

Research England Strategic Institutional Research Funding Review



Research
England

Strategic Institutional Research Funding Principles and assumptions

How Research England's Strategic Institutional Research Funding (SIRF) supports a healthy research sector

Principles

SIRF contributes to these overall aims in collaboration with funding from other sources



Enable research excellence
Supporting infrastructure, environment and culture to enable high-quality research outputs and impact



Contribute towards research sustainability
Enabling long-term financial and strategic planning



Support a healthy research sector
Supporting the wide range of institutions, research disciplines and missions



Address strategic priorities
Facilitating research responses to current and emerging local, national and global challenges

Objectives

The purpose of SIRF and how Research England uses it to support the research sector

Recognise research quality
across the wide range of research outputs



Enhance research infrastructure
and promote effective use across the sector

Balance transparency & burden
by considering administrative burden while evidencing value



Drive research impact
supporting connections with wider society to bring about positive socio-economic change



Enable HEP's strategic autonomy
providing flexibility to progress their own research strategies and priorities

Balance stability & dynamism
to enable longer term strategic planning and agile responses to emerging priorities



Enable partnerships
promote collaboration across the research sector, including higher education providers, industry, charities and communities

Support people & culture
building and maintaining an inclusive research system

Mechanisms

Research England uses two broad funding mechanisms to allocate SIRF



Flexible funding
can be used by HEPs to support any research activity

Ring-fenced funding
must be allocated to activities that support the specific aims of the fund



SIRF Review

Research England is undertaking a review of our approach to some of our formula-based research funding. This activity is called the strategic institutional research funding (SIRF) review.

The review will consider the fundamental principles and the effectiveness of our current funding allocation mechanisms, in consultation with the higher education sector and wider stakeholders. This review is anticipated to continue until 2030 and will be made up of several discrete stages.

Funding streams included in the Review include:

- QR Mainstream
- QR business research element
- QR charity support element
- QR research degree programme supervision fund
- Research Capital Infrastructure Funding
- Specialist Provider Element
- Policy Support Fund
- Participatory Research Fund
- Enhancing Research Culture Fund

One phase of the SIRF Review is to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of our funding. An element of this is a review of RE's SIRF ring-fenced funding, which includes the Enhancing Research Culture Fund.

SIRF Principles and Assumptions Explainer

The Review explores how SIRF currently delivers on its aims and objectives, including testing the findings against the identified principles and assumptions below.

Principles

These principles describe the high-level aims that Research England's SIRF is intended to contribute to as part of a healthy research sector and in collaboration with funding from other sources.

Objectives

The objectives outline the purpose of SIRF and how Research England uses it to support the research sector

Mechanisms

There are two broad funding mechanisms used by Research England to allocate SIRF, flexible funding and ring-fenced funding streams

If you would like to talk to us or share your experience, please contact the Research Funding team at researchpolicy@re.ukri.org