

Specific guidance for AHRC-led Projects submitted to the **US NSF/SBE–UKRI Lead Agency Opportunity**

Note: this guidance applies only to applications where **AHRC is the lead agency**. There is a separate guidance document where NSF is the lead agency.

Transnational teams of UK and US-based researchers are invited to apply directly to the AHRC under the existing responsive mode research grants scheme via Je-S. An expression of interest (EOI) must always be submitted and approved by all agencies involved before full proposal submission. We expect that full proposals will be submitted within 12 months of EOI approval. If greater time is needed for proposal preparation, an additional EOI may be required. Please see website for more details regarding the EOI submission process.

Once an Expression of Interest has been submitted, and confirmation received that the project is appropriate for submission with the AHRC as lead agency, the Principle Investigator will be invited to submit a full-application to the AHRC Research Grant scheme via the Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) System. If any assistance is required to use the system, please contact the Je-S helpdesk on 01793 444164 or jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org.

The AHRC's [Research Funding Guide](#) (RFG) section 1.1 provides a full overview of the Research Grants scheme, including eligibility criteria, information on how to apply and terms and conditions of awards. In addition to the information provided in the *Research Funding Guide* (RFG), the following guidelines apply:

Eligibility Requirements

Investigators

UK: The UK Principal Investigator must meet the AHRC's current eligibility criteria for standard and early career AHRC Research Grant proposals. Please consult the AHRC's *Research Funding Guide* for further information on eligibility.

USA: Please note, US principal investigators must be eligible for funding from the National Science Foundation

International Co-Investigators may be charged to the UK element of the proposal in-line with the eligibility and costing guidance in the AHRC *Research Funding Guide* (section 2). However, for the purposes of the SBE-UKRI Funding Opportunity it is expected that any researchers based at US institutions will be funded by the NSF.

Research Assistants

Research Assistants employed by the UK organisation need to meet the AHRC's threshold of being of

postdoctoral standing, either having a PhD or equivalent research experience (See *RFG*, section 2).

Note on research involving human subjects

The National Science Foundation supports research involving human subjects when the project has been certified by a responsible body (an Institutional Review Board or IRB) to be in compliance with the US government's 'Common Rule for Protection of Human Subjects'. While a proposal can be reviewed without receipt of the IRB approval, projects involving human subjects cannot be funded until this certification or its equivalent is submitted to NSF (please see the [NSF Human Subjects Policy \(NSF website opens in new window\)](#)).

If the research conducted by the UK partner involves human subjects, the UK partner must adhere to UKRI's [Policy and Guidance on the Governance of Good Research Conduct](#) and provide details of where the UK Research Organization's ethical policy can be accessed. This approval should be submitted to both the AHRC and the NSF.

Costing

UK: AHRC will accept proposals with a total full economic cost (fEC) of between £50,000 and £1,000,000 under the standard route, or £50,000 to £250,000 under the early career route for the UK component of the project. If the application is successful, the AHRC will contribute 80% of these costs.

The UK applicant must detail the UK component (the costs being incurred by the UK Research Organisations) of the costs according to AHRC financial guidelines on the appropriate section of the Je-S form.

US: All costs relating to the US side of the project must be in accordance with the NSF's normal funding rules for unsolicited proposals within the [NSF Grant Proposal Guide](#). Requested US costs must be commensurate with the scheme limits of the appropriate subject organisation within SBE. Contact the NSF officer within the appropriate organisation of the [SBE directorate](#) for further information

How to apply via Je-S

Once the applicants have received confirmation that the AHRC is the most appropriate Lead Agency, and that the proposal is a suitable fit to AHRC and SBE remit, a single integrated project proposal should be submitted according to the procedures and processes used in applying to the AHRC's Research Grants scheme. The group of scholars should prepare a single application which must be submitted electronically by the UK-based Principal Investigator's Research Organisation to the AHRC Research Grant scheme via the Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) System.

