Research Development Fund application guidance

Please contact the Public Engagement team ([peteam@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:peteam@leeds.ac.uk)) if you have any questions about the fund, the application process, or reporting after receiving the fund.

**Introduction**

It is a benefit to you and your research when members of the public are involved in the development of your public engagement activities. Many research funding streams now require or look favourably to applications with this included.

The University recognises that there are financial implications to this. The Research Development Fund (RDF) gives a financial grant for researchers to deliver research development activities with the public.

**Eligibility**

* The RDF is available to all researchers from all disciplines
* The lead applicant must be an employee of the University of Leeds
* You must be able to demonstrate how the activity will lead to a grant application within nine months of receiving the funding

**Question guidance**

*How will you use the RDF and how will it support your research proposal?*

You must include

* A description of the activity you will use the RDF for
* The public demographic you wish to work with and why you have selected that group
* How will you create the initial connection to this group?
* How this activity will support your research development?

The definition of ‘public’ will depend on the topic area and can include:

* Members of the public
* Anyone the research could impact
* Third sector organisations
* Informal carers
* Parents or guardians
* Patients and potential patients

Types of activities you can use the funds for:

* Costs you incur from attending events to meet stakeholders or the public
* Paying members of the public for their time and expertise
* Transport and catering
* Event logistics and production costs

Funding cannot be used to:

* Pay for the time spent by University staff; third sector and voluntary organisation’s employees; or health professionals,
* Fund any data collection activities that will feed into your main research findings
* Undertake preliminary pilot work
* Pay for venue hire within the University or your organisation, unless this is fully justified in your application
* Pay for materials which you can reasonably access in your department

*How will you continue to engage with your demographic after your RDF activity?*

Public engagement work relies on building trust with research. It can be very detrimental to future research work- either delivered by yourself or other researchers- if you break this trust.

We always recommend you seeing if there is a group already established within the University that you could work with. Or if the people you are looking to work with have taken part in research before.

You must be able to show a commitment to legacy in your activities at all stages of your research. In this answer please consider

* What your demographic might expect from you, have you been explicit on your timeline with them?
* How will you communicate with the group after your RDF activity?
* How will you share any updates on progress with your application?
* If you are establishing an ongoing group, how you will continue to engage with this group after the RDF?
* How will you continue your engagement if your funding is unsuccessful?

We do not fund applications that only satisfy the researchers demands on the group they are working with. You must acknowledge that this group have invested time, expertise and energy into sharing their experiences with you. We encourage you to have a conversation with a group about what they want beyond your activity.

*How will you evaluate your RDF activity?*

We want to hear how you will evaluate the format of your activity. It may be that your demographic would prefer engagement in a way you hadn’t considered before.

You also should take into consideration the learning you will gain from the activity. What skills it will help you develop or what gaps there are in your knowledge.

Ways in which you may want to evaluate your activity:

* Invite an independent observer to assess the quality of your activity.
* Ask for feedback on the activity from your group.
* Set goals for the session and reflect on them afterwards.
* Shadow similar activities to develop your own practice.

*Please provide a breakdown of your RDF spend using the guidelines in the application guidance document.*

In your application provide a breakdown, together with costings, of how the funding will be spent. There is a suggested participant payment table at the end of this document.

Your faculty will have guidance on how to make these payments and what you can make payments for. It is important to speak to them before you make your application to ensure your amount is correct. It would also be beneficial to have your payment process in place before the activity happens.

Your payments may have implications for participants in receipt of benefits. Because of the intricacies of the system, you will never have the right information to establish if it will have an impact. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the participant to make this decision, you will need to communicate that to the participant.

Considerations when deciding on payments:

* How long do you expect the meeting to be?
* What expertise are you looking for from the participants?
* Does your payment include paying for their expertise?
* Does anyone have complex needs in order to access the meeting?
* Can you design the event to absorb any identifiable costs? For example child-friendly spaces so childcare costs don’t occur.
* How many pages do they have to read?
* How are they delivering their feedback to you? For example in person or via email.
* How much time do you expect them to take on a task?
* How valuable is their expert knowledge?
* How much of this feedback will contribute to your final research proposal?

**Application conditions**

* Funds will only be transferred in arrears after the activity has taken place. We endeavour to make funds available for successful applicants within the four weeks of receiving their evaluation report.
* The RDF does not support retrospective activities.
* The maximum grant that is available is £600 per application. The requested funding should be fully justified and itemised, in line with the University financial procedures.
* All applications should demonstrate that the funds will be used to develop one or more research grant applications to a national or international, peer-reviewed funding competition.
* If funds have not been claimed by you within the nine months of the award being made, you will lose the award. Extensions can be negotiated if you contact us in good time. If funds are still not claimed after any granted extension, the award will expire.
* Good practice guidelines on public involvement in research should be followed and activities should be appropriate for the specific demographic.
* Only one award will be made for any single research proposal in development.
* All applications should be submitted via email to [peteam@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:peteam@leeds.ac.uk) using use ‘RDF Application – YOUR NAME’ in the email subject.
* Unsuccessful applicants are welcome to resubmit.

**Reporting and monitoring**

If successful, the award will be paid in arrears into a University account only on receipt of:

* A completed form that covers how the award was used, including an itemised list of your spend
* Information about submission of the grant, including grant amount

**Acknowledgements**

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| Category | Examples | Fee bracket |
| Attendance to a public meeting- either in person or online.  *Attendees should not be individually recruited to attend this meeting. Attendance to this meeting should be advertised publicly, it is on the public to opt in to attending.* | * An open meeting where people are invited to discuss part of a research proposal presented to them. * Research open day. | £30 - £50 |
| Attendance to an invite only meeting- either in person or online.  *By having a recruitment criteria for your meetings means you will be looking for specialist knowledge from the participants. It is this specialist knowledge that differs between this meeting and a public meeting.*  *This row is for participants working in a group setting offering group insights. If you are recruiting individuals to do specific tasks please see guidance in the ‘Research Development’ row.* | * Attending a meeting to review content for a grant application. * A meeting of selected people who meet a criteria, who will provide insight based on expertise or experience. | £30 - £60 |
| Reviewing documents | * Drafts of summaries. * Drafts of meeting notes. * Sections of grant applications. * Communication drafts to specific groups. | £30 - £50 |
| Research development  *This row is for individuals you are recruiting for specific tasks. If you are working with multiple participants in a group setting, gathering group insights, please see the guidance in ‘Attendance to an invite only meeting’ row.* | * Consultation on method for recruiting participants. * Helping to design the research. * Providing feedback on research proposal from a specific perspective. * Working together to set priorities and develop research questions. | £40 - £60 |