

Policy and Evidence Centre on Modern Slavery Victim / Survivor Recovery and Support

Introduction

The Policy and Evidence Centre for Human Rights and Modern Slavery ('the Centre'), led by AHRC and with support from ESRC, is designed to bring research, policymakers, businesses, charities and NGOs together on a scale not seen before in the UK. It will combat and reduce modern slavery by driving real policy change in prevention, legal enforcement and supply chains, with a strong focus on victim / survivor support and recovery.

The Centre is funded by UKRI until 2024 and this first call for applications is focused on **victim and survivor support and recovery**. Applications are welcome from arts, humanities and social science (working with other disciplines where appropriate) to address the needs of those who have experienced different kinds of exploitation considered to be modern slavery, and to improve their near and long-term outcomes of recovery.

Proposals for **full economic costs of up to £300K** for a period of **up to 12 months** may be submitted. The call will close at **1600 hours on Tuesday 27 October 2020**.

Context

The Centre is designed to bring together world class research, policy-makers, businesses, civil society and international organisations on a scale which is capable of having a real impact on tackling this global challenge. The Centre therefore aims to:

- transform our understanding of modern slavery;
- model and bring about a more collaborative approach to responding to modern slavery;
- establish a "network of networks", to enable better dialogue, knowledge sharing and collaboration in the fight against modern slavery;
- make legal and policy responses to modern slavery more effective; and
- take a distinctively human rights-based approach to tackling modern slavery.

Modern slavery, also known as human trafficking, denies people of their dignity and their basic human rights. The Centre will take a partnership approach, working with those who already play a part in eradicating slavery, to put victims and survivors at the heart of research and help them influence future policy development. In this first major funding call, the Centre aims to fill several gaps in the evidence base:

- understanding the decision-making process for identifying victims and the support needed and/or offered throughout this process
- the impact of decision-making times on victim recovery,
- the recovery and reintegration needs of both adult and child victims/survivors of modern slavery;
- test the effectiveness of different interventions in meeting those needs;
- to develop methods and/or better approaches to prevent re-trafficking; or
- address any other aspect related to the care of survivors and the prevention of victimisation.

Aims of the call

Scope

The purpose of this call is to support original and innovative research, which identifies ways that the current support system can be improved to ensure better near-term and long-term outcomes for victims and survivors of modern slavery. In short, 'how do we make things better?' for victims and survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking?

Projects may wish to address one or more of the following, noting that the list is not exhaustive and other research questions / ideas are welcome:

Modern Slavery Systems (e.g. challenges, interactions, limitations, exemplars, etc)

- exploring the impact of and interactions with related policies, e.g. on immigration and asylum, housing, labour market regulation, legal aid, etc. and whether or how survivors navigate across these;
- analysis, identification and recommendation regarding where government should focus: why victims do not come forward to get help, where and how do they fall through the cracks of support, how do different parts of the system link together, and is this effective? This could include national vs local/devolved decision-making and support: how they interact together; whether more should be devolved? How well or not outreach support integrates with government provision?
- Comparison between UK and international systems, including learning and collaboration across international borders;
- Analysis, evidence and recommendation regarding whether or not the NRM is achieving its objective of improving outcomes for victims of modern slavery
- whether or how the UK's withdrawal from the EU has further legal implications in the context of victim/survivor rights and access to support

Children and the Most Vulnerable

- improving knowledge about survivors' multiple and complex needs, including which services help victims to recover; what areas other than services can help support survivor recovery (e.g. social engagement, right to work);
- assessment and recommendations regarding whether or when interventions or approaches may jeopardise victim recovery, particularly if the victim or survivor is a child? Is the NRM effective for children affected by criminal exploitation?
- Improving understanding of the experience of individuals who have been child victims of modern slavery and the transition into adult support when they reach the age of 18
- Understanding better ways to prioritise or identify the most vulnerable and at-risk victims / survivors, taking into account the support at national and local level
- Developing a methodology or context for First Responders who find themselves working with potential victims who do not regard themselves as such: better understanding regarding why that may be and what to do about it;

Outcomes and Recovery

- Analysing, evidencing and recommending better, more tailored care, e.g. in areas such as mental health, psychological trauma, cultural contexts or backgrounds, to aid recovery from trauma;
- what role can the arts or social prescribing play in helping survivors recover from their ordeal;

