

Vice-Chancellor's Early Career Researcher Development Awards 2019/20

GUIDANCE

We are pleased to announce the fifth round of the Vice-Chancellor's Early Career Researcher Development Awards, 2019. Applications are invited from early career researchers for projects to be undertaken during academic year 2019/20.

Purpose

The purpose of the Awards is to support early career researchers at UWE to undertake preliminary research focused in areas aligned with UWE's research priority areas (see Annex 1) that will lead in due course to high quality outputs and make significant impact. The projects are also expected to lead to a substantial bid for external funding to take this work forward subsequently.

Grants

The scheme will comprise grants of up to £15,000 (minimum value £5,000).

Subject to a full justification, the funds can be used to cover whatever is required to enable preliminary research to be undertaken, whether this is short-term salary costs, replacement teaching, research assistance, technical support, equipment, consumables or travel and subsistence. Applications are **not** subject to full economic costing (fEC) but should cover actual costs incurred. Please see the notes on the application form for guidance on costings and for further advice please contact Research, Business and Innovation (RBI). Any costs for travel, subsistence or conference attendance will need to be essential to the work proposed and fully justified.

As a holder of a Vice-Chancellor's Award you will be expected to attend appropriate training and development opportunities over the course of your project as provided through the University's research skills development programme.

Continuation of project grants will be conditional on a satisfactory interim progress report.

Successful applicants will be notified in May 2019 to allow time to plan activity alongside other work commitments, and funding will be available from August 2019. All funds for the 2019/20 scheme have to be spent by 31 July 2020. Part-time staff on contracts of 0.6FTE or less may apply for longer Awards, up to 24 months ending no later than 31 July 2021. Evidence of contracted hours will need to be provided.

Eligibility

For the purposes of this scheme, an 'early career researcher' is a member of staff in the early stages of their research career, typically within 5 years of their first academic appointment on a teaching and research contract, or of completing a doctorate, whichever is more recent.

Applicants may be on a research-only contract as a Research Fellow/SRF but also have to be within 5 years of completing a doctorate and hold a contract which runs over the full term of the Award. The Award cannot be used to extend existing fixed-term contracts. Staff without a doctorate may only apply if they are able to demonstrate they have undertaken research at an equivalent level. Account will be taken of individual circumstances such as career breaks and part-time working in determining eligibility (in line with the individual staff circumstances guidance for REF2021).

Research-only staff (SRFs and RFs) are eligible to apply provided the proposed project can be delivered in the time and with the resources requested, without impacting on any existing commitments that cannot be rescheduled, and without contravening any terms and conditions of externally-funded contracts.

All applicants must hold an employment contract that runs for the full term of the grant. There are no age restrictions. Vice-Chancellor's Awards must demonstrably support the individual's career development strategy.

The scheme is not open to Associate Lecturers or any staff on a 'teaching only' contract. As in the REF, Research Associates are not eligible unless they can clearly demonstrate that they are working as independent researchers.

You are required to provide a statement on your eligibility in the application form. Please see Annex 2 below for further guidance on eligibility or contact RBI for any clarification that may be required.

Administration and Advice

Administration of the scheme will be provided by RBI, reporting to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Business Engagement). The initial point of contact for advice and information is:

Alison Vaughton, Research Information and Governance, RBI
Ext 82872 email alison.vaughton@uwe.ac.uk

In addition, a briefing will be held on Thursday 31st January, 12:00-13:00 in 5X108, Frenchay which will provide an opportunity for potential applicants to seek clarification on any aspect of the application process. Please [register](#) to attend.

We recommend that you discuss your proposal with your Research Centre Director, or Associate Dean (Research) if you are not a member of a Research Centre.

Application process

Prior to submission, applications need to have the support of a research mentor and the relevant Head of Department (see application form). A brief CV must be attached with the application form (no more than 2 pages).

Proposals should be submitted by **12 NOON on FRIDAY 22nd MARCH 2018** to the Associate Dean (Research and Knowledge Exchange) in your Faculty:

Arts, Creative Industries & Education – Hazel Edwards
Business & Law – Professor Vikas Kumar
Environment & Technology – Professor Catherine Hobbs
Health & Applied Sciences – Professor Olena Doran

Please also copy your application to: Research@uwe.ac.uk

The Associate Dean (RKE) will be invited to consider applications from their faculty having assessed them against the criteria (see below). Applicants may be asked to make a presentation. Applications will then be considered by the Research Strategy Implementation Group (RSIG) chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Business Engagement) and including the Associate Dean (RKE) of each Faculty and Head of

Research Administration, RBI. The final decision on which applications will be supported will be made by the Vice-Chancellor following assessment by RSIG and recommendation by the PVC (RBE).

It is planned to announce the outcome of the process in **May 2019**.

Criteria

In assessing proposals, the following criteria will apply:

Projects should:

- *be led by an 'early career researcher'*

Although proposals may involve collaboration, both internally and externally, they should be led and primarily executed by a named 'early career researcher' as defined above. Joint applications may be made (by two early career researchers) but the maximum amount that can be bid for remains £15,000.

