**Resilient UK coastal communities and seas Network Plus**

Apply for funding to develop a Network Plus to enhance the resilience, health and wellbeing of UK coastal communities and seas. The network will provide a coordinating function across projects funded through the complementary [resilient UK coastal communities and seas](https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/resilient-uk-coastal-communities-and-seas-outline-stage/) research programme.

This network will be funded by ESRC, AHRC, Defra, NERC and UKRI. You must be based at a UK research organisation eligible for UKRI funding.

The full economic cost (FEC) of your network can be up to £2 million. We will fund 80% of the FEC.

Your network must start on 1 April 2024, and last up to 54 months.

Before applying for funding, check the following:

* [the UKRI eligibility guidance for applicants](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/)
* [the eligibility of your organisation](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/eligibility-as-an-organisation/)

UKRI is introducing [new role types](https://www.ukri.org/publications/roles-in-funding-applications/roles-in-funding-applications-eligibility-responsibilities-and-costings-guidance/) for opportunities being run on the new Funding Service from 22 May 2023. For full details, visit [Eligibility as an individual](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/eligibility-as-an-individual/).

### Who is eligible to apply

The project lead must be based [at a UK research organisation eligible for UKRI funding](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/eligibility-as-an-individual/). That organisation will be responsible for submitting the grant application to UKRI.

The project co-leads can be based at UK research organisation eligible for UKRI funding, or at UK businesses, public sector, third sector or eligible public sector research establishments (PSREs). Read our guidance on the [Inclusion of business, third sector or government body Co-Is on ESRC proposals](https://www.ukri.org/publications/including-project-co-leads-from-business-third-sector-or-government-bodies/).

### International applicants

Project leads from non-UK organisations are not eligible to apply for funding for this opportunity.

Project co-leads based in non-UK organisations are eligible to be included in applications for this opportunity. Read [our guidance on the inclusion of international co-investigators](https://www.ukri.org/publications/project-co-lead-international-policy-guidance/) for details of eligible organisations and costs.

### Equality, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants. We encourage applications from a diverse range of researchers.

We support people to work in a way that suits their personal circumstances. This includes:

* career breaks
* support for people with caring responsibilities
* flexible working
* alternative working patterns

Find out more about [equality, diversity and inclusion at UKRI](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/supporting-healthy-research-and-innovation-culture/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/).

### Scope

A Network Plus is a strategic investment that brings together new or disparate communities from across the research and development system to identify, prioritise and develop emerging research and knowledge exchange challenges. It provides leadership across disciplines and sectors, continues to expand its connections and relationships throughout the duration of its funding, and tailors its activities to the needs in its area.

A Network Plus is expected to establish and maintain appropriate links with relevant activities and research users to achieve its aims of increasing collaborative working across disciplines and sectors, providing visibility and accessibility, and connecting the research and innovation landscape.

This Network will be funded by ESRC, AHRC, Defra, NERC and UKRI as part of the [resilient UK coastal communities and seas programme](https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/resilient-uk-coastal-communities-and-seas-outline-stage/), to provide a complementary role, coordinating with awarded research projects to build a transdisciplinary research community that will:

* apply a place-based approach that will transform our understanding of climatic, environmental, health, economic, social, and cultural factors affecting UK coastal communities and seas
* support the resilient management of UK coastal seas, coastal communities, and the natural capital these areas support
* build capacity and capability for transdisciplinary research and the mobilisation of research evidence within UK coastal communities and seas

The resilient UK coastal communities and seas Network Plus will have an agenda that:

* engages and networks with other UKRI activities, and stakeholders in academia, industry, government and third sector in the UK, connecting and coordinating across a diverse range of disciplines and backgrounds
* assesses and determines what the UK needs in terms of research, research infrastructure and skills to develop capability in management and understanding of coastal communities and seas to improve resilience
* provides thought leadership and a clear vision to transform our understanding of factors affecting coastal communities and seas, to build resilience and improve management.
* develops and runs open opportunities for small projects or activities in the areas of transdisciplinary research that will complement the delivery of other projects funded by the [resilient UK coastal communities and seas programme](https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/resilient-uk-coastal-communities-and-seas-outline-stage/)

Applications should include clearly defined, realistic short-term outcomes that can be achieved within the first year of the network.

