



# Forging Collaboration on Maximising Research in Environmental Health Research in the UK and Germany

## Guidance Document

### Objectives:

Health Data Research UK (HDR UK) and Helmholtz Centres, Germany are inviting applications for travel awards. Proposals are expected to facilitate researchers (at any level) to share existing knowledge in the field of Environmental health research.

### Scheme at a Glance:

Lead applicant career stage:	Applications will be accepted from all career stages. For students - supervisors' permission will be needed.
Eligibility:	Prospective applicants must be from either a <a href="#">UKRI eligible organisation</a> or a <a href="#">Helmholtz Centre</a> , Germany.
Funding amount:	Applications of up to £30K per person will be supported. All costs will need to be justified in the application.
Funding duration:	Travel awards are expected to be from a few days up to six months duration and must be completed before 31st July 2025.
Opening date:	August 2024
Closing date:	17.00hrs, Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2024
Funding:	Funding has been secured through the UK government's International Science Partnerships Fund (ISPF) to support collaborations between UKRI eligible organisations (UK) and Helmholtz Centres (Germany). <b>Grant Reference Number:</b> MC_PC_24002



## What This Call Offers:

Applications are open for funds towards travel, accommodation, subsistence and pilot research activities, such as data access and required software costs, for single researchers or small research teams to spend time (up to 6 months) within UKRI eligible organisations, or Helmholtz Centres, Germany, to create a foundation for new partnerships between institutes.

Reasons for travel might include (not exhaustive): giving/attending a seminar or series of seminars, organising a group workshop, sitting within a research team to build new working relationships and learning about established, publicly available methods and data from other teams.

Research organisations receiving travel awards through this scheme are expected to provide in-kind contributions through provision of office space, access to computer facilities, etc. In addition, it is expected that all participants will have their salary/studentship fully paid for by their home research organisation for the duration of the travel award.

## What is Offered:

- Up to 100% of the direct costs
  - Pilot research activities (e.g. data access and software)
  - Travel, accommodation, and subsistence (subject to the UKRI Travel and Subsistence policy set out in the Terms and Conditions of Funding)

Research activities, such as learning about established, publicly available methods and data from other teams, can be included as a part of the proposed work, but funding is not intended to pursue individual research projects.

## What is not Offered:

- Salary costs, including PI costs
- Studentships costs
- Estates and Indirects
- Visa costs
- Any additional consumable costs

Directly Incurred costs cannot be used to meet the costs of an activity that will fall outside of the end of the Grant Period, for example where travel falls after the end of the grant, the associated costs cannot be charged to the grant even if the travel booking can be purchased in advance.

Funding cannot cover studentship costs but can cover additional travel/subsistence and facility costs not already covered by existing studentship funding.

## Additional Information:



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Travel awards must be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025. A single visit is not expected to exceed more than six months. Visits lasting 6 months would need therefore to commence by 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025.

Lead organisation receiving the funding needs to be an [UKRI eligible institution](#) and Applicants will need to coordinate with the relevant institution to arrange and pay for travel.

Please note that the expenditure must be in line with the Terms and Conditions of Funding set out in Appendix 4. Funding is conditional upon signed acceptance of an award letter issued by HDR UK. Payment for this award will be paid quarterly in arrears via invoice.

The costs of additional childcare, beyond that required to meet the normal contracted requirements of the job and which are directly related to the project, may be requested as a Directly Incurred cost if the institutional policy is to reimburse them. For example, the travel and accommodation expenses of the person looking after an accompanying child while the researcher/academic attends a conference overseas.

Unsuccessful trips, where the travel was booked but did not take place for any reason will not be reimbursed. Therefore, please ensure that adequate insurance that covers all eventualities are in place.

**For any questions regarding this call please contact [procurement@hdruk.ac.uk](mailto:procurement@hdruk.ac.uk)**

## **Responsibilities of Research Organisations:**

By applying for this travel grant, a research organisation confirms:

- Its formal approval of the application
- Willingness to accept the terms and conditions of funding if awarded
- The eligibility of the applicants
- The approval of funding sought

Applicant organisations have responsibility for ensuring that the resources requested in the application are sufficient to undertake the travel.

