Updated February 2022

Grants for Research, Development & Analysis Guide for applications

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1. Introduction

The Nuffield Foundation is an independent charitable trust established in 1943 by William Morris, Lord Nuffield, the founder of Morris Motors. Our aim is to advance educational opportunity and social well-being across the United Kingdom. We do this by funding research, development and analysis in education, welfare and justice, and by equipping young people with skills and confidence in quantitative and scientific methods through our student programmes.

In June 2017, the Foundation published a five-year strategy setting out its funding priorities, and we have updated our *Guide for applicants* to reflect these priorities as they evolve. Our primary objective is to improve people's lives through better understanding of the issues affecting their life chances. We are also keen to engage with, and to understand the significance of, new and emerging trends and disruptive forces – social, demographic, technological, and economic – that are changing the structures and context of people's lives. Our work is also concerned with securing social inclusion and addressing inequalities, discrimination and vulnerabilities, in an increasingly diverse and fragmented society, where we define diversity broadly to include age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and other characteristics. We want to consider with the implications of a data-enabled digital culture (for example, for trust, evidence, and authority); and with safeguarding, through the justice system, the rights of the individual in relation to the State.

The Foundation seeks to be an open, collaborative and engaged funder that offers more than money. We are not simply an academic funding body, though the research we fund must stand up to rigorous academic scrutiny. We want the policies and institutions that affect people's well-being to be influenced by robust evidence, and the work we fund to have real impact. We will work with the research, policy and practice communities to foster an environment where that is possible.

This guide is for those who are considering applying for funding from the Foundation for research projects through our responsive application rounds, of which there are two a year for applications of up to £750,000 and one for applications over that value. It describes our funding priorities, explains our application process, and sets out our expectations for successful proposals. See our website for the current application timetable.

Before applying, applicants should:

- Read this guide in its entirety.
- Check that our *Terms and conditions* are acceptable, both to themselves and to the host institution. It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to identify any potential difficulties in complying with the *Terms and conditions* at the *Outline application* stage.
- Visit the 'Apply for funding' section of our website to check application dates.
- Look at projects we have funded in relevant areas. These can be found in the Research section of our website, or summary data are available at https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/funding#360giving.

Whilst these documents provide detailed guidance, the Foundation is an engaged and proactive funder, and once we have screened outline ideas, we are willing and able to support promising applicants in refining and delivering projects, to help maximise their rigour and impact.

We welcome feedback from those reading and using this guide. This can be sent to info@nuffieldfoundation.org with the subject header: ‘Feedback on Guide for applicants’.

2. What we fund

The Nuffield Foundation’s research, development and analysis portfolio is central to the delivery of our mission to advance educational opportunity and social well-being across the UK. We expect the work we fund to improve the design and operation of social policy, especially in those domains that we have always identified as underpinning a well-functioning society: **Education, Welfare, and Justice.**

2.1 What unites our work

To achieve our mission of advancing social well-being, we prioritise research, development, and analysis projects that:

- Identify and explain the social and economic determinants of opportunity and risk across the life span, focusing in particular on early childhood adversity, transitions from adolescence to young adulthood, and social and economic well-being in adulthood and later life.
- Improve well-being for society as a whole, while ameliorating negative outcomes and informing the foundations of and pathways towards a just and inclusive society.
- Support the development of workable evidence-based solutions for policy and practice over the medium term.

The research we fund is often founded on quantitative evidence and analysis, but we also believe that well-designed qualitative research can provide important insights. Whatever the approach taken, applications to us must be based around impartial, objective, and rigorous research. The applicant should be open-minded as to the outcomes of the research and committed to basing any conclusions or recommendations on what the evidence shows.

We remain committed, to encouraging original and thought-provoking approaches to research that identify new questions and change the terms of debate. Our primary focus is on the United Kingdom, but this may include comparative work between the four nations and internationally, where appropriate. Some issues that will determine social well-being will cut across our three domains of Education, Welfare, and Justice, and may extend beyond them. In particular, we are interested in funding research that takes account of the trends that are shaping today’s increasingly complex society. These might include those featured in our 2017-22 strategy:

- How do **digital technologies and digital communications** alleviate, exacerbate and shift vulnerability, and affect concepts of trust, evidence, and authority?
- In what ways do factors such as **socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, community,** and **geography** affect the vulnerability of people to different types of risk, and how can this be mitigated?
- What interventions might promote opportunity and reduce adversity through different life stages, and **promote social inclusion between and across generations**?
- What are the social and economic implications of **physical and mental disability and chronic illness?**
- How can social policy institutions make **better use of research, evidence, and data** in order to understand better the needs of those they serve, and improve services and outcomes?
- How might the **data infrastructure** be used or improved to better understand and explain **outcomes** for individuals and society?

Following our support for **COVID-19 related research and analysis** since Spring 2020, we continue to encourage applications that address key aspects of the pandemic's longer term impact, and recovery from it, in areas relating to our three domains, with implications for developing policy and practice. These aspects include:

- mitigating the disproportionate impact on some groups and communities (including those from ethnic minority backgrounds, young people, and low-income families, recognising that vulnerabilities frequently intersect);
- evaluating shifts in attitudes, practices and service delivery that occurred in response to the pandemic that have future implications; and,
- extending the evidence base for effective interventions

2.2 Size and duration of our grants

We welcome applications at all levels of scale, scope, and cost.

Applications for grants costing up to £750,000 will be considered **twice a year**, with deadlines for submission of outline applications in March and September. For applications at the upper end of that range we recommend that applicants contact us to discuss in advance of submitting an application. Most of the grants we award are below £300,000.

We also welcome applications between £750,000 and £3 million for more strategic projects, which will be considered **once a year**, with an outline application submitted in March. **This distinction is not purely a financial threshold; we expect applications for grants over £750,000 to address the most significant themes and developments that will shape the UK public policy agenda and wider society over the next decade and beyond**. Applications at this level must also bring a wide-ranging, interdisciplinary approach to addressing the questions they examine, including proposals for working collaboratively across research, policy and practice. As with all the work we support, they must be connected in some way to at least one of our three core domains, but it is likely they will cut across more than one of these three areas or extend beyond them, engaging with other social policy fields. We pay particular attention to the value for money offered by applications for larger grants.

Note that funding for projects of over £750,00 replaces that available through our Strategic Fund, which ran from 2019-2021.

We occasionally make smaller grants for work costing less than £15,000. There are options for assessing such applications on a quicker timetable than our standard one – potential applicants should get in touch with us before submitting to discuss.

2.3 Our priorities

Our core interests focus on three broad public policy domains that we have long identified as underpinning a well-functioning society: Education, Welfare and Justice. The priorities within each of these domains are set out in the next sections.

We encourage the involvement of a range of disciplines to issues in these three domains. These disciplines include, but are not limited to, law, psychology, economics, sociology, geography, and data and computer sciences. We welcome cross-disciplinary approaches and also proposals that cut across our domains of interest: to that end, we encourage applicants to read about the priorities in all three domains and consider how their particular topic of interest might relate to these

EDUCATION

The scope of our interest in education covers all life stages and phases from early years[1] (including pre-natal), through school, to further and higher education and vocational learning. We are interested in all influences on educational opportunity and life chances, including educational provision, informal learning, family and home environment, genetics, gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic and place-related factors. Most recently, the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on education at all phases and stages is an additional perspective that would be of interest.

We have four thematic funding priorities in education: skills and capabilities; teaching quality; young people's pathways; and educational disadvantage. We would expect most of the projects we fund to address one or more of these themes.

Skills and capabilities
We seek applications related to the skills, capabilities and attributes that equip children and young people for life and work in a rapidly changing world. These may be developed through formal and informal educational experiences but are also shaped by the home environment and other influences outside of educational institutions.

Particular skills and capabilities include:
- Oral language, literacy and wider communications skills.
- Numeracy, quantitative and data skills, as developed across all subjects

[1] In 2015 the Nuffield Foundation set out some specific funding priorities for early education and childcare research. These can be found here: https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/funding/research-development-and-analysis-fund/early-years-funding-priorities and remain of interest to us.

(including mathematics, statistics, natural and social sciences, arts and humanities, and vocational learning).
- Scientific inquiry and analytical thinking.
- Social and emotional development, and mental health and well-being more broadly.
- School readiness and the range of skills and competencies this encompasses.
- Broad and transferable skills such as problem-solving, interpersonal skills, collaboration and teamwork, time management, self-confidence, self-efficacy, motivation, leadership, and creative and metacognitive skills.
- Digital skills and their relationship to other skills, including how the increasing use of digital technologies and media affects learning and development.

We are interested in factors that affect the development of these skills and capabilities from the earliest years into adulthood.

Teaching quality
We seek projects aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning, in particular through:
- Evidence-based pedagogy and practice across all education settings including early years providers, schools, colleges and work-based provision, for example based on carefully designed, developed and evaluated interventions.
- Harnessing digital technologies to improve teaching and learning, parental engagement, and child development.
- Addressing the roles of, and arrangements for, the assessment of learning and achievement.
- Scrutinising and understanding the recruitment, retention, training and continuous professional development of talented and motivated early years, school and tertiary education workforces.
- Enabling better dissemination, accessibility and use of knowledge from research to inform teaching practice.
- Research into school effectiveness and improvement.
- Examining the role and impact of structures and organisation of education systems, including funding and accountability arrangements.

Young people's pathways
We seek projects that improve the evidence base concerning young people's choices, decisions and pathways at key points in their progression through education and training into work. They should aim to influence relevant policy and practice on these issues. Key areas include:
- Pre-16 subject and course choices, and how these relate to later pathways and outcomes.
- The post-16 landscape, encompassing the full range of vocational, technical, further and higher education routes available to young people, how young people interpret and understand the options available, pathways into these routes and how they are accessed.

- The immediate and longer-term societal and individual outcomes associated with post-16 routes, including further training, earnings, broader employment and well-being outcomes.
- How the post-16 pathways followed by young people and their associated outcomes vary and why, including evaluating policy and other evidence-based solutions to improve outcomes.
- How to effectively enhance learning outcomes across different pathways, settings and experiences, for example through work experience or placements in technical routes.
- The role of information, advice, guidance and work experience to support effective learning, education and career development choices.
- The role of employers in the design and delivery of the education curriculum and training, in supporting young people to enter and thrive in the labour market and how these relate to individual and societal well-being.

We are also interested in how the pathways and qualifications available equip young people with the various skills and capabilities set out above, acknowledging that there will be some core skills required for all young people, and others which are more specialised depending on their intended vocations.

In this area we are particularly interested in proposals seeking to improve understanding of progression into technical and vocational pathways, training and work. We welcome work that identifies effective policies and practices to support young people, particularly those facing educational disadvantages and other vulnerabilities, including the potential roles played by their families, the professionals who work with them, and employers.

Educational disadvantage
We seek applications that investigate the prevalence of – and interrelationships between – the various forms of educational disadvantage and vulnerability faced by children and young people at risk of falling behind in their learning, or of being locked into trajectories of low achievement. We are particularly interested in projects that aim to identify and address these needs as early as possible, including through the development and evaluation of specific interventions, whether in early years settings and schools or through support for parenting and the home learning environment. We are also interested in how the pathways taken by young people from age 14 and into post-compulsory education and training vary by different forms of disadvantage or vulnerability and how evidence-based policy and practical solutions might address inequalities that underpin or result from these variations.

Particular forms of disadvantage and vulnerabilities of interest include:
- Developmental delays, impairments or difficulties, and other special educational needs.
- Physical disabilities.
- Mental health issues.
- Socio-economic disadvantage.
- Disadvantages relating to race or ethnicity
- Geographical disadvantage.

