

ISPF International Collaboration Awards 2025 - Japan

The following scheme notes set out the eligibility and application process of the Royal Society ISPF International Collaboration Awards – for UK partnerships with Japan. Please read through the entire document before proceeding with an application.

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1 Overview

1.1 Background

The [International Science Partnerships Fund](#) (ISPF) will support collaborations between UK researchers and innovators and international peers to deliver important science that can only be fully realised by working internationally. The fund aims to support research excellence and build the knowledge and technology of tomorrow; strengthen ties with international partners that share our values; and enable researchers and innovators to cultivate connections and follow their curiosity.

This call is funded by ISPF under the theme of “Tomorrow’s Talent – Nurturing talent to drive inclusion, research and innovation.” The call is delivered by the Royal Society and applications should be made through the Royal Society’s grants and awards management system.

1.2 Aims of the Scheme

The International Collaboration Awards will provide funding to enable outstanding emerging research leaders in the UK and Japan jointly to develop bilateral research collaborations.

The grants are open to newly independent researchers building their own group who are ready to lead and drive the research vision of an international research programme.

The objectives of these awards are to:

- **Supporting collaboration** - support the development of sustainable and mutually beneficial collaborative partnerships and growth of international research networks;
- **Funding high-quality and original research** – enable newly independent researchers to generate new approaches to challenging research questions;
- **Nurturing talent** - build the capabilities of newly independent researchers and their groups to conduct, manage, share and apply high quality research through sharing of knowledge, skills and exchange of people.

1.3 Subjects Covered

Research must be within the Royal Society’s remit of natural sciences, which includes but is not limited to biological research, chemistry, engineering, mathematics and physics. For a full list, please see [our guidance page](#).

Submissions from clinically qualified scientists may be considered. The Society does not support clinical or interventional research on humans at the individual or group level, social sciences or humanities, unless otherwise stated.

If there is any doubt about the eligibility of a project, contact the Grants team via collaboration.awards@royalsociety.org.

1.4 **Duration and Start of Award**

Approximate number of Awards offered: 15

Awards are expected to commence between January and March 2026.

The award is available for three years.

2 Timetable

Opening date	Tuesday, 13 May 2025
Closing date	Tuesday, 08 July 2025, 15:00 (UK Time)
Expected results	November 2025

3 Finance

Applicants are permitted to apply for up to £225,000 (£75,000 per year) from the Royal Society.

3.1 **Programme Specific Funding Rules**

Funding Rules are listed within the [Royal Society Grant Funding Guidance for ISPF International Collaboration Awards](#).

4 Eligibility

4.1 **Applicant Eligibility**

- The UK lead applicant and Japan lead applicant must both be newly independent researchers building their own group, who are ready to lead and drive the research vision of an international research programme.
- As a guide, we would typically expect both applicants to have a minimum of three years and maximum of eight years of active research experience since completing their PhD by the time of application (career breaks will be taken into consideration - see below for more details), or no more than 5 years of an independent research career.
- The UK lead applicant and Japan lead applicant must be based in their respective countries and at an eligible institution at the time of application and for the duration of the award.
- As this grant does not support salary, the UK lead applicant and Japan lead applicant must hold a permanent or fixed-term independent academic research post, or named independent research fellowship, for the duration of the award.

- Applicants should have access to their own lab space and the ability to recruit research staff and students.
- The scheme is not for post-doctoral researchers or researchers whose salaries are paid by a grant for which someone else is the principal investigator. These individuals are not eligible to apply.
- Applicants are not permitted to submit more than one application to this call.
- Applicants are permitted to hold only one active ISPF International Collaboration Award.

The Society appreciates that there are diverse research career paths and understands the challenges of managing a research career alongside other personal commitments. When reviewing applicants' eligibility and research experience, the Society will consider time spent outside the research environment (e.g. time away due to personal reasons such as maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoptive leave or other caring responsibilities; ill-health or working in a non-research environment/role, such as industry or military service).

Furthermore, where applicants have taken formal periods of maternity, paternity, shared parental, and adoptive leave as the primary carer (either the mother, father, partner or adopter), or extended sick leave, the Society will allow an additional amount of time on top of each period of leave when assessing eligibility. Each case will be considered individually as per guidelines below:

- Maternity, paternity, shared parental leave and adoptive leave: In addition to the actual time taken off work, an additional amount of time equivalent to 100% of the duration of leave taken will be added on top, up to a maximum of 6 months.

Example 1: If an applicant took 4 months leave, an additional 4 months would be added, and a total of 8 months would be deducted.

Example 2: If an applicant took 18 months leave, an additional 6 months would be added (maximum additional time allowed) and a total of 24 months would be deducted.

- Extended sick leave (defined as more than four weeks off work, as per the UK Government's definition): In addition to the actual time taken off work, an additional amount of time equivalent to 100% of the duration of leave taken will be added on top, up to a maximum of 6 months. As with the parental leave, cases will be considered individually, and the host institution may need to confirm that the applicant qualifies for this provision. Supporting documents may be requested at the Society's discretion. The Society reserves the right to consider individual requests outside of the outlined policy in exceptional circumstances.