By the end of the funding period, the Network Plus should have enabled a step change in the connectivity and coordination of researchers and stakeholders in this field. It should have:

* generated new insights that will enhance knowledge mobilisation and improve resilience in the management of coastal communities and seas
* built new transdisciplinary capability in this area, linking existing (and establishing new) partnerships, bringing together new approaches and developing conceptual, methodological, theoretical and leadership skills
* enabled a coherent and connected climatic, environmental, health, economic, social, and cultural coastal research landscape across disciplines, stakeholders and sectors, by bridging existing structures, and by identifying needs through relationship building, co-creation, and sustained engagement
* informed policy, practice and understanding through understanding stakeholder needs and enabling insights to feed into development processes for transformative policy, practice and new research.
* stimulated collective research outputs and implemented legacy plans to ensure the benefits of the Network Plus outlive the funding period

The Network Plus will play an important strategic role in delivering the aims of the [resilient UK coastal communities and seas research programme](https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/resilient-uk-coastal-communities-and-seas-outline-stage/). The network will also play an important role in fostering links between this programme and UKRI’s growing portfolio of investments in transformative coastal research, place-based approaches to research and transdisciplinary approaches to research.

The Network Plus will be expected to establish and maintain appropriate links with relevant ESRC, AHRC, Defra, NERC and UKRI investments, to achieve its aims of increasing collaborative working across disciplines, and connecting the research landscape. This will include the Network Plus working closely with other projects funded by the [resilient UK coastal communities and seas](https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/resilient-uk-coastal-communities-and-seas-outline-stage/) programme to transform our understanding of UK coastal communities and seas, collaborating with stakeholders to enable transformative decision making. The successful Network Plus will be required to participate in, and coordinate, relevant programme events and integration activities. You should budget sufficient travel and subsistence costs to coordinate at least four one-day programme events based in the UK to do this. Research projects funded through the programme have been instructed to request appropriate costs for attending these events.

The funders reserve the right to attend and observe advisory group meetings. The Network Plus will also be asked to engage with and provide regular and ad hoc project progress reports to the Programme Executive Board (PEB). The PEB includes representation from all funders and will provide strategic oversight for the resilient UK coastal communities and seas programme.

There will be a requirement to report through the UKRI reporting system, Researchfish. This is required annually and continues for up to five years after funding ends. For details, see [reporting your project’s outcomes](https://www.ukri.org/manage-your-award/reporting-your-projects-outcomes/).

### Your Team

The Network’s core team will build sustained engagement and collaboration on emerging research and knowledge exchange areas, engage research users and run training and capacity building activities for core staff and those in the wider network and beyond. The Network’s core team should have suitable capability and capacity to undertake activities such as:

* workshops
* events
* communications
* undertake projects (which could include pilot studies, scoping, knowledge exchange, evidence synthesis, impact generation, capacity building, methods development, or other relevant activity)
* Produce key outputs
* Secondments
* Horizon scanning

The core team should include people at different career stages, who collectively offer:

* effective leadership, with an in-depth understanding of relevant disciplines, policy challenges and evidence needs. The project lead may be from the communities of any of the three research council funding partners (AHRC, ESRC and NERC) and your network must fit the remit of all three of the research council funding partners for the funding opportunity
* thematic expertise beyond the social sciences and beyond academia, reflecting the communities that will be engaged in the network
* an ability to engage and collaborate with diverse stakeholders through a range of activities and outputs
* an ability to articulate a clear vision for engagement with communities working in this area and new partners from within the appropriate disciplines or elsewhere
* an ability to deliver complex projects to time, considering the variety of activities and outputs
* specialist expertise (academic and non-academic) to support the desired outcomes, which may include sector representatives, programme management, project management and finance expertise, a communications function, administrative support and knowledge mobilisation expertise.
* An ability to bring together diverse expertise within projects, conceptually, methodologically and theoretically

The Network Plus will be responsible for the formation of suitable advisory structures. Proposals should include detail of the advisory group, including academic and non-academic members, that will support the research and oversee the development of the key activities.

### Duration

The duration of this award is 54 months.

Projects must start by 1 April 2024.

### Funding available

The full economic cost of your project can be up to £2 million.

ESRC, AHRC, NERC, Defra and UKRI will fund 80% of the full economic cost.

