

Researcher Collaborations Grant

Guidance for Applicants

The following document provides guidance on the eligibility and process for the **3 March 2025 – 7 April 2025** application round of the Royal Society of Chemistry (“RSC”) Researcher Collaborations Grant.

Please read the following guidance for applicants before making an application.

1. About the grant

- 1.1 Up to £5000 GBP (“**Grant**”) will be awarded to the successful applicant (“**Recipient**”) to undertake a Project (“**Project**”) which enables them to establish and/or develop national, international, interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaborations and networks. Activities include participating in a research visit(s) to a potential or current collaborator’s institution or organising a meeting or workshop.
- 1.2 It is not intended that the Grant will support existing conferences and meeting series or those hosted on behalf of organisations, rather small workshops/discussion-style type meetings to facilitate potential and existing collaborations/networks.
- 1.3 For research visits, the Grant is intended to facilitate a project between the Recipient and up to three collaborators (“**Collaborator(s)**”). The Grant can be used to support the Recipient to visit the Collaborator(s). In addition to the Recipient’s research visit(s), the Grant can also be used for the Recipient to host visit(s) from the same Collaborator(s).

2. Duration and start of award

- 2.1 Funding is available for a period of up to 12 months for activities starting within 12 months of 1 August 2025.
- 2.2 Recipients will be able to request a no cost extension of up to 12 months at any point within the duration of the grant.

3. Eligibility

- 3.1 Applications should be made by one person “**Applicant**”. The Applicant should be the person undertaking the research visit(s) or organising the meeting/workshop. Applications cannot be made on behalf of another person.
- 3.2 Applicants must be either an Associate Member (AMRSC), Member (MRSC) or Fellow (FRSC) of the RSC at the time of the application deadline and for the duration of the grant period. This will be checked by RSC staff and the Applicant’s RSC membership must be confirmed at the grant application deadline. It is not sufficient to have a membership application in process. 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.
- 3.3 Applicants may only apply for a maximum of one RSC Researcher Collaborations Grant per application round.

- 3.4 Applicants must not be a Recipient of another active RSC Researcher Collaborations Grant. i.e. previous Researcher Collaborations Grant Recipients must have completed and submitted their Final Reports before they can apply for another Researcher Collaborations Grant.
- 3.5 There are no career stage restrictions associated with this scheme, however Applicants must either:
 - 3.5.1 Hold a fixed term or permanent contract at an eligible organisation (university; industrial, private or commercial organisation; university spin-out company or research institute) that lasts for the duration of the grant. Or
 - 3.5.2 Be undertaking a graduate course at a Higher Education Institution, for example university.
- 3.6 Any given Project may not receive more than one RSC grant. Applicants must inform the RSC if a Project is successful in multiple RSC grant applications.
- 3.7 The Applicant is solely responsible for ensuring they are not under any obligation which prevents them from applying for or receiving the funds, whether the obligations are imposed by the home organisation or otherwise.

4. Application timelines

Applications open: 3 March 2025

Application close: 7 April 2025 14:00 UK time (BST)

Initial eligibility decisions: Week commencing 22 April 2025

Funding decisions: By end of June 2025

5. Application requirements

- 5.1 Applicants must make their application through the RSC's online application system, [SurveyMonkey Apply](#). Before completing the online form, all Applicants should check that they comply with the eligibility requirements that are stated in section 3.
- 5.2 Applicants must use their own SurveyMonkey Apply account, under their own name and email address. Applications made under another person's account will not be considered.
- 5.3 The application form will ask the Applicant to provide:
 - a. Information on the nature and purpose of the Project and the need for collaboration.
 - b. Details of the Collaborator(s) and their respective contribution(s) to the project
 - c. The expected outcomes and potential next steps from the Project for the research area and/or collaboration(s).
 - d. Information on how RSC funding will make a significant difference to the ability to deliver the Project.
 - e. The approximate costings of the Project and a breakdown of how the Grant will be used. This should include quantities and approximate costs for each item (see eligible costs in section 6).
 - f. A document of maximum two sides of A4 (at font size 10) describing the scientific case for the proposed Project.