- Being in care, or leaving care.
- We are interested in projects that consider how one or more of these disadvantages or vulnerabilities intersect with our other Education funding priorities, and those within our Welfare and Justice domains.

Approaches to these education priority themes
We encourage the application of a wide variety of disciplines to these educational issues. These disciplines include psychology, economics (including behavioural economics), sociology, geography, and data and computer sciences. We welcome cross-disciplinary approaches and proposals that span issues relevant to our other domains of interest (Welfare and Justice).

As with the Foundation's work in general, our primary focus is on the United Kingdom. Where appropriate we are interested in comparative work between the four nations and internationally, particularly taking advantage of differences and similarities in educational policy and practice.

As covered in detail in Section 2.3 we are open to a wide variety of research approaches, believing that the research question should drive the choice of an appropriate methodology. In our Education work, depending on the research questions, we are particularly interested in projects that:

- Systematically synthesise the existing evidence base in particular areas of central interest to us;
- Undertake secondary analysis of existing datasets and where appropriate linkages between them;
- Pilot or evaluate interventions on a pre-trial basis, or through appropriately-scaled trials.

For proposals for interventions, we are particularly interested in projects aimed at developing and evaluating innovative approaches to the direct experience of pupils and students at all stages from the early years through compulsory education. Such student-oriented programmes need to be grounded in evidence and/or designed to help develop the evidence base. Scalability should be built in from the outset and applicants should consider whether development and early evaluation work might pave the way towards a large-scale randomised controlled trial a later stage. For such applications the project should develop the evidence to a sufficient level to make it a strong candidate for subsequent funding by the Education Endowment Foundation. Intervention proposals need clear and quantifiable objectives, a defined audience(s), and should be relevant to our educational priorities above, for example:

- Targeting children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, whether socio-economic or other types of disadvantage.
- Focusing on the development and application of one or more of the skills or capabilities listed.
- Supporting young people undertaking post-16 routes other than A level and university as discussed.

WELFARE

Our Welfare framework
Our Welfare portfolio aims to improve economic and social well-being across the life course. Our approach is motivated by how certain individuals and groups are potentially vulnerable to adverse outcomes, and how those risks can be mitigated, or channelled in a positive manner. Mitigation involves drawing on resources, broadly defined to include financial and physical assets but also less tangible factors such as practical and emotional support. Such support may come from sources including:

- **Self**: An individual may draw from their own resources, to improve their economic, social, physical and emotional outcomes throughout their lives. This may be, for example, by acquiring skills, managing their health and deciding where to live, whether to save and in what form.
- **Family**: The distribution of housing and financial, practical and emotional resources within families and between generations are important in affecting people's outcomes. Family-formation, organisation and caring decisions also play a key role.
- **Work**: Well-being in work is influenced by a number of factors. These include the ability to enter and progress in employment, people's control and autonomy over the way they work and inequalities in the labour market according to characteristics including age, gender, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation.
- **Community**: Building and drawing upon social capital and other attributes affects the resources provided by communities, and the outcomes for individuals and their families that result. This applies, in different ways, to both digital and virtual communities.
- **State**: Regulation and state provision of transfers, goods and services affect the economic and social well-being of individuals, families and communities.

In all cases, we are interested in vulnerability and the extent to which it can be mitigated, which varies according to individual and group characteristics including age, gender, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation.

We are also interested in how vulnerability and its mitigation interact with major social and economic forces that may shape society and the distribution of outcomes over the coming years. We are open to what these forces may be, but the following are likely to be relevant:

- **Demographic**: For example, how do we respond to the multiple pressures and opportunities resulting from an ageing population? This will include the impact of personal choices and work on the ageing process and how policy and institutions can adapt to the demands of a growing older population.
- **Technological**: For example, how are changes in technology affecting the interface between individuals and their family, employer and community?
- **Economic:** For example, what are the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis but also the longer term systemic economic slowdown for the implicit contracts that underpin society? These include implicit contracts between generations and also those between individuals, business and the state. What does this imply about the need for individuals to manage their own health and financial security?

Areas of focus
Applications are welcome in all of the above areas. However, we particularly wish to support research into how **family**, **work, and the intersection of the two** will affect individual and societal well-being in the coming years. These topics link strongly to the Nuffield Foundation's other domains of Education and Justice and we are also interested in projects which explore the intersections between these domains.

We are also sharpening the Welfare focus of the Foundation's cross-cutting theme of how new technologies can alleviate, exacerbate and shift vulnerability, and affect concepts of trust, evidence, and authority. We will have a particular focus on **how new technologies combine with family and work** to affect economic and social well-being, including the links between digital and social exclusion. We will prioritise projects that look to inform solutions and which use innovative methods that are fit for purpose in this rapidly developing area.

We are also interested in research exploring how quality of life can be maximised during **later life and the final phase of life**, taking account of decisions and experiences over the full life course, and including the implications for family and carers. We invite such proposals relevant to our broader Welfare aims. Examples include better understanding the population of people receiving formal and informal care, insights into preferences for care provision and the role of markets or missing markets in protection against the financial risks arising from needs in later life.

We also highlight some further topics as specific examples of areas where we would be interested to receive applications:

- What types of **economic policies and systems** would best enhance individual and societal well-being and challenge existing inequalities, as society adjusts to turbulent and uncertain growth in the economy, earnings and productivity in the post-COVID-19 world?
- How will the costs and benefits of the **transition to a net zero-emissions economy** be shared fairly across the population and across generations?
- How can we better understand the **economic determinants of health outcomes and their impact on social well-being,** both in the current context and in the face of long-term demographic trends?
- How can quality of life be maximised during **later life and the final phase of life**, including for family and carers, and taking account of decisions and experiences over the full life course?
- What learning can we capture from the **COVID-19 pandemic** in terms of intersectionality of vulnerabilities and how can these lead to adverse outcomes? How might these be addressed, either locally or nationally and through the state or other actors?

We emphasise that we are not funders of general research into macroeconomics, science, technology, medical issues, or health or social care systems that is solely, or primarily, aimed at enhancing knowledge within those fields. Successful proposals in the above areas will need to be very clearly and directly focused on improving economic and social policy, practice and well-being.

Complementary social and economic analysis
Complementing our Welfare portfolio, in April 2020 we awarded £4 million in research funding through the Oliver Bird Fund to improve the lives of people living with musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions. This followed a dedicated call for proposals on this topic. The programme is focused on exploiting the unique UK data environment to enhance our understanding across a broad range of MSK conditions. A further call for proposals to the Oliver Bird fund will run in the future – an update will be available on our website.

JUSTICE

Our Justice framework
Our work in Justice is central to our mission to advance social well-being and to understanding the foundations and pathways to a just and inclusive society, and the restrictions to achieving it. We believe that a well-functioning, fair, and effective system of justice is essential for day-to-day life and for public trust, respect, and confidence in the law and institutions of State. Following a recent review of work in our Justice domain, we have refreshed our funding priorities.

We are interested in research that explores how the real-world application of law and the administration of justice meets (or fails to meet) people's needs and expectations. Our particular (although not exclusive) emphasis is on issues of law and justice that have the most significant effect on the lives, opportunities, and social well-being of vulnerable and disadvantaged people. We are especially interested in both the causes of people's involvement in the justice system and the consequences of that involvement for their wider life chances.

While we are potentially interested in issues spanning all jurisdictions and areas of law, both because of their strong connection to the Foundation's wider priorities and because we think there is particular scope here to develop the existing evidence base to contribute to improved knowledge and outcomes, our principal focus is on the following: **access to justice; Administrative justice; Family justice; and Youth justice.**

Note that our work on family justice links to, and is aligned with, the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory (Nuffield FJO), an organisation we have established to improve the lives of children and families by putting data and evidence at the heart of the family justice system. Although we have different functions and ways of working, we share a common goal and our work complements that of the Nuffield FJO by responsively funding research that addresses issues of contemporary or perennial concern in family justice, whether of a strategic or more practical nature.

While work in youth justice is a priority for us, other criminal justice topics are typically less so, although we will consider applications that can demonstrate either a connection with our priority questions set out below or a link to the Foundation's wider interests. Issues of commercial and contract law, and other matters of personal property entitlement or dispute, are less likely to be of significant interest to us unless applicants can show how they would address either our priority questions or significant wider issues around new trends and forces that are changing society.

The centre of our focus is on the operation of the formal justice system but we are also very interested in the connected systems, processes and agencies operating alongside and up and downstream of the decisions made by courts and tribunals in our areas of interest, such as the early legal advice sector, or children's social care services. On the latter, while we lead work on children's welfare and protection services from our Justice domain, there will be strong interest and involvement from other parts of the Foundation.

We are interested in all of the UK's legal systems (England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland), separately and comparatively.

Our consultations with academic experts and professionals working in the justice system have highlighted the need for the work we fund to focus on the current challenges facing the justice system (including those arising from the impacts of the pandemic), and also broader questions around the effectiveness of the system - not just in terms of its capacity to serve the needs of its users and the public, but also its wider social and economic value.

Areas of focus
We believe that a modern, well-functioning justice system is: responsive to the needs of people who rely on it; accessible and transparent; fair; effective; trusted and regarded as legitimate.

In this context, we welcome proposals addressing research questions that speak to different aspects of these principles. The following **priority topics and questions** are ones in which we are particularly interested, although this is not an exclusive list and we are open to applications featuring other priorities and questions of significance identified by applicants.

1. **Understanding users**
   - How do people respond to their legal needs in different situations, and what are their experiences and/or expectations of the justice system in addressing them?
   - What is the interaction of these needs with different forms of vulnerability, disability, and disadvantage?
   - What shapes both public and user views of the justice system's legitimacy and their trust in it, and what are the implications of those views?

2. **Accessing and participating in justice**
   - What does meaningful access and participation in justice look like in different settings and to different users of the justice system?
   - What are the enablers and barriers to these, including the role of the system's processes and culture?

3. **Delivering justice – outcomes of and from the system**
   - What are the most effective, efficient, proportionate, and just routes to addressing different types of legal needs and disputes, including new or alternative forms of dispute resolution?
   - How are different types of justice outcomes and performance best understood and measured? In particular, how can the wider social and economic value of the justice system's operation and outcomes be examined, and what are the effects

of contact (or non-contact) with the justice system or other legal processes on wider life chances?
- What are the impacts and implications of changes caused by (a) the COVID-19 pandemic and (b) system reforms and resourcing?
- What is the relationship between procedural protections for users and substantive outcomes?

4. **Disparity, discrimination, and exclusion**
    - What are the causes, consequences, and circumstances of different types of disparity (for place or people) and discrimination in processes and outcomes within the justice system?
    - In what situations are individuals or groups being poorly treated or underserved by the system, and how can that be best addressed?

5. **Impacts of new technology and other scientific developments on justice**
    - What are or will be the impacts and implications of new technologies, AI and data-driven approaches on processes, decision-making, public trust, and outcomes in the justice system, including as potential sources or correctives of bias?
    - Do scientific developments in our understanding about behaviour and mental capacity change how the justice system should address and regulate them?

6. **System connections, comparisons, and effects**
    - What can systemic analysis or 'systems thinking' – considering the system as an interdependent whole rather than sum of separate parts – demonstrate about the connections (or lack of them) and operation of the justice system?
    - What connections across different parts of the justice system are feasible and appropriate, and what are the trade-offs and consequences of such connections?
    - What lessons can be learnt from comparative research between the UK and other jurisdictions or with other complex social policy systems?

Applicants should make explicit reference to how their topic of study or approach relates to these questions <u>or</u> whether they address a different issue of significance.