The Royal Society recognises that diversity is essential for delivering excellence in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The Society wants to encourage applications from the widest range of backgrounds, perspectives and experiences to maximise innovation and creativity in science for the benefit of humanity. We regularly review and revise policies and processes to embed EDI principles in all aspects of the grant making process and ensure all talented applicants have an equitable chance to succeed as per assessment criteria.

See below for details of the adjustments we can provide for disabled applicants.

Support to applicants with disabilities: The Royal Society welcomes applications from disabled scientists and provides support and adjustments to ensure that they can participate fully in the selection process. If you require support or an adjustment when accessing the application form, attending interviews if applicable, or for any other part of the application process, please contact the Grants team on collaboration.awards@royalsociety.org or call +44 20 7451 2666. All requests for adjustments are made in

confidence. Any request for an adjustment will not normally be shared with panel members unless it becomes relevant to the selection process itself. If we need to share your request with anyone (for example if panel members are required to implement any adjustments during interviews), we will ask for your permission first. Adjustments can include but are not limited to:

- Extension of the deadline;
- Additional support to complete the application form;
- Receiving the application form in a different format, such as on a Word document;

The Grants team will be pleased to answer questions about eligibility and/or points covered in this section.

4.2 Host Organisation Eligibility

Eligible host organisations are a Higher Education Institute (HEI), a UK Research Council supported Research Institute (RCI), a not-for-profit research institute (IRO), or a Public Sector Research Establishment (PSRE).

For information on eligible UK host organisations please see <https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/applications/>

5 Equitable Partnerships

Partnership building is an essential part of this call. Research partnerships work best when they are founded on mutual trust, respect and reciprocity. It is expected that proposals are co-developed and that applicants form genuine, equitable partnerships that ensure fair opportunity, process, and sharing of benefits, costs and outcomes. Applicants are encouraged to refer to available [good practice resource hub](#) guidance and tools supporting equity in the design, delivery and dissemination of research; these have not been developed directly by the Royal Society but may be a useful resource.

Applicants can use the application form question on equitable partnerships to address this aspect of the call. Applicants can also reference other parts of their application, if relevant.

Fair opportunity

The project should be co-designed and make contributions of partners explicit, respecting cultural and contextual differences, as well as recognising the capacity and resourcing of partners, developing the project within the contextual understanding of this and with consideration to all parties' research priorities and oversight mechanisms.

Fair process

The project should fairly hire, train and source resourcing locally, with respect for authority and local ethics operationally. The intellectual contribution to the research, and amount of time dedicated to the project should be equitably distributed, and clear communication and flexible working relationships should be developed between partners. Leadership and management, as well as decision making should be shared by partners fairly, with all partners empowered to set agendas and negotiate research competently and confidently and opportunities provided for less experienced members to develop skills in these areas. Data ownership, storage, access and use must be fair, ensuring due diligence from all partners for ethical, legal and financial commitments and obligations, with accurate budgeting for costs and compensation for all partners involved in the project.

Fair Sharing of Benefits, Costs & Outcomes

The project's outputs should have mutual benefits and relevance to all partners, with agreed representation in any associated outputs. Researchers should be supported to network and develop new relationships and collaborations throughout the project. The expected input of partners should be fair and proportionate, with regard to variables such as available infrastructure, access to non-monetary resources, etc.

As part of this process, it is expected that the partnership will clearly and fully define the roles and expectations of each partner for the duration of the award at the outset of the project (including the balance of leadership, scientific contributions and resources between the partners). If the application is successful, award holders will be required to complete a management plan, which will lay out the shared approach for managing the collaboration, and include roles and responsibilities, financial management plan, risk register, data management, intellectual properties, publications and any other forms of contribution and recognition arising from any work through the award, etc.

6 Training

Building research capabilities is an essential part of this call and is equally as important as the research objective. One of the scheme objectives is to build the capabilities of newly independent researchers and their groups to conduct, manage, share and apply high quality research. It is, therefore, expected that effort and resources will be devoted to both research activities and training activities.

The Royal Society is a signatory to the [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#) and recognises the importance of professional development and training opportunities as essential tools to develop the next generation of research leaders.

Your budget can include resources for research and training to address specific skills gaps. This can cover technical and non-technical knowledge and skills and include activities such as courses, learning by doing, networking and engagement. It is advised that research groups undertake a skills gap analysis to identify and prioritise training required.

Applicants should justify decisions regarding who will benefit from training activities in terms of the needs of individuals and the project, and indicate how opportunities offered to project members will be equitably shared. Project members can include the lead applicants and other research and non-research staff including postgraduate students, postdoctoral researchers, technicians, fieldworkers, project managers. Applicants should consider how to support potentially disadvantaged members of the research team (for example, people with caring responsibilities, different first languages, mobility restrictions) in ways that enable them to contribute fully.