The successful Network Plus must include defined short-term outcomes that can be achieved within the first year of the project.

We will be funding one resilient UK coastal communities and seas Network Plus from this opportunity.

### What we will fund

#### Flexible funding for small projects or activities

As part of running the Network Plus you will be expected to use part of the grant funding to develop and run opportunities for small projects and other activities. These opportunities are an important way of bringing individuals and organisations into the network and growing connections. Activities can take place at any point during the grant but their timing should be considered and justified.

The network can use its flexible funding pot to undertake activities such as:

* workshops
* events
* funding small projects (which could include pilot studies, scoping, knowledge exchange, evidence synthesis, impact generation, capacity building, methods development, or other relevant activity)
* producing key outputs
* secondments
* horizon scanning

You should decide the amount of grant funding allocated to activities which will be supported through the flexible fund. This amount should strike a balance between a need to deliver the key outcomes of the network and the added value which can be realised through activities supported through a competitively distributed flexible fund. You should clearly outline what activities you intend to support through the flexible fund. This may include limited new research in the form of small project opportunities. Your application should clearly explain how the activities supported by the flexible fund will meet the aims of the network and add value to the resilient UK coastal communities and seas programme. The flexible fund should be used to support innovative projects and activities undertaken by researchers outside of the Network’s core team. The Network’s core team members should not be supported by the Flexible Fund. UKRI will fund 80% of the flexible fund’s full economic cost. Flexible fund costs should be included in applications as ‘Other Directly Incurred’.

You must define and justify your objectives for the flexible fund and outline how it will be operationalised, governed and, where appropriate, distributed through a competitive process. You should ensure that funds genuinely enable new work (instead of going towards existing activities) while giving due consideration to ensuring diversity and capacity-building.

The funding partners, through ESRC, should be consulted throughout the award to ensure good practice is followed in the assessment and allocation of flexible funds. The Network Plus’s core team should make it clear that activities funded through the flexible fund are expected to engage with the wider programme of activity and to report their progress and outcomes to the core team.

### What we will not fund

Associated studentships are not eligible for inclusion.

Proposals where the Network Plus does not benefit transdisciplinary collaboration across the remits of all three research councils funding the network (AHRC, ESRC and NERC).

Proposals where there is an imbalance of the intellectual content, and some disciplines appear ‘bolted’ on.

Please be aware that Defra should not be included as a project partner or be asked to provide letters of support, as they are a co-funder for this programme. Defra’s Arm’s Length Bodies who are [approved UKRI public sector research establishments](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/eligible-public-sector-research-establishments/) are eligible to apply to this opportunity.

### Capacity building

We will look for evidence of a strong commitment to supporting the development of researchers at all stages of their career and capacity-building. We expect this to include a strong career development programme, shaped to suit the stage of the researchers’ career and providing increased opportunities for professional development. This should include, but not be limited to, the early career stage. We encourage you to consider how you can support the career development of all members of the core network team.

Increasing capacity contributes to the quality and impact of the research. Examples of building capacity include:

* Support and mentoring
* Management and leadership training

Proposals should include the outline of a career development programme (including research, leadership and management skills) shaped to the career stage of each member of the core network team.

### Supporting skills and talent

We encourage you to follow the principles of the [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](https://researcherdevelopmentconcordat.ac.uk/) and the [Technician Commitment](https://www.techniciancommitment.org.uk/).

### Impact, innovation and interdisciplinarity

We expect applicants to consider the potential [scientific, societal and economic impacts of their research](https://www.ukri.org/publications/including-impact-in-your-research-proposal/). Outputs, dissemination and impact are a key part of the criteria for most peer review and assessment processes. We also encourage applications that demonstrate [innovation and interdisciplinarity](https://www.ukri.org/councils/esrc/guidance-for-applicants/impact-innovation-and-interdisciplinarity-expectations/) (research combining approaches from more than one discipline).

Applications should include clearly defined, realistic short-term outcomes that can be achieved within the first year of the network.

Post-award, within the first three months, the successful applicants will work with the funders to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan that will form the basis of ongoing monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements, to learn from what works, track the impact of the investment and ensure value for money.

### International collaboration

If your application includes international applicants, project partners or collaborators, visit [Trusted Research](https://www.cpni.gov.uk/trusted-research) for more information on effective international collaboration.

