Information and Guidance on the AcSS and ESRC EDI Funding Scheme

The Academy of Social Sciences (AcSS) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) are working in partnership on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) as a priority area, working closely with our social science communities to support and champion EDI at the disciplinary level.

As part of this partnership, AcSS and ESRC have small scale grant funding available to support EDI initiatives and interventions. There is a total of £75,000 available in each funding round (2023-4 and 2024-5) and this will be divided into five small pots of £5,000 and larger pots of between £10,000-25,000. Social science societies can apply either at an individual societal level or as a partnership/consortium of learned societies, to support work to pilot or scale up EDI initiatives or interventions.

1. Eligibility criteria

All current Academy of Social Sciences member social science societies are eligible to apply either individually or as a group, as are other learned societies who work within the social science discipline but they will need to provide additional supporting evidence of the way in which the project will be carried out. Member societies do not need to be part of the AcSS ESRC EDI working group to apply.

The Academy of Social Sciences recognises that diversity is essential for delivering excellence in the social sciences. We therefore encourage applications from social science societies and would normally anticipate that those making applications are member learned societies of the Academy of Social Sciences. The application process has been designed to help ensure that all social science societies have an equitable chance of success, regardless of their size or previous work in the EDI domain.

2. Application requirements

To be considered for the grant funding, please complete the application included at point 11 and provide a written proposal of no more than two pages outlining:

- A short summary of the EDI initiative or intervention being proposed
- The planned outcome of the initiative/intervention, including how this will move forward and develop the EDI outputs of the organisation applying, and how this will be measured and in what format the outcomes will be published/reported on
- Identify the protected characteristics/intersectionality/EDI needs being addressed and evidence how this initiative or intervention will do this
- The target audience
- Any previous EDI work that links to this proposal

- How your initiative or intervention could be scaled up to be used across other social science disciplines
- The amount being applied for and an outline of how the funding will be spent
- The project timetable and completion date (we anticipate that most initiatives or interventions will last for a period of up to 12 months)
- Who will manage the project and how
- Any other relevant information including data to support your bid (please attach as an appendix if required)

Completed forms should be submitted to administrator@acss.org.uk

3. Selection process

As detailed in point 5, **funding applications submitted before 16 October 2023 will initially be checked against the selection criteria outlined in point 4** by staff at AcSS. The proposers may then be asked to supply further information or clarity around certain aspects relating to the selection criteria if these have not been sufficiently covered in the application. The purpose of doing so is to allow societies the opportunity to sure up their funding applications as much as possible before these are passed to the panel.

Applications will be considered and reviewed by the Academy's EDI peer review funding panel, which is made up of a Chair, three further panel members and an independent ESRC observer. If needed, applications will go through two phases, shortlisting and then a final decision made.

All funding panel members have been briefed on unconscious bias in decision making.

4. Selection criteria

As EDI needs vary across organisations and disciplines and given EDI has many dimensions, we do not wish to be too prescriptive with regards to the types of initiatives or interventions we fund. As such, there are no strict criteria outlining what type of projects will be funded, as we believe individual societies, or those working in a consortium together, are best place to identify what their unique EDI needs are and the specific initiatives or interventions that would best address these. Rather, what AcSS and ESRC are most concerned with are the proposed outcomes of successful bids. We are looking for proposal that are innovative and focus on how to move EDI initiatives and interventions among social science societies forward. Therefore, **what is important is that proposals clearly outline the rationale for the suggested initiatives or interventions and detail what the expected EDI benefits will be and how these may be further scaled up or built on in the future**.

Given this, all applications will be reviewed and judged against the following selection criteria:

- The proposal should be realistic and deliverable

- The proposal should clearly indicate how the grant money will be used and the costings should be realistic for the proposed initiative or intervention
- The proposal should have a clear rationale regarding the EDI benefits of the proposed initiative or intervention and should clearly outline how this will move the EDI work of the bidding organisation/s forward
- It should be clear what protected characteristics/intersectionality/EDI needs will be addressed and who the target audience and beneficiaries will be
- There must be a clear evaluation plan to monitor the success, challenges and impact of the initiative or intervention, which should include details of how the relevant findings and learnings will be shared more broadly
- Where possible, the proposal should emphasise the transferability of the initiative or intervention and how it could be adapted across other social science disciplines
- It should be clear how the initiative or intervention may be scaled up or built upon and what the longevity plan is to build on this work once the funding period ends

5. Key dates

There will be one round of funding available in 2023, with the following key dates:

