

APEX Awards Scheme Notes 2016/17

1. 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 (Academies Partnership in Supporting Excellence in Cross-disciplinary research award) offers 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. Successful applicants will be expected to work in collaboration with relevant researchers from other disciplines.

Objectives of the APEX Award are to:

- support outstanding interdisciplinary research which is unlikely to be supported through conventional funding programmes
- promote collaboration across disciplines, with a particular emphasis on the boundary between science and engineering and the social sciences and humanities
- support researchers with an outstanding track record, in developing their research in a new direction through collaboration with partners from other disciplines
- enable outstanding researchers to focus on advancing their innovative research through seed funding

Applications should be within the remit of more than one of the Academies. Awards, of up to £100,000 can be held for up to 24 months.

2. Eligibility

Applicants can be of any nationality but must be exceptional researchers with excellent track records as established independent researchers (this can include engineering researchers, humanities and social sciences scholars and scientists). Applicants must be based in either a UK University or not-for-profit research organisation for at least the duration of the project.

Applicants will be expected to collaborate with a research partner from a different discipline from their own or a different university in the UK.

All applications must be supported by the applicant's Head of Department, who will be asked to provide assurances that the researcher will be permitted to use the institution's facilities during the period and can be released/partially released from teaching duties (if required).

Applicants may only submit one application per round.

Please see [FAQ](#) for further guidance.

3. Duration of award and level of support

Duration: Grants can be held for up to 24 months.

Support: Funding will be available for up to £100,000 to fund staff costs of which no more than 25% of the total requested amount may be used for associated research costs. These can include consumables, equipment and collaborative travel.

Staff costs covered include the cost of providing a teaching replacement for the applicant (up to the equivalent of the minimum point on the lectureship scale as paid by the host university - basic salary only, including on costs - FEC will not be paid). This is to enable the applicant to focus on their research project by relieving them of all, or a proportion (particularly for applications of £50,000), of their teaching and administrative duties and focus on their research project.

Requests for any other salary costs e.g. for research assistants, post-docs or studentships etc. *cannot* be included in the application. Note that awards under this scheme will not pay indirect and estate costs.

4. Timings and Assessment

Closing date: 13 January 2017

No late applications will be accepted.

Applications will be peer-reviewed and assessed by a cross-disciplinary panel with broad ranging expertise drawn from the fellowship of all three academies. Applicants will be notified of the outcome at the start of July 2017.

All projects must be commenced between 01 September and 01 November 2017.

The size and number of awards will vary and the panel will select applications on the basis of research excellence, extent of the collaborative interdisciplinary research and the novelty of the proposed research.

The primary considerations in the **assessment process** will be:

- The applicant's strong scientific and/or engineering / or social sciences /or humanities track record and proven track record in collaborative research
- The strength of the interdisciplinary research collaboration and team

- The quality, novelty and potential of the proposed interdisciplinary research project
- The potential of the proposed project to enable the applicant to develop a new direction for their research
- The feasibility of the proposal and whether the applicant recognises the inherent risk of failure associated with this type of research and their strategy for minimising these risks

Please be assured that the Academies specifically request all involved in reviewing applications to consider them in confidence.

5. Information for completing application

Applications should be within the remit of more than one of the Academies and the Royal Society will be administering the application process and the awards on behalf of the 3 Academies. Therefore applications can only be submitted online using the Royal Society's electronic Grant Application and Processing (e-GAP2) system (<https://e-gap.royalsociety.org/>). Applicants should be aware that this application form will be considered by the cross-Academy selection panel and that independent reviews will not be sought. The application will be treated as confidential at all times.