Applicants can use the application form question training activities to address this aspect of the call. Applicants can also reference other parts of their application, if relevant.

7 Assessment Criteria and Review Process

7.1 Assessment Criteria

The primary considerations will be:

- The extent to which the proposal will address challenging research questions.
- The importance and scientific merit of the proposed research and the clarity, quality and originality of the proposed project and likely contribution to the research field, and whether the research plan is clearly defined and feasible.
- The track record of the applicants and their ability to develop and lead the research.
- The potential to nurture talent leading to significant and sustainable enhancement of the ability of individuals to conduct, manage, share and apply high quality research.
- The suitability of the research environment (host departments and institutions) for the proposed research.
- The strength of the proposed collaboration, complementarity of competencies, skills, knowledge and facilities, and potential for mutual benefit.
- Evidence of equitable partnership, including inclusive, consultative approach to co-design and co-delivery, distributed leadership, appropriateness of resource and task allocation, and fair sharing of benefits, costs and outcomes.

7.2 Review Process

All applications will be assessed by the International Collaboration Awards Panel. Following eligibility checks the proposals submitted are initially reviewed and assessed by two members of the selection panel who have the most appropriate expertise using the criteria detailed above. A shortlist of applications is then drawn up for discussion at the final panel meeting.

The subject tags you select on your application play a vital role in matching your application with appropriate reviewers, so it is extremely important to select only the most relevant subject tags on your application.

Please be assured that the Royal Society specifically requests anyone involved in reviewing applications to consider them in confidence. More information on the Review Process can be found in Appendix 1.

All applicants will be notified of outcomes via email.

8 Overseas Applicants Guidance

The application is a collaboration between the UK Lead Applicant and Overseas Lead Applicant. The application is editable by both applicants, and therefore, it is expected that both lead applicants will complete the application form and develop the proposal together.

Participating in the application:

- The UK Lead Applicant will need to initiate the application on Flexi-Grant® and invite the Overseas Lead Applicant to participate.
- Once invited the Overseas Lead Applicant will receive an email requesting their participation in the application form as follows:

Application Contribution Request Reminder

Dear [REDACTED]

This is a reminder that you have been invited to contribute on the completion of International [REDACTED] by [REDACTED].

In order to ensure the application is submitted in time for consideration, please click the link below and complete your contribution tasks. You can do this by selecting the link below:

How to complete a contribution:

1	Accept Invitation (if not already accepted) If you haven't yet accepted the invitation you will be asked to accept it. Otherwise you will be taken to login or register.
2	Register / Login Register for an account if you do not already have one, otherwise you can login using your existing account.
3	Contribute The pages you are being asked to contribute to will be highlighted on the Application Summary page.
4	Submit When you have finished your contribution click the Submit button found on either the Application Summary Page or any Application Page. This lets the applicant know you have finished.

Click the below link to contribute to the application.

- The Overseas Lead Applicant will need to accept the invitation.
- Once accepted the Overseas Lead Applicant will need to log into the Flexi-Grant® system, if they do not already have a log in, they will need to register on the system.
- Once signed into Flexi-Grant® the Overseas Lead Applicant will be able to contribute to the application.

9 References and Participants

To complete and submit the application form, the applicants are required to provide supporting statements or references from two individuals. The following individuals must be included:

- The **UK Lead Applicant's** Head of Department
- The **Overseas Lead Applicant's** Head of Department

Note: if either the Lead Applicants is the Head of Department, then details of the individual to whom they report to must be supplied instead i.e. Head of School/Head of Faculty/Dean.

9.1 How to invite referees and participants to contribute to an application

All references and supporting statements must be submitted through Flexi-Grant. To submit references please follow the steps below.

Step 1 | Ensure all participants have a Flexi-Grant account

- All referees and other participants must set up a Flexi-Grant account in order to contribute to an application.
- If a participant already has a Flexi-Grant account they should use that, if not then a new account should be set up.

Step 2 | Invite participants to contribute to an application

- Applicants should invite referees and other individuals to submit their supporting statements through the 'participants' tab.
- The participants tab can be found on the application form summary page and contains details of each participant required to contribute to the application
- Applicants should select 'invite' and enter the e-mail address of the person they wish to invite to provide the relevant reference or statement and send the invitation.

Step 3 | Monitor participants responses

- The recipient will need to accept your invitation before they can participate in the application.
- You can monitor the progress of your participants' activity through this section of the application form and issue reminders as required.
- Once the participant has accepted your invitation, their status will be displayed as 'active'.
- Once participants have completed all their sections of the application form they should select '**Save & Submit**' on the application form page or select '**Submit your contribution**' on the summary page.
- Upon completion of their section of the application form their status will be displayed as 'complete'.

Please note that you will not be able to submit your application form until the status of all participants' shows 'complete'.