While we primarily fund empirical work, we are open-minded as to the type of methodological approach proposed, for both quantitative and qualitative work, provided it is appropriate for the project's aims and research question. We have a particular interest in the following approaches:
- Evidence synthesis on key topics, translated for policy and practice audiences.
- Analysis (possibly involving data linkage) of datasets held by local and national agencies and organisations.
- Exploring system users'/potential users' requirements and expectations through deliberative and participative research.
- Innovation and evaluation: identifying and testing possible solutions to problems and understanding and evidencing what works in policy and practice.

Whatever the proposed method, we place significant weight on rigour, quality, and impact.

We encourage a broader perspective on justice issues from a range of academic and research disciplines and welcome applications from multidisciplinary teams, and applicants from disciplines outside of the legal and socio-legal traditions who may have different interests and approaches to questions around the real-world applications of law and justice.

In addition to the overlap in interests and priorities with the Nuffield FJO, we also encourage applications on topics that cross our domain boundaries. Examples might include::

- The availability and enforcement of rights for vulnerable workers (links to Welfare).
- Addressing the educational and behavioural needs of children in or at risk of entering the youth justice system, and the role of Pupil Referral Units in particular (links to Education).
- The fairness and effectiveness of decision-making processes around access to benefits or specialist educational provision (links to Education and Welfare).
- Assessing the importance of an effective justice system for broader social and economic outcomes (links to Welfare and Education).

2.4 Types of projects we support

The Foundation supports a wide range of research, development, and analysis projects.

Research reviews, synthesis, **and translation.** These may include formal meta-analysis as well as other systematic and narrative reviews that offer a critical evaluation of empirical research, policy and practice within or across our domains. The aim should be to draw out implications for policy and practice reform (including learning from international experience where appropriate) or to generate a new research agenda. In some of our areas of interest, practitioners in our priority domains (such as teachers, judges, social workers etc.) have limited access to data and evidence showing how systems operate and the outcomes they achieve, and to how to embed this knowledge into practice. We are therefore interested in projects that explore how different approaches can help practitioners to better understand and use existing or new data to improve outcomes or service provision.

Primary data collection and analysis. While many of the projects we fund involve secondary analysis of existing datasets, some proposals aim to explore topics or questions where there is no or only inadequate current data. In those situations, we support work involving primary data collection, both quantitative and qualitative (they may involve both types but that is not essential, the priority being that the methods employed are appropriate to the project's aims and research questions).
Please note that we will only fund primary data collection of any type where analysing and reporting on that data is also an integral part of the same project; we do not fund data collection exercises (including sweeps of regular surveys, either on a one-off or ongoing basis) as a standalone task.

Pre-trial development work. We fund projects that conceptualise and design innovative interventions and take the concept through an initial pilot phase. The appropriate scope for a project will depend upon the current stage of the intervention's development. For example, an intervention may be 'promising' because of its strong theoretical basis but may not have been implemented in practice or subjected to any form of evaluation. Where projects are at such an early stage, we would expect an application to be small scale and to focus on feasibility and early piloting. In contrast, some interventions may be more developed, with initial evidence of promise from previous evaluation of the approach (e.g. pre- and post-test assessments; a matched study; a trial conducted in another context). Appendix C contains further detail regarding our expectations for pre-trial development work.

Comparison or controlled trials or evaluations. We will consider comparison or controlled trials or evaluations where there is a particularly important and innovative intervention that has already been subjected to formal pre-trial development work. We will also consider funding large-scale trials where the evaluation has a strong design and where there are good prospects for wider implementation. All trials should be pre-registered on an appropriate trial registry such as the ISRCTN Registry or AEA Trial Registry. We do **not** fund projects that simply involve 'rolling out' a well-known way of working to new areas.

Developmental projects. In addition to research, we occasionally fund projects of a more developmental nature. They may or may not lead to larger scale applications for funding from the Foundation. Examples might include:

- Initial development or feasibility studies for practical project interventions, with relevance to wider populations, i.e. beyond those directly involved in the project.
- Small-scale inquiries, working parties or similar mechanisms to engage and deliberate with a range of stakeholders to reach common ground on a priority policy or practice issue and research/identify a potentially workable way forward.
- Exploratory analysis of new data to inform the feasibility and potential for further analysis.
- Small-scale deep-dive/observational studies to understand the operation of a policy or practice area to inform a larger scale project or initiative.

In each type of project, it is essential that the approach chosen is methodologically rigorous, draws on the right range of disciplines to address the proposed questions, and is proportionate to the likely impact of the project. Further guidance on key methodological considerations is outlined later in Section 5 on *Full applications*.

2.5 Eligibility

We have few hard and fast rules about eligibility but offer the following guidance in response to the most frequently asked questions we receive: **The best way to get a clear answer to your question is to submit an outline**. The outline process is specifically designed as a mechanism for you to test out your ideas with us. It is often hard for us to offer steers without as the level of detail requested in an *Outline application*, and we do not have the capacity to offer tailored advice to the very many 'pre-outline' queries we receive.

Non-UK applications

In general, we award grants to a wide range of organisations including, but not confined to, universities based in the UK and for projects focused on the UK context. We do however, welcome applications from UK-based organisations to carry out collaborative projects, possibly involving overseas partners (and/or exploiting data relating to other countries), for example where:

- These provide useful comparators for UK experience in our areas of substantive interest.
- There are lessons to be learned from international experiences.
- Policy or practice overseas might be adapted for the UK.
- There is a capacity building dimension that might benefit the UK.

In exceptional circumstances, we might consider an application from an overseas organisation along the lines of the above where there is no workable arrangement whereby a UK-based organisation can host the grant. In these cases, the applicant must convince us that there are adequate arrangements for dissemination, engagement and impact in the UK context.

Other funders

In some circumstances we will accept applications for projects that are being considered by another funder, pending discussion with our Programme Heads. However, we are unlikely to fund proposals that have been unsuccessful elsewhere unless the project is truly outstanding and central to our areas of interest. Although the Foundation does not contribute to general appeals for pooled funding, in some circumstances we will consider partnership funding. Where applicants wish to propose a partnership funding model, we would expect applicants to argue the case for such an approach within their *Outline application*. Further guidance is given in Section 4.2 below.

Multiple proposals

Where applicants wish to seek funding for more than one project, we are willing to consider more than one *Outline application* from the same organisation. However, applicants should bear in mind that it is unlikely that we would shortlist more than one *Outline application* from a single PI within a given funding round.

Exclusions

Some specific categories are not eligible for funding from our research, development, and analysis calls:

- Individuals without a formal employment or other relationship with the institution hosting the grant.
- Projects led by individuals unaffiliated to any particular organisation.
- Projects led by schools or further education colleges.
- Projects led by undergraduates or masters students.
- PhD fees or projects where the main purpose is to support a PhD.
- The establishment of academic posts.
- Ongoing costs or the costs of ‘rolling out’ existing work or services.
- ‘Dissemination-only’ projects, including campaigning work, which are not connected to our funded work.
- Local charities, replacement for statutory funding, or local social services or social welfare provision.
- Requests for financial help or educational fees from or on behalf of individuals.

3. Overview: the application process and what we look for

The Nuffield Foundation seeks to be a flexible and engaged funder that offers more than money. We usually have two ‘open’ funding rounds each year, in which we welcome the submission of ideas for projects that fit our mission in one or more of our three domains of Education, Welfare and Justice. For strategic projects over £750,000 in value, there is one application round each year. See our website for the current application timetable. We ask applicants to indicate which of the domains, their project *best* fits so that it can be directed to the appropriate team for initial sifting. However, there are no separate budgets or criteria for the different domains, and potentially promising *Outlines* are often shared internally so that they can benefit from the range of experience in the team.

3.1 What we look for

Our grants rounds are always competitive, and we only fund a small proportion of the many applications we receive each year. To help manage demand, we have two stage process. The first stage is an *Outline application*, comprising a short online application form where applicants can briefly layout their proposal and make the case for its importance. Each *Outline application* is screened by one or more members of our programmes team, all of whom are experienced in conducting and managing research. We consider the following factors in assessing applications submitted to us:

- **Is the research question relevant?** We consider whether is it an interesting question addressing an important issue that fits the Nuffield Foundation’s mission and is relevant to at least one of our domains. Applicants need to make a clear case for the importance of the proposed project and how it would add to the existing knowledge base
- **Is there a clear conceptual framework?** Where there is a falsifiable hypothesis or theory of change this should be explicitly set out. We also support research relating to theory-building as well as theory-testing but will still look for a clear underpinning analytical structure demonstrating an understanding of the social context in which the research would be conducted.
- **Is the question researchable and the methodology appropriate and rigorous?** This relates to analysis and drawing conclusions as well as design/data collection. Methods need to be robust and right for the question. See Section 2.3 for further advice on methodological considerations.
- **Does the team possess appropriate experience, expertise and potential?** We consider suitability to carry out the project as planned in terms of track record and disciplinary focus, but also evidence of potential to further enhance the capability of members of the team.
- **Is the budget requested appropriate and does it offer good value for money?** We examine whether funds requested are both adequate and not excessive. Value for money considerations encompass whether the cost is justified by the potential benefits and in line with comparable research, as well as whether resources are being used in the best way to achieve the intended outcomes.
- **Is there a clear route to use the output to positively influence future outcomes?** There needs to be clarity of outputs and outcomes and of the relationship between

the two. Applications need to set out the ways in which the research could have impact beyond the research community (and who are the key audiences for the research), backed by a credible plan to achieve this.

This *Outline* process provides a fair way to offer all potential applicants the opportunity to test out their ideas with the Foundation. Typically, between one in six and one in eight of *Outline* applicants are invited to submit a *Full Application,* which we then send for external peer-review before being assessed by Trustees. We do not operate a quota and all applications are judged on quality, relevance, and impact.