Since travel awards can only be awarded to the UK institutions, eligible organisations will need to receive travel awards for hosting colleagues from their partnering Helmholtz Centre and/or to cover travel costs for their employees to their partnering Helmholtz Centre

The host organisations and employing organisations of the visiting researcher(s) will be responsible for putting in place such agreements between them that may be necessary, including but not limited to visiting researcher agreements, agreements covering generation of intellectual property and/or data sharing.



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Delivery of funded proposals will be monitored through regular reporting processes. Grants awarded will be paid in **Pounds Sterling (£)**. Any actual or anticipated underspend on the projects must be flagged to the project manager and finance partner (emails [lara.edwards@hdruk.ac.uk](mailto:lara.edwards@hdruk.ac.uk) and [lucy.vidal@hdruk.ac.uk](mailto:lucy.vidal@hdruk.ac.uk)) immediately.

## Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria:

This travel grant is open to all researchers, regardless of their career stage.

Prospective applicants must be from either a UKRI eligible organisation, (see list of eligible organisations [here](#)), or a Helmholtz Centre, (see a list of eligible institutions [here](#)) and must travel from one to the other as part of the travel award.

Applications from multiple different UKRI eligible Organisations and Helmholtz Centres are encouraged.

Applicants are responsible for obtaining all relevant permits and permissions required to undertake the proposed travel.

Eligibility for the scheme and proposal alignment to the travel award objectives will be evaluated by the leads of the HDR UK – Helmholtz grant in accordance with the scoring criteria set out in Appendix 2. Applicants will need to obtain a minimum score of 60% to receive a travel award. Applications that do not meet the minimum score will not be accepted for a travel award.

Application deadline is 2nd December. We will aim to review complete proposals **within 2 weeks of submission deadline**. Written feedback will be provided to all unsuccessful applicants.

Applicants will have 10 days from receipt of an award letter to accept the award.

As this funding is a part of a grant that is already active, we recommend successful applicants inform their UK partner research organisation's legal team as soon as possible about a successful funding decision.

## Application Process:

Complete the travel award application form provided in Appendix 1.

It is expected that all proposals will be developed collaboratively between colleagues of eligible institutions. Applicants will need to show how their visit could expedite future collaboration between the UK and Helmholtz eligible institutions in the field of environmental health research.



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Ensure the application is reviewed and approved by an 'authorised organisational approver' at both organisations, and leave enough time for the approver to review and submit your application.

Your application must be submitted to [procurement@hdruk.ac.uk](mailto:procurement@hdruk.ac.uk)

## Terms and Conditions of Funding

Awards will be subject to the terms and conditions of funding in Appendix 4.

In addition to the reporting obligations set out in the Terms and Conditions of Funding or as set out in the relevant award letter, awardees must submit a short (200 words) summary of their experience from using the award within 30 days of the end date of award.



## Appendix 1: Application Form for Travel Grant

### Part A: Applicant Details:

#### UK contacts

Please list the UK investigator(s) involved in the proposal (please add and remove from the table below as necessary).

Role	Name	Research Organisation	Position
<i>Lead applicant</i>			
<i>Lead administrative contact</i>			
<i>Supervisor (if applicable)</i>			

#### German contacts

Please list the investigator(s) involved in the proposal (please add and remove from the table below as necessary).

Role	Name	Research Organisation	Position
<i>Lead applicant</i>			
<i>Lead administrative contact</i>			
<i>Supervisor (if applicable)</i>			

### Part B: Lead Applicant's Full CV:

Please send via email alongside the completed application.



## Part C: Description of Activities:

Title

Summary (*up to 500 words*)

*Please include a description of how the travel award will help forge future collaboration between Eligible institutions.*

Proposed start date

Proposed end date



**Part D: Cost Justification:**

Please confirm the total funding requested in GBP.

*Conversion from Euro where necessary should be calculated by using the current exchange rate as set out on <https://www.xe.com/>. HDR UK will be unable to increase the total amount of award as the result of changes to exchange rates during the course of the Project. Any foreign exchange gains must be reported to HDR UK, but will not be used to reduce the total value of the award.*

£

What is the anticipated spend profile starting from the earliest possible date?

