

The Sussex Knowledge Exchange and Impact Support Programme Innovation Fellowships

1. Background

The University of Sussex has been allocated funding from Research England –HEIF to support, develop skills and shape best practice in developing new approaches for enabling innovation across the economy, regions, and society.

As part of a Fellowship scheme being overseen by **the Sussex KE and Impact Support Programme** a proportion of this funding for 2024/2025 has been allocated to support a number of **Innovation Fellowships**. Each fellowship has a maximum award value of £10,000, with a total of four (4) projects expected to be funded under this category. This is open to only previous KE and Impact Fellowship recipients of Innovation or Business Development Funds.

The Innovation Fellowship seeks to cultivate a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship within the university. It aims at empowering researchers and their external partners to turn their groundbreaking ideas into impactful solutions that tackle real-world challenges.

Objectives

- *Support Innovation:* Provide resources, mentorship, and funding to fellows to develop and explore commercial pathways for their innovative ideas, while developing new approaches for supporting innovation across the economy, regions, and society.
- *Enhance market place collaboration:* Facilitate partnerships between the university, industry, and government to accelerate the development and implementation of new technologies, and contribute to and lead on challenges aimed at increasing links with industry and business.
- *Drive Impact:* Use KE activities to ensure that the innovations developed through the Fellowship have a measurable positive impact on society and the economy.

Projects must centre around knowledge exchange activities, and those involving only higher education partner (s) will not be eligible.

Relevant activity which might be funded through the Innovation Fellowships category includes;

- **Proof of concept Development:** creating a preliminary model or prototype to demonstrate the feasibility of an idea or concept
- **Market Research & exploring commercial models:** Conducting studies to understand market needs and potential for new innovations.
- **Collaborative Projects:** Initiatives that involve partnerships between the university and industry to co-develop novel approaches, new technologies, products or services.
- **Entrepreneurship Training:** Workshops and courses to equip fellows with business skills and knowledge.
- **Pilot Programs:** Implementing small-scale versions of projects to trial or test feasibility and impact.

2. Innovation Fellowships details

This is open to only previous KE and Impact Fellowship recipients of Innovation or Business Development Funds.

This stream supports projects that are at a more advanced stage of development. It is expected that these projects will have established partnerships and well-developed, potential viable outcomes from prior engagements to build upon.

Applications will be assessed against the following equally weighted criteria:

a. Clear Articulation of Previous Project Outcome's Relevance in the Marketplace and Current Objectives

- Show how your previous project outcomes met a market need with evidence of success, including any user adoption feedback (e.g., testimonials or case studies).

b. Innovation and Originality

- Demonstrate what makes the project unique and explain how it solves problems better than existing methods.

c. Collaboration and Industry Partnerships

- Provide evidence of the partners involved in the project, detailing their contributions, and explain how collaboration will enhance the project's outcome.

d. Feasibility

- Provide evidence of the necessary resources needed, an implementation plan within the funding timelines, and demonstrate value for money.

e. Sustainability and Long-Term Impact

- Detail how the project will be maintained and scaled, outline next steps and long-term goals, discuss anticipated long-term impact, and provide evidence of how the Fellowship will position the researcher to explore or leverage external funding in the near future.

3. Funding available and eligible costs

The maximum funding that can be requested is £10,000.

Eligible costs can include:

- **Research assistant costs via REED**
- **Communication and Engagement:**
Costs for non-academic publications and communications (e.g. briefings/video/podcasts/social media activity).
- **Capability Building and Deepening understanding:**
Costs for hosting and attending: workshops for training and knowledge transfer/exchange events, key stakeholders and opportunities to support engagement (e.g. travel & accommodation).
- **Consultancy Fees**
Fees for external consultants or experts who provide specialised knowledge or services for the project

Ineligible costs

- Paying PhD students
- Salary buy-outs or permanent staff time
- Estate and indirect costs
- Conference participation
- Publications, journals or book launch
- Projects that involve another HE external partner only

4. Application process

Applicants can only submit a single application to this call.

Applications will need to be set up, costed and approved on Worktribe, the University’s research management system. **Worktribe approvals must also be submitted and completed by 5pm on 10th January 2025.** Applications and Worktribe approvals received after this date will not be considered.

