

United Kingdom – Iceland Arctic Science Partnership Scheme: Introduction and Call for Bids

Summary

An opportunity for researchers based in the United Kingdom and Iceland to make joint applications for bursaries ranging from £5,000 to a maximum of £20,000 to support active participation in new partnerships in the 2024-25 season.

Please note, the call for applications has now closed.

Background

Researchers in the United Kingdom and Iceland are well-placed to develop important new science partnerships that address pressing research questions. These partnerships can support the development of skill- and knowledge-based networks to strengthen both communities; foster the creation of positive, respectful and empowering partnerships; and create lasting research connections.

The United Kingdom's Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, working with the British Embassy in Reykjavik, the UK Science and Innovation Network and the NERC Arctic Office, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Icelandic Research Council (Rannís) is funding a new bursaries programme. This will support UK and Iceland-based researchers working in Iceland in 2024-25.

The outcomes of the science partnerships scheme are expected to support and further develop lasting research and collaboration links between researchers in the UK and Iceland; to provide new access opportunities for researchers to work with new partners; and develop ideas for future international projects.

Science Partnership Scheme details

This scheme is open to researchers based in the United Kingdom and Iceland in a broad range of science fields. Applications will be particularly welcomed from early career scientists and researchers within groups under-represented across the research community. It is expected that applicants will normally be employed in positions within institutions in the UK and Iceland. PhD candidates undertaking the research as part of their qualification will not usually be eligible. Proposals could be from single researchers from the UK and Iceland working together or a small number of researchers in both countries. The numbers from each country do not need to be equal.

Eligible costs should not exceed £20,000 in total. Applications for smaller sums are especially welcome. All costs will be funded at 100 percent.

Applications to the science partnership scheme must be joint between the UK and Iceland-based researchers in order to be eligible. Applications from a researcher or group of researchers based in one country only will not be eligible.

Supported activities: The expectation is that this will be for practical work, networking and partnership building, including fieldwork and associated research and laboratory work as required, undertaken in the financial year 2024-25 (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025). Applications may be for work which addresses a specific research question or which is part of a wider initiative where the bursary scheme will add value and impact. Applications can also be for work which is focused on capacity and confidence building in new joint teams, sharing skills and techniques, developing practical methods which combine science and traditional and local knowledge and similar initiatives.

The scheme will not generally be available to support existing UK-Iceland joint research projects but will focus on new or significantly extended collaborations. Researchers with existing partnerships must clearly identify the additional value and the new aspects of the collaboration in their application.

Eligible costs can include: travel, accommodation and subsistence, purchasing/hire/use of special equipment, logistics and shipping costs, specific training and permit/access costs. Where appropriate, travel and related subsistence costs for Iceland-based researchers to visit the UK as part of the project can be eligible. Salary costs and associated costs, such as insurance, will not be eligible. Conference costs may be eligible but should be a minor part of the overall costs of the bursary and link specifically to the outcomes of the bursary. Publication costs will not normally be eligible.

Funds will be dispersed following the signing of appropriate agreements. Subsequent transfers of funds to Iceland-based partners will be the responsibility of the UK-based researcher and institution.

Research fields: Applications are welcomed from across the full range of Arctic environmental, geological, innovation, technological and emerging tech, AI, space, health, energy and social themes. Applications demonstrating clear links to known and demonstrated areas of priority Arctic research, including those identified as part of the [ICARP III process](#) and the [IASC Strategic Plan](#) and which show potential for medium-long term collaboration are encouraged.

Eligibility: UK-based applicants who are normally able to apply for UK Research and Innovation funding will be eligible to apply. Their Iceland-based partners should normally be eligible to apply for funding through Rannís or similar institutions.

Prioritisation: We strongly encourage applicants to give consideration to public engagement and scientific dissemination within their application, e.g. guest lectures in relevant study programmes, community outreach or similar.

Timelines: All funded science partnership activity must be completed during the 2024-25 financial year (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025).

Data handling and storage practices: should be in line with overall UK Research and Innovation principles of data management. A short final report will be required, in addition to responses to ad hoc requests.

Networking and new research partners event

There will be an online event from **10am-12pm on 20 November** to enable prospective partners based in the United Kingdom and Iceland to meet and talk to each other, ask questions about the science partnerships scheme and exchange information. The event will be held in partnership with Rannís and other Icelandic organisations.

Participation in this networking event is not mandatory to submit an application to the scheme, but prospective applicants are encouraged to attend.

Please register for the event

here: <https://forms.office.com/e/eXBU7dpwNR> with further details to follow.

Application and assessment process

You are strongly encouraged to contact the NERC Arctic Office to discuss your proposal and eligibility at an early stage before submitting an application.

Applications must not exceed four pages A4 (12 point text). They must be submitted electronically to the NERC Arctic Office arctic@bas.ac.uk by **1600 on Friday 19 January 2024** in PDF format.

Supporting documentation such as CVs and confirmation letters from PIs can be in addition to the four page limit.

The application must include:

- A proposal title and executive summary (200 words maximum)
- A description of the joint research or other work to be undertaken by the UK and Iceland based applicants, including details of the role and responsibilities
- A description of the expected scientific outputs and/or other outcomes/impact of the joint UK-Iceland project
- Amount applied for, with a full breakdown of expected costs for the project in both the UK and Iceland.
- Evidence of where the proposed work could lead to further medium-long term UK-Iceland Arctic research collaboration
- Confirmation of the UK and Iceland employment status of the intended recipients of the bursary

Enclosed documents

- A confirmation letter from both applicants stating their agreement to work in partnership to deliver the work within the bursary proposal
- A two-page (max.) CV containing full contact details of both the UK and Iceland-based applicants, including e-mail and telephone details

The review of applications will be undertaken by a small joint UK-Iceland Review Team, managed by the NERC Arctic Office in partnership with Rannís. The criteria used will include the assessment of all evidence provided, and will include:

- The overall importance of the proposed research question in Arctic science, as demonstrated by the applicant and with appropriate reference to the Research Councils' remits; and/or the value of the new partnership being created, the innovative nature of the links being created; and the potential for new research in the future.
- The practical feasibility of the proposed work within the budget and timescale outlined.
- The anticipated scientific outcome and impact, or other impact connected to the proposed work.
- The level of support and integration between UK and Iceland-based partners; the focus on empowering local research partners and organisations, including knowledge and skills exchange; and planned outreach activity.
- The extent to which the proposal is a new collaboration in an important topic area and evidence of medium to long term follow-up research opportunities which will deliver closer UK-Iceland research impact.

Timescales

Applications must be submitted by **1600 GMT on Friday 19 January 2024**. Confirmation of receipt will be via e-mail. You must contact the NERC Arctic Office – arctic@bas.ac.uk – if you do not receive confirmation of receipt.

Applicants should receive written confirmation of the outcome of their application by **the end of February 2024**. **Funding will be issued to your institution from April 2024 on completion of appropriate documentation.**

All Bursary activities must be completed during the 2024-25 financial year.

This call is also available in [PDF format](#).

Further details and questions

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