ESRC Business Boost guidelines

PhD Business Engagement Fund

About the PhD Business Engagement Fund
What is it?
The PhD Business Engagement Fund (BEF) provides a responsive means both of supporting events that seek to build relationships with business and researchers, and to explore potential avenues for developing impact and engagement. The fund will provide up to £1,000 to hold events, including (but not limited to) seminars, workshops, closed round-table discussions, launch events for the publication of high-profile research reports, panel discussions and any other related business engagement activities.

How can the fund be used?
Events and activities supported by the PhD BEF will target specific audiences from the private and commercial, sectors and will be held either on our campuses, or at other appropriate venues when organised jointly with external partners. The events can take place at any time during the research process and can be used at an early stage to help to identify potential users and to ascertain their needs. We expect the events to be targeted at particular audiences with invitations being sent to relevant organisations and individuals. The fund can be used to meet travel and subsistence and any venue hire costs incurred.

Application process and eligibility
The PhD BEF is open to University of Essex social science PhD students and PhD students whose research is at least 51% social science related, regardless of their funding status. Priority will be given to applications from students from the ESRC Doctoral Training Partnerships programme via SeNSS, or its predecessor the Doctoral Training Centre. We will also consider applications to support cross-disciplinary projects with identifiable social or economic outcomes.

Applications to the PhD BEF can be made at any time and should be submitted to iaadtp@seNSS-dtp.ac.uk. As this is a rapid response call, decisions to be made within 10 working days of receipt of application.

Applications should be made by submitting the PhD Business Engagement Fund application form and should follow the Application Guidance below. All applications should be fully costed, using exact costs where possible.

Applications should address the following:
(i) What the funding will be used for (e.g. meeting a representative of an organisation for the first time, attending a policy briefing or receiving business engagement related training)
(ii) What the activity aims to achieve in the short-term (e.g. finding out about an organisation’s needs/interests, presenting research findings or learning negotiation skills)
(iii) Whether there are any longer-term plans if the initial activity is successful (e.g. applying for further funding, developing a collaborative proposal)
(iv) Costing – we would expect funding to be used largely for travel and subsistence and venue hire
(v) Approval from your Supervisor

Assessing applications
The criteria (where applicable) against which applications will be judged will include:

- Does the proposal have clear aims?
- Is the event/training appropriate to the meet the aims?
- Timeliness: why is it necessary that the event/training takes place when it does?
- How effectively will the target audience be reached?
- How likely is it that impact will be generated?
- What would be the likely reach and significance of this impact?
- How appropriate are the follow-up plans?
Successful applicants will be expected to submit a brief report on progress, outcomes and intentions for future activities. Applicants should note that case studies may be developed from any award given and that there may be follow-ups and further information required post-award. Should students be successful in their business engagement endeavours, additional applications are welcomed to enable the relationship(s) to develop further.

**Please note that this fund does not cover the cost of academic conferences or associated activities.**

All activities must be completed by 28th February 2019, with reports due on 15th March 2019 at the very latest.

**For more details contact Nikki Pockett at iaadtp@ensus-dtp.ac.uk**