Applicants need to complete the relevant application forms (downloaded via the links below) and email them to research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk by **5pm on 10th January 2025 after completing approvals on Worktribe.**

[Innovation Fellowship Application Form](#)

To access Worktribe you must complete the mandatory LearnUpon training ‘Introduction to Worktribe’. Guidance on accessing Worktribe is available on the internal [Worktribe webpages](#). Please note, following completion of the training, it can take up to 1 week for Worktribe access to be given so we advise you to complete the training module as soon as possible.

If you would like to start your project costing on Worktribe and do not yet have access, you can email research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk with details of your project. The team will set up your project costing on Worktribe so that you can see and edit it once you do gain access.

Worktribe process:

In Worktribe, go to ‘Opportunities’ and ‘Browse Opportunities’. Select the opportunity ‘INTERNAL Knowledge Exchange and Impact Support Public Community Engagement Fellowships’ (Funder: University of Sussex). Create your application from this opportunity (‘Create Project’) as this will pre-populate scheme information in your project record. Please select ‘Add to My Opportunities’ so that we can gauge interest levels and provide support.

When you have created the project from the opportunity, complete the mandatory fields (marked with an asterisk):

Project Title:	Your Project Title
Est Project Dates:	1 Feb 2025 – 30 Jun 2025
Project Type:	Internal Funding Other
Project Activity Type:	Internal

Funder	University of Sussex
Scheme	Select the relevant scheme/strand from the drop down
Project Lead	Your Name
Lead Org Unit	Your department

And 'Create Project'.

Once your project has been created in Worktribe you can add further details and budget costs. To cost staff time (your own and that of other staff on your project), you will need to contact research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk quoting your Worktribe project number.

Please note the following:

- PI and Co-I time needs to be costed into your Worktribe record even though these costs cannot be recovered from the Fellowship and do not need to be detailed in the word application form.
- Please contact Ian Sinclair on research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk with the %FTE you will spend on the Fellowship, and he will add these costs to your Worktribe project record. These will not be covered by the grant funding.
- If intending to employ a casual worker via Reed, please contact Ian Sinclair on research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk to obtain the most accurate and up-to-date hourly/daily rates
- You will need to complete a risk assessment in Worktribe before the application can be submitted for approval.
- You will need to upload a draft application form before the project can be sent for internal approvals. This can be updated before the bid is submitted to the deadline.
- When your project is ready to be sent for internal approvals, the Research Initiatives team will initiate this process in Worktribe.
- Once your bid is approved, the Research Initiatives team will confirm that you may submit your final application by emailing research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk.
- Because this is an internal call with a short turnaround, due diligence checks on external partners will only be completed on awarded Fellowships.

Scheme contacts

If you would like to discuss the suitability of your project idea, please contact either:

- Nana Yankah, Programme Consultant, KE and Impact Support Programme
ny95@sussex.ac.uk or

For all Worktribe queries, please contact Ian Sinclair research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk

Timescales

Call opens	Call ends	Assessment	Awards start
w/c 25 th November 2024	5pm on 10 th January 2025.	w/c 20 th January 2025, with decisions expected to be communicated w/c 3 rd February 2025	w/c 10 th February 2025

Activities are expected to start by 1st March 2025 at the latest and must be concluded by 30th June 2025. Unspent funds cannot be rolled beyond 30th June 2025.

5. Assessment Process:

- The application process is overseen by Prof Debbie Keeling, Deputy PVC for Knowledge Exchange, and managed by Nana Yankah, Programme Consultant, Sussex Knowledge Exchange and Impact Support Programme.
- The panel reviewing applications will comprise academics and professional services colleagues
- All applications need to be logged on **Worktribe** and go through the usual School approval process.
- A strong application:
 - Must have a confirmed KE business/industry partner with proposed in-kind or financial commitments.
 - Aim to create business development opportunities and have potential to generate medium or long-term commercial benefits for the University of Sussex, as well as socio-economic benefits for its stakeholders.
 - Provide evidence of industry collaboration and efforts to explore commercial pathways or opportunities.
 - Demonstrate the feasibility of the project proposal within the timelines of call
 - Evidence of how the Fellowship will position the researcher to explore or leverage external funding in the near future.

6. Reporting

All recipients will be required to complete a short evaluation at the end of the funding and may be asked to provide comments and other content for internal and external communications, to demonstrate the impact of the Fellowships.