When completing your application on e-GAP2, it is recommended that you take particular note of the following points:

- **Submission:** You will not be able to submit your application until you have completed each section in full. You should submit your application for approval by a designated approver at your host organisation **at least 5 working days** before the closing date to allow for your host organisation's administrative procedures. Please note: your Head of Department must also submit their statement of support **BEFORE** the closing date.
- **Lay summary: You will be asked to provide a lay summary of your proposal.** Please bear in mind when writing your lay summary that your application will be reviewed by a cross-academy panel with a broad range of expertise and therefore generalist. The lay summary is therefore a very important part of your proposal.
- **Personal details:** Once logged on to e-GAP2 and before starting your application, click My Details at the top of the page. Please ensure that this information is up to date.
- **Automatic log-out:** You are advised to save your work regularly to prevent accidental loss of text. In particular you should be aware that if the system does not detect any activity for 3 hours it will log out and everything that has not been saved will be lost. Please note that typing and moving between *tabs* within an application is not considered an activity, you need to have pressed the save button or have moved from one *page* to another.

- **Multiple sessions:** You should not have multiple browser windows/tabs of your application open at the same time. Only one user should edit an application at a time, otherwise changes might be lost.
- **Character limits:** When completing boxes that have a restricted length (note that it refers to characters and not words and that the count includes spaces) you should note that if you exceed the specified amount you will not be able to save when you press the save button. You should type the text for the longer-length boxes in a word processor. You will then be able to check the character limit and paste it into e-GAP2. You will then still have a copy of the text to return to in the word processor. The character limit applies to text boxes, the page limit to PDFs.
- **Plain text:** If entering plain text, please avoid using symbols as some may not be accepted by e-GAP2. You should generate and view a PDF of your application (by choosing 'print' on the form) to check that the application appears as you want it to.
- **Uploading PDF documents:** When uploading PDF documents, please add your name and a heading at the top of every page to show what the document is, e.g. personal statement, list of publications, etc. Please ensure that there are no security settings activated on uploaded PDFs and avoid uploading documents containing illustrations with fine details or colour as this can cause problems when creating a PDF of the application. Please note we will only print your applications in black and white. Each PDF cannot exceed 3 Mb in size.
- **Email addresses:** The e-GAP2 system relies heavily on automatic email contact. It is essential that you ensure you enter accurate email addresses where requested as it may cause considerable delay in the submission/processing of your application if any of these are incorrect. You cannot make changes to email addresses after your application has been submitted for approval.
- **Application sharing:** You can let other e-GAP2 users view your draft application, in advance of submission, by providing their email address and entering the permissions you want them to have. They will be able to log in using their existing password and also see and, depending on permissions, amend your application. If you choose to do this, the sharer needs to click on *My Applications* once they have logged on to see *your* application.
- **Application deletion:** You can delete your application at any time although it is often a lot easier to just re-edit your existing application. You will be able to recover a deleted application for a period of 7 days after deletion. After this it will be permanently removed from the system.
- **Application returned for editing:** The approver can return your application to you for further editing.
- **Guidance:** In the tables below you will find in the left-hand each question as set out in the application sections and in the right-hand column useful guidance on its completion.
- **Further clarification:** *If you have any questions or require* further information, please do not hesitate to seek clarification from the Royal Society UK Grants Team (apex@royalsociety.org).

PLEASE NOTE THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU CREATE A PDF OF YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION (by clicking 'Print Application'), AND CHECK IT THOROUGHLY, INCLUDING EMAIL ADDRESSES AND UPLOADED PDF FILES, BEFORE SUBMITTING IT FOR APPROVAL BY YOUR HOST ORGANISATION. IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO RECTIFY MISTAKES IN TIME FOR THE DEADLINE.

6. Completing the e-GAP2 form

Questions asked on e-GAP2 forms

Guidance on completion forms

Questions labelled with * in e-GAP2 are mandatory

SUMMARY

Summary table

When your application form is complete, all sections on this summary table will have a green tick. You will only then be able to submit your application.

APPLICANT PERSONAL DETAILS

Title, Names, Address, Email address etc.

Please take care to complete this accurately. Errors in this section can cause difficulties in the processing of your application. Some fields will be pre-filled with the details from your e-GAP2 account. If details are wrong, please make changes and also update your account information by choosing 'My Details' on the first page after login.

Nationality

Click 'Add Nationality' and select from the drop down list. Click 'OK' – this is a mandatory field

APPLICANT CAREER SUMMARY

Statement of qualifications and career

Please provide a full list of all your appointments since your PhD in reverse chronological order stating if part-time (and percentage part-time) when necessary.