### Demand Management

Research Organisations can only act as the lead organisation (meaning the organisation where the project lead is based) on one submission to this opportunity.

Individuals can only be project lead on one application to the following funding opportunities:

ESRC Policy Talent Accelerator Network Plus

Behavioural Science for Security and Defence Network Plus

Dementia Network Plus

Polarities and Regions Network Plus

Modelling UK supply chains as complex systems for resilience

### UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Funding Service

We are running the funding opportunity on the new UKRI Funding Service. You cannot apply for this opportunity on the Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system.

If you do not already have an account with the UKRI Funding Service, you will be able to create one by selecting the ‘start application’ button at the start of this page. Creating an account is a 2-minute process requiring you to verify your email address and set a password.

If you are a member of an organisation with a research office that we do not have contact details for, we will contact them to enable administrator access. This provides:

* oversight of every UKRI Funding Service application opened on behalf of your organisation
* the ability to review and submit applications

Research offices that have not already received an invitation to open an account should email [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org).

To find out more about the role of research office professionals in the application process, watch a [recording of a recent research office webinar on YouTube.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=trU5yAwxOeo&feature=youtu.be)

### Submitting your application

Applications should be prepared and submitted by the lead research organisation but should be co-created with input from all investigators, and project partners, and should represent the proposed work of the entire consortia.

To apply:

1. Select the ‘Start application’ button at the start of this page.
2. This will open the ‘Sign in’ page of UKRI’s Funding Service. If you do not already have an account, you’ll be able to create one. This is a 2-minute process requiring you to verify your email address and set a password.
3. Start answering the questions detailed in this section of ‘How to apply’. You can save your work and come back to it later. You can also work ‘offline’, copying and pasting into the text boxes provided for your answers.
4. Once complete, use the service to send your application to your research office for review. They’ll check it and return it to you if it needs editing.
5. Once happy, your research office will submit it to UKRI for assessment. Only they can do this.

As citations can be integral to a case for support, you should balance their inclusion and the benefit they provide against the inclusion of other parts of your answer to each question. Bear in mind that citations, associated reference lists or bibliographies, or both, contribute to, and are included in, the word count of the relevant section.

We are running this funding opportunity on the new UKRI Funding Service. You cannot apply on the Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system.

The project lead is responsible for completing the application process on the Funding Service, but we expect all team members and project partners to contribute to the application.

Only the lead research organisation can submit an application to UKRI.

To apply:

1. Select ‘Start application’ near the beginning of this page.
2. Confirm you are the project lead.
3. Sign in or create a Funding Service account. To create an account, select your organisation, verify your email address, and set a password. If your organisation is not listed, email [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org).
4. Answer questions directly in the text boxes. You can save your answers and come back to them, or work offline and return to copy and paste your answers. All questions and assessment criteria are listed in the ‘How to apply’ section on this Funding finder page.
5. Send the completed application to your research office for checking. They will return it to you if it needs editing.
6. Your research office will submit the completed and checked application to UKRI.

Watch our [research office webinars about the new UKRI Funding Service](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/improving-your-funding-experience/about-simpler-and-better-funding/).

### Deadline

ESRC must receive your application by 12 October 2023 at 4:00pm UK time.

You will not be able to apply after this time.

You should ensure you are aware of and follow any internal institutional deadlines that may be in place.

ESRC, as part of UKRI, will need to collect some personal information to manage your funding service account and the registration of your funding applications.

We will handle personal data in line with UK data protection legislation and manage it securely. For more information, including how to exercise your rights, read our [privacy notice](https://www.ukri.org/about-us/privacy-notice/).

ESRC, as part of UKRI, will need to share the application and any personal information that it contains with AHRC, NERC and Defra so that they can participate in the assessment process. For more information on how Defra uses personal information, visit [Defra’s privacy notices page](https://your-defra-account.defra.gov.uk/privacy-notice).

If your application is successful, some personal information will be published via the [UKRI Gateway to Research](https://gtr.ukri.org/).

UKRI and Defra may publish the outcomes of this funding Opportunity on their websites.

### UKRI Funding Service: section guidance

#### Summary

In plain English, provide a summary that can be sent to potential reviewers to determine if your proposal is within their field of expertise.

