

# Guidance on applying to the policy engagement fund

## Overview

Policy Leeds is looking to support researchers within the University of Leeds to engage with local, regional, national or international policy communities to build deeper relationships and more innovative and impactful collaborations through our policy engagement fund.

Objectives:

* To build new or enhance relations with policy-facing partners at local, regional, national or international levels
* To kick-start policy engagement activity, matching areas of research excellence at the University of Leeds with current or anticipated policy needs
* To develop skills and capacities for effective policy engagement within the University, in particular widening the equality, diversity and inclusion of researchers involved in policy engagement

Funding can be applied for via our two funding modes:

* Rapid response mode – to support researchers to respond quickly and tactically to urgent policy opportunities. Awards up to £3,000.
* Small grant mode – to support larger or longer policy engagement projects to establish new areas of engagement or take existing engagement to the next level. Awards up to £7,000.

The funding is intended to support the development of policy engagement focused activities and not research activities. We particularly welcome projects that are developing innovative approaches to policy engagement.

Policy engagement activities could include:

* Supporting building relationships and networks with policy professionals to maximise routes to impact and facilitate coproduction of future research
* To deliver or participate in knowledge exchange activities with policy professionals
* Supporting the translation, application, and utilisation of existing research findings or approaches for policy, for example via a rapid evidence synthesis or demonstrating the value of an approach for a policy context or challenge

The policy engagement fund can be applied for in concert with other funding opportunities, such as Impact Acceleration Accounts, to extend the potential impact of policy engagement activities.

## Eligibility

For the small grant mode, applications should be led by an academic member of staff. For the rapid response mode, applications are welcomed from researchers at PhD level and above, or professional staff whose role involves engaging policy actors with research evidence. For both modes, applicants should be contracted/ registered at the University of Leeds for the duration of the anticipated activity.

## Funding

Policy engagement funding can only cover directly incurred costs associated with the award (i.e. it does not cover Full Economic Costs), which may include:

* Reasonable travel, accommodation and subsistence costs.
* Consumables directly related to the project, such as registration costs at events (excluding academic conferences), production of professional communication materials, room bookings, catering etc.
* Other costs such as external consultancy fees may be eligible. Please discuss with Policy Leeds prior to submitting your application.
* Salaries to support fixed-term staff already employed by the University of Leeds or to recruit new members on a short fixed-term basis.

The following costs are not eligible:

* Academic staff time, DA costs
* IT or equipment costs
* Estates and indirect costs

Small grants can also request Policy Leeds support in the form of project management, organisational and communications capacity, up to a maximum of 0.5 day per week for 3 months (or equivalent).

Applicants should provide costings and justification for the budget requested on the application form.  For all small grants and rapid response applications above £1,000, please submit DA staff cost in consultation with your Faculty Research & Innovation Office or your Faculty Finance Office, in order to inform appropriate sign-off by your Head of School.

Policy Leeds applications can be considered in conjunction with other IAA funding schemes such as the ESRC, or translational funding, including the integrated IAA from other research councils, that are available at the University. Please indicate on you application if you wish for your application to be considered for co-funding with other schemes at the University.

## Application and awards process

There is no deadline for policy engagement fund applications, and applications will be assessed on a rolling basis by Policy Leeds. As a limited amount of funding is available each year, the number of awards will depend on the size of requests already granted.

Please email your completed application form to the Knowledge Exchange team at knowledge-exchange@leeds.ac.uk. If you would like to discuss your application prior to submitting, please contact Juliet Jopson at policyleeds@leeds.ac.uk.

Applications will be assessed based on the likely effectiveness and targeting of the proposed policy engagement, deliverability of the outlined activity, and potential to lead to research impact. Applications should focus on the development of policy engagement activities and outputs, and not research.

For rapid response mode applications we will aim to give feedback on the result of the assessment within one week of application. For small grant mode, decisions will be given within 3 weeks where possible.

Once an application has been approved, the award will either be administered by Policy Leeds (in their project management capacity) or a Faculty account will be set up for the award-holder (which may take a couple of weeks). In this latter case, the award-holder is responsible for managing and reporting on all expenditure and complying with all University of Leeds Financial Regulations.

## Reporting requirements

A short evaluation will be requested one month after the end of the supported activity to enable us to monitor the effectiveness of the funding stream. The report should detail any outputs and outcomes, and reflect on the success of the policy engagement activities undertaken. A template for the report will be provided upon completion of the award.

For larger awards, Policy Leeds may follow up with the award holders after 12 months to capture any longer term outcomes or impacts.