- overcoming the challenges in identification and decision-making processes by First Responders and Competent Authorities, and how these impact on outcomes for individuals;
- developing approaches for and providing victims with a voice; using survivor-focused advocacy and better representation of victims and survivors' perspectives to or within government services, NGOs, businesses and civil society;

Data and Information

- better data regarding outcomes of interventions, including the best ways in which actors can share data safely while protecting the rights of victims and survivors, including issues around:
 - data correlation and the use of data across multiple support mechanisms
 - better access to data across multiple stakeholders, to enable better support and prevention mechanisms
 - better agreements regarding sharing and accessing data across multiple jurisdictions in order to combat the problem globally
- how can we best develop ways to capture data on re-trafficking, outcomes for survivors who are returned to their home country (both short and longer term)

Preventing Re-trafficking and Facilitating Reintegration

- improved data or understanding regarding the conditions, vulnerabilities or pathways to re-trafficking and ways to stop or prevent it, including where survivors have returned to their country of origin or the impact of the right to work;
- better data sharing across multiple and complex systems and organisations
- mechanisms which help aggregate or scale-up data, to produce a more comprehensive picture regarding movement, hot spots, vulnerabilities, changes in patterns, etc

Proposals related to other areas of victim support and recovery are also welcome and while this call is UK focused, applications that consider an international comparative strand are welcome.

The Centre's requirements for funding under this call

A key aim for the outputs of this call is to transform how support for survivors and prevention are undertaken and to help build the evidence base so that learning and impact can be shared internationally. Although targeted interventions, evidence and/or analysis are expected and welcomed, applications that also take a whole-systems approach are encouraged.

In addition to the publication of academic outputs as a result of research funded through the Centre, projects will also be required to produce output/s which are intended for and, importantly, co-created with non-academic stakeholders, e.g. survivors, NGOs, government administrations, businesses, front-line staff, etc. It is therefore a requirement that research teams will collaborate and co-create the research projects with those they are seeking to influence from the very outset.

Finally, given the sensitive topic of this call – victims and survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking – applicants will have to demonstrate strong plans for safeguarding and the safe use / appropriate sharing of data. A strong ethical statement, particularly where there is direct involvement of victims or survivors, will be required.

Applications should be focused on:

- public education and awareness;

- civil society, including support and programmes they provide;
- public policy and government interventions;
- evidence that is generated using rigorous and ethically informed methodologies

It is an important criterion that the Centre produces outputs and outcomes that otherwise would not have happened without its support. All projects funded under the Centre, therefore, will have to demonstrate the following:

- **Topicality** – does the proposed project address a live and pressing issue on which there is a clear and recognised need for research / evidence?
- **Relevant and Actionable** to the Centre’s main audiences – Will it be regarded as relevant and useful by the Centre’s stakeholders: policymakers, legislators, businesses, civil society, international organisations, the media and/or the public?
- **Collaboration** – Will the project involve a team which will be drawn from across and outside the lead research organisation (RO), involving at least two non-affiliated organisations working together?
- **Outreach** – Does it engage a non-academic partner with relevant expertise/experience from the outset?
- **Additionality** – Will it be clear that the project could not have been done without facilitation by the Centre?
- **Impact** – Will the output and outcome of the project have a clear and obvious impact which will demonstrate the value of the Centre?

Further information regarding the Policy and Evidence Centre for Modern Slavery can be found on the [UKRI](#) and [Government](#) websites.

Remit and eligibility

Interdisciplinary boundary-crossing proposals are welcomed, including those that cross arts, humanities, social sciences (AHSS) and STEM. Where proposals extend beyond AHRC’s and ESRC’s remits, they should ensure that they bring the distinctive AHSS research expertise, concepts, ideas and/or approaches centrally into the development of relevant cross-disciplinary fields.

Unless otherwise stated, the eligibility criteria as published in section 3 of the AHRC [Research Funding Guide](#) will apply. Note that no studentships can be funded via this call. Applicants must be of post-doctoral or equivalent standing.

The principal investigator must meet standard AHRC eligibility criteria and awards will be made to a UK research organisation eligible to receive AHRC funding. Project Partners, which can also include businesses, NGOs, charities, government agencies, etc and International co-investigators may be included. Indeed, it is expected that Project Partners will be sought from those non-academic stakeholders with a direct interest in the research/policy outputs.

