

## RSC Research Fund Frequently Asked Questions

This document applies to the application round 5 June 2023 – 10 July 2023

### **Membership Requirements & details on how to upgrade membership**

All applicants (and co-applicants) must at least be Associate Level Members (AMRSC) or higher (\*see below).

If you currently hold Affiliate Membership, please contact [membership@rsc.org](mailto:membership@rsc.org) to find out about upgrading your membership and whether you are eligible to do so. Please note that your membership must be successfully upgraded before the application deadline. You should allow a couple of months for both new and upgrades of membership to be processed.

\* Levels of Membership

Affiliate	Ineligible: Requires upgrade to Associate or above. Needs to be approved by application deadline.
Associate	Eligible
Member	Eligible
Fellow	Eligible

If your membership login shows your membership status as “Web Applicant / Applicant” this means your Membership Application is still being processed and you have not yet been admitted as a member. Your Membership application must be approved by the grant deadline.

### **How do I submit my application to the Research Fund?**

You need to log onto our online application system. If you have not used the SurveyMonkey Apply system before, you will need to create an account (this is not an RSC system and so your membership login will not work). Once you have created an account, it will take you step-by-step through completing your application, from entering your details, uploading your CV, project proposal and entering your referee and Head of Department's details.

### **Can I save my application to return and complete at a later stage?**

You are not required to complete your application on the same day you start it. You have the option to save your application as you go through allowing you to return multiple times prior to submission.

### **I am unable to access the part of the form to provide details of Scientific Referee and HOD.**

You are required to complete all previous sections of the application form before you are able to access the Scientific Reference and Head of Department sections of the application form. Please note, you will not be able to submit your application until your referee has uploaded their reference, and your Head of Department has submitted their approval.

### **What does my Referee need to do for my application?**

Once you enter the details of your referee, the online system will send them an email with a link. They just have to click this and submit their reference. Please note we cannot accept references via email; they must be uploaded online.

### **I am a PhD Student, can I apply to the Research Fund?**

Unfortunately, PhD students are not eligible for the Research Fund. The grant is only available to those holding an independent research post.

### **What is your definition of an Independent Researcher?**

Typically, eligible applicants are:

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- undertaking self-directed research, and
- not employed on a supervisor or Principal Investigator's grant, and
- not otherwise benefiting from funding from a supervisor or Principal Investigator.

Researchers employed on a Fellowship may apply but should be aware about explaining the need for the Research Fund grant on top of funds already included as part of the Fellowship; part of the grant's assessment criteria is the funding situation of the applicant (please refer to our website for more information).

We typically would not expect postdoctoral research associates (or equivalent) to be eligible under this definition. However, if you believe you should be eligible based on the above definition, our application form provides the opportunity to explain your situation. If you have any uncertainty, we would also recommend that you get in touch with us before applying in order to ascertain eligibility.

### ***What expenses can I use the Research Fund for?***

The Research Fund grant can be used for the purchase of equipment and chemicals, but it cannot be used for salary contributions or travel. External equipment access costs are acceptable but must be justified. Please note however that the Research Fund does not typically provide travel funding, so if you need to go with your sample, you will need to make a case for it in your application.

### ***What does my Head of Department need to do for my application?***

As part of the application, you will be asked to enter the details of your Head of Department. Once you enter their details, the application system will send them an email with a link. They just have to click this link, then confirm that they approve the application (tick box). The approval confirms that the application is the only one from your department.

### ***Can my former PhD supervisor to act as a referee?***

Yes, your former supervisor can act as your referee, but they will need to declare this in your reference letter.

### ***Can my Head of Department also be my Scientific Referee?***

No, your Head of Department cannot act as your scientific referee. Your scientific referee should be another researcher who is able to comment on your scientific proposal.

### ***Can I, as Head of Department, apply for the Research Fund?***

If you are the Head of Department, you are eligible to nominate yourself and approve your own application.

### ***Do I need to have a permanent position in my institution?***

You do not necessarily need to have a permanent position, but you must hold an independent research position and you must be employed in your post for the duration of your project.

### ***How long does my project proposal need to be?***

The total project proposal cannot exceed two A4 pages at font size 10 (including references). Please note that we reserve the right to reject any applications that do not meet length restrictions.

### ***How long does my CV need to be?***

Your entire CV (including any references or supplementary information) cannot exceed one A4 page at font size 10. Please note that we reserve the right to reject any applications that do not meet length restrictions.

### ***I currently hold an active Research Fund from a previous round, can I apply again?***

You are not eligible to apply if you currently have an active Research Fund grant.

### ***Is there a timeframe for completion of my project?***

There is no strict grant period should you be successful with your Research Fund application. However, we expect all projects to be achievable within a 12-month timeframe from when you are awarded the grant.