**AHRC Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) Guidance Notes**

These Guidance Notes are to be read *before* and referred to during completing the **AHRC Impact Acceleration Account Application Form**. The Guidance Notes follow the order of the form step by step. If you have any questions about this guidance or completing the form, please contact ahrciaa@lancaster.ac.uk.

**Initial declaration relating to these Guidance Notes**

**Please confirm that you have read these accompanying Guidance Notes in order to complete this application**

Please delete Yes or No as appropriate to confirm whether you have read *this* document. This is a prompt to avoid any queries that should already be answered through reading and considering the criteria below.

**1. Applicant Details**

Only staff with an indefinite contract at Lancaster University are eligible to lead an IAA-funded project. The lead staff member/applicant may supervise and involve other staff (e.g. RAs or Post-Doctoral Researcher) in delivery of IAA projects, but they remain the PI. You must show how at least 51% or more of your activity fits within the AHRC remit to access these funds – we encourage interdisciplinary projects. Arts and humanities disciplines that the AHRC funds are listed [here](https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/AHRC-210722-ResearchFundingGuide.pdf) (see pages 88-95), with a helpful commentary on AHRC/ESRC distinctions on pages 96-98. We are also keen to know if you have previously received other IAA funding.

**2. External Partner Organisation**

It is mandatory that you have an external (non-HEI) partner for this funding scheme. **Please note that for projects** requesting over £20,000 matched in cash (not in-kind) from your external partner(s) (see section 12) **a signed collaboration agreement** will be required outlining things such as payment terms and intellectual property ownership. A template of this agreement can be supplied to the partner as part of the preparation of the proposal as this will potentially save time later. Please note: **Only in exceptional circumstances will amendments to the terms of the agreement be considered by the University.**

**3. Proposed dates of project**

Please indicate your preferred start and end dates. These are likely to be indicative of the level of funding requested and all activities set out in the rest of your application. All funding awarded must be spent no later than 31 March 2025, however all projects should be finished well in advance of this date.

**4. Head of Department Approval**

**Your application must be approved by your Head of Department before being submitted for review**.

Approval should be provided by e-signature. If this is not possible, please confirm the date of approval and retain the email from your HoD approving your application - this will be checked on award for auditing purposes. Your HoD will be informed of the outcome of your application. We also expect to share details of successful applications/projects with relevant colleagues via relevant Committees and associated reports and communications e.g. PRCs, Engagement Committees and Impact Committees.

**5. IP Declaration**

Please confirm who owns any Intellectual Property and know-how related to your application - if you are unsure, please make this clear. If you need any further [IP and Commercialisation Support](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/research/research-enterprise-services/ip-support/), please contact Jess Wenmouth (Commercialisation Impact Manager on j.wenmouth@lancaster.ac.uk.

**6. Proposed Project Title**

Along with a title that best describes your project, please also provide a short title in brackets for internal systems and reporting.

**7. Summary of the collaborative idea and key objectives**

Provide a summary which can be understood by a non-specialist reader. It is important that you provide sufficient context and background of your research, but do not go into too much detail – the panel is not questioning your *research* on this application, but the *impact* you will achieve through this project. Explain the key aspects of the project such as the need, the importance, the intended beneficiaries, the anticipated impacts and how they will be achieved. **This scheme will not fund primary research or contract research/consultancy.**

**8. Why is this particular partnership/collaboration best suited to achieve your project objectives?**

The primary purpose of the IAA scheme is to enable partnership working and collaboration in order to accelerate the impact of academic research. Although the term to ‘accelerate’ suggests this may be about speeding up the generation of impact, this has a broader meaning relating to growing the impact you have already had or developing or progressing collaborative activities to have impact.

Please tell us why this partnership is best suited to achieve the intended impact – why is your partner best placed to help you achieve this; what is their motivation, why will they work with you and you with them, what is the main driver for this partnership?

**9. How does your project meet Lancaster University strategic priorities?**

It is good for the panel to be clear how IAA funded projects align with strategic priorities. Those that directly relate to the institutional Strategic Plan are likely to be scored more favourably, however we recognise the importance of our broad research base and its value, so this provides an opportunity to set out how your project relates to strategic priorities at a departmental, faculty or institutional level to highlight its importance.

**10. What will the impact be for all partners?**

This is an important aspect of collaboration with *all* external partners. A successful collaboration will bring benefits to all parties concerned and it is important to identify and discuss these with your partner, in order to be clear, manage expectations and confirm this has been agreed with all partners. Your impact project should be done ‘with’ partners, not ‘to or on’ them. We strongly encourage applicants to undertake a FAB analysis (below) to demonstrate why a research outcome could potentially translate into impact:

**Features** – the nature of the impact and underpinning research

**Advantages** – what the application of the research delivers compared to current understanding

**Benefits** – reasons for applying the research

Partner impacts should be discussed in advance of submission. These should be described in terms of an anticipated change within the partner, such as change in attitudes, behaviours and knowledge, enhanced R&D capability, networks and credibility for future collaborations or increased understanding of how partners apply university research outcomes.