However, applicants will need also to provide assurance, in consultation with their research organisation, that relevant and proportionate due diligence checks have been completed on those partners. A risk-based approach should be undertaken, which considers the motivations and reputational risks to the outcomes of the research, the research organisation, the Centre and the AHRC. Similarly, assurances must be provided demonstrating that safeguarding, ethical, risk and safety assessments have been conducted, given the topic area of focus.

Completing an application

Applications need to be submitted through Je-S (<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx>). Except where specifically noted in this call document, standard AHRC policies and guidelines for Open Call Research Grants will apply (see *Research Funding Guide*).

To apply: Please select Document Type 'AHRC Research Grant', Scheme 'Development Grants' and Call 'MS PEC Victim Recovery Call SPF 27 Oct 2020'.

Applications should include a **Case for Support of no more than 4 sides of A4** covering the following issues:

- **Challenge area to be addressed** – a summary of the policy challenge within victim / survivor recovery and/or support and how this research will address that challenge;
- **Research context** – including added value to the existing research literature/data or innovation; originality/novelty, as appropriate; as well as the wider context for the research;
- **Research aims and objectives** – including contribution to addressing gaps in the research/ evidence base and driving better policy or grass-roots delivery of support for victims;
- **Research contribution and importance** – expected ways that the research will contribute to advancing knowledge, understanding, data, etc.;
- **Policy contribution and importance** – expected ways that the outputs will produce demonstrable outcomes for the victims and survivors of modern slavery;
- **Research expertise and partnerships** – why the individuals, organisations, and/or partners involved are the most appropriate for undertaking the proposed activities; how the project will support equitable partnership and ways of working (including co-creating the research agenda with non-academic partners; capacity building and/or support for ECRs, etc);
- **Research outputs, outcomes and sustainability** – what will be generated, what will be achieved, how will the learning be embedded, and with whom.

In addition, the following attachments must be provided:

- **Short CVs/Publication Lists**, CVs should be a maximum of two sides of A4. Publication lists, also a maximum two sides of A4, should highlight both relevant academic publications, plus any materials which have been produced for a non-academic audience or relevant modern slavery stakeholders (e.g. policymakers, NGOs, charities, civil society, businesses, etc.);
- **Letters of Support**, particularly from key non-academic partners or collaborators. These should articulate the importance of the research, how the outputs will benefit victims and survivors of modern slavery and how the partners intend to make use of those outputs. Letters of Support must not exceed two sides of A4.
- **A Data Management Plan**, where applicable. Up to two sides of A4, which includes a statement on data safeguarding (i.e. the proposal involves generating or working with significant new data and/or sensitive data).
- **An Ethical Statement**, of up to one side of A4, which describes the method/s and safeguards for working with extremely vulnerable people

Unless otherwise stated in this call document or in additional conditions, awards made under this call will be issued in accordance with standard AHRC and UKRI grant terms and conditions as outlined in AHRC's *Research Funding Guide*.

Costs and project timescales

The maximum funding that may be sought for proposals under this call is **£300K**; this limit applies to the total (100%) full economic cost of the project, of which AHRC will fund at 80% fEC. Separate contingency budgets should not be included in proposals.

If applications are supporting international collaborations or partners, these will be funded at 100% fEC, in line with AHRC's standard international co-investigator policy.

Proposals can last up to **12 months**. A clear strategy is required for the sustainability of the non-academic output beyond the funded period and for the sustained management of any data collected or produced as a part of the research. Publication and data management plans should meet UKRI standard requirements for open access.

Applicants should seek contributions from project partners, e.g. businesses, government and third sector organisations, where appropriate. In acknowledgment of the fact that some smaller third-sector organisations do not have the capacity to co-fund research activities, costs to support partners from third sector organisations (e.g. NGOs) are eligible under this call. This includes costs for staff salaries (no more than 1 FTE per annum per NGO), travel and subsistence, other direct costs and overheads. Costs will be funded at 100% fEC and should be listed as Other Directly Incurred Exceptions on the Je-S form. Total costs associated with third sector bodies' contribution should not normally exceed 30% of the overall cost of the grant at 100% fEC; however, exceptional cases may be considered where the research impact activities require additional work by partners which fall outside their normal activities.

Where projects involve either international co-investigators, businesses, NGOs, charities, etc. or the sub-contracting of significant elements of the funding or research delivery to these organisations, it will be a condition of funding that the lead Research Organisation undertakes appropriate due diligence and financial assurance checks, considering the perceived or real risk associated with such partnerships. A further condition will be that Research Organisations ensure that those partner organisations have in place contextually appropriate procedures for addressing issues of gender, equalities, diversity and inclusion, research integrity, safeguarding, data protection, fraud prevention and compliance with the other standard terms and conditions of UKRI grants.