To add a position please select 'Add Qualification' highlighted in blue, a window will appear to add one position at a time. Please include start and end date in the 'qualification date' field. In the 'description' field please only include the position, title and institution.

	<p>It is essential that you provide full details of any periods of part-time working, career breaks, extended sick leave or maternity/paternity/adoptive leave as your eligibility may depend on the accuracy of this information. You are not required to include prizes and achievements in this section; this can be included in the Personal Statement field.</p>
<p>Publications</p> <p>Please provide a complete publication record - in reverse chronological order. Please indicate the three most significant publications (within the last 5 years) with an asterisk*. Please give the publisher or URL, including any password, where these three publications may be obtained.</p> <p>If your field of research differs in any way from normal conventions, <i>e.g.</i> lead author first and publications in journals being the main gauge of success, please provide a brief explanation at the top of your publication list.</p>	<p>This box does not have a character limitation, you may enter plain text or upload a PDF file in portrait orientation A4. Please add 'See attachment' in the text box if necessary.</p>
<p>Personal statement</p> <p>Please provide a personal statement about your qualifications, research career to date and aspirations in the long term. Give details of all appointments in reverse chronological order. Please ensure that it includes information about your achievements in making your research more accessible to non-specialist audiences.</p>	<p>Please ensure that you provide the information in reverse chronological order as requested. It is also recommended that you take particular note of the character limitations of this box.</p> <p>PDF file Two pages portrait orientation A4 or</p> <p>Plain text Maximum 5,000 characters (including spaces).</p>
<p>Present Position</p>	<p>Please give the title of your present position including information regarding current position type and position length i.e. lecturer, reader. Maximum 300 characters (including spaces)</p>
<p>Present Employer</p>	<p>Please enter the name of your present employer, e.g. University of ABC. Maximum 200 characters (including spaces)</p>
<p>Present Department</p>	<p>Please enter your Department. Maximum 200 characters (including spaces)</p>

<p>Present Position Full Time?</p> <p>Please confirm your post is permanent and state the source of funding, e.g. <i>Permanent Senior Lecturer (HEFCE funded)</i>.</p>	<p>Is your present position a full time contract? Please select Yes or No</p>
<p>PhD Awarded date</p>	<p>Please give the date of your PhD</p>
<p>Existing Grants</p> <p>Please give brief details including title of any current and recent research grants and other income for research, indicating source and value (GBP, approximately)</p>	<p>Maximum 2,000 characters (including spaces)</p>

ORGANISATIONS

<p>Host organisation</p> <p>Please be aware that it is your responsibility to ensure that you complete your application in time for the host organisation to process it and provide their approval by the closing date. Once they have checked your application they will contact you if any changes are required. It is recommended that you allow at least five working days for this process.</p>	<p>The majority of appropriate establishments appear in the drop-down list but if your proposed organisation is not there, please contact the Royal Society.</p> <p>Please be aware that it is your responsibility to ensure that you complete your application in time for the host organisation to process it and provide their approval by the closing date. Once they have checked your application they will contact you if any changes are required. It is recommended that you allow <i>at least</i> five working days for this process.</p>
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PROPOSAL

<p>Subject Group</p>	<p>Select the group that most reflects your area of research from the drop-down menu</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>Select a subject sub-category from the drop down menu</p>
<p>Project Title</p>	<p>Maximum 100 characters (including spaces)</p>

