# Policy Support Fund 2025-26

*Find out how to apply to the Policy Support Fund which provides funding to support universities to link effectively with policy research.*

## About the Policy Support Fund

The University has been awarded a Policy Support Fund from Research England and we are delighted to announce an Open Call of £145K. Applicants are invited to apply for projects of no more than £15K, as we hope to award funds for around 9-10 projects in total. We hope to explore new partnerships and projects, as well as building on the strengths of the projects that have already benefitted from the fund.

The Policy Support Fund is also supporting the [The Bath Policy Engagement Academy.](#)

A key aim of the Policy Support Fund is to support universities to link effectively with policy research priorities and opportunities. The funding supports universities in undertaking research with partners working within **local, regional, national and international structures** (including parliament, central government, devolved administrations, local government, health and education bodies, the justice system and other regulatory organisations). The policy support fund can be used to support the following activities:

- **Research** in partnership with policymakers to better understand local, regional, national & international challenges
- **Facilitation** of knowledge exchange between the University & policymakers
- **Improving dialogue** with policymakers and the means to better equip early career researchers to do this
- **Supporting** evidence-based policymaking through partnerships and exchange of people
- **Activity and training** to better equip academics, including postgraduate researchers and early career researchers, to communicate effectively with policymakers
- **Partnerships and collaborations** aimed at supporting evidence-based policy making
- The **exchange of people,** e.g. staff secondments, contributing towards professional doctorates in policy, joint PhDs, etc.

## Policy Support Fund Open Call

An Open Call is available to request funds from the PSF. Staff are invited to submit applications for projects that align with the objectives of the fund.  We particularly encourage applications from (although not limited to) the following areas in the current call:

- Projects that align with the priority research areas of Health & Wellbeing, Digital and Sustainability as per the [University Strategy](#) and support the pillars of: fostering outstanding and inclusive relationships, driving high impact research and enhancing strategic partnerships.
- Projects with the potential to contribute to strong impact case studies for the next REF.
- Interdisciplinary research projects.
- Projects that build on previous Policy Support Fund where there is a clear

demonstration of how the additional funding will extend the impact of the project.
- Projects that show clear collaboration with and/or engagement with policy makers throughout the project.
- Applications from Early Career Researchers (ECRs), or projects that provide a clear opportunity for ECRs to engage with policy makers.

**Application form**
In order to apply you will be asked to develop a short proposal using the template provided and submit this to Emma Riddle (ejvw20@bath.ac.uk) and Helen Perryman (hp544@bath.ac.uk) by **5pm on 10th October 2025.**

These applications will be assessed by the Review Panel, further details of this panel are outlined below.

The costing guidelines at the end of this document must be used to prepare your initial cost estimate. You will then be required to finalise the costing and have this approved by **Emma Hoar in central finance (adselh@bath.ac.uk)** - she will work with you to do this.

You will need to ensure that you have the appropriate ethical approval in place by the start of the award (where relevant). You can find out more by visiting the following webpage: https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/ethics-review- process/

Awards will be made from funds provided by Research England and will be subject to Research England's terms and conditions of funding. Please note that project partners for successful projects will also be expected to sign up to terms and conditions for this funding, in line with the T&Cs issued by Research England for Policy Support Funds.

## Timeline

| Activity | Date |
|---|---|
| Call opens | Friday 12th September 2025 |
| **Application deadline** | **5pm on Friday 10th October 2025** |
| Panel review meeting | Monday 20th October 2025 |
| Panel decision | 27th October 2025 |
| Funding starts | 1st November 2025 |
| **Funding ends** | **31st July 2026** |

## Guidelines

We expect projects to be submitted of a value of more than £15K. Requests for conducting a smaller project or event, for a shorter duration of time will be considered, provided these are within the funding window. Awarded projects can start from the 1st November and must complete by 31st July 2026.

Each PI will be limited to make a maximum of ONE application, but you are welcome to apply on additional projects as a Co-I.

