APEX Awards Frequently Asked Questions

For the purposes of this scheme interdisciplinary research is defined as:

"Interdisciplinary research (IDR) is a mode of research by teams or individuals that integrates information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, and/or theories from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialized knowledge to advance fundamental understanding or to solve problems whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice."

"Successful IDR plans and supports research practices and outputs greater than the sum of their constituent disciplinary parts"

FAQs for APEX Awards

1.1 The Applicant

1.1.1 I am an engineer who does research. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes, as long as you are based in either a UK University or not-for-profit research organisation for at least the duration of the project and you hold an established academic position, then you are eligible to apply.

If you are an engineer with specific questions regarding your eligibility or the remit of the scheme you can contact the Royal Academy of Engineering (research@raeng.org.uk) as well as the dedicated enquiries inbox apex@royalsociety.org

1.1.2 I work in the humanities and/or social sciences. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes, as long as you are based in either a UK University or not-for-profit research organisation for at least the duration of the project and you hold an established academic position, then you are eligible to apply.

If you work in the humanities and/or social sciences and have specific questions regarding your eligibility or the remit of the scheme you can contact the British Academy (grants@thebritishacademy.ac.uk) as well as the dedicated enquiries inbox apex@royalsociety.org

1.1.3 I see that the APEX Awards are for researchers who want to pursue genuine interdisciplinary and curiosity-driven research and that applicants must collaborate with relevant researchers

from other disciplines. I am a social scientist, and I want to collaborate with someone from humanities, would this be eligible?

No, applications should be within the remit of more than one of the Academies. As social science and humanities fall within the remit of the British Academy this would not be eligible.

1.1.4 I am an established researcher, but I don't have a PhD. Am I eligible to apply for an APEX Award?

Yes. If you are able to make a case that your career experience is equivalent to that of holding a PhD (i.e. publication record etc.), and if you are in an established academic post at a UK institution, then you would be eligible to apply. You should make reference to this under the 'Personal Statement' part of the application form.

1.1.5 Is there a minimum number of years of research experience?

No, there is no minimum or maximum number of years' experience an applicant must have but the scheme is open to established researchers.

1.1.6 I am on a part-time contract. Can I apply, or is this scheme only open to researchers on a full-time contract?

Applications are accepted from researchers currently employed on both full and part-time contracts (i.e. anything less than 1.0 FTE). As the grant covers the cost of providing a teaching replacement, you can apply to cover the time that is specified on your contract.

1.1.7 I am employed by my institution on an hourly contract. Would I be eligible to apply?

If you are employed on an hourly contract, you can still apply. You can apply for costs to provide a teaching replacement for the time you are employed to spend on teaching and administrative duties.

1.1.8 I am on a fixed-term contract. Would I be eligible to apply?

Yes. However, it is essential that the length of your contract covers the whole proposed period of the grant. The purpose of the scheme is to allow the successful applicant to obtain time freed from their normal teaching and administrative commitments. If your current contract ends during the proposed grant period, or before it starts, but there is a commitment from the University to renew the contract, then yes, you would be eligible to apply.

1.1.9 I am on a full-time contract but currently have other commitments (i.e. I am a Co-I on another project) outside of my time allocated to my own research. Am I able, for example, to apply for an 18-month grant and pro-rata this part-time over 36 months?

It would not be a high priority to support someone whose time was not being largely devoted to this grant. The aim of the scheme is to allow the successful applicant to be free to focus on their research by relieving them of their teaching and administrative duties. You would need to fully explain in your application those duties and commitments from which you cannot be released.

1.2 The Co-Applicant

1.2.1 What is the difference between a co-applicant and a collaborator?

The co-applicant is an individual who is making a significant contribution to the research project and is essential for delivering the proposed work. They may or may not request teaching relief and/or research expenses. Collaborators are individuals whose contribution is important to the proposed research but do not play a major role in the project.

1.2.2 I would like to write a proposal with a researcher who is based overseas, can they act as co-applicant?

No, both the applicant and co-applicant must be based at a UK University or not-for-profit research organisation. There is no restriction on the location of collaborators, as they play a smaller role in the project.

1.2.3 I would like to write an application with a partner based in industry, can they act as a co-applicant or collaborator?

The co-applicant must be based at a UK University or not-for-profit research organisation. However, there is no restriction for the collaborators, who can be based in Industry.

1.2.4 Can I have more than one co-applicant?

There can be up-to 3 co-applicants on an application, but we would expect their inclusion to be appropriately justified and for their work on the proposed research to be essential.