**11. What is your proposed project plan?**

Please describe the key stages of the project and the activities to be undertaken *by each of the partners*, illustrating the interactions and timescales by providing a description, Gantt chart, table or diagram. This should show how the activities are intended to deliver the outputs and outcomes achieved and the dependencies between them. **The significance of partner involvement and the impact(s) that may be accrued by their organisation as a direct result of participation cannot be overstated**. We expect to see partners embedded in project activities regardless of whether they are contributing cash to the project or not – ensuring a high level of involvement is more likely to enable a sustained partnership post IAA funding.

**12. Please describe how the relationship between the partners will be sustained post funding, and what a follow-on project could achieve?**

A key aim of the IAA is to build sustainable partnerships beyond the initial impact project. Please describe how the relationship between the partners will be sustained post funding and what a follow-on project could achieve. Describe how you envisage the partnership developing, what your collaboration could achieve and how it could develop going forward. Be ambitious *and* realistic. The more specific examples for funding streams and timescales you can provide, the stronger your application will be. For example, identifying a specific UKRI or other funding call or further contract research or consultancy.

**13. Budget**

**Please note that all monies must be spent no later than 31 March 2025.**

Please confirm whether you are requesting seed, growth or accelerator funding:

* **Seed funding** for up to £10,000 per project, intended for short 3-6 month duration projects to enable initial researcher and external partner collaborations or for critical, emerging opportunities.
* **Growth funding** for up to £20,000 per project, intended to support AHRC researchers and partners with clear routes to accelerate, deepen or broaden impact over 6-12 months.
* **Accelerator funding** for over £20,000, intended to support teams of researchers make substantive advances with an external partner along the impact pathway. This must include funding matched in cash (not in-kind) from your external partner(s).

Please provide details of any match funding you will receive from your partner (cash or in-kind). In-kind contributions are welcome for all projects and further demonstrate partner commitment. Please can we reiterate that **Accelerator funding IAA projects** must be matched in cash from your external partner(s) and details given.

Please provide details of your requested budget:

* One total figure is *not* sufficient – a breakdown of headings is required.
* Include the Value Added Tax (VAT) on costs where applicable.
* Full Economic Costs are not applicable/eligible (i.e. estates and indirect costs, permanent staff time etc).
* We are looking to support the additional direct costs of projects through this call – so additional Research Assistant/Post-Doctoral Researcher time, travel, consumables and small items of equipment (<£10K)
* Costs and approvals do *not* need to go through the Research Support Office, though you may find it helpful to seek assistance with staff costs, if applicable.

**14. Please explain how you will protect and promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) within this project**

The AHRC Impact Acceleration Account at Lancaster University works to promote, equality, diversity and inclusion. This supports Lancaster University’s commitment to creating an environment where everyone can thrive and fulfil their potential is expressed by initiatives linked with recognising and supporting protected characteristics including age, disability, gender identity, race, religion and sex and sexual orientation in alignment with the Equality Act 2010. Our commitments, aims and planned actions are set out in our [**EDI Strategy**](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/edi/edi-strategy/), Gender Pay Gap Report and our EDI chartermarks work.

The application should describe activities that feature EDI, such as recruitment to the project and Personal Development Reviews of staff actively engaged in delivery, and how new approaches might be adopted/developed to support compliance with, and delivery of, EDI within all organisations involved in the partnership. All partners of the University are responsible for complying with equality legislation and equality requirements set out in contracts with the University. This applies equally to IAA partnerships and it is the Project Lead’s responsibility to check that appropriate policies exist and are adhered to as applicable and where appropriate to the project, for example in the case of secondments. As part of your EDI considerations, please include any relevant details relating to intended beneficiaries of the collaboration.

**15. Please explain how you will approach Responsible Innovation (RI) within this project**

Lancaster University and UKRI expects all staff involved in research to understand, and account for, the risk of unintended consequences stemming from innovation. By understanding what ‘Responsible Innovation’ offers by way of mitigating negative impacts through effective planning, accountability and transparency, researchers involved in IAA funded projects will maximise impact whilst ensuring that the systems, processes and results of their work meet the standards required by the University, the UKRI and wider society. We will include in the assessment of applications, a consideration of the robustness and appropriateness of the measures proposed to ensure ‘Responsible Innovation’.

Please use the following to describe the project’s approach to RI:

* **Anticipate** – describing and analysing the impacts, intended or otherwise, (for example economic, social, cultural and environmental) that might arise. This does not seek to predict but rather to support an exploration of possible impacts and implications that may otherwise remain uncovered and little discussed.
* **Reflect** – reflecting on the purposes of, motivations for and potential implications of the research, and the associated uncertainties, areas of ignorance, assumptions, framings, questions, dilemmas and social transformations these may bring.
* **Engage** – opening up such visions, impacts and questioning to broader deliberation, dialogue, engagement and debate in an inclusive way.
* **Act** – using these processes to influence the direction and trajectory of the research and innovation process itself.

**16. Please briefly explain why you think this is the most appropriate source of funding for your project.**This is to ensure that IAA funding is the most appropriate mechanism for support. We realise there are a number of internal and external funds available, so we require confirmation that the IAA is the most appropriate for support, particularly in developing and sustaining external non-HEI partnerships to enable progression along an impact pathway. If the IAA is not the most appropriate funding, the IAA Team or Research Support Office colleagues can help you to look for alternative funding sources.