Please give the full title of your proposed project	
Rationale & Motivation	Please state your research question and provide a brief statement explaining why the proposed interdisciplinary research question or hypothesis is significant and novel. And how your proposed research will address this and be potentially transformative. Maximum 2,000 characters.
Start Date	This must be between 01/09/2017 – 01/11/2017
End Date	Please complete the date in DD/MM/YYYY format. Note the maximum time permitted is 24 months
Research Proposal	<p>Information of your collaborator, including name position and contact details MUST be provided here.</p> <p>This information has to be in Adobe postscript document format (PDF). Please remember to put the title 'Project Description' at the top of the PDF document. Do not exceed 4 pages of A4 sized paper (portrait orientation) or equivalent, approximately 1 page for each of the points below. Please do not use a text size smaller than Arial 10 and please also ensure that the PDF document is not more than 3MB. Applicants are requested to make sure uploaded PDF documents are unlocked. Please enter "See attachment" in the field. For further information please refer to the Uploading PDF documents section.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the nature of the proposed research. This should include a summary of the aims & objectives and timescales of the research and how it meets the objectives of the scheme. 2. Indicate what results you expect from the research, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential scientific impact and outputs – significance of key advances, potential impact on other research. • Potential outputs such as – further/additional research funding from other sources, future developments beyond the lifetime of the project and provision of training and career progression of research staff. • And any potential benefits to society such as commercially exploitable results.
Need for teaching relief	If you require relief from all, or a proportion of, your teaching and administrative duties, please give details of your current duties and why relief is required. Give precise details of your current administrative and teaching duties (e.g. contact hours and preparation

Please note: This information will need to be confirmed by your Head of Department in their accompanying statement of support

hours) in an average week. Please state how much of your time you currently dedicated to research and quantify how much additional time would be available for research should you be awarded.

Maximum 2000 characters (including spaces).

Outline of Data Management and Data Sharing Plan

The Society supports research as an open enterprise, and is committed to ensuring that data outputs from research supported by the Society are made publically available in a managed and responsible manner, with as few restrictions as possible. Data outputs should be deposited in an appropriate, recognised, publically available repository, so that others can verify and build upon the data, which is of public interest. To fully realise the benefits of publically available data they should be made intelligently open by fulfilling the requirements of being discoverable, accessible, intelligible, assessable and reusable.

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. The information submitted in plans should focus specifically on how the data outputs will be managed and shared, detailing the repositories where data will be deposited. In considering their approach for data management and sharing, applicants should consider the following:

- What data outputs will be generated by the research that are of value to the public?
- Where and when will you make the data available?
- How will others be able to access the data?
- If the data is of high public interest, how will it be made accessible not only for those in the same or linked field, but also to a wider public audience?
- Specify whether any limits will be placed on the data to be shared, for example, for the purposes of safeguarding commercial interests, personal information, safety or security of the data.
- How will datasets be preserved to ensure they are of long-term benefit?

If the proposed research will generate data that is of significant value to the research community, then please provide details of your data management and sharing plan. (Maximum 1500 characters)

Use of Animals in Research

The Royal Society is committed to supporting the development of alternative methods to reduce and/or replace the use of animals in research. Applicants proposing to use animals in their research must ensure that the use of animals falls within the regulations stipulated in the Animals (Scientific Procedures Act) 1986 and subsequent amendments. Additionally, applicants should continually be aware of developments in best practice, and adopt the principles of the **3Rs** (<https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/the-3rs>) when designing and conducting experiments on animals.

As a funder of research, the Society takes its responsibilities towards the UK Animals (Scientific Procedures Act) 1986 seriously, and requires applicants to consider the questions below when preparing grant applications that include the use of animals.

Applicants who intend to involve the use of animals as part of their research proposal are required to complete a supplementary form, which will be attached to your research proposal. Both the applicant and co-applicant(s) are expected to complete a separate form, where research using animals is being conducted at both the UK and Overseas organization(s). Please contact the office for further information.

Does your proposal involve the use of animals or animal tissue?

If you intend on using animals in research, then please contact the office for further information, as you will be **required** to complete an additional form detailing your intended use of animals in your research. Failure to do so will result in a delay in processing your application.

Please note that all applications involving the use of primates, cats, dogs and equidae animals will be further reviewed by the NC3Rs.