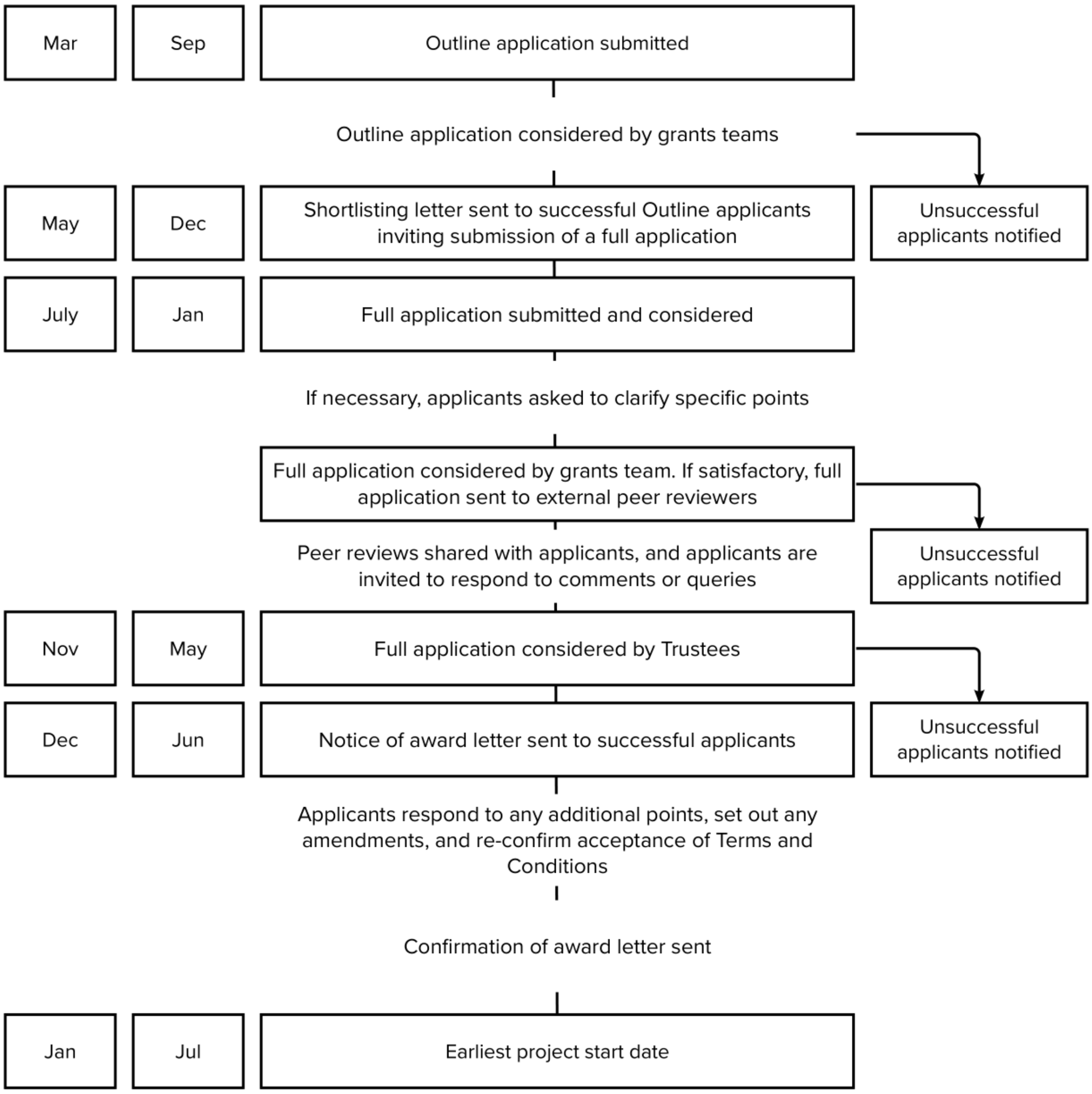
Having assessed a *Full Application*, Trustees may decide to offer a grant, or to request further clarification or specific conditions before awarding a grant, or they may decide not to award a grant. The whole application process typically takes around eight months from submission to final decision, with the shortlisting decision made around three months after the deadline, although occasionally we will agree a bespoke timescale with you. The flowchart on the next page provides an overview of the application process. Potential applicants should refer to our website for the latest application deadlines. Applicants should note that the start date for any project should be at least two months after the month of the Trustees' decisions. You will be informed of the likely decision date by the grants team.

All proposed projects must be led by a named Principal Investigator (PI), who is the lead applicant. PIs must take overall responsibility for the application and be the main point of contact with the Foundation throughout the application process and for the duration of any subsequent grant period. We award grants to organisations (the 'host institution') rather than individuals, and the PI must be based at the host institution.

Individuals who will assist the PI in the management and leadership of the project may be named as co-investigators. Given the level of responsibility that these individuals would need to take for the conduct of the project, we would not expect more than two or three individuals to be named as co-investigators.

Application process overview chart

The months on the left hand side provide an indication of our two grants rounds, but applicants should check the application timetable on our website for key dates and deadlines.



4. Stage 1: Outline applications

Outline applications must be submitted via our online form. Applications need to provide a clear, concise and compelling account of your proposal, why it is needed and the impact it is expected to achieve. The *Outline* must demonstrate that the project fits within the Foundation's interests, clearly articulate the aims and objectives and demonstrate that the approach, methodology and activities are well-considered, fit for purpose and appropriately resourced (staff, time and costs).

Your *Outline application* must stand alone to make your case, without any need for the reviewers to undertake further research or to follow up the bibliographic references in order to judge the application.

We receive a large volume of O*utline applications* in each round. It is therefore important that you follow the guidance here to enable reviewers to judge your application on its merits. Only a small proportion of *Outline applications* are shortlisted to proceed to a *Full application* and we will offer constructive advice and support to those shortlisted to help them put their best foot forward when Trustees make decisions about their proposals.

Due to the large number of *Outline applications* we receive in our responsive rounds, we are not necessarily able to meet with, or offer bespoke advice to, prospective applicants prior to the submission of an outline, nor to provide specific feedback on all unsuccessful *Outline applications*.

4.1 Outline application form

You can find the *Outline application* form via the Nuffield Foundation website. After selecting 'Apply now' you will be asked a brief set of questions related to your proposal, completion of these questions will direct you to the form most appropriate for your application.

- You **must** use this online form to submit your *Outline application*. If there is a legitimate reason why we need to consider an offline application, then you should contact us at applications@nuffieldfoundation.org to discuss an alternative method.
- You **must** follow the guidance in the online O*utline application* form on word / character limits and attachments. These are designed to ensure that you make your case succinctly, there will be opportunity to expand on detail if invited to Full Application stage. You will not be able to submit your application if it exceeds the word or character limits, or if you do not answer mandatory questions.
- Please provide supporting documentation as attachments where prompted.
- The *Outline application* form cannot accept rich text format. You may therefore provide additional information in the form of charts, diagrams, tables or budgetary explanations as an attachment if required. This can be attached as a single file in Word, Excel, PowerPoint or text-searchable PDF format. However, we would **strongly** prefer that all relevant information regarding your *Outline* is covered in the sections within the form, without the need for a separate attachment.

- Please pay attention to the FAQs section in Annex A, particularly with regard to saving progress and returning to the application later, and to the process for saving a copy of the application before submitting.

4.2 Sections of the *Outline application* form

In each section of the application form there is guidance on the types of questions you should answer in completing the section. Not all of these questions will be applicable to all projects, and there will be a distinction between research, development and analysis projects. The sections also indicate how much detail you should provide. You should aim for a balance that is sufficient for Foundation staff and Trustees to assess the importance, value and rigour of your proposal.

The initial section of the *Outline application,* asks for contact details and some basic information about the grant such as the project start and end dates. Otherwise, the core components are:

- Project summary
- Alternative funding sources
- Case for the importance of the project
- Aims and objectives
- Methods, approach and activities
- Outcomes, outputs and dissemination
- Staffing
- Timetable
- Budget
- References
- Additional information

For shortlisted applications, we understand that the budget, timetable and some other aspects of your proposal may be refined between *Outline* and *Full application* stage, and indeed the feedback we provide on shortlisting may well prompt some of these changes.

Further guidance about some of these sections is provided below.

4.2.1 Alternative funding sources

You must state if you are **applying or have applied for funds for your project elsewhere**. We will judge your application on its merits but reserve the right to contact the relevant person at the other funding organisation(s) for information. Where applicants wish to propose a partnership funding model, we would expect them to argue the case for such an approach within their *Outline application.* This should provide the name and contact details of the proposed co-funder and set out the reasons for considering a partnership funding model so that we can take this into consideration when reviewing your application. We would usually expect to contact the proposed co-funder to discuss the feasibility of co-funding prior to a funding decision being made by the Foundation's Trustees.

4.2.2 Methods, approach and activities

A key section of your *Outline application* is **Methods, approach and activities** (Section C)**.** The purpose of this section is to set out the work you will undertake to achieve the aims and objectives, and to address the research questions, if applicable. It must demonstrate that the proposed design is fit for purpose, the project is feasible and that a high-quality project will be delivered. We need to understand that any risks to the analysis or limitations to the data have been recognised and that there is a plan in place to deal with them. We do not require the full details but need sufficient information to make these judgements.

For **research and analysis** applications, we need to see:

- An account of whether your approach is designed to be exploratory, to provide a robust descriptive account, or to infer/understand causality (or a combination of these).
- Clarity on both the population of interest and the unit of analysis; a definition of who will be included in the study and explanation of why; an assessment of whether some important groups will be excluded, the reasons for this, and the impact upon the study.
- A description of the research methods proposed, whether primary research or secondary, and a rationale for why these have been proposed. Details of the approach to research synthesis/review, data collection or analysis as relevant. For each approach, you should provide sufficient information for the reviewer to assess its scientific rigour. For example, you may need to cover:
    - For any form of sampling - information on the proposed sampling method, planned issued and achieved sample sizes, and issues of bias to be considered.
    - For quantitative analysis – an assessment of whether the sample sizes are big enough to test the key relationships with sufficient confidence, including subgroup analysis.
    - For qualitative work – how the sampling strategy will ensure an appropriate range of individuals and experiences are covered, and the approach to analysis.
    - For evaluations - how the ‘counterfactual’ will be assessed and what effect sizes will be detectable.

We do not expect all **development projects** to succeed in leading to further work, but we still expect significant rigour in their design and delivery. They require significant skill and experience to ensure they are delivered successfully and that any potential to lead to further work is properly explored. As an applicant for a development project, you will need to set out what you will do, how you will do it, why you have chosen the proposed approach, and initial thoughts on how the activities proposed might lead to further work. It is particularly important to set out whether the proposed team has previous experience of applying the proposed approach, and in moving projects out of development phase.

4.2.3 Timetable

We do not expect a detailed **timetable** (Section F) in the *Outline application*. However, we do need to be given sufficient information to help us judge whether the overall timeframe, and sequencing of key stages in the project, fits with its aims, objectives, and approach.

In considering your timetable, please take into consideration the requirements of the Foundation that grant-holders publish a freely available *Main public report*, which serves as a concise and accessible account of the project, drawing out key findings and recommendations. This report must be published and disseminated **before** the end of grant date.

4.2.4 Budget

We do not expect a detailed **Budget** (Section G) in the *Outline application.* We only need an estimated budget that indicates the split between staff time (separately for different categories of staff), overheads/ estate costs and other direct costs (e.g. non-staff costs for quantitative and qualitative research) and complies with our *Budget guidelines for Outline applications* (see Appendix B).

4.2.5 Additional information

It is not necessary to include any **additional information** to that requested in the application form. However, if you feel it is important to include additional information that is supportive of your application (e.g. a letter of support from a key stakeholder who will need to provide access to data or is pivotal in delivering impact) you may do so. If you are providing additional information, it must be submitted in a single attached document in Word, Excel, PowerPoint or readable PDF format.

4.3 How to submit your *Outline application*

The latest deadlines for *Outline applications* can be found on our website. You should review the website regularly as deadlines may be subject to change.

You must complete the online *Outline application* form on the Nuffield Foundation website.

Once you have submitted your *Outline application,* you will no longer be able to access the form to download or edit it. Therefore, in order to save a copy, please select **Review and Print Before Submit** at the end of the form. This will generate a summary of your application – please note that this preview feature will only show the basic text of the application, whereas the submitted application will retain any formatting – scroll to the bottom and click Print this page. In the print preview screen, go to the left and select the Destination drop down, choose Save as PDF. This will let you save a copy of your application to your PC.

You must click **Confirm** on the *Outline application* form for your application to be submitted to the Foundation. We will not receive your application if this is not selected at the end of the application form.

Once an *Outline application* has been completed and submitted, you should receive an email confirming receipt of your application and providing a reference number for your application.

If you have any concerns or queries about your *Outline application*, please contact applications@nuffieldfoundation.org. Please ensure you include the name of the PI and if you have received it, the application reference number included in your confirmation email.

4.4 Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring

As part of our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion the Nuffield Foundation wants to ensure that our application process and grant-making activity is inclusive and supports diversity among the people who approach us for funding, and those who are successful in gaining support. To assess this, we will be seeking to collect some basic diversity data from PI, and their CI immediately after an outline application has been submitted.

The data will be collected via an online monitoring form which will be sent directly via email to the named PIs and CIs to an application. Participation in the survey is entirely voluntary and will not influence the consideration or outcome of any application. Data collected through the online survey will be securely stored separately from other application information.

Where an application is successful, and a grant is awarded, we will look to collect fresh data for the full project team (PI, CI, and other project staff) at a point after the start of the project.

Data will be aggregated to report anonymously on the protected characteristics of our applicants and grant holders. Personal data will be held for a period of no longer than 18 months before being permanently deleted.