Please note that once an applicant submits an application on Flexi-Grant®, it is then directed to the designated Approver for the employing organisation at which the UK lead applicant has applied to host an award (see Application Approvals in the 'Application Guidance Notes' Section). It is recommended that referring and supporting participants fulfil their requirements **at least 5 working days** before the submission deadline (Tuesday, 08 July 2025) to ensure there is sufficient time for organisational approval. The UK Host Organisation approver must approve the completed application by the submission deadline.

It is the applicant's responsibility to liaise with the UK Host Organisation's Approver and the Head(s) of Department to ensure that the required tasks are completed by the deadline. Please contact the Grants team before the deadline if there is any issue. Alternatively, the UK Host Organisation's Approver, the Head(s) of Department can contact us directly. The Royal Society will not be held responsible for emails that are not received due to address errors or spam filters and no provision is made for non-receipt of emails sent by the Royal Society.

Re-opening the Application form to Participants

On the occasion that an invited participant accidentally submits their section of the application form prematurely, the UK Lead Applicant has the ability to re-open the application form for the participant. To do this, the UK Lead Applicant should return to the Participant tab on the application form summary page. You will find a 're-open' button alongside the name of any participant who has completed their section of the form. Once you click this button, the form is reactivated and available for participants to amend.

Research Support Role

The Research Support role displayed under the participants tab is an optional role, which allows you to invite an individual from the relevant UK Host Organisation research support team to review and amend the

application prior to submission. The primary purpose is to ensure that the requested finances have been recorded correctly for this specific grant programme. Applications cannot be submitted until all participant sections are marked as complete so it is important that applicants ensure that their organisation's research support team complete this section.

As the Research Support Role is optional, applicants can revoke this participant request in order to submit their application if the section has not been completed. Please navigate to the participants tab and revoke the request for Research Support Role.

Additional system guidance can be found in the 'Systems Guidance Notes' Section.

10 Contact information

Enquires about this scheme can be made using the contact details below. Before contacting us, please check whether your question is answered by these scheme notes. If not, please email the Grants team via collaboration.awards@royalsociety.org or call +44 20 7451 2666 (lines open Mon-Thur, 10am to 4pm).

Please quote your application reference number in all correspondence with the Grants team.

11 Use of Data

All applicant data, including personal data, is governed by the [Royal Society's Privacy Policy](#). This Policy sets out how and why the Royal Society uses your personal data, and how we protect your privacy when doing so. Please refer to the section entitled "Grant Applicants and Holders" for details of how the Privacy Policy determines the use of applicant data.

In addition to the usage set out in the Royal Society's privacy policy, please note that information regarding your application for International Collaboration Awards may be shared with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) and its Science and Technology Network (STN) for data monitoring and scheme evaluation purposes. You may also be contacted by selected third parties such as independent evaluators, consultancy groups, and career development organisations. If successful, the Royal Society will contact you regarding the administration of your award throughout the course of your funding and after its completion. You may also be contacted by the Royal Society, DSIT and its Science and Technology Network (STN), or an agent acting on their behalf, for reporting and evaluation purposes throughout the course of your funding and after its completion.

12 Use of generative AI

Generative AI tools offer potential benefits for research but also challenges and risks. The Royal Society has joined with other funders to set our expectations around the use of generative AI tools in funding applications. [Funders joint statement: use of generative AI tools in funding applications and assessment](#).

When developing funding proposals, researchers must ensure generative AI tools are used responsibly and in accordance with relevant legal and ethical standards where these exist or as they develop. Funding proposals

for Royal Society grants should adhere to our existing commitments to policies on [Research Integrity and Trusted Research](#). Applicants are responsible for ensuring the originality, validity, reliability and integrity of any outputs created or modified by generative AI tools. Where generative AI tools are used in funding proposals their use should be acknowledged in the application by naming the AI source and specifying how the content was generated (for example by listing the prompt used).

13 System Guidance Notes

Please read these guidance notes carefully as you complete the application form.

13.1 Using Flexi-Grant®

Applications can only be submitted online using the Royal Society's Grants management system (Flexi-Grant®) via <https://grants.royalsociety.org>. Further information about the Grants management system can be found via <https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/flexi-grant/>. If you have not previously used Flexi-Grant®, please follow the registration process from the Flexi-Grant®, homepage. ***Paper-based applications will not be accepted.***

Before completing the online form, all applicants should check that they comply with the eligibility requirements and ensure all necessary information is presented in the application. These requirements are strictly adhered to and applications without all the necessary information, or evidence to show the assessment criteria are met, will be rejected.

All applications must be approved by the UK Host Organisation and the applicant's departmental support must be completed before you can submit via Flexi-Grant®. Late applications will not be accepted.

For instructions on inviting participants to contribute to an application (such as referees or departmental support), please see the 'References and participants' section.

Further guidance and support can be found through the [applicant and approver knowledge base](#).

13.2 ORCID Identifier

All applicants should submit an ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) identifier if they have one before their application is submitted. ORCID maintains a registry of unique researcher identifiers and a transparent method of linking research funding, research publications, research data and any other research outputs to these unique identifiers. This is a mandatory requirement at the application submission stage only. You can register for an ORCID identifier via <https://orcid.org/register>.