This summary may be made publicly available on external facing websites, so please ensure it can be understood by a variety of readers, for example:

* opinion-formers
* policymakers
* the general public
* the wider research community.

##### Guidance for writing a summary

Succinctly describe your proposed work in terms of:

* its context
* the challenge the project addresses and how it will be applied to this
* its aims and objectives
* its potential applications and benefits.

Word count: 550

#### Applicants

List the key members of your team and assign them roles, for example:

* Project lead (PL)
* Project co-lead (UK) PcL)
* Specialist
* Grant manager
* Professional enabling staff
* Research and innovation associate
* Technician
* Visiting researcher

You should only list 1 individual as project lead.

#### Section: Vision and approach

Question: What are you hoping to achieve with your proposed work and how will you deliver it?

We will ask you to submit a single seven-page PDF attachment covering the ‘Vision’ and ‘Approach’ sections of the application and enter the words ‘attachment supplied’ in the text box below. The document must have single line spacing, margins of at least 2 cm and be typed using Arial 11pt, or another ‘sans serif’ font with an equivalent size to Arial 11pt.

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

For the Vision, explain how your proposed work:

* is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
* has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
* is timely given current trends, context and needs
* impacts world-leading research, society, the economy or the environment

Within the Vision we also expect you to:

* identify the potential direct or indirect benefits and who the beneficiaries might be

For the Approach, explain how you have designed your work so that it:

* is effective and appropriate to achieve your objectives
* is feasible, and comprehensively identifies any risks to delivery and how they will be managed
* if applicable, uses a clear and transparent methodology
* if applicable, summarises the previous work and describes how this will be built upon and progressed
* will maximise translation of outputs into outcomes and impacts
* describes how your, and if applicable your team’s, research environment (in terms of the place, its location, and relevance to the project) will contribute to the success of the work

#### Section: Flexible Fund

Question: how will you use and manage the Network’s flexible fund?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Explain how you will use and manage the flexible fund so that it:

* supports the Network’s objectives
* distributes funding appropriately across a diverse range of activities
* where appropriate, distributes funding through clear, transparent competitive processes
* builds capacity in key fields and career stages
* ensures appropriate processes for monitoring, reporting and governance of funded activities

Word count: 1,000

#### Section: Data management and sharing

Question: how will you manage and share data collected or acquired through the proposed research?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Provide a data management plan which should clearly detail how you will comply with ESRC’s published [Data Sharing Policy](https://www.ukri.org/councils/esrc/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics-guidance/data-requirements/), which includes detailed guidance notes.

Word count: 1,000

#### Section: Your Organisation’s Support

Question: provide details of support from your research organisation.

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Provide a Statement of Support from your research organisation detailing why the proposed work is needed. This should include details of any matched funding that will be provided to support the activity and any additional support that might add value to the work.

Assessors will be looking for a strong statement of commitment from your research organisation.

ESRC, AHRC, NERC and Defra recognises that in some instances, this information may be provided by the Research Office, the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) or equivalent, or a combination of both.

You must also include the following details:

* a significant person’s name and their position, from the TTO or Research Office, or both
* office address or web link

Upload details are provided within the service on the actual application.

Word count: 500

#### Section: Project partners: contributions

Question: provide details about any project partners’ contributions using the template provided.

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you do not have any project partners, simply add ‘N/A’ into the text box, mark this section as complete and move to the next section.

If you do have project partners, [download and complete the project partner contributions template (DOCX, 52KB)](https://ukri-tfs-prod-assets.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/Project-partner-contributions-template.docx) then copy and paste the table within it into the text box below.

Ensure you have obtained prior agreement from project partners that, should you be offered funding, they will support your project as indicated in the template.

Word count: 1000

#### Section: Project Partners: letters (or emails) of support

Question: upload a single PDF containing the letters or emails of support from each partner you named in the table in the previous ‘contributions’ section.

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you do not have any project partners, simply add ‘N/A’ into the text box, mark this section as complete and move to the next section.

If you have named project partners in the previous ‘contributions’ section, enter the words ‘attachment supplied’ in the text box below.

Each letter or email you provide should:

* confirm the partner’s commitment to the project
* clearly explain the value, relevance and possible benefits of the work to them
* describe any additional value that they bring to the project
* please refer to ESRC’s guide for more guidance.