4.5 What happens next?

Research professionals in our grants team (Programme Heads and Directors) are experienced in undertaking, commissioning or managing empirical social science research, to inform policy and practice. They review every eligible *Outline application*, and may consult Trustees or other key stakeholders. *Outline applications* are judged against our criteria and also in comparison with the large number of other applications we receive. Therefore, even if your *Outline application* meets our formal criteria, there is no guarantee it will be shortlisted to proceed to a *Full application*.

We let each applicant know in writing whether they have been shortlisted to submit a *Full Application.* Our open calls are extremely competitive and we shortlist only a small proportion of proposals so that we provide the right advice and support at the next stage. We therefore focus our feedback on those outlines that have been shortlisted, and a few that are promising but would need further work before being ready to shortlist.

The date by which we aim to inform all applicants of our decision is set out on our website. If you do not hear back by the specified date, you should contact applications@nuffieldfoundation.org

If your application is shortlisted, our letter will set out any comments and questions raised by staff and Trustees in the shortlisting process. These must be addressed in the *Full application*. The date by which you must submit your *Full application* will be provided in your letter.

Please note that Full applications must be submitted online using the instructions given in the emailed letter inviting you to prepare the Full application.

We aim to ensure that applicants have around six weeks to prepare their *Full application*. We do not generally allow deferrals to a later round unless there is a strong case for doing so. Unless we agree an alternative timescale with you, if we do not receive your *Full application* for the next deadline, we will consider your application withdrawn.

We may request a discussion with shortlisted applicants to help them fully consider our feedback. Shortlisted applicants may also request a discussion with Foundation staff if they want clarification on any feedback in the letter.

We do not provide substantive feedback on unsuccessful *Outline applications,* or accept resubmissions of the same *Outline*.

5. Stage 2: Full applications

Full Applications must be submitted via our online form. This will be shared directly with successful applicants after their *Outline application* has been reviewed by Programme Heads. Your *Full application* should be a detailed exposition that is clear both to peer reviewers and Trustees, not all of whom will be expert in the area. It needs to be standalone and comprehensive, fully demonstrating why your project is important and that your approach will deliver a high quality and impactful project.

Applicants should read our *Terms and conditions* before submitting their *Full application*. Your host institution must accept these *Terms and conditions* in principle when you submit your *Full application.* If your application is successful, your host institution will be asked to formally accept the *Terms and conditions*.

You should also read the *Guide for grant-holders,* as this sets out in detail our expectations of successful applicants.

5.1 Full application form

You will receive an email notification from us if your outline application has been successful, this email will provide a link to the Nuffield Foundation Community, where the *Full application* form in addition to guidance regarding the submission of your full application can be found. The email notification will also lay out key information such as the deadline for applications, feedback specific to your application and any other requirements necessary for the Foundation to consider your application.

- You **must** follow the guidance in the online *Full application* form on word / character limits and attachments. You will not be able to submit your application if it exceeds the word or character limits, or if you do not answer mandatory questions.
- Please provide any potential supporting documentation as attachments where prompted.
- The *Full application* form cannot accept rich text format. You may therefore provide additional information in the form of charts, diagrams, tables or budgetary explanations as an attachment if required. This can be attached as a single file in Word, Excel, PowerPoint or text-searchable PDF format via the Additional Information section of the *Full Application* form. However, we would **strongly** prefer that all relevant information regarding your *Full application* and budget are covered in the sections within their respective forms, without the need for a separate attachment.
- Please pay attention to the FAQs section in Appendix A, particularly with regard to saving progress and returning to the application later, and to the process for saving a copy of the application before submitting.

5.2 Sections of the *Full application* form

In each section of the application form there is guidance on the types of questions you should answer in completing the section. Not all of these questions will be applicable to all projects, and there will be a distinction between research, development and analysis projects. The sections also indicate how much detail you should provide. You should aim for a balance that is sufficient for Foundation staff and Trustees to assess the importance, value and rigour of your proposal.

The initial section of the *Full application* asks for contact details and some basic information about the grant such as the project start and end dates. Otherwise, the core components are:

- Project summary
- Alternative funding source
- Case for the importance of the project
- Aims and objectives
- Methods, approach and activities
- Outcomes, outputs and dissemination
- Staffing
- Expert advice and stakeholder engagement
- Quality assurance and risk management
- Legal and ethical aspects
- Archiving
- Timetable
- Budget
- References
- Additional information

- Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

Your application must be sufficiently detailed to satisfy experts of your knowledge and grasp of the subject and why it is important, and the appropriateness of your chosen methods, approach and activities, while at the same time being comprehensible to lay people. It should build on your *Outline application,* providing fuller information and taking into account the feedback received from the Foundation. It is particularly important that your *Full application* follows through on your intended outcomes, and what activities you will undertake to deliver these. Further guidance about some of these sections is provided below.

5.2.1 Methods, approach and activities

At Full application stage we expect a much fuller and more detailed account of your proposed **Methods, approach and activities** (Section C). This should be the most substantial and detailed part of your application, comprising a presentation of your proposed activities and how they will achieve the aims of the project. For research proposals, you must provide a comprehensive description of the methodology for both qualitative and quantitative approaches and articulate their elements with reference to the research questions. Include the methods of data collection and analysis you plan to use and your rationale for choosing them. We will be looking closely at whether the methods chosen are appropriate and sufficiently rigorous to address the questions you are asking, and whether the project is feasible.

Where a project includes **primary data collection**, you must supply full details of the rationale for the sampling strategy. This should include a clear description of the population of interest, and how you will select and recruit the sample and any sub-groups within it. We expect a full account of the theoretical, technical and practical issues that have influenced your selected methodology/approach.

If this involves **quantitative data collection**, you should provide information about both your issued and achieved sample sizes, along with appropriate power calculations, and how you will account for expected attrition. Where the project involves a survey, you must provide details of the approach to implementation, and demonstrate an understanding of the practical implementation challenges as well as statistical theory. If your study involves collecting data in a systematic and quantifiable way from electronic or paper records, (e.g. court files) you need to state what data is held in what form, identify issues of data quality and consistency and set out how the data will be accessed, collected and manipulated to be in a useable form for analysis.

If this involves **qualitative data collection**, you should clearly set out the approach you are suggesting for each group (e.g. one to one in-depth interviews, focus groups, deliberation) and identify any specific tools or interviewing techniques you intend to deploy to elicit quality data. You should also set out the approach you intend to take for the analysis and presentation of findings.
For all projects that include primary quantitative or qualitative data collection, you should set out whether you plan to deposit the data at an appropriate archive to ensure data is available for future research. You should explain:

- What you will say to participants about how their data will be used, including any statements about anonymised data.
- How data will be anonymised, which data archive will be used or, if an archive is not appropriate, what other arrangements will be made to enable other researchers to access your data.
- The timescale for the deposit, which should be within one year of grant completion.

If you do not think it is appropriate to deposit the data for future use, you should say why this is. Any costs related to preparing data for archiving should be included in your budget.

Where you propose **secondary data analysis of existing data sources** – surveys, administrative data or other sources – you must explain how the source is appropriate to address the aims and objectives of the project, how you will obtain access to the data source, and what further manipulation of the data may be necessary to make it fit for purpose. You should also include an analysis plan. Researchers should use and integrate the data sources that best address their research questions (rather than focusing on only one dataset and then using separate projects to interrogate other datasets to examine the same issue).

For reviews and synthesis, including formal meta-analysis as well as other systematic and narrative reviews, you need to demonstrate that your approach will deliver a critical assessment of empirical research or policy/practice initiatives, drawing out implications for policy and practice, or generating a new research agenda. You will need to demonstrate that you have undertaken preliminary work to establish there is sufficient literature to review.

You will need to explain how relevant research would be identified (i.e. which databases will be searched) and include details about how you would assess the quality of studies and other inclusion criteria.

For **pre-trial development work**, there needs to be potential for the work to progress to decisive outcome trials, and interventions which are being tested must be based on strong evidence, for example about the:

- scale and nature of the problem that the intervention seeks to address;
- causal mechanisms at the heart of any programme design;
- practicality of implementing the proposed intervention in the chosen setting;
- potential effect sizes; and the
- feasibility of conducting an evaluation of sufficient scale and rigour to provide convincing evidence of effectiveness.

We usually expect pre-trial development work to be undertaken separately and independently from formal large-scale comparison or controlled trials to establish potential effectiveness (including cost effectiveness). Applicants must set out why any particular concept or approach – as opposed to others that may already be available or in development – warrants further development and testing. Please see Appendix C for further detail regarding our expectations for pre-trial development work.

Evaluations, whether process, impact or economic, will often require a mix of methods in order to address the research questions and meet the wider project objectives, and you should therefore apply the guidance above where relevant. In addition, you should provide details about:

- the underlying theory for the intervention proposed for evaluation;
- how any 'counterfactual' would be assessed;
- the outcome measures you would use, including their validity, reliability and how these would be collected; and
- estimated sample sizes and whether these would provide sufficient power to detect the expected effect size, with reference to previously observed effect sizes where relevant.

5.2.2 Outcomes, outputs and dissemination

In the *Full application* you must also more fully elaborate on the intended **Outcomes, outputs and dissemination** (Section D) activities designed to support this. Here we are interested in how things might change in the real world as a result of the project, even if that change is long-term. You should outline the key mechanisms you will use, such as conferences, seminars, meetings with senior policy makers, or the production of online communications or publications aimed at wider audiences. This will form the basis of the *Communications plan* for the project, should it be funded. We view research reports, briefing papers, other publications, seminars and other events as outputs. These may or may not lead to policy or practical change (outcomes). While we welcome the production of academic journal articles, these are not usually the primary outputs of the projects we fund. All research, development and analysis projects should produce **at least one report aimed at as broad an audience as possible and which is freely and publicly available**. We recommend that you read the *Guide for grant-holders* as this sets out in detail our expectations.

5.2.3 Staffing

We need to be confident that **Staffing** (Section E) for the project is appropriate and that staff have the necessary expertise to conduct the project proposed. You must therefore provide the information required to make this assessment in the appropriate part of the application form and by including short CVs (one page each) that focus on the skills and experience of the individual relevant to delivering this project. In addition to information on how you will manage the contributions of staff working on the project, you should also set out your proposed project management arrangements for the grant.

We are keen to develop the **future pipeline of empirical researchers** in our fields of interest, through the development of less experienced staff in the proposed team, and to encourage interdisciplinary teams that share and develop their expertise. Demonstrating this in your proposal will be considered favourably by the Foundation.

We encourage applicants to look at the details of our student programmes, such as Nuffield Research Placements and Q-Step, and consider whether the project could provide opportunities for research placements for students in school sixth forms (S5/6 in Scotland), sixth form colleges, further education colleges or universities.

5.2.4 Expert advice and key stakeholder engagement

You must provide details of your plans for engaging with **experts and key stakeholders** (Section F) during the project to support the delivery of a high quality and impactful project. You should make sure that your costs take into account this engagement and delivering against the *Communications plan*. The *Guide for grant-holders* provides full details of our expectations.

5.2.5 Quality assurance and risk management

You must provide information on your approach to **Quality assurance and risk management** (Section G). You should include details of how you will assure the quality of project design, analysis and interpretation of the findings, and project outputs. In this section, you should also identify any limitations and risks to the project, including any measures you propose to manage and mitigate them.

5.2.6 Legal and ethical aspects

The *Full application* also requests details to assure us that the **Legal and ethical aspects** of the project**,** and the processing of personal data (Section Ha & Hb) have been fully considered. Where projects involve processing of personal data, we would expect projects to complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment at the outset of the project. Likewise, we expect an appropriate ethical clearance procedure to be in place before the project commences. Projects that involve direct contact with participants (‘primary research’) are required to pass through independent ethical scrutiny. It is the PI’s responsibility to meet this requirement, and the responsibility of the host institution to:

- ensure appropriate provision for scrutiny is in place; and
- accept responsibility for the ethical conduct of the research.