13.3 Completing the application form

The application can be completed by using the navigation tabs on the application summary page, with each page categorised as follows:

Summary

Understanding our Promotion

Eligibility Criteria

Contact Details
UK Lead Applicant Career Summary
Overseas Lead Applicant Career Summary
Research Proposal
Data Management and Data Sharing
Use of Animals in Research
Use of Human Patients or Tissue
Financial Details
Applicant Declaration

A full list of question fields to be completed as part of the application can be found in the Question Guidance in the 'Application Guidance Notes' Section.

14 Application Guidance Notes

14.1 Application Approvals

It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that approval of the application by the UK Host Organisation is completed before the closing date.

The person responsible for approving your application will be the delegated authority at the UK Host Organisation where you are applying to hold your award. This may be someone within the research office, Faculty administration, Vice-Chancellor, or other administrative or management role.

The approver must be someone with the authority to confirm that the potential award can be hosted within their organisation, confirm that there is the capacity to deliver the proposed research and assure the proposed budget is appropriate and eligible for the scheme.

You will only be able to submit your application for approval by the UK Host Organisation's Approver once all sections of the application form have been marked as complete and all participants have marked their work as complete AND have submitted their section. The UK applicant must check the status of the Participants under the 'Participants' tab on the summary page of the application form.
Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

14.2 Question Guidance

Please read the following guidance notes carefully as you complete the form. In the table below, each box represents a page of the application form; the left-hand column contains the questions within each of these pages as set out in the form; the right-hand column contains useful guidance on its completion.

Note that questions with * are mandatory fields.

Summary	
Summary page	<p>The summary page of the application form provides instructions for submission of your application for approval from the UK Host Organisation. In addition, you are provided with an overview for each section of your application form, including the approximate length of time it will take to complete each section.</p> <p>The summary page also allows applicants to manage and invite participants (e.g. Head of Departments) who are required to contribute to the application form. Instructions for inviting participants can be found under the 'participants' tab on the application summary page.</p> <p>Note: you will only be able to submit your application for approval by the Host Organisation once all sections of the form have been completed.</p>

Eligibility Criteria	
Eligibility Criteria *	<p>Please provide confirmation that you meet the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>Details of the eligibility criteria can be found in the 'Eligibility' Section of these Scheme Notes.</p>

Contact Details	
Title, Names, address, organisation and country *	<p>Review and complete your personal details accurately. Errors in this section can cause difficulties in processing your application. Errors will not be corrected after submission.</p> <p>Under this section, you should edit the contact type of the participants who will partake in your application form. The system default contact type is set as 'collaborator'. To amend the contact type of your Head of Department, click 'edit', and under the contact type field, select the 'Head of Department'.</p> <p>Organisation: this table will automatically display details of the intended Host Organisation (marked by a tick) which you selected previously and your current organisation, if different from the organisation where the award will be held and administered.</p>
Email address *	<p>This field defaults to the account in which the application has commenced and is where all correspondence pertaining to the application throughout the application process will be sent. The applicant must therefore commence the application using the login email address used to register a user account on Flexi-Grant®.</p>

UK Lead Applicant and Overseas Lead Applicant Career Summary	
Full name *	Please enter your full name, including title.
Title of Current Position *	Please state the title of your current position.

Current Employer *	Please enter the official organisation name of your current employer (e.g. University of Bath).
Current Department *	Please enter details of your current department (e.g. Department of Astrophysics).
Country/Territory *	Please select the country/territory where your current employer (or last employer if currently unemployed or on leave) is based.
Current Position Start Date *	Please enter the date when your current position started.
Current Position End Date *	Please enter the date when your current position is expected to finish. If you are on an open-ended contract, please enter 31 December 2050.
Contract Type *	Please select your current contract type from the list.
Field of Specialisation *	Enter details of your field(s) of specialisation. (Maximum 20 words)
Summary of Your Current Research *	Provide an outline summary of your current research. Please also include a brief comment on the strength of your organisation. (Maximum 200 words)
PhD Award Date *	Please enter the date that you were awarded your PhD.
PhD Institution *	State the name of the institution where you were awarded your PhD.
Personal Statement *	<p>Please provide a personal statement about your research career to date including research-related contributions, prizes and achievements and your career and research aspirations in the long term.</p> <p>Please clearly state how you meet the applicant eligibility criteria for this scheme, indicating how you are a newly independent researcher.</p> <p>You should state why the aims of this scheme will be beneficial to you at this stage in your career, how, as a newly independent researcher, you intend to build your independent research career and international networks, and how the scheme will help you to reach your goals.</p> <p>Please note that you may use the personal statement to provide details of additional activities you have undertaken to demonstrate your contribution to the wider scientific endeavour (e.g. conferences, patents, workshops, public engagement activities, etc). (Maximum 500 words)</p>
Applicant Career History *	<p>Please provide a full list of your appointments since your PhD in reverse chronological order stating if part-time (and percentage part-time) when necessary. Please indicate with asterisks (*) which positions are considered independent to assist with eligibility checks.</p> <p>The depth of information you provide is up to you, but this will represent you under assessment and so it is worth including as much good evidence for your academic merit as possible.</p> <p>Please provide full details of any periods of part-time working, career breaks, extended sick leave or maternity/paternity/adoptive leave as your eligibility may depend on the accuracy of this information.</p> <p>Note: You can retrieve your career history information from your profile to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.</p>