(Jan -March) 2025/2026	(April-June 2025/2026)	(July 2025)
£ <input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/>

Please provide a breakdown and justification of costs (*up to 500 words*).

*Please outline what types of activities the funding will be used to support and how much funding will be allocated to these activities. Please clearly outline:*

- Requested funds and justification towards travel costs
- Requested funds and justification towards subsistence
- Requested funds and justification towards pilot project costs





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## Part E: Administrative Feasibility

Please outline any administrative and contractual needs and timelines which must be met for the proposed travel to take place (e.g., visitors agreements and how long would it take to set them up, etc.)

**Important:** *To ensure proposed travel and associated pilot research activities are feasible in the proposed time frame and visitors are granted access to required areas of the host research organisations and resources such as computer facilities, it is critical for onboarding requirements to be completed in advance of the visiting worker's start date.*



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## Part F: Declaration

I confirm that the information I have given on this application form is accurate. Digital signature is acceptable.

Signed:  
(UK Lead applicant)

Date:

I confirm that the information I have given on this application form is accurate. Digital signature is acceptable.

Signed:  
(Helmholtz Centre Lead applicant)

Date:

### **If Applicable,**

I support the submission of this application for a travel award. Digital signature is acceptable.

Signed:  
(UK Supervisor)

Date:

I support the submission of this application for a travel award. Digital signature is acceptable.

Signed:  
(Helmholtz Centre Supervisor)

Date:



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## Part G: Support from Research Organisations

Please provide written confirmation from **relevant organisational authority**

By adding the names with date, this is taken as approval of the below:

UKRI eligible Organisation confirms:

- support for the project proposal;
- it can meet in-kind costs associated with the award;
- it can receive travel awards and pay for travel expenses associated with the travel award for hosting colleagues from their partnering Helmholtz Centre, where applicable;
- it can cover travel costs for their employees to their partnering Helmholtz Centre, where applicable.

Name of the UKRI eligible Organisation:

Signed:

Date:

(On behalf of the UKRI eligible Organisation named above leading on this application)

By adding the names with date, this is taken as approval of the below:

**Helmholtz Centre confirms:**

- support for the project proposal;
- it can meet in-kind costs associated with the award;

Name of the Helmholtz Centre:

Signed:

Date:

(On behalf of the Helmholtz Centre named above leading on this application)

**Submit via email with CV to [procurement@hdruk.ac.uk](mailto:procurement@hdruk.ac.uk). Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until funds have been exhausted.**



## Appendix 2 Scoring and Timelines

### Selection criteria

Applications will be evaluated on the criteria set out in Annex A below.

### Timing

Stage of process	Date	Location
Call for funding release	August 2024	HDR UK website, HC preferred communications route
Deadline for clarification questions	October 31 <sup>st</sup> 2024	Send to: <a href="mailto:procurement@hdruk.ac.uk">procurement@hdruk.ac.uk</a>
Call closing date	2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2024	Send to: <a href="mailto:procurement@hdruk.ac.uk">procurement@hdruk.ac.uk</a>
Notification of outcome	2 weeks after the application has been received	Via email
Award accepted	10 days from receipt of the award letter	Via email
Award start date	Evaluated on a case by case basis	Via email
Award end date	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	

## Annex A: Selection Criteria

### Compliance Criteria

Each application will be assessed on the basis of the compliance criteria below. Only applications which pass the compliance criteria will be shortlisted for scoring by the panel. Applicants will need to obtain a minimum score of 60% to receive a travel award.

1.0 Compliance Checking		
1.1	Application complete and in the requested format?	Yes / No
1.2	Applicant meets Eligibility Criteria?	Yes / No



**Scoring Criteria:**

PASS – Application is compliant, or Applicant has corrected any obvious error in their proposal after clarification.

REJECTED – Application is not compliant, including any clarification measures.