We expect larger research institutes and universities to have standard procedures in place for ethical scrutiny. Where there are no such procedures, we are willing to consider alternative arrangements, for example an independent advisory committee convened specifically for the purpose, or use of a scrutiny committee from another institution. Your budget should include any costs associated with ethical or similar scrutiny.

5.2.7 Timetable

At *Full application* stage we **require a detailed timetabled project plan** (Section J) that sets out the various work streams across the months of the project and includes when you would propose to deliver the various requirements of the grant (see *Guide for grant-holders* for full details). You may wish to submit a separate technical appendix for quantitative analysis plans or may also present this information in Gantt chart form for ease, though this will need to be submitted as part of the document uploaded in the Additional Information section. Please note this document should not exceed three pages.

5.2.8 Budget

You will be asked to complete a more detailed version of your **Budget** (Section K), under the same broad headings requested at Outline stage. This must be entered into the excel template provided in the application form. You should download the template, complete the budget in the template file and then upload the completed budget where required in the application form. For details of eligible costs and budgetary guidance please refer to Appendix B.

5.2.9 Additional Information

It is not necessary to include any **additional information** to that requested in the application form. However, if you feel it is important to include additional information that is supportive of your application (e.g. a letter of support from a key stakeholder who will need to provide access to data or is pivotal in delivering impact or a short technical appendix) you may do so. Any additional information should be included in one document and uploaded via the Additional Information section of the *Full application* form.

5.2.10 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

We require confirmation that the PI accepts the **Terms and Conditions**, and details of an institutional signatory who can confirm that the host organisation would administer any grant awarded according to the Terms and Conditions, ensure that the project is conducted legally and ethically, and that the stated budget has been approved. Please ensure that the individual is informed in advance that they have been nominated as a signatory, as the Nuffield Foundation will then use the contact details provided in the form to contact this individual with a link to a form which must be completed.

Following submission of the application form and budget, an email will be sent to the nominated signatory containing a link to a form which must be submitted before the application can proceed to be reviewed.

5.3 What happens next?

Following receipt of the *Full application form, budget and institutional signature*, the grants team will assess whether the application is in line with expectations, including whether it addresses sufficiently any earlier feedback.

Please find below a table of approximate timings for the applications process. Please check our website for the most up to date information regarding application deadlines and Trustee meetings.

Stage	May Trustee Meeting	November Trustee Meeting
Full applications due	January	July
Nuffield checks full applications	January	July
Peer reviewers contacted	January - February	July - August

Applicants invited to respond to Nuffield and reviewer comments	February - March	August - September
Applications are finalised and shared with Trustees	March - April	September – October
Trustee meeting	May	November
Applicants informed of the outcome of their full application	Late May	Late November
Peer reviewers informed of the outcome of applications they reviewed	May - June	November - December
Liaison with successful applicants, finalisation of awards and issuing of confirmation documents	May - June	November - January

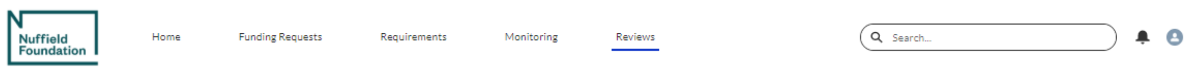
Reviewer comments

The usual process is to share the *Full application,* including budget, with a range of peer reviewers (from the research community, policy and practice where appropriate). We also seek comments from international reviewers where possible and appropriate. If we receive a *Full application* that does not contain all the information we need, and/or that has not sufficiently addressed earlier feedback in the letter inviting submission of a *Full application*, we may decide to reject the application without sharing the application with peer reviewers.

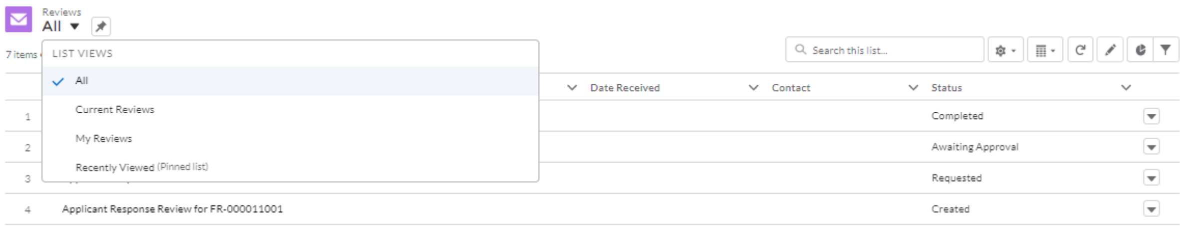
Peer reviewers are asked to consider: whether the project will be useful; whether the approach is appropriate and feasible; whether the staffing is suitable; the overall value for money of the application; whether the amount of funded time sought is reasonable; and whether the dissemination and stakeholder engagement plan is sufficiently comprehensive to deliver impact and outcomes.

Anonymised comments will then be shared with the applicant alongside any questions or concerns arising from the application, Applicants will receive an email requesting that you log into the Nuffield Foundation Community to view all reviewer comments.

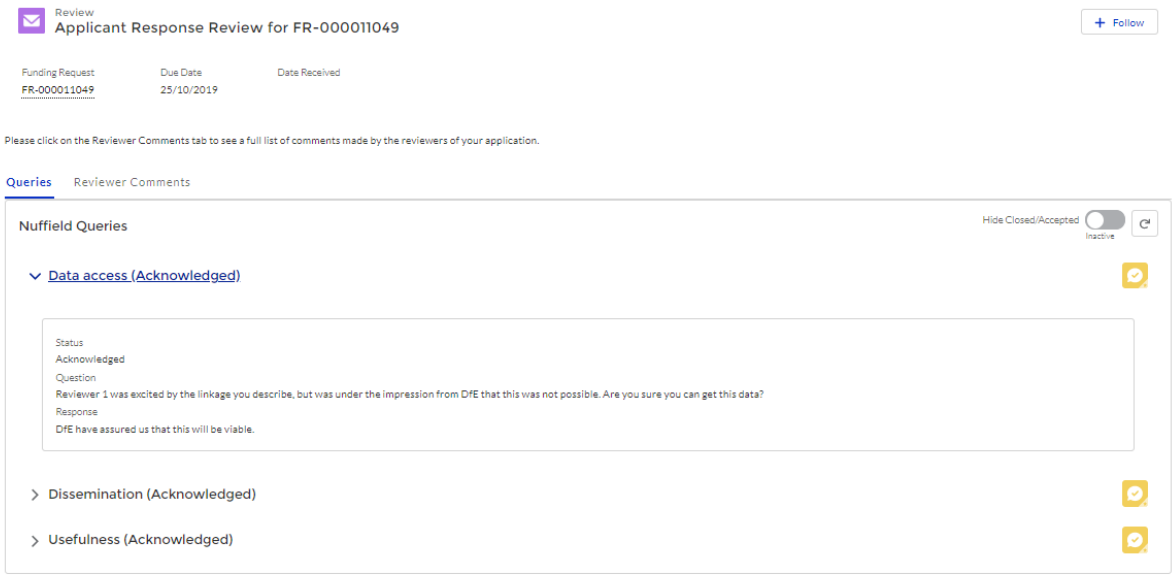
You will have the opportunity here to respond to each query on your application, and to address any other concerns you may think pertinent.



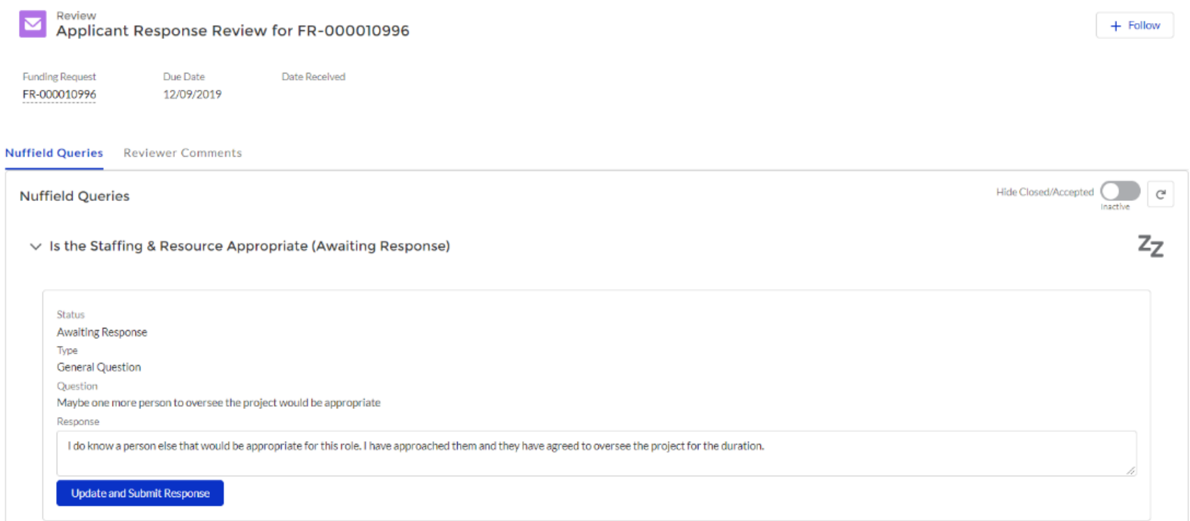
As a Nuffield Foundation Community user navigate to the ‘Reviews’ tab and select the Review record associated with your application’s reference number. This will take you to a Queries tab that lists a number of queries related to this application which should be responded to individually. There is also a ‘Reviewer comments’ tab which contains a full list of the comments made by the reviewers of your application.



The queries are presented under summary headings, and the status of each query is shown in brackets (i.e. whether it has been responded to; whether the Nuffield Foundation have acknowledged the response). To view the nature of the query in full, the query can be expanded and responded to.

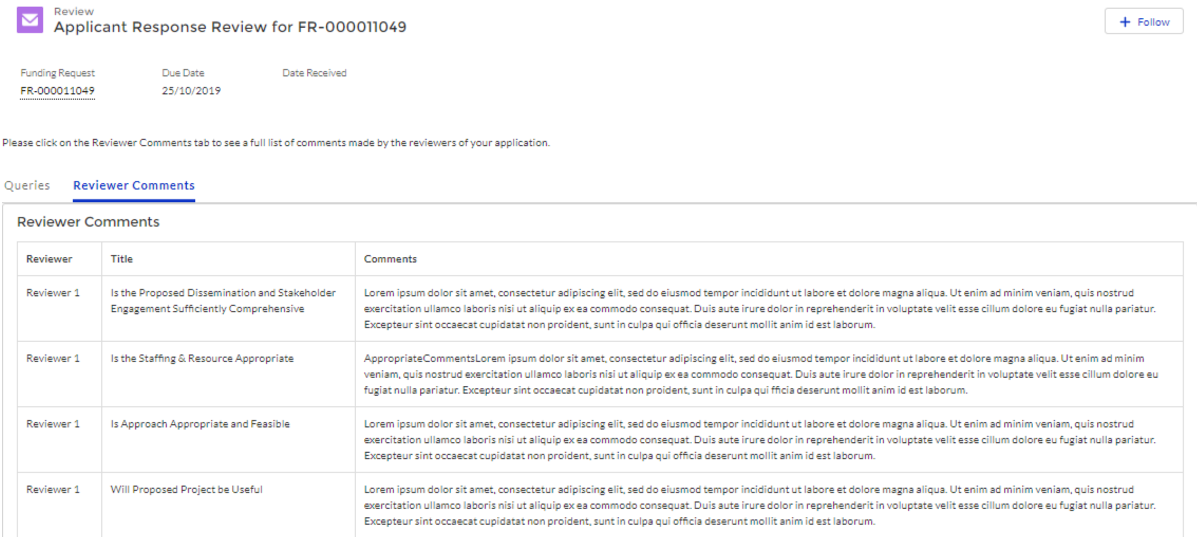


To respond, click into each query, enter comments into the comments box provided and then click **Update and Submit Response. Note that when this button is pressed the response will be visible to the internal team**, if you are not ready to have your queries displayed select the 'Save' button and only select 'Update and Submit response' when ready to submit.