Impact of Covid -19	<p>The Society appreciates that the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on researchers and their work will be varied. Please provide a summary of how the pandemic has affected your research activities. (Maximum 500 words)</p> <p>This can include but is not limited to: delays in publishing/submitting a key paper(s) (please note preprints can be included in your publications list), pause on experiments/research plans, reduced ability to work due to additional caring responsibilities.</p>
Applicant Qualifications *	<p>Please list all your qualifications in reverse chronological order.</p> <p>The depth of information you provide is up to you, but this will represent you under assessment and so it is worth including as much good evidence of your academic merit as possible and as appropriate for the funding for which you are applying.</p> <p>Note: You can retrieve your qualification information from your profile to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.</p>
List your Key and/or Relevant Publications *	<p>Please provide details of authors, titles and references of up to 10 of your key preprints and publications in refereed journals, in reverse chronological order. You should include those outputs most relevant to the application to support your case. Please note that publications will be reviewed on the basis of scientific content, rather than publication metrics or the identity of the journal.</p> <p>Your list can be divided into three sections: (i) refereed papers in primary journals, (ii) contributions to symposia and compiled volumes (refereed only); and (iii) preprints.</p> <p>Most significant publications - Please identify with asterisks (*) up to five publications which you consider to be most significant. For these * publications please provide a short statement describing their significance and your contribution (up to 50 words per output).</p> <p>For publications arising from large collaborative programmes clearly specify the exact role and contribution made towards large collaborative research programmes that have resulted in multi-authored publications.</p> <p>If your field of research differs in any way from normal conventions, e.g. lead author, first author, and publications in journals being the main gauge of success, please provide a brief explanation at the top of your publication list.</p> <p>Please provide the full bibliographic reference. If appropriate, give the publisher or where each publication may be obtained, providing a URL if available. Citations for preprints must state "Preprint", the repository name and the articles persistent identifier (e.g. DOI)</p> <p>Note: You can retrieve your publications to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.</p>
Applicant Research Funding *	<p>Please list your current and previous research funding in reverse chronological order.</p>

	<p>The depth of information you provide is up to you, but this will represent you under assessment and so it is worth including as much good evidence for your academic merit as possible and as appropriate for the funding for which you are applying.</p> <p>Please highlight any current or previous funding secured to work with collaborators in the country that is the focus of this application.</p> <p>Note: You can retrieve your information from your profile to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.</p>
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Research Proposal	
Project Title *	Please give the full title of your proposed project. (Maximum 20 words)
Start Date *	Please enter the proposed start date of the project. Please note that the start date must be no later than 31 March 2026.
End Date *	Please enter the proposed end date of the project. This must be 36 months from the start date.
Scientific Categorisation*	<p>Please select whether you consider your application to be primarily a biological sciences or a physical sciences application. For multidisciplinary projects, please select the category which is the best fit.</p> <p>This question is used for reporting purposes, and for some schemes to help us allocate the application to the appropriate panel.</p>
Subject Group/Area *	<p>Select the subject group/area(s) that most closely defines the research area of the research proposal from the drop-down menu and tick box options.</p> <p>The subject area you select on your application plays a vital role in matching your application with appropriate reviewers, so it is extremely important to select only the most relevant subject sub-categories on your application. Please select between 1 to 4 tick box options, with 4 as the maximum.</p>
Abstract *	Please provide a scientific summary of your proposed project. This should be a summary of your research proposal, briefly outlining the background and summarising the aims of your project. (Maximum 400 words)
Lay Summary *	Please provide a lay summary of your proposed project. This should be understandable by a layperson. Explain why you have chosen to work in this subject area and what it is about your proposed research that you find particularly exciting, interesting or important. Please also briefly explain the potential impact or wider benefits to society of your research. (Maximum 250 words)
Research Proposal *	You can either detail your research proposal within this application form (Maximum 1500 words), or alternatively upload it as a PDF file. PDF files must be no longer than 3 sides of A4, portrait orientation, be titled and the text size cannot be smaller than Arial size 10.

