than one co-applicant?

There can be up to 2 co-applicants on an application, but we would expect their inclusion to be appropriately justified and for their work on the proposed research to be essential.

1.3. Resubmissions and Other applications

1.3.1 My previous application was unsuccessful, can I reapply?

Yes, you can reapply as long as you are still eligible under the new round guidelines and have addressed the feedback from the independent referees. Your new application will be treated separately from the previous one.

1.3.2 I see from the scheme guidance notes that applicants may only submit one application per round even though this award is to enable collaborative research. Could I apply in this round and my colleague with whom I am currently engaged with on an on-going project also apply in this round – and can we name each other as a co-applicant?

No, you can only apply as lead applicant or co-applicant within the same round.

1.3.3 I am currently a PI on another grant that won't finish for at least another year. Is it possible to apply to this scheme if one already holds research funding for another project?

Yes, you may apply to the scheme if you currently hold research funding for another project. Please bear in mind the panel will be assessing the feasibility of the proposed project and therefore will consider the amount of time you can devote to the project. Please explain and justify the amount of time you will dedicate to the award as part of the application. Applicants are expected to devote at least 100% of the time which they have requested to be bought out, to the project.

1.4. The Host Institution

1.4.1 I am not affiliated to an institution. Would I be eligible to apply?

No, all applicants must have a UK host organisation.

1.4.2 I am about to move to another institution. If I am successful in my application to this scheme, are these grants transferrable?

Yes. The grant can be transferred to another institution. This change will require the Society's approval, please contact the team for further information.

1.5. The proposed research and costings

1.5.1 The scheme notes state that you are looking for applicants to develop a new direction for their research. I am already working on an idea and currently have an existing partnership. Am I eligible to apply or are you looking for a completely new idea?

The grant is not intended to supplement current projects or research that can be supported through other sources of funding; therefore, it is important that you describe the novelty of your proposal and clarify to what extent you have already developed the research included in your APEX application. The selection Committee will look for innovative research ideas and development of new research directions resulting from the combination of different disciplines.

1.5.2 I would like to apply for costs to support public engagement activities. Should I cost these into my proposal?

Yes, in your proposal you can apply for public engagement costs, up to the value of £10,000, to support public engagement activities linked to their APEX awards. If public engagement costs are requested, then these will need to be fully justified within the application form. This justification will be assessed independently by Public Engagement experts.

1.5.3 Can costs be requested to cover the teaching replacement for the co-applicant as well as the lead-applicant?

Yes, the lead applicant **must** provide costs for their teaching replacement. Costs can also be requested to provide teaching relief for the co-applicant. It is between the lead applicant's and co-applicant's respective universities to decide how the award will be divided up between them (to cover their respective teaching replacements). This should be clearly stated in the need for teaching relief field within the proposal tab of the application.

Additionally, a supporting statement from the head of department of any co-applicant who is requesting teaching relief will need to be uploaded in the event that this is requested. If successful, it is recommended that the organisations involved have a collaboration agreement in place.

1.5.4 My institution feels that it would be more appropriate to appoint more than one part-time lecturer to cover my position if my application was successful. Are there any restrictions on this?

Funds are normally used to appoint one lecturer who can provide teaching relief to the main applicant, thus giving an opportunity to a younger researcher and avoiding the need to ask the award-holder to fill in any gaps in the teaching arrangements. However, if your institution felt that was the more feasible option then that would be fine.

1.5.5 I do not have any teaching and administrative duties that I can be bought out of, can I still apply for an APEX Award to buy in my own time to work on the project or pay for a post doc?

No, if you do not have teaching and administrative duties then you are not eligible to apply for this scheme.

1.5.6 Can I include publication costs?

No. Currently the position is that publication costs are not eligible costs.

1.5.7 Do these grants require the outputs of the research funded to be made available in any open access format?

The data outputs should be made publicly available in a managed and responsible manner. The Society does not dictate a set format for data management and sharing plans. Where they are required, applicants should structure their plan in a manner most appropriate to the proposed research. Please make sure you review the guidance on 'data management and data sharing' and complete this section of the application accordingly.

1.5.8 My research includes interviewing or observing people rather than experimenting on people, do I need to select the question regarding the use of human tissue and participants?

Yes, any applicant proposing to work with human participants is expected to clarify the requirement for the ethical approval. If your research does not require acquiring ethical approval you will still need to explain why it is not needed. Please make sure you provide detail on how your experiment will be conducted.

1.5.9 I have secured a 3-year PhD studentship from another funding body. Can I request funds to top up this existing studentship and extend the duration to 4 years?

No, Apex funds cannot be used to supplement a project funded through another grant.