You will be notified of further queries from the Foundation via email and via the Nuffield Foundation Community if subsequent responses are necessary. To answer any subsequent queries, enter the Nuffield Foundation Community and apply the same process as above.

You can also read the reviewer comments in their entirety by navigating to the Reviewer Comments tab. Please note these comments are provided to inform your responses and require no action.



The Trustee meeting

Trustees are sent a copy of the *Full application*, the peer review comments and the applicant's response to inform their decision. Most applications are considered by all Trustees, who may decide to offer a grant, request further clarification or impose specific conditions before awarding a grant, or to reject an application. Applicants are informed of the outcome as soon as possible following the Trustees' decision.

6. Stage 3: Finalising the award

6.1 Outcome letters

You will receive a letter confirming the Trustees' decision regarding your application.

If you are unsuccessful, your *Rejection letter* will set out issues raised by Trustees. Unsuccessful applications may not be re-submitted unless you are specifically invited to do so. Invitations to revise and resubmit applications are rare and will usually be accompanied by specific feedback on ways in which the project may be amended.

If Trustees decide to take forward an application, you will be sent a *Notice of award* letter. **The grant has not been confirmed at this stage.** The *Notice of award* will include feedback from Trustees and details of any further requirements or issues on which the Foundation's staff need to be satisfied before a grant is confirmed. Occasionally, we send a

Conditional award letter that identifies specific *Trustee conditions.* Satisfying these conditions is fundamental to a decision to award, and they must be signed off by Trustees before the grant can be released.

Provided your award is not conditional, the email containing the *Notice of award* letter will contain a link to a grant acceptance form (6.3) which must be completed before the Foundation can confirm the award (6.4). *Conditional awards* will be sent a link to the grant acceptance form (6.3) once the Foundation are content with your response to the Trustees' conditions.

6.2 Response to outcome letters

In your reply to the *Notice of award* letter, you must set out any proposed amendments to the project, especially where these are required in response to *Trustee conditions.* You should confirm the start and end dates, the project budget breakdown, the dates for delivering the requirements (*Interim reports*, *Communications plan*, and *Main public report*), and accept the latest *Terms and conditions.* We do not usually expect amendments to the budget at this stage, and significant budget changes will require Trustee approval.

If there have been substantial changes to your project during the application process, we may require you to incorporate these into an updated project plan or application form so that there is a single agreed record of what has been agreed.

We are happy to provide advice before you send your response letter, for example if there is more than one option for addressing feedback, or if you anticipate timing difficulties.

6.3 Grant Acceptance form

Once you are satisfied that grant can proceed on the basis of the Notice of Award letter, and you require no further changes be made to the delivery requirements including their due dates, you must access the link to the Grant Acceptance Form in order to:

- confirm that you accept the grant and agree to the Terms and Conditions
- indicate whether any changes are required to the Institutional Signatory
- submit any further comments regarding points in the Award Letter

6.4 Confirmation of award

A *Confirmation of award* letter will be sent to confirm the final details of the grant (e.g. budget, start and end dates, duration, reporting requirements and agreed *Terms and conditions*). **It is only once this letter has been issued that the grant is confirmed and the details can be made public**. We cannot fund any work that takes place before the start date of the grant, so if any expenditure is likely to be incurred before then, this should be discussed with us in advance.

It usually takes around three weeks between receiving your formal response letter and sending the formal *Confirmation of award* letter**.** We aim to issue a *Confirmation of award* letter within two months of issuing a *Notice of award,* but the length of time varies depending on the nature and scale of feedback, whether *Trustee conditions* have been set, and of course how long it takes the applicant to respond to the outcome letter. While the Foundation endeavours to be flexible where there are legitimate difficulties in providing all the information needed in response to a *Notice of award* letter, it reserves the right to withdraw an *in principle* offer if it is not possible to confirm the award within six months of issuing the *Notice of award*.

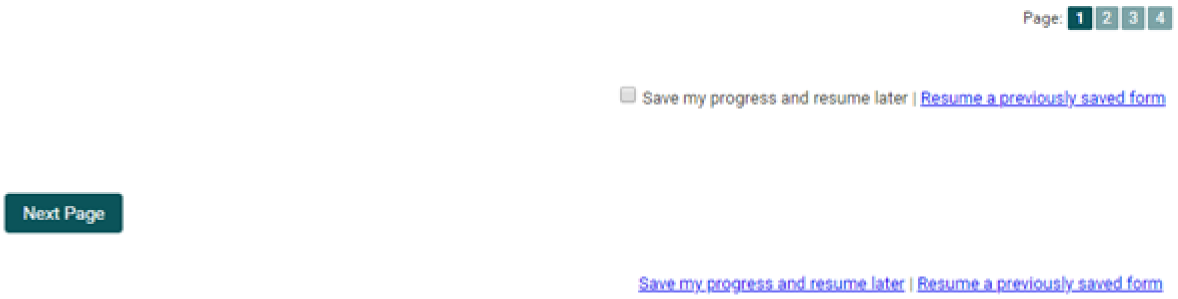
At this stage, it is important that you read our *Guide for grant-holders*, which sets out our typical approach to managing grants, including invoicing, grant outputs, acknowledging the Foundation, and reporting requirements.

Appendix A: FAQ

Outline and Full application form FAQs

1. How do I save my application?

At the top and bottom of the application forms there is the option to save your application form, and to resume a previously saved form. When saving your application, you will be asked to provide an email and password; remember these details to re-access your application.

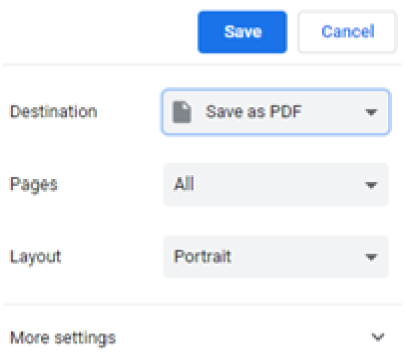


2. Can I download a copy of my application before submitting it?

Once you have submitted your application you will no longer be able to access the form to download or edit it. In order to save it, please select Review and Print Before Submit at the end of the form.

This will generate a summary of your application, scroll to the bottom and click Print this page.

In the print preview screen, go to the left and select the Destination drop down, choose Save as PDF. This will let you save a copy of your application to your PC.

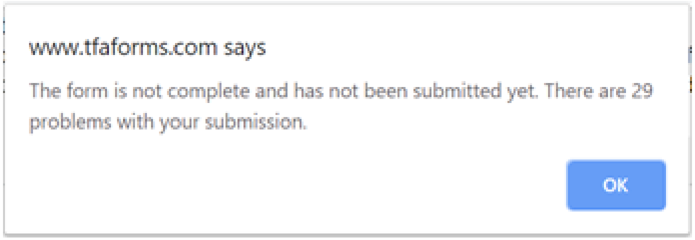


3. Help! I pressed Review and Print Before Submit and all my formatting has gone

This button is intended to show you 'Print Preview' version of your application which can then either be saved as a PDF (FAQ 2.) or printed. The entries you provided to each of the free text fields will retain their formatting when submitted, and the Nuffield Foundation team will be able to see this.

4. There are errors in my application. How can these be resolved?

Throughout the application forms there are mandatory fields which must be completed for an application to be submitted: these fields are denoted by a red asterisk and a detailed breakdown of them can be found in Section 4.2 of this guidance. If these fields are not completed, you will receive the notification below:



You will be given the option to address any problems that have been flagged up with your application, and these will be highlighted for your ease.

5. Do I need an electronic signature?

You don't need to use an electronic signature to declare completion of the application form. Simply typing your name is acceptable.

6. My application did not submit.

Your application will not be submitted until you have clicked 'Review and Print Before Submit'. This will flag up if any mandatory fields have not been completed and give you a chance to address this. You will then be shown a preview of your application. At the very bottom of the page there will be a button to 'Confirm'. You must click this for your application to be submitted.

7. Do the application forms support rich text?

The application forms do not support rich text – please enter words only, without any additional formatting. Do not cut and paste formatted content from external documents or web pages as formatting will not be retained and any hidden formatting may distort the word count. You may use hyphens for bullet points, but please note that each hyphen will count as a word.

8. I cannot find my registered charity.

In order for the Registered charity number to work, you will need to submit a correct charity number and the correct charity regulator that the charity sits within. To confirm whether the charity number and charity regulator is correct, please visit the Charity Commission website.

9. I cannot fit my project title into the application form; is there a way to increase the character limit?

There is a hard cap on the length of the project title and we would ask that all applicants keep to the specified 80 character limit, otherwise your project title will simply be truncated. We are unable to increase this cap.

10. Will I lose any entered information if I use the navigation buttons in the application form at the top and bottom of the page?

You will not lose any data that has been input into your form when switching pages on the application using the Previous Page and Next Page buttons at the bottom of the page, as well as the Page 1, 2, 3 and 4 buttons at the top of the page. (You should not use the forward and back buttons in the browser – only use the navigation buttons within the application form itself.) Please note that you should always make sure you save your application before closing the browser.

11. Can I work collaboratively on the application form with my co-investigators?

Two applicants cannot work on the form at the same time. If necessary, you can share the link and password with co-applicants, though we would not recommend this.

12. What will happen with the Institutional Signatory data I input to my *full application* form?

The contact data you input to these fields on the full application form will be used by the Foundation to send a signature form to the individual whose details we receive. Please ensure, as stated in the full application form, that you receive the consent of the individual who will be your signatory before you provide us their details.

Appendix B: Budget guidelines

The following points set out our approach to assessing your budget and to financial monitoring:

- Our grant funding is outside the scope of VAT, as it is not a business activity for private benefit. Where applicants are contemplating working with others for substantial parts of the grant, we expect them to consider whether it is feasible to include them as co-applicants or collaborators, rather than as providers of a service which might make them liable for VAT. Any VAT that is expected to be payable must be set out within the budget submitted as part of *Full applications*; budgets should be inclusive of all VAT and local taxes, where applicable.

- We fund 100% of eligible costs, not the 80% funded by Research Councils. Where we make an award to a Higher Education Institution (HEI), we will meet all 'directly incurred' costs, subject to certain conditions, and most 'directly allocated' costs (except the estates costs of PIs and permanent university staff). We do not fund 'indirect' costs. Guidance about these terms should be sought from university research administration staff.

- We reserve the right to hold back up to 20% of the total grant value (to a maximum of £50,000) until satisfactory completion of all grant work and outputs.

- Your budget should not include 'contingency' funds. If unforeseen events arise or new activities (such as dissemination activities) are agreed, we can consider a request for a supplementary grant.

- PhD students can work on grants to undertake specific tasks, provided this is explicitly requested and justified in the application (or as a change to the project). We will fund the PhD student's time and reasonable costs. We will **not** fund PhD fees. Where the work a PhD student undertakes will contribute to their PhD, the host institution, rather than the Foundation, is responsible for ensuring appropriate progress towards the PhD is made, and for recruiting alternative staff if the project is delayed.