If the Application is compliant, it will be scored in accordance with the following:

**Selection Criteria and Weightings**

Selection Criteria Weightings	
Requirement	Weighting
1.0 Compliance Checking	PASS/FAIL
2.1 Fit of applicant’s proposed activities to the call specifications	60%
2.2 Fit of applicant’s expertise and track record to the call specifications	20%
2.3 Justification of the proposed costs	20%
	<b>100%</b>

Criteria will be scored in accordance with the following score definitions:

- 0 - Absent or does not meet the criterion in any respect
- 1 - Response has significant major shortcomings and clear deficiencies, which on balance outweigh positive aspects that meet some of the criterion requirements
- 2 - Response has multiple shortcomings and/or deficiencies, which are balanced with the positive aspects that meet some of the criterion requirements
- 3 - Response has minor shortcomings and/or deficiencies, but on balance these are outweighed by the positive aspects that meet the majority of the criteria requirements.
- 4 - The response meets most aspects of the criterion with only very minor shortcomings or deficiencies
- 5 - The response meets the criterion in all material respects



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## Appendix 4: Terms and Conditions of Funding

Awards issued under this call will be subject to the following terms and conditions:

The standard **UKRI Terms and Conditions of Research Council fEC Grants** and **MRC's Additional Terms and Conditions**.

In addition, the following terms apply:

**AC1 - Travel:** All travel must adhere to the **UKRI Travel and Subsistence Policy**. Any expenditure that does not adhere with this policy will not be reimbursed.

All travel claims should evidence value for money alongside environmental impact, welfare and business need. Consequently, these should only include travel by standard class by train and economy class by air. Exceptions to this would be permitted where there is a justifiable health and wellbeing need and approved by the Research Organisation prior to purchase and evidence of this should be available. Consideration to the environmental impact of travel should be in line with the institutional policy

### **International Science Partnerships Fund (ISPF) Additional Conditions of Grant**

In these Additional Conditions of Grant, the words “We”, “Our” or “Us” refer to the relevant Council of UKRI awarding the Grant and “You” or “Your” refer to the Research Organisation in receipt of the Grant.

#### **GAC ISPF 1: Extensions**

Notwithstanding Our Standard Term and Condition RGC 6, due to the ISPF financial constraints, grant extensions will only be considered under exceptional circumstances (in line with the Equality Act 2010) and will require Our agreement on a case-by-case basis. You remain responsible for compliance with the terms of the Equality Act 2010 including any subsequent amendments introduced while work is in progress; and for ensuring that the expectations set out in RGC 3.4 are met.

#### **GAC ISPF 2: Collaboration Agreement**

In accordance with Our Standard Term and Condition RGC 12, a Collaborative Agreement is required for this project.

A Collaboration Agreement must be in place within 6 months of the start date of the UK grant, and if requested should be shared with Us.



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It is the responsibility of the lead Research Organisation to put such an agreement in place. The terms of collaboration agreements must not conflict with the Our terms and conditions or any other policies.

- *The practical application of this condition requires awardees to ensure that they put in place appropriate agreements between host and employing organisations which set out positions on Intellectual Property that may be generated in the course of the exchange as well as any other terms and conditions necessary to comply with the Terms and Conditions of Funding set out in the relevant award letter.*

### **GAC ISPF 3: Acknowledgements**

In addition to the provisions in Our Standard Term and Condition RGC 12.4, all materials for this Grant (including any publicity materials, publications, reports, press releases, social media releases and websites) where appropriate should acknowledge that it is funded by the Medical Research Council (a part of UKRI) and must refer to the ISPF.

### **GAC ISPF 4: Reporting and Evaluation**

You must deliver on monitoring and reporting commitments as agreed upon commencement of this Grant, including reporting research outcomes via Researchfish and providing narrative progress updates. You are also required to assist Us with any reasonable additional reporting requirements as requested by DSIT.

You must assist any external evaluators contracted by Us and/or DSIT for the purposes of an evaluation of ISPF. Contracted evaluators will be given permission to contact You directly.

There is an expectation that You will make reasonable efforts to support and contribute to any reporting requirements by Your collaborators funding agencies.

### **GAC ISPF 5: Government Support**

This Award is dependent on continuing government commitment for this initiative. In the event that this support is withdrawn, We reserve the right to terminate the Award.