Please be aware that Defra should not be included as a project partner on applications, or be asked to provide letters of support, as they are a co-funder for this programme.

Please do not provide letters of support from host and project co-leads research organisations.

Unless specifically requested, please do not include any personal data within the attachment.

Upload details are provided within the service on the actual application.

For audit purposes, UKRI requires formal collaboration agreements to be put in place if an award is made.

#### Section: Applicant and team capability to deliver

Question: Why are you the right individual or team to successfully deliver the proposed work?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Evidence of how you, and if relevant your team, have:

* the relevant experience (appropriate to career stage) to deliver the proposed work
* the right balance of skills and expertise to cover the proposed work
* the appropriate leadership and management skills to deliver the work and your approach to develop others
* contributed to developing a positive research environment and wider community

Use the Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI) format to showcase the range of relevant skills you, and if relevant your team (investigators, researchers, other (technical) staff for example research software engineers, data scientists and so on, and partners), have and how this will help to deliver the proposed work. You can include individuals’ specific achievements but only choose past contributions that best evidence their ability to deliver this work.

Complete this section using the R4RI module headings listed below. You should use each heading once and include a response for the whole team, see the [UKRI guidance on R4RI](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/resume-for-research-and-innovation-r4ri-guidance/). You should consider how to balance your answer, and emphasise where appropriate the key skills each team member brings:

* Contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge
* The development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships
* Contributions to the wider research and innovation community
* Contributions to broader research or innovation users and audiences and towards wider societal benefit

#### Section: Ethics and Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)

Question: What are the ethical or RRI implications and issues relating to the proposed work? If you do not think that the proposed work raises any ethical or RRI issues, explain why.

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Using the text box, demonstrate that you have identified and evaluated the relevant ethical or responsible research and innovation considerations, and how you will manage them.

If you are collecting or using data you should identify:

* any legal and ethical considerations of collecting, releasing or storing the data including consent, confidentiality, anonymisation, security and other ethical considerations and, in particular, strategies taken to not preclude further reuse of data
* formal information standards with which study will be compliant

Word count: 1000

#### Section: Research involving human participation

Question: will the project involve the use of human subjects or their personal information?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

If not, enter ‘N/A’ into the text box, mark this section as complete and move on to the next section.

If you are proposing research that requires the involvement of human subjects, provide the name of any required approving body and whether approval is already in place. Then, justify the number and the diversity of the participants involved, as well as any procedures.

Provide details of any areas of substantial or moderate severity of impact.

Word count: 700

#### Section: References

Question: List the references you’ve use to support your application.

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response:

Ensure your application is a self-contained description. You can provide hyperlinks to relevant publications or online resources. However, assessors are not obliged to access the information they lead to or consider it in their assessment of your application. You must not include links to web resources in order to extend your application. If linking to web resources, to ensure the information’s integrity is maintained include, where possible, persistent identifiers such as digital object identifiers.

Word count: 250

#### Section: Facilities

Question: Does your proposed research require the support and use of a facility?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

If not, enter N/A into the text box, mark this section as complete and move on to the next section.

If you will need to use a facility, you should follow your proposed facility’s normal access request procedures. Where prior agreement is required, ensure you obtain their agreement that, should you be offered funding, they will support the use of their facility on your project.

In the text box below, for each requested facility you should provide:

* the name of facility, copied and pasted from [this list](https://ukri-tfs-prod-assets.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/Facility+Information+for+TFS.docx)
* the proposed usage or costs, or costs per unit where indicted on that list
* confirmation you have their agreement where required

Do not put the facility contact details in your response.

Word count: 100

#### Section: Resources and cost justification

Question: What will you need to deliver your proposed work and how much will it cost?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Use the resources and cost summary table to enter the full costs. Include high-level costs only, not a breakdown of individual items. Use the Justification textbox to demonstrate how the resources you anticipate needing for your proposed work:

* are comprehensive, appropriate, and justified
* represent the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes
* maximise potential outcomes and impacts

This section should not simply be a list of the resources requested, as this will already be given in the detailed ‘costs’ table. Costings should be justified on the basis of [full economic costs (FEC)](https://www.ukri.org/councils/epsrc/guidance-for-applicants/costs-you-can-apply-for/principles-of-full-economic-costing-fec/) of the project, not just on the costs expected from UKRI. For some items we do not expect you to justify the monetary value, rather the type of resource, such as amount of time or type of staff requested.