Capital or infrastructure expenditure (e.g. basic office, laboratory, accommodation, furniture or equipment, building/site construction, maintenance or refurbishment work, etc.) is not an eligible cost under this call although additional costs incurred by existing facilities, e.g. through archiving of project-specific research data/outputs, may be considered. Costs for equipment purchase under £10,000 will only be considered on an exceptional basis where significant use of equipment is required primarily or solely for the proposed project activity and/or where this is more cost effective than other options, such as hiring equipment.

Funding for PhD or master's studentships cannot be included under this call. However, involvement of students and early career researchers in research activities and/or related training or capacity building activities is encouraged and appropriate support costs (e.g. travel and subsistence) can be included within proposals.

We anticipate that 5-8 awards will be funded under this call.

Assessment process and criteria

Applications under this call will be assessed using the following criteria:

- **Fit to call**, including both the research/evidence gap and the proposal for producing policy-relevant material and impact;
- **Research contribution and importance**, the potential for the research to make a significant and original contribution to knowledge, understanding, data and/or research capabilities and to add significant value to existing research;
- **Policy contribution and importance**, the potential for the outputs to make a significant and positive impact on the victims of modern slavery and/or prevent their re-trafficking;
- **Research expertise and partnerships**, the extent to which the proposal provides a convincing case that the individuals, organisations or partners involved are appropriate for undertaking the proposed activities and that it will promote equitable partnerships and ways of working;
- **Feasibility of proposed activities and methods**, including appropriate plans for addressing data, risks, safeguarding, due diligence and gender (and where appropriate, wider) equalities, effective management arrangements and a realistic project plan;
- **Potential for significant impacts**, including a convincing plan for maximising impact and outreach, demonstration of the benefits of this research to the victims and survivors of modern slavery and an articulation of how the outputs and outcomes will lead to recovery or support;
- **Significant research outputs**, including appropriate plans for the outcomes and outputs and plans for the sustainability or legacy of the research; and
- **Value for money**.

Applications will be assessed in the following manner:

- Two academic reviews;
- One user or relevant stakeholder review;
- A sift stage, based on the grades/comments from the academic reviews, where both reviewers agree that a proposal is unfundable;
- A PI Response;
- A moderating panel, to include academic and non-academic members

Call timeline

A NOTE ABOUT CORONAVIRUS

We recognise that almost everyone in research and innovation is either facing major interruptions to their work or a major transition to work on the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the fact that our community is showing real resilience in stepping up to find new and innovative ways of working, taking time to think or craft future proposals and collaborations, there will likely be impacts on application and assessment times.

Funding opportunities that are open now will continue to be advertised. All our systems are operating as normal.

We recognise that the current situation may present additional challenges to those intending to apply. To help with that, the **deadline to this scheme will be extended** to give applicants more time to submit.

This call will be reviewed regularly and, if necessary, timelines outlined below extended further.

Activity	Dates
Call announced	18 May 2020
Call opens on Je-S	04 June 2020
Deadline	27 October 2020
PI Response (expected)	w/c 11 Jan 2021
Panel meeting	w/c 8 February 2021
Funding decisions	w/c 1 March 2021
Start of awards	1 April 2021

Scheme requirements and post award reporting

Unless otherwise stated, the scheme requirements and post award reporting will be as per the *Research Funding Guide*.

Award holders will be required to submit outputs, outcomes and impacts that arise from AHRC's funding through the Researchfish system. Information can be added to Researchfish at any point once the award has started and award holders will be required to submit updates of this information to AHRC at one 'submission period' each year. Award holders will receive an email with log-in details shortly after their award has started. More details on Researchfish are available on the UKRI website here: <https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/research-outcomes/>.

Additionally, the Director of the Policy and Evidence Centre for Modern Slavery and Human Rights may require further information or wish to engage with award holders outside AHRC's reporting criteria. It will be a condition of award that award holders participate where required.

Contact information

For queries about this call such as eligible activities and costs or remit of the call, please contact AHRC at enquiries@ahrc.ukri.org or telephone 01793 416 060 (Monday to Friday 08:30-16:30).

For queries on using Je-S, such as creating and submitting the application form or Je-S account creation, please contact the Je-S Helpdesk on 01793 444 164 or JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org (Monday to Friday 08:30-17:00).