To prepare a proposal form in Je-S, log-in to your account and choose 'New Document', then select **AHRC** as the Council, **Standard Proposal** as the Document Type, either **Research Grants – Standard** or **Research Grants - Early Career** as the Scheme then select **Research Grants (standard or early career) National Science Foundation NSF/SBE-UKRI (Open Call)** as the Call/Type/Mode and then 'Create Document'. Je-S will then create a proposal form, displaying the relevant section

Using the 'Help' link at the top of each section will provide guidance relevant to that section of the form.

Applicants submitting a proposal to AHRC do not need to also apply to NSF.

Specific guidance on Case for Support and Justification of Resources attachments submitted to AHRC under the NSF/SBE-RCUK opportunity

The case for support and justification of resources should outline all elements of the project and provide justification of all resources that are requested. Please note that for applications submitted **under the NSF/SBE-UKRI opportunity only**, the justification of resources should be no more than **three sides of A4** in a font no smaller than size 11

All proposals requesting funding from NSF **must** include an NSF budget form under 'Other attachments'. US costs must be entered into the specific [NSF budget form](#) and uploaded to the Je-S proposal as an additional attachment type 'Non-UK components'

How to identify that the proposal is submitted under this scheme

Each application should be identified clearly as a collaborative proposal under the NSF/SBE-RCUK scheme by indicating this in the project title field. The text '**SBE-UKRI:**' should precede the project title.

How to identify the details of the US researcher involved

All US investigators for whom funds are being requested from NSF must be listed as co-investigators. In completing the Je-S form, costs for US-based international co-investigators should be entered with a salary value of zero.

For international co-investigators from the US for whom funds are being sought from the NSF, all costs must be entered into the specific NSF budget form and uploaded to the Je-S proposal as an additional attachment. All costs must be in accordance with the NSF's normal funding rules for unsolicited proposals, as outlined in the [NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#).

Letter of support/proposal cover letter

In addition the UK applicant must attach a Letter of Support from the US institution agreeing to the US partner's involvement and confirming eligibility of the US investigator under NSF Criteria. The statement should clearly state the intended institutional support and the institution must guarantee as a minimum that appropriate support facilities (including office space and appropriate computing facilities) will be made available to the applicant during the period of the grant. The statement must also confirm the institution's support for the proportion of the applicant's time and salary not to be supported by the AHRC or NSF, and the activities that will be undertaken.

All statements must be on headed paper, signed and attached to the application using the attachment type: **Project Partner's Letter of Support**.

Duration

The AHRC-funded part of the project should be a proposed duration of no more than five years (60 months). The NSF SBE-funded part of the project should comply with normal NSF rules for unsolicited project proposals as outlined in the [NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#)

Closing Date

This scheme operates to open deadlines.

Peer-review process

In line with AHRC practice, assessment of applications follows a two-stage process: written peer review followed by moderating panel.

All applications submitted to the AHRC will be assessed by two peer reviewers selected by AHRC, plus one more nominated by NSF/SBE. Peer reviewers will use the criteria and procedures applicable to AHRC, and the written reviews formally incorporated in the AHRC's peer review processes.

For the second stage, applications will be subject to the AHRC sifting process (outlined in the AHRC [Research Funding Guide](#)). Applications that pass sift will be sent to an AHRC peer-review moderating panel. The peer review moderating panel will determine a final grade for each application and will rank proposals in order of priority for funding. The panel will consider only the expert peer reviews and the PI response to these reviews to reach its decision. Final funding decisions for UK-USA applications will rest with the AHRC and NSF/SBE.

Applicants should be aware that this will require that applications are processed by both AHRC and NSF/SBE officers. Applicants should provide written consent to the joint processing of the applications by AHRC and NSF at the end of the Case for Support under the heading of 'Consent to Joint Processing'.

If recommended for funding, the US component of the project, and the UK component of the project, will be separately supported by NSF and AHRC respectively. Grantees from the US and UK will be subject to their respective agency's conditions of awards and the parameters agreed in the NSF/AHRC Memorandum of Understanding. Each agency will handle the administration and monitoring of awards in accordance with the respective agency's standard policies and procedures.

For enquiries concerning the AHRC implementation of this funding opportunity please contact:

enquiries@ahrc.ukri.org

sbeleadagency@ukri.org