Where you do not provide adequate justification for a resource, we may deduct it from any funding awarded.

You should identify:

* support for activities to either increase impact, for public engagement, knowledge exchange or to support responsible innovation
* support for access to facilities, infrastructure or procurement of equipment
* support for preserving, long-term storage, or sharing of data
* support from your organisation or partner organisations and how that enhances value for money

Word count: 1000

### Assessment process

We will assess your application using the following process.

#### Peer review

We will invite academic and user experts to review your application independently, against the specified criteria for this opportunity.

#### Response to Peer review

If a proposal meets the standard ESRC minimum quality threshold, the project lead is given the opportunity to respond to the peer reviewers’ comments.

#### Panel

We will invite experts to join an assessment panel which will collectively review your application against the criteria and rank it alongside other applications before making a funding recommendation.

The funders reserve the right to use the recommendations to create a balanced portfolio across the research grants.

The funders reserve the right to modify the assessment process as needed.

The funders will make the final funding decision.

Find out more about [ESRC’s assessment process](https://www.ukri.org/councils/esrc/guidance-for-reviewers/).

#### Timescale

We aim to complete the assessment process in February 2024.

#### Feedback

You will receive anonymised versions of peer reviews on your application. If your application was discussed by a panel, we will give feedback on the outcome of your application.

### Principles of assessment

We support the San Francisco [declaration on research assessment (DORA)](https://sfdora.org/read/) and recognise the relationship between research assessment and research integrity.

Find out about [the UKRI Principles of Assessment and Decision Making](https://www.ukri.org/publications/ukri-principles-of-assessment-and-decision-making/).

### Sharing data with co-funders

ESRC as part of UKRI, will need to share the application (including any personal information that it contains) with AHRC, NERC and Defra so that they can participate in the assessment process.

For more information on how Defra uses personal information, visit [Defra’s privacy notices page](https://your-defra-account.defra.gov.uk/privacy-notice).

### Assessment criteria

#### Section: Vision

Have the applicants demonstrated how the work they are proposing:

* is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
* has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
* is timely given current trends, context and needs
* will impact world-leading research, society, the economy or the environment

#### Section: Approach

Have the applicants demonstrated that they have designed their approach so that it:

* is effective and appropriate to achieve their objectives
* is feasible, and comprehensively identifies any risks to delivery and how they will be managed
* if applicable, uses a clear and transparent methodology
* if applicable, summarises the previous work and describes how this will be built upon and progressed
* will maximise translation of outputs into outcomes and impacts
* describes how their, and if applicable their team’s, research environment (in terms of the place, its location and relevance to the project) will contribute to the success of the proposed work

#### Section: Applicant and team capability to deliver

Have the applicants provided evidence of how they, and if relevant their team, have:

* the relevant experience (appropriate to career stage) to deliver the proposed work
* the right balance of skills and expertise to cover the proposed work
* the appropriate leadership and management skills to deliver the work and their approach to develop others
* contributed to developing a positive research environment and wider community

#### Section: Resources and cost justification

Have the applicants demonstrated how the resources they anticipate needing for their proposed work:

* are comprehensive, appropriate, and justified
* represent the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes
* maximise potential outcomes and impacts

#### Section: Ethics and Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)

Have the applicants identified and evaluated the relevant ethical or responsible research and innovation considerations, and how they will be managed.

### Background

#### Context

The UK’s coastal communities and coastal environments are a diverse and heterogenous grouping, with a wide range of needs and challenges. Some of the challenges to these localities, which also impact the potential opportunities for development, include:

* historical context
* seasonal industries (fishing, tourism and more)
* peripherality (access to services)
* issues of deprivation
* ageing populations
* healthcare
* environmental change
* the impact of both climate change and resulting policies

Understanding needs and the capacity for adaptation, and how communities are represented in policymaking, is critical for the implementation of policies that will build resilient and sustainable UK coastal communities and seas.

UK coastal seas, stretching from the coastline out to the edges of the continental shelf, make up 78% of UK territorial waters and encompass the majority of UK marine natural capital assets, with an estimated value of £211 billion. These seas support a diverse and dynamic range of coastal communities and industries, and provide vital spaces for recreation, contribute to societal wellbeing through engagement with blue space, and are home to a wide range of maritime culture and heritage.