	<p>Your research proposal should provide a general description of the proposed research to be carried out. This should include, but is not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear specification of the context, research objectives and expected outputs of the proposed study; • description of the methodology to be used, including data analysis; • an indication of milestones/timescales; • description of the importance, novelty, and timeliness of the proposed research.
<p>Participants *</p>	<p>Please list project participants from each team, their role/position and why you wish to include them in the project (for example if they will conduct part of the research, participate in an exchange visit or benefit from professional development). Participants can include postgraduate students, postdoctoral researchers and any other academic or laboratory/fieldwork staff members from both research groups.</p> <p>If there are any other relevant affiliated stakeholders that you wish to directly involve in the project you should list them here as well. This could include, for example, <i>inter alia</i> affiliated stakeholders delivering training or participating in a workshop. Please describe the contribution they would make, citing any particular specialism or expertise they bring to the research and its additionality, and the benefits envisaged to the partnership. This can include relevant industry, policy or practitioner stakeholders.</p> <p>Note: There are no restrictions on the number of project participants from each research group. Other affiliated stakeholders, however, should be limited and well justified, particularly if costs are being included, where the focus of this grant is on the partnership between the research groups; and costs can only be included for affiliated stakeholders based in the applicant countries, those based in other third countries may be included but the Royal Society will not contribute to their costs. (Maximum 200 words)</p>
<p>Training *</p>	<p>One of the aims of this scheme is to build the capabilities of newly independent researchers and their groups to conduct, manage, share and apply high quality research, and activities can include training that addresses specific skills gaps. It is advised that the research groups undertake a skills gap analysis to identify training required. Please provide an overall summary of any proposed training activities, their relevance and suitability, who will deliver and receive the training, and what are the expected outcomes. Please also justify decisions regarding who will benefit from the activities in terms of the needs of individuals and the project, and indicate how opportunities offered to project members will be equitably shared. (please refer to the 'Training' Section of the scheme notes above). (Maximum 500 words)</p>
<p>Previous Contact *</p>	<p>Please provide details of any previous contact or collaboration between the UK lead applicant and Overseas lead applicant. This question is to help give context of any existing relationship and how you have approached partnership for this application; it is not a requirement, however, to have worked together previously.</p>

Equitable Partnerships *	It is expected that proposals are co-developed and that applicants form genuine, equitable partnerships that ensure fair opportunity, process, and sharing of benefits, costs and outcomes. Please comment on how you have jointly approached and will ensure the equitable partnership aspect of this call. Please ensure this includes commentary on the balance of leadership, scientific contributions and resources between the partners (please refer to the 'Equitable Partnerships' Section of the scheme notes above). Please also comment on any intentions for sustaining an equitable partnership in the longer term. (Maximum 500 words)
Benefits to individuals / Institutions *	If relevant, please describe any other potential benefits or added value that will result from the proposed collaboration for the applicants and the respective organisations that has not been covered in other parts of the application form. (Maximum 200 words)

Data Management and Data Sharing	
<p>The Royal Society supports science as an open enterprise and is committed to ensuring that data outputs from research supported by the Society are made publicly available in a managed and responsible manner, with as few restrictions as possible. Data outputs should be deposited in an appropriate, recognised, publicly available repository, so that others can verify and build upon the data, which is of public interest. To fully realise the benefits of publicly available data they should be made intelligently open by fulfilling the requirements of being discoverable, accessible, intelligible, assessable and reusable.</p> <p>The Royal Society does not dictate a set format for data management and sharing plans. Where they are required, applicants should structure their plan in a manner most appropriate to the proposed research. The information submitted in plans should focus specifically on how the data outputs will be managed and shared, detailing the repositories where data will be deposited. In considering your approach for data management and sharing, applicants should consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data outputs will be generated by the research that are of value to the public? • Where and when will you make the data available? • How will others be able to access the data? • If the data is of high public interest, how will it be made accessible not only for those in the same or linked field, but also to a wider public audience? • Specify whether any limits will be placed on the data to be shared, for example, for the purposes of safeguarding commercial interests, personal information, safety or security of the data. • How will datasets be preserved to ensure they are of long-term benefit? 	
Outline of data management and data sharing plan *	If the proposed research will generate data that is of significant value to the research community, then please provide details of your data management and sharing plan. (Maximum 200 words)
Fieldwork *	Will you be conducting fieldwork as part of your research? Yes/No *

Fieldwork	Please provide all details of any proposed fieldwork to be carried out. Please ensure you provide details of location, duration and justification for the fieldwork.
Fieldwork (Upload only)	Please upload documents related to the following (if applicable): 1. Permission Any mandatory documents that show local support has been assured by way of permission from the government concerned to travel to and work in the country. 2. Collection of specimens Any mandatory documents that show: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific permission has been obtained from the host country to collect and to export specimens and material • The director of the museum or other decision makers where these specimens will be deposited has indicated his/her desire or willingness to have such specimens and material.

Use of Animals in Research *

The Royal Society is committed to supporting the development of alternative methods to reduce and/or replace the use of animals in research. Applicants proposing to use animals in their research must ensure that the use of animals falls within the regulations stipulated in the Animals (Scientific Procedures Act) 1986 and subsequent amendments. Additionally, applicants should continually be aware of developments in best practice, and adopt the principles of the [3Rs](#) when designing and conducting experiments on animals.

