Researcher Collaborations Grant
Guidance for Applicants

The following document provides guidance on the eligibility and process for the 29 August 2023 – 2 October 2023 application round of the Researcher Collaborations Grant.

Please read these before making an application.

1. About the grant
1.1 Up to £5000 GBP will be awarded to the successful applicant to undertake an activity 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.

2. Duration and start of award
2.1 Funding is available for a period of up to 12 months for activities occurring in 2024.
2.2 Grant Holders 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 Applicants must be RSC members (Associate Member or above) 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.
3.2 Applicants can be PhD students or researchers, in any sector. There are no career stage restrictions associated with this scheme. However:
3.2.1 PhD students must be actively undertaking a PhD course in the chemical sciences.
3.2.2 Researchers must be holding 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 period.
3.3 Any given activity may not receive more than one RSC grant. Applicants must inform the RSC if an activity is successful in multiple RSC grant applications.
3.4 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: 29 August 2023
Application close: 2 October 2023 14:00 UK time
Initial screening decisions: Week commencing 16 October 2023
Funding decisions: By 24 December 2023

5. Application requirements

5.1 Applications will be made through our online application system, SurveyMonkey Apply. Before completing the online form, all applicants should check that they comply with the eligibility requirements.

5.2 Applicants are required to provide information on:
   a. The nature and purpose of the activity in which they seek funding.
   b. The need for collaboration.
   c. For applicants seeking funding to host meetings/workshops, they must include 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.
   d. The expected outcomes and potential next steps from the activity for the research area and/or collaboration(s).
   e. The approximate costings for the activity and a description of the manner in which any awarded grant funding would be spent. This should include quantities and approximate costs for each item (see eligible costs in section 6).
   f. The need for RSC funding.

5.3 A document of maximum two sides of A4 (at font size 10) on the scientific case for the proposed activity should be uploaded.

5.4 Your application will be rejected without review if the activity proposal exceeds length limits specified in the application form.

5.5 Applicants must include a Letter of Support from their collaborator as part of the application. For those seeking funding to visit a potential/current collaborator, the Letter of Support should be from the Host Collaborator. For those seeking funding to host a meeting/workshop with multi participants, the letter of support should be from a potential key participant.

5.6 Applicants must include a declaration from either their Supervisor, Line manager or Head of Department in support of the application.

6. Eligible costs

6.1 For applicants requesting funding to visit a potential or current collaborator, the grant can be used to contribute towards travel, including visa and insurance costs, to and from the host collaborators, accommodation and subsistence during the visit. Applicants may apply for up to £500 to fund any other essential expenses during their visit and can include, for example, chemicals or consumables, access charges or specialist software licences.

6.2 For applicants requesting funding to organise/host a meeting/workshop, the grant can be used to contribute towards venue hire, catering costs, essential participant expenses, equipment costs eg AV and costs for accessibility.
6.3 Applicants cannot apply for salary contributions, including consultant fees, social excursions or dissemination costs associated with their activity. Applicants may not seek funding for conference attendance within their RSC Researcher Collaborations Grant application.

6.4 Grant Holders will be expected to make their own travel and accommodation arrangements, in liaison with their Host Collaborator as appropriate, including visa arrangements. Grant Holders should ensure they have insurance or access to additional financial support in case their costs unexpectedly increase.

6.5 Grant Holders 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 their collaborator as part of the application. For those seeking funding to visit a potential/current collaborator, the letter of support should be from the host collaborator. For those seeking funding to host a meeting/workshop with multi participants, the letter of support should be from one potential key participant. **Please make them aware of this before entering their details into the application system.**

7.2 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.

7.3 **The collaborator letter of support needs to be completed by the grant deadline.** You will not be able to submit your application form until the status shows ‘complete’.

8. Inviting people to provide their support of the application.

8.1 Applicants must include confirmation of support from either their Supervisor, Line Manager or Head of Department in support of the application. **Please make them aware of this before entering their details into the application system.**

8.2 Once applicants enter the details of a Supervisor/Line Manager/Head of Department, 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 confirm their support.

8.3 **Confirmation of support needs to be completed by the grant deadline.** You will not be able to submit your application form until the status shows ‘complete’.

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 activity.

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 activity. 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 undergo an initial screening by RSC staff. Applications will be rejected at this stage if:

a) You do not meet our eligibility criteria (please see above)

b) Your application is incomplete

c) Your application does not adhere to the length limits instructed in the application system

d) Your funding request exceeds the £5000 limit

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. **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.