Lay Report

Please provide a **lay summary** of your proposed research project including a description of the experimental methods and techniques you will be using, together with an indication of milestones/time-scales for the various components. Please bear in mind when writing your lay summary that your application will be reviewed by a cross-disciplinary generalist panel and therefore the lay summary is an important part of your proposal. Plain text only – please enter a

	<p>maximum of 2000 characters (including spaces in the text box).</p> <p>You should explain why you have chosen to work in this subject area, why this project is suitable for the objectives of this scheme and what it is about your research that you find particularly exciting, interesting or important. Please also explain the potential impact or wider benefits to society of your research and address any inherent risks in pursuing this project.</p> <p>Plain text only – please enter a maximum of 2000 characters (including spaces in the text box).</p>
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FINANCIAL DETAILS

Duration (Years)	Please specify the length of your project. You must select 1 or 2 years from the drop down box.
Please complete this field first	
Financial Details For each year of your project, please add a total amount for each type of proposed cost and give a description of each cost in the corresponding 'Justification' box.	Basic Salary and On costs refer to the cost to the university of relieving you of all, or a proportion of, your teaching and administration duties. This can be up to the equivalent of the minimum point on the lectureship scale as paid by the host university. FEC will not be paid.
Sum Requested	Please enter the total amount requested in this grant application. This should be the total sum of the Financial Details table(s) above. This should be up to £100,000.
Start Date	Please insert the proposed start date for your project as 01 September 2017 to 01 November 2017
Other Expenses	Please describe and then justify any amounts entered under 'Other Expenses' in the table(s) above.

NOMINATED REFEREES

<p>Two personal referees</p>	<p>Provide details of 2 referees who can provide confidential references for your application. Please check with them that they are happy to provide the references, and inform them that they will be contacted by email and asked to provide references via the e-GAP system.</p> <p>At least one referee should be someone who has worked closely with you, but the other must be external to your current research group. You should not choose both referees from your proposed host organisation, and if possible, one should be an international referee. Your named HoD cannot be listed as a referee.</p> <p>To add each referee click 'Add Referee' and enter their email address. Check if they are already registered on e-GAP by clicking 'Check Email', and if not, enter their details. You must choose to contact them to inform them you have added them as a referee or not before you can continue. Ensure you have clicked 'Save' after making your selections. You can refer them to Appendix 1: Instructions on providing a reference.</p>
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DEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT

<p>Head of Department</p> <p>Click on 'Add HoD' to add your Head of Department's details.</p> <p>Please provide accurate details of your head of department. They will be contacted automatically by email to provide a confidential statement of support for your application, commenting on the suitability and merit of the proposed research.</p> <p>If you are the Head of Department then an alternative referee is required to supply the reference, e.g. Deputy Head or Head of School</p> <p>Please check that they are able to supply their statement by the application deadline. You should send them a copy of Appendix 1</p>	<p>Click "<i>Add HoD</i>". Then "<i>Check email</i>" allows you to check if they are registered on e-GAP2. If they are not, please enter their name and title.</p> <p>You then have the option to choose "<i>Contact now</i>" or "<i>Don't contact</i>". You must select one otherwise the HoD may not be added to the application correctly.</p> <p>"<i>Contact now</i>" means that they can log on to e-GAP2 now and provide their statement, potentially without your application being complete. You may enter a personal message and you should send them a copy of Appendix 1 below separately.</p> <p>"<i>Don't contact</i>" means they will be contacted when your application has been submitted and approved, and then they can provide their reference.</p> <p>Once you have chosen one of these options, you may remove the referee or choose to "<i>Contact</i>" them, as</p>
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below. This will advise them that the main reference must be plain text only and there is a character limit of 3,000 including spaces. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the statement is submitted by the deadline.

Please check which email address the HoDs would like to use, as they may already be registered on e-GAP2 and mistakes may lead to a delay in processing your application. No provision is made for non-receipt of these automatic emails; please check the HoD has been contacted and is able to log-in to their e-GAP2 account. The Royal Society will not be held responsible for automated emails that are not received due to address errors or spam filters. It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that referees' statements are submitted in time.

described above. Please ensure that you press 'save' after selecting your HoD.

DIVERSITY MONITORING

Diversity Monitoring

The 3 Academies are committed to promoting diversity in UK research by seeking to increase participation from under-represented groups. Please help us to monitor how effectively we are doing this by providing the requested information. All questions are mandatory. The information provided will form a confidential statistical record in accordance with the Data Protection Act and will not be used for any purpose other than analysis of the Academies' activities.

This information will be kept separately from the rest of your application and will not be seen by those involved in the selection process, including referees etc.

