

Open Research Fund

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Introduction to the Open Research Fund

Do you need funds to help you deliver an Open Research activity or project, or to support Open Research learning and development?

The Open Research Fund provides small amounts of money up to £500 to researchers, members of staff connected with research and research students (either individually or as members of a team) to enable them to deliver an Open Research activity, project or output, or to support Open Research learning and development.

Any member of University staff active in research or a research-related role, research student, or team, can apply to the Fund at any time. The Fund can be used:

- to enable delivery of an Open Research activity or project, such as organising a workshop or developing an open resource;
- to cover the cost of archiving/enabling access to data or other digital resources;
- to attend an Open Research-related event or training course.

Applications must be submitted using the [online application form](#). If you are interested in applying to the Open Research Fund, please read this call document for full details.

If you have any questions or would like an informal chat, please contact [Robert Darby](#), Research Data Manager (0118 378 6161).

What is Open Research?

Open Research means making the process and outputs of research as **accessible**, **transparent**, **re-usable** and (where relevant) **reproducible** as possible. It includes the Open Access publication of peer-reviewed research, and the sharing of other outputs of research, which may include data, computer code, software, digital resources, preregistered study designs, methods/protocols, open hardware, and preprints.

Research practices that are ‘open’ improve research quality and integrity, re-use by others and value for money. They increase public trust in research and protect against fraud.

For more information about Open Research, consult the University's [Statement on Open Research](#). The web page [12 things you can do to be open](#) lists the key Open Research practices, while the [Open Research Handbook](#) provides a more detailed practical primer.

Open Research is a matter of importance to funders, institutions, and the publishers of research. Public funders, including the UKRI and the European Commission, have policies requiring Open Access to research outputs and the sharing of data and other materials necessary to validate research findings. This University, like any other research-active university, has policies on [Open Access](#) and [data sharing](#). Publishers, especially in the sciences, increasingly encourage, in some cases require, the sharing of data and code necessary to validated published results.

The University supports the principles and aims of Open Research. We encourage all researchers to be as open as they can, as early as they can.

What is the purpose of the Open Research Fund?

In its 2019 [Statement on Open Research](#) the University made a commitment to 'increase the quality, integrity and accessibility of our research by supporting a growing culture and practice of Open Research'. This commitment is integrated into Objective 4 of the University's [Research and Innovation Strategy](#), and is enacted through the Committee on Open Research and Research Integrity (CORRI), chaired by Professor Parveen Yaqoob, PVC for Research and Innovation.

At the start of 2021 the CORRI launched its Open Research Action Plan (download from Useful links [here](#)), a three-year programme of activities to stimulate the development of a culture of open and reproducible research. The Open Research Fund is provided as part of this plan.

We want to work collaboratively with our research community to achieve this ambition, by helping our researchers to develop their Open Research knowledge and skills and enabling them to create more open and reproducible research.

Who can apply to the Fund?

Any member of University staff active in research or a research-related role, research student, or team, can apply to the fund at any time.

An individual or team may apply to the Fund as many times as they wish, but may not receive more than £500 in any financial year.

If you or your team have been awarded an *external grant* to support a project with a *primary Open Research focus*, you can apply to the Fund to facilitate project outcomes or for Open Research-related learning and development purposes. An Open Research Fund grant can be used to contribute to any project outcomes or for general Open Research-related learning and development purposes, e.g. to attend a conference or training course.

Open Research Champions may apply for a grant from the Open Research Fund, but must demonstrate that the activity or project cannot be funded out of the Open Research Champion funds available to them. Open Research Champions would be expected to use these funds for any activities undertaken in the performance of their role. This requirement does not apply if Open Research Champions are part of a team application, providing the activity or project is sufficiently distinct from activities undertaken in the capacity of Open Research Champion.

How can an Open Research Fund award be used?

An Open Research Fund award must be used to deliver an Open Research activity or project, which has as an objective the development of Open Research knowledge and skills or the delivery of Open Research outputs.

Typical activities for which Open Research Fund grants may be used are:

- To organise a workshop or event, e.g. to cover costs for catering and expenses for trainers/speakers;

- To cover the costs of participating in an activity or project with collaborators outside the University;
- To develop an Open Research resource, such as software that enables research outputs to be discovered, accessed and re-used, or a tool for enhancing creation of standardised metadata and data interoperability;
- To develop, build or market [open hardware](#);
- To create an open output (excepting Open Access publications), for example to cover the cost of depositing a dataset with a data centre/data repository that charges a deposit fee, such as the [Archaeology Data Service](#);
- To attend an external training course. Organisations that may provide relevant training include (but are not limited to) the [UK Reproducibility Network](#), the [Software Sustainability Institute](#), the [Carpentries](#) initiative, [Open Life Science](#), and the [UK Data Service](#);
- To attend a conference with an Open Research focus, such as the [FORCE11](#) conference, the [International Data Curation Conference](#), the [RSE Conference](#), etc.

Funds can be requested towards the cost of archiving/enabling access to data or other digital resources on the following conditions: the relevant output has been wholly or substantially created by members of the University; there is no external grant funding that can be used to cover the cost; the funding will support long term preservation and access.

The Open Research Fund cannot be used to pay Open Access publication charges, as [separate University funds](#) are available this purpose.

What happens when the award is made?

Once an award is made you can claim funds for the activity or project specified in your grant application. You will be required to provide a report on the completion of the activity or project, with details of expenditure and outcomes. This is so that the impact of the fund can be assessed.

We also want to know about your outcomes because so that we can celebrate your good work! Award recipients will be expected to co-operate with the Research Engagement team to facilitate communications about their Open Research activities. This might involve, for example, authoring a short [Open Research Case Study](#).

What are the benefits of receiving an Open Research Fund award?

Apart from the obvious benefit that you will be able to fund your activity or project, there are several other advantages to receiving an Open Research Fund award:

Add points to your CV

- You will be able to include the award on your CV. It may be for an activity or project that is additional to your regular studies or work, and so will demonstrate your ability to go above and beyond what is expected of you.

- By undertaking your activity/project, you will put Open Research principles into practice, and demonstrate your progressive credentials as a researcher.

Gain new knowledge and skills

- Your project will allow you to gain new knowledge and learn new skills, which may be of direct benefit to your research and in your future career.

Increase your public profile

- We are keen to showcase the work of recipients of funds, and will work with you to develop and amplify communications showcasing your activities and successes.

Join the University's Open Research network

- You will have the opportunity to become part of the University's developing Open Research network, to interact with like-minded researchers across the University and share experiences and ideas. This may open up new possibilities for making interdisciplinary connections, developing your research or advancing your career.

What support will be provided?

The Open Research Fund is managed by the [Research Engagement team](#) in the Library. You will have access to the support of this team, which will keep in regular contact with you to find out about your activities and needs, and to process claims for funds. The team may be able to assist with any administrative and communication requirements associated with your activities. You will also have access to the community of [Open Research Champions](#), who may be able to support your activities.

How to apply

To apply for an Open Research Fund grant, simply complete [this form](#). This is an open call, and there is no deadline for applications. We will respond to all applications within 20 working days of receipt.

If you would like an informal discussion about the Open Research Fund, please contact Robert Darby, Research Data Manager at r.m.darby@reading.ac.uk / 0118 378 6161.