1.3. Resubmissions and Other applications

1.3.1 My previous application was unsuccessful, can I reapply?

Yes, you can reapply as long as you are still eligible under the new round guidelines and have addressed the feedback from the independent referees. Your new application will be treated separately from the previous one**.**

1.3.2 I see from the scheme guidance notes that applicants may only submit one application per round even though this award is to enable collaborative research. Could I apply in this round and my colleague with whom I am currently engaged with on an on-going project also apply in this round – and can we name each other as a co-applicant?

No, you can only apply as lead applicant or co-applicant within the same round.

1.3.3 I am currently a PI on another grant that won't finish for at least another year. Is it possible to apply to this scheme if one already holds research funding for another project?

Yes, you may apply to the scheme if you currently hold research funding for another project. Please bear in mind the panel will be assessing the feasibility of the proposed project and therefore will consider the amount of time you can devote to the project. Please explain and justify the amount of time you will dedicate to the award as part of the application. Applicants are expected to devote at least 100% of the time which they have requested to be bought out, to the project.

1.4. The Host Institution

1.4.1   I am not affiliated to an institution. Would I be eligible to apply?

No, all applicants must have a UK host organisation.

1.4.2   I am about to move to another institution. If I am successful in my application to this scheme, are these grants transferrable?

Yes. The grant can be transferred to another institution. This change will require the Society's approval, please contact the team for further information.

1.5. The proposed research and costings

1.5.1   The scheme notes state that you are looking for applicants to develop a new direction for their research. I am already working on an idea and currently have an existing partnership. Am I eligible to apply or are you looking for a completely new idea?

The grant is not intended to supplement current projects or research that can be supported through other source of funding; therefore, it is important that you describe the novelty of your proposal and clarify to what extent you have already developed the research included in your APEX application. The Panel will look for innovative research ideas and development of new research directions resulting from the combination of different disciplines.

1.5.2   I would like to apply for costs to support public engagement activities. Should I cost these into my proposal?

Yes, in your proposal you can apply for public engagement costs, up to the value of £10,000, to support public engagement activities linked to their APEX awards. If public engagement costs are requested, then these will need to be fully justified within the application form. This justification will be assessed independently by a member of the Public Engagement Panel.

1.5.3   Can costs be requested to cover the teaching replacement for the co-applicant as well as the applicant?

Yes, applicants can apply for costs to provide a teaching replacement for either themselves and/or the co-applicant. It is between the applicant's and co-applicant's respective universities to decide how the award will be divided up between them (to cover their respective teaching replacements). This should be clearly stated in the need for teaching relief field within the proposal tab of the application.

Additionally, a supporting statement from the head of department of the co-applicant will need to be uploaded in the event that this is requested. If successful, it is recommended that the organisations involved have a collaboration agreement in place.

1.5.4   My institution feels that it would be more appropriate to appoint more than one part-time lecturer to cover my position if my application was successful. Are there any restrictions on this?

Funds are normally used to appoint one lecturer who can provide teaching relief to the main applicant, thus giving an opportunity to a younger researcher and avoiding the need to ask the award-holder to fill in any gaps in the teaching arrangements. However, if your institution felt that was the more feasible option then that would be fine.

1.5.5   **I do not have any teaching and administrative duties that I can be bought out of, can I still apply for an APEX Award to buy in my own time to work on the project or pay for a post doc?**

No, if you do not have teaching and administrative duties then you are not eligible to apply for this scheme.

1.5.6   **When I apply for funding for one of these awards, can I include in the application the cost of APCs (Article Processing Charges) to enable any articles that may arise from the research to be published in learned journals that offer a 'Gold' open access option?**

No. Currently the position is that publication costs are not eligible costs.

1.5.7   **Do these grants require the outputs of the research funded to be made available in any Open Access format?**

Recipients of APEX awards are encouraged to publish in open access journals. More information on our publication policy can be found here.

1.5.8   **My research includes interviewing or observing people rather than experimenting on people, do I need to select the question regarding the use of human tissue and participants?**

Yes, any applicant proposing to work with human participants is expected to clarify the requirement for the ethical approval. If your research does not require acquiring ethical approval you will still need to explain why it is not needed. Please make sure you provide detail on how your experiment will be conducted.

1.5.9   **I have secured a 3-year PhD studentship from another Funding Body. Can I request funds to top up this existing studentship and extend the duration to 4 years?**

No, Apex funds cannot be used to supplement a project funded through another grant.