As a funder of research, the Society takes its responsibilities towards the UK Animals (Scientific Procedures Act) 1986 seriously and requires applicants to consider the questions below when preparing grant applications that include the use of animals.

Does your proposal involve the use of animals or animal tissue? *	Select 'Yes' or 'No'. If you have selected 'Yes' it is mandatory to complete all of the relevant questions on the Use of Animals in Research page.
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Experimental Design Assistant

The Royal Society recommends that applicants use the [Experimental Design Assistant](#) (EDA), which is a free resource from the NC3Rs to support researchers in the planning of animal experiments. This will help to facilitate robust study design and reliable and reproducible findings.

The EDA helps applicants build a machine-readable diagram representing their experimental plan, following capture of their methodology, and allows the applicant to then generate a PDF report which provides a transparent description of the experimental design in a standardised format, which can be uploaded to the application form.

Please note: Applicants who choose to use the EDA, and subsequently uploads the EDA report to the application form, are advised to enter **see report** or **n/a** into any question fields within this section of the application form that have already been captured in the EDA report, to avoid any duplication.

Use of Human Participants and Tissue

Any application for a research proposal involving human participants, patients or tissue and therefore requiring local ethical committee approval will be considered only when accompanied by the necessary permission certificate or proof that ethical permission will be sought, which must be provided in English.

Does your proposal involve the use of human participants, patients or tissue? *	Select 'Yes' or 'No'. If you have selected 'Yes' it is mandatory to provide either a certificate or letter, as proof that ethical permission has been, or will be, obtained. Please upload the file as a PDF in portrait orientation.
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Financial Details	
Budget Table**	Please enter the values applied for under the budget table headings for the UK partner and the overseas partner. The full duration of the award is three years. The values should be inputted in the appropriate financial year. This should be done in collaboration with your Host Organisations Research/Finance Office. The maximum value of the award is £225,000 (£75,000 per year). Please refer to the Royal Society Grant Funding Guidance for ISPF International Collaboration Awards for further information.
Justification for Other Research Staff *	Please confirm the total value requested and provide a full justification for this amount. The Royal Society will cover contributions to other staff salaries; please note that Principal Investigator salaries are not permitted as a cost.
Justification for Equipment *	Please confirm the total requested for equipment and provide a full justification for this cost. Costs must not exceed £25,000 per item.
Justification for Research Expenses *	Please confirm the total value requested for all research expenses and provide a full justification for this amount.
Justification for Other Costs *	Please confirm the total value requested and provide a justification for this amount.

Applicant Declaration *
<p>Please declare that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have read the Terms and Conditions of Award under which Royal Society grants are awarded and, if a grant offer is made, you agree to abide by them. The Terms and Conditions for Royal Society applications can be found at https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/international-collaboration-awards-ispf/. You have access to the necessary facilities to enable you to deliver the research proposed and will continue to have access to the facilities for the duration of the project. You have agreed with your Head(s) of Department that you will be afforded sufficient time and resources to deliver the research project as described in this application.

Institutional and Departmental Support *
<p>You should invite the Heads of Department from the UK and overseas organisations to upload a statement of support by following the instructions under the 'Participants' tab on the application form summary page. Please check that they are able to supply their statement by the deadline of 8 July 2025 3:00pm UK time.</p> <p>Please check which email address your Heads of Department would like to use, as they may already be registered on Flexi-Grant® and mistakes may lead to a delay in processing your application.</p>

The Head of Department is expected to detail the suitability of the department and institution for the proposed research and the supportive workplace structures in place to ensure diversity, recognising that diversity in the scientific workforce is a key part of ensuring scientific excellence. They should also confirm that they will support you for the duration of the award, which includes, but not limited to, that you will be provided with adequate office and laboratory space and access to essential equipment, software and facilities and appropriate training and development opportunities at the Host organisation.

If the UK lead applicant or Overseas lead applicant is also the Head of Department, then details of the individual to whom they report to must be supplied instead i.e. Head of School, Head of Faculty or Dean.

Diversity Monitoring

Diversity Monitoring

The Royal Society is committed to promoting diversity in UK science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) by seeking to increase participation from under-represented groups. Please help us to monitor how effectively we are doing this by providing the requested information. All questions are mandatory. The information provided will form a confidential statistical record in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and will not be used for any purpose other than analysis of the Society's activities.

This information will be kept separately from the rest of your application and will not be seen by those involved in the selection process, including referees etc.

You must either complete the form or tick the boxes stating that you 'prefer not to say'. If you do not select a box for each question, the system will regard your application as incomplete and will not allow you to submit it.

Please note, that where an application contains applicant and co-applicant(s) details, all applicants will be expected to complete the diversity monitoring form.

The UK lead applicant and Overseas lead applicant are restricted to completing and viewing the diversity monitoring form that is relevant to them as individuals. You are not permitted to view the information provided by the other under this section of the application.

Appendix 1: Application and Review Process

