Social Sciences Research Development Fund (SS RDF)

Guidelines 2024/25

Awards of up to £5,000 are available to support researchers (individuals and teams) in the Faculty of Social Sciences to develop strategic and competitive external funding bids. The Social Sciences Research Development Fund (SS RDF) will support research activities taking place between 7 October 2024 and 31 July 2025.

The SS RDF will contribute up to a maximum of £5,000 towards research expenses for defined research projects. This includes scoping activity for data collection such as costs for travel, accommodation, and the hiring of research assistants. It may also cover larger-scale networking activities such as holding workshops or consortia meetings with external collaborators and international partners. Stand-alone pilot studies generating data to inform a significant grant application can also be funded. Such pilot studies would hopefully also result in publishable pieces of research. In all cases, projects must identify and target a major external funding scheme with clear timelines and strategies for submission.

Applications led by and/or including University of Warwick early-career researchers[1] are particularly welcome.

Applications are also strongly encouraged to link to the Social Science Connect Programme Themes:

- Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience;
- Promoting Social Justice;
- Data and the Production of Knowledge;
- Understanding Behaviour and Experience;
- Creating Inclusive Prosperity;
- Health, Wellbeing, and Care.

Support from host departments is important and so all applications to the SS RDF should include a financial (not in-kind) contribution from a Social Sciences department or appropriate internal organisation. The contribution should be at least 10% of the overall cost of the proposed project. As funding capacity is limited, the RDF cannot support all applications.

Budgets

Applicants should provide a clear budget in their applications. This should include the full costs of the project, a clear indication of contributions from other sources, particularly confirmation of financial contribution. All costs must be fully justified and in accordance with Warwick's travel and subsistence allowances.

Value for money is an important assessment criterion and all costs should be robustly justified. Proposals including shared costs will be particularly welcome, especially in terms of support for any non-Warwick academics. It is unlikely that all such costs would be supported by the fund.

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[1] ECRs are Assistant Professors and other research staff (assistants and fellows), or individuals who have already submitted their PhD thesis and are awaiting their viva (max. 5 years post-viva).

SS RDF will not support requests for PI or Co-I time, estates, or indirect costs. These costs should not be included in the budget.

A budget template is included in the application form. Please contact your Departmental Administrator for any assistance required in developing the budget.

How to Apply
The application form is available to download on the [Social Sciences Research Development Fund](#) webpage and should be accompanied by a narrative CV from the main applicant (please use the template provided).

Completed application forms and main applicant CV, should be signed and emailed by the Head of Department or by a departmental representative (with Head of Department in copy) as an attachment to the Faculty resource account (fss.rdf@warwick.ac.uk).

Applications will be assessed by a Faculty panel shortly after the deadline, with outcomes communicated as soon as possible.

Assessment criteria will include:

- (i) novelty and timeliness of project;
- (ii) clear objectives and methodology;
- (iii) national or international relevance;
- (iv) link to strategic priorities of department/Centre/Faculty/University;
- (v) likelihood that proposal will lead to an external funding application (please make sure you clearly explain the link between the proposal and the planned external grant application); and
- (vi) value for money.

If your application cannot wait for the next formal deadline, please contact fss.rdf@warwick.ac.uk with a brief explanation of the time-sensitive nature of your proposal and the funding panel Chair will decide whether the proposal can be considered under a rapid response pathway.

Faculty of Social Sciences Research Development Fund

Terms and Conditions (2024-25)

General

Awards are non-repayable grants (except in the case of conferences or other events which make a profit).

Application forms should be electronically signed by the applicant and the Head of Department.

Application forms must be submitted to the SS RDF inbox by the applicant's Head of Department, or a departmental representative with the Head of Department in CC, by the specified deadline.

Funds must be spent between 1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025. No expenditure will be permitted against RDF codes after 31 July 2025.

Appropriate ethical approval must be sought where necessary and relevant before project work commences.

There must be no significant additional space or equipment implications that cannot be accommodated within the Department(s) involved.

All decisions taken by the assessment panel are final.

Eligibility

The SS RDF is open to all researchers within the Faculty of Social Sciences, with particular encouragement given to early career researchers.

Applications will only be accepted from permanent or fixed-term members of staff (who have at least 12 months of their employment contract to run with effect from the start date of the project) within the Faculty of Social Sciences.

ECRs are Assistant Professors and other research staff (assistants and fellows), or individuals who have already submitted their PhD thesis and are awaiting their viva (max. 5 years post-viva).

Eligible costs

Eligible costs include direct staff costs, consumables, travel and accommodation, and all other items required for the project.

Equipment requests will not be supported other than in very exceptional circumstances. Any requests for specialist equipment should be fully justified by the Head of Department as well as the applicant.

Building and refurbishment costs are ineligible under this scheme.

SS RDF will not support requests for PI or Co-I time, estates and indirect costs. These costs should not be included in the budget.

Applications must include a completed budget section and all costs should be justified in the application form.

Contribution

Support from host departments is important and so all applications to the SS RDF should include a financial (not in-kind) contribution from a Social Sciences department, or appropriate internal organisation, or an external body. The contribution should be at least 10% of the overall cost of the proposed project.

The applicant's Department (and those of all co-applicants) must detail any contribution they will make to the direct costs of the project.

Epigeum Research Integrity Training

The University takes seriously its commitment towards the provision of a healthy research culture for all staff, students and research participants. Applicants to RDF are therefore strongly encouraged to undertake either the full or condensed version of the Epigeum Research Integrity Training which can be accessed [here](). Please note that completion of this training will be reviewed when applying for any future internal funds.

Reporting Requirements

All successful applicants will be required to provide a brief report within 1 month of the end of the funding period (31 August 2025). A template report will be provided to award holders.