- g. A document outlining the meeting/workshop programme, if relevant.
- h. Letter(s) of Support from the proposed collaborator(s) (see section 7).
 - i. For Projects to visit a potential/current collaborator, a Letter of Support is needed from each collaborator the Recipient will visit, up to a maximum of three.
 - ii. For Projects to host a meeting/workshop with multi participants, the letter of support should be from a potential key participant.
- i. Approval from either the Applicant's Supervisor, Line manager or Head of Department in support of the application (see section 8)
- j. For Applicants seeking funding to organise meetings/workshops, details on any actions to be taken to ensure an inclusive event. Guidance on inclusive events can be found here: <https://www.rsc.org/policy-evidence-campaigns/inclusion-diversity/resources/#network-guides>.
- k. Applications will not be considered for funding if any part of the application exceeds length limits specified in the application form.

6. Eligible costs

- 6.1 Applicants may apply for costs directly needed for their Project. All costs should be essential to undertake the Project, as well as be reasonable and appropriate for the Project. These can include:
 - a. Travel, including visa and insurance, accommodation and subsistence costs to visit any Collaborator(s).
 - b. Up to £500 to fund any other essential expenses required for a research visit for example chemicals or consumables, access charges or specialist software licences.
 - c. Venue hire, catering costs, essential participant expenses, equipment costs eg AV and costs for accessibility to organise a meeting/workshop.
- 6.2 Recipients shall ensure that any subsistence costs do not exceed £30 a day.
- 6.3 Recipients are encouraged to travel by the most economic fare. Wherever possible the environmental effect of travel should be considered.
- 6.4 Applicants can request funds to organise multiple research visits or meetings in the same application if they relate to the work outlined in the project proposal.
- 6.5 Applicants can only apply for either research visit(s) or to host meeting(s) in an application. If you have projects that require you to undertake both kinds of activities, please get in touch with us at funding@rsc.org.
- 6.6 Funding should not replace or reduce institutional or funding agency support.
- 6.7 Applicants may not seek funding for the following within their application:
 - a. Salary contributions, including consultant fees
 - b. Costs for general-purpose hardware, apparatus, or equipment
 - c. Costs for the dissemination of work, including conference attendance and publication costs
 - d. Social excursions
 - e. Personal items, such as clothing, toiletries or entertainment/leisure expenses

- f. Expenses not related to the grant applicant (e.g. costs relating to accompanying family members). Although, depending on your circumstances, you may also be interested in our Grants for Carers and Accessibility Grants
 - g. Computers, phones, tablets or other personal gadgets/electronics
- 6.8 Recipients will be expected to make their own travel and accommodation arrangements, in liaison with their collaborator as appropriate, including visa arrangements. Recipients should ensure they have insurance and access to additional financial support in case their costs unexpectedly increase.
- 6.9 Recipients who are travelling or participating in in-person activities should follow relevant institutional and government guidelines and policies.

7. Inviting collaborators to provide a letter of support for the application.

- 7.1 Applicants must include a letter of support from each of the named Collaborator(s) as part of the application. ***Please make them aware of this before entering their details into the application system.***
- 7.2 Applicants are required to complete all sections of the Main Application Form before the Applicant can access the Collaborator letter of support section of the application form.
- 7.3 Once Applicants enter the details of the Collaborator, the SurveyMonkey Apply system will send them an email, which includes a link to the application. Clicking this link will allow them to login (or sign up) to enter their letter of support. If they have not received a link, it may have gone to their junk folder. Please contact funding@rsc.org if there are any problems.
- 7.4 **The Collaborator(s)' letter(s) of support needs to be completed by the Grant application deadline.** Please consider the availability of the Collaborator(s). We recommend giving the Collaborator(s) at least two weeks to complete their section of the application form. The RSC will recommend to the Collaborator(s) that their declaration needs to be completed in advance of the application deadline.
- 7.5 Applicants will not be able to submit their application form until the status for the **Collaborator letter of support** task(s) shows as 'complete'.
- 7.6 If Applicants needs to make any final edits after submitting their application before the application deadline, they should contact funding@rsc.org for guidance.