Budget guidelines for *Outline applications*

In the *Outline application*, you will be asked to set out your proposed budget using the broad categories below:

- Staff costs: PI time
- Staff costs: Co-I time
- Staff costs: Team member time
- Staff costs: Consultants
- Staff costs: Overheads and estate costs

- Non-staff costs: Qualitative research

- Non-staff costs: Quantitative research
- Non-staff costs: Communications and stakeholder engagement
- Non-staff costs: Equipment
- Non-staff costs: Other direct costs

The types of cost we expect to be included under each of the non-staff cost headings is outlined below:

Non-staff costs	**Include direct costs relating to:**
a. Quantitative research	survey fieldwork costs (and associated print and postage), data entry, data processing, incentives (please refer to detailed guidance if using incentives), data access/linkage fees, travel to secure data enclaves, statistical software licences, assessment materials and licences, etc.
b. Qualitative research	transcription, incentives (please refer to detailed guidance if using incentives), fieldwork associated travel, accommodation and subsistence, qualitative analysis software licences, etc.
c. Communications and stakeholder engagement	dissemination activities, conference and workshop expenses, advisory group activities, travel for advisory groups, etc.
d. Equipment	e.g. recording equipment, laptops
e. Other direct costs	general administrative or office expenses, recruitment of project staff, any other costs not covered elsewhere

A more detailed explanation of eligible and ineligible costs mostly relevant to the *Full application* stage is provided below.

Budget guidelines for Full applications

<table>
<tr><th>Budget category</th><th>Eligible costs</th><th>Ineligible costs</th><th>Comments</th></tr>
<tr><td>Staff time (salaries and on-costs)</td><td>Salaries (for both UK and non-UK staff).

National Insurance.

Employer pension contributions</td><td>Enhanced salaries resulting from promotion are not eligible.</td><td>At Full application stage, your budget must show:
The total amount budgeted for each named person, per calendar year.
The staffing section of the Full Application form should specify:
The proportion of time that each person would contribute to the project, entered as the Full Time Equivalent (FTE), where 1.0 is the equivalent to full time. If calculating a proportion of a week please assume a 35-hour working week and if calculating a proportion of a year assume 220 working days per year.
Where the person is not known, please specify the equivalent information separately for each post to be filled.

On-costs may be claimed in addition to basic salary costs and should be included within the total amount budgeted for each named person.

At Full application stage, an estimate of cost of living and incremental pay increases should be included in the budget. The combined total of any increases and increments should not exceed 5% per annum. The Foundation will only meet the costs of actual increases, not estimated ones. Where an individual is expected to receive incremental pay increases, these can be incorporated into the budget.

We expect the PI on the project to contribute at least ½ day a week (0.1 FTE) on average over the life of the grant. There is no minimum time limit for other members of the research team; however, it is important that all named members of staff have a clearly defined role.</td></tr>
</table>

Budget guidelines for Full applications

Budget category	Eligible costs	Ineligible costs	Comments
Consultants	Daily rates usually within range £250 - £800.		We expect <u>all</u> research team members within the host institution to be funded via salary and on-costs as described above. We also expect to fund most staff within other organisations in this way; however, individuals from other organisations who are undertaking a limited and discrete role on a project may alternatively be written in as consultants. Example consultancy roles include the provision of statistical skills or advice, expert advice regarding data collection instruments or approach, or expert knowledge regarding policy or practice. At *Full application* stage, the number of days and daily rate should be specified in the budget. Rates higher than £800/day need detailed justification on the basis of specific skills, experience or seniority. Separate or additional overheads for consultants are not allowable since we expect these to be incorporated within the specified daily rate.
Indirect costs, estates and overheads	Estates costs for HEI staff who are not permanent staff or PIs can be met on a pro rata basis. Overheads for non-HEIs (but we do not expect overheads to exceed 60% as a	Indirect costs for HEIs are ineligible. Estates costs for permanent staff and PIs in HEIs are ineligible.	HEI applicants will be aware that the government has established a revenue stream (the Charity Support Fund) to contribute towards the running costs of research funded by charities at universities. These funds are distributed through the quality-related (QR) element of the higher education funding councils. Grants from the Nuffield Foundation are officially recognised by HEFCE as eligible for this QR funding. Non-HEIs must specify the overhead rate as a proportion of salaries, and provide details of services included in overhead charges (accommodation, management, central services and so on).

Budget guidelines for Full applications

Budget category	Eligible costs	Ineligible costs	Comments
	proportion of salaries).		
Qualitative and quantitative research (direct, non-staff costs)	Direct fieldwork costs. Incentive payments (if justified). Travel & subsistence to undertake quantitative or qualitative research activities. Admin and office expenses incurred to undertaken quantitative or qualitative research activities.		At *Full application* stage, you should provide details of the issued sample size, achieved sample size, response rate and total cost. Where fieldwork is subcontracted, please provide a specific and up-to-date quotation from the fieldwork provider and specify whether VAT is payable. At *Full application* stage, any request for incentive payments to ensure respondents' participation needs to be justified in detail, with evidence that these are necessary to the delivery of this specific project. You should show that any advantages in improved participation outweigh potential risks (such as potential influence on responses, and the research relationship, and impact on wider willingness to participate without incentives). We are more likely to be sympathetic to a case for incentive (or 'thank you') payments in qualitative research; or in research which includes particularly onerous demands on respondents (e.g. completing a diary); and to incentives in the form of prize draws rather than direct payments.
Communications and stakeholder	Advisory group activities.	Fees for advisory group members are not eligible.	As the availability of Foundation rooms cannot be guaranteed, your costing assumptions should be based on the use of external facilities. We will make any necessary adjustments later, if we do host any events or meetings.

Budget guidelines for Full applications

Budget category	Eligible costs	Ineligible costs	Comments
engagement (direct, non-staff costs)	Costs of events, publications and dissemination activities. Travel & subsistence for contributors to events.	Fees for open access publication in journals are not typically eligible. Travel and attendance costs at international academic conferences are not eligible, except with specific permission (unlikely prior to grant start).	We are aware of the debate about various models of open access for academic publications. However, as Universities often have other funds to support open access, and as many journal articles are published after the grant end date, we will only provide funds for this under exceptional circumstances.
Equipment	Full costs for project-specific equipment for projects lasting three years or more.		Equipment for projects that last less than three years is eligible for part-funding on a pro-rata basis. For example, if the project duration is 18 months, you should request 50% of the actual equipment costs.

Budget guidelines for Full applications

Budget category	Eligible costs	Ineligible costs	Comments
Other direct costs	E.g. direct costs for project specific staff recruitment campaigns. Other admin or office expenses that are attributable to the project.	PhD fees are not eligible. Costs relating to Continuing Professional Development are not eligible.	You must provide further breakdown or justification for budget lines that exceed £5,000. Direct recruitment costs apply only to recruitment campaigns for project-specific staff (usually research assistants). These cannot be agreed retrospectively. The Foundation considers Continuing Professional Development activities to be the responsibility of the host institution.

Appendix C: Intervention development and early evaluation funding

Key criteria for development and early evaluation funding

To be considered for development and early evaluation funding, applicants should demonstrate they have:

An intervention or approach aimed at improving outcomes – in the Foundation's areas and populations of interest. The application must describe the intervention in sufficient detail to explain the nature of the intervention, its intensity e.g. in terms of contact hours, duration, etc., and the target population.

A theoretical basis for why the approach is likely to have an impact based on research literature. The Nuffield Foundation seeks to promote evidence-based policy and practice. It is therefore important that interventions have a sound theoretical basis for anticipating an impact on specified outcomes.

A clear rationale for why it might be expected to be an improvement on existing interventions that tackle the same issue. We are keen to generate high quality evidence about what works, but we do not want to encourage an unnecessary proliferation of interventions. Applicants should demonstrate their awareness of other interventions that seek to tackle the same issue and explain why their intervention would be an improvement upon others already in use.

Some prior experience delivering the approach in equivalent settings and/or with equivalent populations, or a track record of developing and/or delivering other promising approaches. Interventions will only be effective if they are acceptable to practitioners and participants and feasible to implement. Applicants will need to demonstrate their experience of working in or with relevant settings/populations to show they understand the relevant issues, and that they have the necessary skills to successfully deliver the proposed project.

An approach that could be delivered at a reasonable cost. Since high costs are likely to constrain reach, value for money will be an important consideration.

Appetite and potential for the approach to be delivered at scale. Since our ultimate aim is to promote interventions with strong evidence of effectiveness, it is important that applicants have aspirations for delivery at scale, or ideas for pathways for delivery at scale.

Identified the questions to be answered in the development and early evaluation work, how this work will be undertaken, and how it will contribute towards making the approach ready for future trial. Please see the following section for information about what a development and early evaluation project should seek to achieve.

Evaluation expertise. We expect all intervention development projects to have an evaluation component, and to consider how further development or scaling up might also be evaluated robustly and effectively. We encourage intervention designers and developers who do not have evaluation expertise to form partnerships with organisations that do.

Commitment to future independent evaluation of their approach via an RCT, where feasible. Since RCTs constitute the most robust form of evaluation, we would expect applicants to be committed to this approach.

Expected outcomes of a development and early evaluation project

In order to pave the way towards a large-scale RCT, a development and early evaluation project will need to refine the proposed intervention and provide formative findings that will help improve future delivery. It will also need to demonstrate that the intervention or approach meets the following conditions:

Feasibility

- For example, is the approach acceptable to practitioners and/or the target population? Is the approach suitably resourced (including time)? Is the approach aimed at a suitable target population? Could settings or the target population afford to buy the intervention? Has feasibility been demonstrated in an appropriate context i.e. one that is applicable to equivalent settings in the UK?

Evidence of promise

- Is there evidence that this approach could impact on outcomes (i.e. is the approach underpinned by evidence, does the approach change participant behaviour as predicted in the theory of change, is it likely that the observed behaviours could lead to a change in outcomes, has there been a measurable change in outcomes)?

Readiness for trial

- Is the intervention replicable (i.e. is there a clearly defined intervention)? Is the intervention scalable (i.e. could the intervention be delivered in a number of settings in its current form or is further development required)?

We do not expect all applications to address all these questions comprehensively within one project. The appropriate scope for a project will depend upon the current stage of the intervention's development. For example, some interventions may have a strong theoretical basis for why the approach is likely to have an impact and to be an improvement upon existing interventions, but may not have been implemented in practice or subjected to any form of evaluation. Where projects are at such an early stage we would expect an application to be small scale and to focus on feasibility and early piloting.

In contrast, some interventions may be more developed, with initial evidence of promise from previous evaluation of the approach (e.g. pre- and post-test assessments; a matched study; a trial conducted in another context). Where projects are at this later stage of development, applications should contain a strong evaluative component designed to ascertain whether the intervention generates a measurable change in outcomes.

An evaluation component of this kind would need to:

- Employ a robust design with an appropriate control group.
- Use outcome measures that are valid, reliable and predictive of later outcomes.
- Be adequately powered (i.e. have sufficient scale to detect the expected effect of the intervention).

We therefore welcome applications for small-scale RCTs since they will provide good evidence of the likely intervention effect and test the practicalities associated with implementing an RCT design.

Where projects are at this later stage of development, we would also expect the evaluation component to have independence built in as far as possible and to employ appropriate strategies to minimise the risk of bias. This might mean publishing a protocol and statistical analysis plan in advance of conducting the project, involving an independent evaluator to measure outcomes, or ensuring that the individuals measuring and comparing outcomes between intervention and comparison groups are blind to the treatment condition. In particular, all trials should be pre-registered.

Where development and early evaluation projects are able to demonstrate all of the features identified (i.e. feasibility, evidence of promise and readiness for trial), we expect that they will be ready for a large-scale RCT to test efficacy – i.e. whether the intervention can work under ideal / developer-led conditions in a larger number of settings.