It is important that the amount of funding requested is realistic and time-relevant for achieving the proposed outcome before 31st July 2026. You will need to clearly articulate the reason for the requested funding and how this demonstrates good value for money. If your application identifies the need for a postdoctoral research assistant/PhD student who will carry out the project activities, then ideally this person will be named on the application as there is not sufficient time to recruit people for these projects. If this is not possible, then state how this person will be identified and brought into the project. We expect projects to include external partners and/or policy makers and show clearly how these will be engaged throughout the project and the extent and nature of the collaboration. Letters of support or similar are encouraged but not essential.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) is a shared responsibility, and we would encourage applicants to consider how consideration of EDI can be integrated into the project plan. When developing your proposal consider how you will ensure your project activities, outputs (journal articles, events, etc.) and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation.

## Assessment Criteria

A Review Panel consisting of the following members will review applications:

- Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)
- Academic lead
- Business Partnerships and Knowledge Exchange Manager
- Head of Policy Programmes and Communications

There is a maximum of 70 points to be allocated for each project. The following scoring criteria will be used to assess all applications:

1. Project context and importance (*Score 1-10*)
   - What is the problem/need the project is addressing?
   - Why is it important to engage with policy makers?
   - What difference will the project make (to the project, to policy to achieving impact etc)
2. How well the project aligns with the University Strategy *(1-10)*
   - Activity that supports the pillars of: fostering outstanding and inclusive relationships, driving high impact research and enhancing strategic partnerships.
   - Projects that align with the priority research areas of Health & Wellbeing, Digital and Sustainability.
3. Engagement with policy makers and/or collaboration with partners *(1-20)*

- Activity aimed at improving the dialogue between universities and policymakers.
- Activity and training to better equip academics, including postgraduate researchers and early career researchers, to communicate effectively with policymakers.
- Partnerships and collaborations supporting evidence-based policy making and extent to which the policy partner is involved/engaged with the project.
4. Skills, people, pipeline-related (1-10)
- The exchange of people, e.g. inclusion of ECRs, staff secondments, contributing towards professional doctorates in policy.
5. Timely and cost-effective deliverable (1-10)
- The amount of funding requested is realistic and time-relevant for achieving the proposed timeframe.
- Applicants have clearly articulated the reason for the requested funding level and how this demonstrates good value for money.
6. ED&I considerations *(1-10)*
- Equality, diversity and inclusion has been considered when developing the proposed project

**Application Costing Guidelines**

The following costs are eligible:

| Directly Incurred | Project Specific Staff: |
|---|---|
| | · Research Staff (RAs, ROs) |
| | · Technicians |
| | Travel costs |
| | Sub-contract (i.e. tests) |
| | Consumables |
| Directly Allocated | Pool Technicians |
| | Academic Staff (PI, Co-I) |
| | Infrastructure technician |
| Indirect | 10% overheads on all **Directly allocated costs** |

Please use the following scales to calculate salary costs for your application form. The costs are a guideline only and are based on the mid-point of the salary scale. You will then need to contact Emma Hoar in central finance to have your costs reviewed ahead of application. Emma Hoar: adselh@bath.ac.uk

| | Grade | Mid point | Paypoint | Yearly rate | Daily rate | Hourly rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 4 | 94 | 14 | 34,278.00 | 155.13 | 21.25 |
| | 5 | 95 | 19 | 38,595.00 | 174.67 | 23.93 |
| **RA's** | 6 | 96 | 26 | 44,061.00 | 199.41 | 27.32 |
| **RA's** | 7 | 97 | 33 | 54,037.00 | 244.56 | 33.50 |
| **Lecturer (8)** | 8 | 98 | 40 | 66,448.00 | 300.73 | 41.20 |
| **Senior Lecturer (9)** | 9 | 99 | 47 | 81,916.00 | 370.73 | 50.78 |
| **Reader (9)** | 9 | 51 | 51 | 91,376.00 | 413.54 | 56.65 |
| **Professors:** | | | | 98,656.00 | 446.49 | 61.16 |
| | | | | 101,992.00 | 461.59 | 63.23 |
| | | | | 117,319.00 | 530.95 | 72.73 |
| | | | | 132,260.00 | 598.57 | 82.00 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 146,137.00 | 661.38 | 90.60 |
| 158,273.00 | 716.30 | 98.12 |
| 178,378.00 | 807.29 | 110.59 |

NB Please use the below link for hourly rates of pay, if you will be using a casual member of staff. Only use the above rates when a member of staff working on the application is on a fixed term or permanent contract. Please check with HR if you are unsure of the contract of your staff member.

Rates of pay for hourly paid workers (bath.ac.uk)