- *be overseen by a senior research mentor*

To provide experienced academic supervision, the work should be overseen by a named senior researcher. The research mentor should ideally come from the applicant's Research Centre, Institute, Department or other research group, but where appropriate this may be from another faculty. Award holders are expected to meet regularly with their mentor who will also be asked to report on progress. The research mentor's time may **not** be costed into the application.

- *involve a collaborative element*

To promote impact, it is expected that proposals will include an indication that any successful application for follow-on research will involve some form of external collaboration with organisation(s) that will benefit from the outcome of the research and/or contribute to its execution. This need not necessarily involve co-funding or other formalised relationship but evidence of a mutually beneficial interaction in the conduct of future research will be expected. The collaborator's time may **not** be costed into the application.

- *lead to a clear outcome in terms of impact in society*

Linked to the above, and in line with the purpose of the scheme, all proposals should make clear that the project itself, or a successful application for follow-on research, will lead to a clear outcome in terms of impact, whether this is social, economic or cultural. It should be clear how the applicant plans to achieve the impact; a future impact plan will be required as part of the final report.

- *lead to a substantial bid to an external funder*

All proposals are expected to give an initial indication of likely future funding sources. Applicants will be expected to develop a research bid for follow-on funding during the grant period, with support from staff in RBI if appropriate.

- *be focused on an area of research strength within the University.*

Successful applicants are expected to provide evidence that their proposed project is in line with the Faculty's and the University's Research Strategy and priorities (see Annex 1).

- *generate research and research outcomes likely to demonstrate significance, originality and rigour.*

In line with the University's strategy for the Research Excellence Framework (REF), Award holders will be expected to demonstrate that the outputs of the project, in whatever form, are able to meet the criteria of '*significance, originality and rigour*' as used in the REF. In this context, 'significance' is defined as 'the capacity to make a difference either through intellectual influence within the academic sphere or through actual or potential use beyond the academic sphere, or both'.

- *demonstrate that the project will provide value for money for the University*

The cost of the project should be no more than is required to deliver the specified outcomes. Applications will be scrutinised to ensure that all costs are necessary.

Monitoring and RBI Support

Holders of Vice-Chancellor's ECR Development Awards, and their mentors, will be required to provide an interim progress report on which continuation funding will be conditional. A final report which will include an account of the use of funds, the direct outputs from the grant and the future research and impact plans of the grant holder will also be required.

Award holders will be expected to attend appropriate development workshops provided by the University.

All projects are expected to generate a substantial bid to an external funder to continue the research and build the researcher's career. This provides further opportunities to develop bid writing and project planning skills and to negotiate collaborations. Support in identifying appropriate sources of funds and developing bids can be provided by RBI.

Timetable

Date	Event
Wednesday 9th January 2019	Scheme launch
Thursday 31st January 2019	Briefing for applicants
Friday 22nd March 2019 – 12 NOON	Deadline for applications
May 2019	Awards announced

Annex 1 Key Research Priorities

Successful applicants are expected to demonstrate that their proposed project is in line with the University's Research Strategy and priorities. Key research priorities are:

Digital Futures

- Robotics, AI, data analytics, cyber security
- Industrial digitalisation and next generation services
- Visualisation – Immersion, VR/AR/MR

Health and Well-being

- Health technologies, biosciences
- Healthy ageing
- Well-being and mental wealth

Creative & digital technologies

- Creative industries, digital innovation
- Audiences of the future
- Intellectual property, value capture

Sustainable Futures

- Transforming construction and design
- Resources, agri-tech, water security, air quality
- Future mobility and connectivity

Cross-cutting expertise & resource (linked to one of more of the above themes)

- Business and management, new business models
- Leadership and innovation, productivity – across board
- Law, digital IP, social well-being, privacy – across board
- Philosophy, robot and AI ethics, technology, privacy
- Historical studies – context and deeper understanding
- Psychology - human behaviour, human factors
- Sociology, organizational studies, distributional impacts

Annex 2

Eligibility for VC ECR Awards

The following examples may help to clarify staff eligibility.

Example A

Dr Smith joined UWE as a Lecturer in September 2016. She was previously a Research Fellow at Bristol University and was appointed to her post there in January 2007.

Dr Smith is ineligible to apply for a VC ECR Award (not within 5 years of becoming eligible).

Example B

Dr Jones was appointed Research Associate in FET in 2006 and progressed to Research Fellow in January 2015.

Dr Jones is eligible to apply for a VC ECR Award (within 5 years of becoming eligible).

Example C

Dr Ali was employed as a Senior Research Fellow by the University of Bath between Oct 2004 and July 2006 (22 months employment). She then took a career break. In January 2018 she joined UWE as an SL.

Dr Ali is eligible to apply for a VC ECR Award (career break time is not included in the 5 years).