You must either complete the form or tick the boxes stating that you 'prefer not to say'. If you do not select a box for each question, the system will regard your application as incomplete and will not allow you to submit it.

Please note, that where an application contains applicant and co-applicant(s) details, all applicants will be expected to complete the diversity monitoring form.

The lead applicant and co-applicant(s) are restricted to completing and viewing the diversity monitoring form

that is relevant to them as individuals. You are not permitted to view the information provided by the other under this section of the application.

You are strongly advised to print a PDF version of your application and check it thoroughly (including uploaded PDF files) before you finally press submit.

7. Submission of application

The closing date for the receipt of applications is **13 January 2017**. Applications must be submitted via the e-GAP2 system and approved by your host organisation before the deadline.

Once you have submitted your application for approval by your host organisation, automatic emails will be sent to your host organisation approver asking them to log on to the system. You will not be able to edit your application after it has been submitted to your host organisation for approval. The host organisation approver will either: approve and submit your application, contact you to request modifications, or decline your application and contact you.

Please be aware that it is your responsibility to ensure that you complete your application in time for your head of department to provide a supporting statement and the host organisation to process it (including requesting changes) and provide their approval by the closing date. It is recommended that you allow at least five working days for this process.

If your host organisation approver requests modifications through the e-GAP2 email facility, they can unlock your application, allowing you to edit it. If they are unsure how to do this, they should contact the UK Grants Section. Once you have completed the requested changes, please use the application summary to re-submit your application for approval by your host organisation. Please also contact your head of department and alert them to the changes.

Once your host organisation has approved your application and submitted it to the Royal Society it will not be possible to make any changes.

Please note that once the closing date has passed, host organisation approvers cannot approve applications and submit them to the Royal Society and unapproved applications are removed from consideration. No late applications will be accepted.

It is recommended that you check that your application is submitted in time. To see the details of the host organisation approver and to check the status of your application, you should log into e-GAP2 and click on the link to the Application Summary

8. Enquiries

If you have any enquiries about the submission of your application or about the e-GAP process, please contact the UK Grants Team, The Royal Society, 6-9 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5AG. Email: apex@royalsociety.org. Tel: 020 7451 2277.

Appendix 1

Please make sure that you pass a copy of these instructions to your Head of Department. They can then use these instructions to provide their statement/reference. The reference is due BEFORE the closing date

Instructions for Head of Department/Nominated Referee statement:

Please submit your statement/reference on e-GAP2 one week BEFORE the closing date. The deadline for references is **6 January 2017**.

Once you have logged on to e-GAP2, a message in red will alert you to the fact that the system will automatically log you out if there has been no activity (typing is not considered activity) in 30 minutes. Therefore, we recommend that you type out your reference or support statement in a word processor and then copy the text into e-GAP2, using the following instructions:

1. Please go to the e-GAP2 website <https://e-GAP.royalsociety.org/>
2. Enter your email address as provided in the application form.
3. Enter your password (please click the Forgotten Password? link if necessary).
4. If you have forgotten or do not know your password, you can set a new password by following the "Forgotten password" link on the e-GAP2 home page, entering your email address (as provided in the application form). Subsequently you will be sent a link to your email address which will enable you to enter a new password (containing at least one capital character and one numerical character) that you wish to use). Please note for security reasons this link is only active for 30 minutes and therefore the link should be used shortly after the clicking the "Forgotten Password" option. Please check spam filters/junk folders for the correspondence from e-GAP2.
5. Click on *Tasks*
6. Click on *Reference List*
7. Click on *Provide Reference* (if you would like to view a PDF of the application first, please click *Print Application*, or you may view the application form in its original format by clicking on *View Application* on screen at the top of the reference form).
8. Complete the support and personal details text boxes. Please note there is a character limit of 3,000 characters (including spaces).
9. Click *Save* and then *Submit* [If the *Submit* button does not appear, one of the mandatory fields (indicated with *) has not been completed. Please check all necessary fields are complete and click *Save* again – the *Submit* button should then appear.

Your reference is then automatically forwarded to the Royal Society.