8. Inviting people to provide their approval for the application.

- 8.1 Applicants must include approval from either their Supervisor, Line Manager or Head of Department within their application. **Please make the nominated person aware of this before entering their details into the application system.** The approval cannot be provided by the Applicant.
- 8.1.1 If you are a PhD student, the person you nominate should be your PhD supervisor or Head of Department.
 - 8.1.2 If you are working in research (including postdocs), this person should be your supervisor, line manager or Head of Department.
- 8.2 Applicants are required to complete all sections of the Main Application Form before the Applicant can access the approval section of the application form.

- 8.3 Once Applicants enter the details of a Supervisor/Line Manager/Head of Department, the SurveyMonkey Apply System will send the nominated person an email, which includes a link to the application. Clicking this link will allow the nominated person to login (or sign up) to provide their approval. If they have not received a link, it may have gone to their junk folder. Please contact funding@rsc.org if there are any problems.
- 8.4 **The approval needs to be completed by the grant application deadline.** Please consider the availability of the nominated person. We recommend giving people at least two weeks to complete their section of the application form. The RSC will recommend to the nominated person that their declaration needs to be completed in advance of the application deadline.
- 8.5 Applicants will not be able to submit their application form until the status for approval shows as 'complete'.
- 8.6 If Applicants need to make any final edits after submitting their application before the application deadline, they should contact funding@rsc.org for guidance.

9. Assessment Criteria

- 9.1 The assessment criteria are:

a) Case for collaboration

Applicants should give thoughtful consideration to why they chose their respective collaborator(s) for the Project.

It should be clear how each party contributes to the project or research problem.

There should also be clear scope for sustained partnership(s) beyond the conclusion of this grant application.

b) Scientific quality

The scientific proposal must be novel and achievable in the specified timeframe.

Applications should include a timely research problem that merits the proposed Project.

Applications should also have impactful expected outcomes and plans for "next steps".

c) Case for RSC funding

Applicants should demonstrate why RSC funding would be enabling. They should place their funding request in the context of other sources of funding available to them.

d) Inclusion & Diversity (meetings only)

Applicants must demonstrate actions to be taken to ensure an inclusive meeting.

10. Review process

- 10.1 All applications will be checked by RSC staff. Your application will not proceed to peer review if:
- a) The Applicant(s) does not meet our eligibility criteria (please see section 3);
 - b) the application is incomplete (see section 5);

- c) the application does not adhere to the length limits (see section 5);
 - d) the Applicant's funding request exceeds £5000 limit (see section 1);
 - e) the application includes ineligible costs (see section 6);
- 10.2 All remaining applications will undergo peer review by members of our Researcher Grants Peer Review Group and final funding decisions will then be overseen by:
- Professor Alison Hulme, University of Edinburgh
- Dr Charles O'Hara, University of Strathclyde
- Dr Petra Szilagyi, University of Oslo
- Professor Ben Xu, Northumbria University

11. Successful applications

- 11.1 Applicants will be notified by email of any funding decision.
- 11.2 The funding offer is conditional on RSC receiving in writing from the Recipient the details of the bank account the Grant is to be paid into and agreement to all of the conditions set out in the Standard Conditions of Grant within fifty (50) working days of the date of the RSC's letter confirming the Grant is being awarded ("**Award Letter**").
- 11.3 The grant will be paid in a single payment to the Recipient's organisation or, in the case of Projects involving research visits, to the organisation that the Recipient will visit. No funds will be paid directly to individual Recipients.
- 11.4 The Recipient shall submit to the RSC a report ("**Final Report**") on completion of the project.

12. Contact information

If you have any questions about this grant please contact funding@rsc.org. Before contacting us please check the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document for the grant in case this answers your question.