Managing this natural capital to ensure the UK governments’ vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive, and biologically diverse seas, while promoting equitable access and connection to these seas from across all areas of society and conserving associated culture and heritage is a pressing challenge. Ambitious targets are set to transform governance of UK seas and meet government commitments, while also meeting pressures from changing climate and its impacts on ocean health.

Coastal communities are geographically significant as areas which experience deprivation within the UK, both in terms of health ([CMO report 2021](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-2021-health-in-coastal-communities)) and development ([Levelling Up, 2022).](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom) Addressing the natural and human dimensions of this complex socio-ecological challenge is a large knowledge gap that requires the integration of the humanities, natural, and social sciences.

Solutions are required that include environmental, human, cultural and societal influences within a whole system understanding of coastal seas to enhance adaptive capacity to future climate impacts and shocks.

The objectives of the resilient UK coastal communities and seas programme are to:

* apply place-based approaches to transform our understanding of climatic, environmental, health, economic, social, and cultural factors affecting UK coastal communities and seas
* develop the resilient management of UK coastal seas, coastal communities, and the natural capital these areas depend on and support, by delivering the evidence base, tools and practical solutions
* inform policy and enable transformative decision making in collaboration with local communities
* build capacity and capability for transdisciplinary research and the mobilisation of research evidence within UK coastal communities and seas

The Network Plus will be instrumental in achieving the anticipated long-term outcomes of the programme, delivering a coordinated network of academics, policy makers, communities and wider stakeholders that are able to implement scalable solutions to improve the resilience, health and wellbeing of UK coastal communities.

#### Strategic alignment

The Network Plus will be funded by the resilient UK coastal communities and seas programme and it is required to operate together with research projects funded by the programme to transform our understanding of UK coastal communities and seas, collaborating with stakeholders to enable transformative decision making.

The resilient UK coastal communities and seas programme is jointly funded by central funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and AHRC, ESRC, Defra and NERC. By working collectively, we are harnessing the full power of the UK’s research and innovation system to tackle large-scale and complex challenges.

This opportunity is supported through funding made available under UKRI’s strategic theme [’creating opportunities, improving outcomes’](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/creating-opportunities-and-improving-outcomes/), through which UKRI is seeking to improve outcomes for people and places across the UK by identifying solutions that promote economic and social prosperity.

This funding opportunity is also relevant to priority one ‘net zero, environment, biodiversity and climate change’ of the ESRC 2022 to 2025 strategic delivery plan, which sets out our commitment to invest in new ambitious interdisciplinary programmes on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

It will contribute to NERC’s strategic delivery plan ambitions of place-based research (objective two) and embedding environmental science within UKRI’s strategic themes and building national resilience to climate change (objective five). The programme will predominantly address the AHRC vision by contributing to our understanding of contemporary challenges.

The programme will also link to the following priorities detailed in the AHRC strategic delivery plan:

* leading interdisciplinary responses to national priorities, working at the heart of thriving communities
* making connections between people, sectors and capabilities
* being open and supporting the arts and humanities to thrive

Defra investment is through its flagship three-year Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment (NCEA) programme. The marine arm of the NCEA programme is leading the way in supporting government ambition to integrate natural capital approaches into decision making.

The NCEA programme will provide policy with a robust natural capital evidence base, suite of tools, and a framework where environmental, economic and societal information are brought together to transform the way we make decisions to protect and enhance our marine and coastal environments.

UKRI has invested in several Network Plusses. The following lessons learned should be taken into consideration:

* a clear, well-defined topic for the network is needed to focus plans and activities. The activity supported by a network needs to be regularly reviewed
* sufficient administrative and host institution support for the network – including dedicated financial services support – is vital to support activities such as the flexible fund, impact, engagement and communications
* different scales of funding are appropriate for different research topics or disciplines supported via the flexible fund
* different assessment processes may be required relative to the value of projects funded via the flexible fund
* expectation and arrangements for full economic costing of network activities need to be clear across all parties
* advertising of events needs to be included in the budget
* long-term plans for the legacy and sustainability of the network need to be considered early on.