- Applications will **open in mid-June**, which **means societies will have four months** to submit their funding applications, either individually or in collaboration with one another
- There will be the opportunity to attend **two online information sessions with AcSS on 10 July 2023 and 11 September 2023 (further sessions will be added if required). Half an hour slots will be available to book between 10:00am-12:00pm and 1:30pm-3:30pm on 10 July and between 10:00am-12:00pm on 11 September,** during which time societies can come and ask questions about the application process and those who are interested in collaboration can begin to develop these plans further
- The deadline for funding applications to be **sent to AcSS for an initial eligibility check against the selection criteria is 16 October 2023**, societies will then have a two-week window to make changes to and return their application before this is forwarded to the funding peer review panel. **Any grant applications received after 16 October 2023 will not be able to benefit from this eligibility check**
- **The deadline to apply for the 2023 round of funding is 30 October 2023**
- It is anticipated that it will take the panel two weeks from the grant applications closing, to making their decisions and that **feedback on the success of individual grants will occur by the 14 November 2023**
- As per point 8, **successful applicants are expected to invoice the academy by the 11 December 2023**
- Grant recipients will be expected to **report back on the initiatives and interventions within six months of the funding period ending** (we anticipate that most initiatives and interventions will last for a period of up to 12 months, as outlined

in point 2). Successful applicants may also be approached to be part of case studies examining what has previously been funded during future funding rounds.

6. Terms and Conditions

Awarded grants are subject to the following Terms and Conditions:

- Societies may bid, either individually or as a collective, for one of five small grants of £5,000, or they may submit a bid for an amount between £10,000-£25,000
- All grant applications will be judged on the selection criteria outlined in point 4
- Grants will be paid in full upon submission of an invoice to AcSS
- The data supplied to AcSS and ESRC through the grants application process will be used solely for the purposes set out in point 9
- The grant receiver/organisation must ensure that all funds received are used for the purposes described within the application – should there be any question about adapting the initial EDI plan this must be shared with the AcSS in advance for approval
- The original proposer will take overall responsibility for implementing the EDI initiatives and interventions as described in the funding application
- Grant receivers may occasionally be asked to supply documentation showing where and how the money is being spent/allocated and it is expected that this will be shared in a timely manner
- Grant receivers are expected to produce a short report within six months of the funding period ending, as per the reporting requirements outlined in point 7
- Information about the EDI initiatives and interventions funded through a grant award, including the name of the Social Science Society, amount awarded and title of project, will be available on the AcSS website and the ESRC website
- Grant receivers may be approached for a case study relating to the specific EDI initiatives and interventions that have been supported through the funds awarded and these case studies will be available on the AcSS website
- Grant receivers will be required to acknowledge AcSS and ERSC in any publication related to the EDI work carried out as a result of the funding awarded and, where appropriate, their logos should be used. For further guidance on how to reference AcSS and ESRC please email administrator@acss.org.uk

7. Reporting requirements for successful bids

For those whose bids are successful, the Academy will require a short report within six months of the funding period ending outlining how the funding was spent, the project outcomes and any potential further work. The original proposers will be responsible for submitting this and it will be shared with the members of the EDI working group.

It is expected that you will use the following headings to evaluate the outcomes of the project:

- Aim
- Rationale
- Methods
- Key findings
- Outcomes
- Overall evaluation
- Next steps

As part of the evaluation processes, it is important to examine what didn't work and the learnings from this alongside the successes. As such, we welcome transparent reporting that examines and details the challenges and obstacle faced, as well as the successes.

Completed reports should be submitted to administrator@acss.org.uk

8. Transfer of allocated funds

Grant funds will be paid by bank transfer once AcSS have received an invoice for the allocated amount. **Please submit your invoices no later than the 11 December 2023.**

9. Privacy

The data supplied to AcSS and ESRC through the application process will be used for the purposes of processing grant applications, informing applicants of the outcomes, and where money has been awarded, making the relevant payment. Information including the Social Science Society, amount awarded, and the title of the project, relating to successful funding applications will be recorded on the AcSS website, and where applicable, a case study of the EDI initiative and interventions that have been funded.

10. Further details

If you have any questions on the funding bid process, please send these to administrator@acss.org.uk

11. AcSS and ESRC EDI Programme – Application form for funding

Name of social science society/societies	
Is your society an AcSS member learned society?	Yes/No
If you are not an AcSS member please provide a statement detailing your organisational purpose, structure and evidence of your financial position (attach as additional documents if needed)	
Name of person/s applying	
Position in organisation	
Main contact name	
Main contact address	
Main contact postcode	
Main contact phone	
Contact emails	
Signature/s *Forms may be signed electronically or via covering email from society*	
Date of application	

Proposal – two pages maximum

Please provide a short summary of the proposed EDI initiative or intervention, including how this will move EDI forward within your organisation, the protected characteristics/intersectionality/EDI needs being addressed and the target audience:
Please outline the amount of funding you are applying for and how the funding will be spent:
Please describe the planned outcome, how this will move EDI forward within your organisation, how this will be measured and in what format this will be published/reported on:

Please detail any previous EDI work that links to this proposal and the added benefit the funding would bring to this:

Please detail how your initiative or intervention could be scaled up to be used across other social science disciplines:

Please provide details about who will manage the project, the proposed timetable (we anticipate that most initiatives or interventions will last for a period of up to 12 months), and completion date:

Please provide any further details you wish to make us aware of in support of your funding bid:

Please list any additional documents you are submitting as part of the application process

Please return your completed form to administrator@acss.org.uk