ESRC Impact Acceleration Account
Guidelines and governance

Introduction
The University of Essex has been awarded funding by the ESRC through an Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) to support knowledge exchange and impact activities by academics that enable their social science research to contribute to economic and societal development. The aim of the IAA is to facilitate sustainable engagement between researchers and the public, private and third sectors in order to enhance the impact of social science research beyond academia. The IAA will provide funding until March 2018.

The IAA supports four schemes listed below. Full details of each scheme are available. For more details visit http://www.essex.ac.uk/reo/impacts/esrc-impact-acceleration.aspx

Excellence in Knowledge Exchange
To provide a flexible training programme for University of Essex academics to develop skills that underpin successful impact and knowledge exchange relationships

Active Engagement Fund
To provide seed-funding in support of events designed to enable the development of relationships with research users

Secondment Fund
To develop and foster productive partnerships via secondment of University of Essex researchers into external organisations and of researcher users into the university

Impact Fund
To provide funding in support of novel ideas for engaging with research users to enhance and deliver the impact of social science research at Essex

Process
1. Calls for the Active Engagement Fund, Secondment Fund and Impact Fund\(^1\) will be announced each year. There will be three calls for each scheme during each academic year.
2. Applications must be made on the relevant application form.
3. There is no limit to the number of applications from each department per competition.
4. Applicants are required to discuss their project with their Research / Impact Director and Head of Department in relation to strategy and staffing implications. Applications should have support from the department.
5. Completed forms should be submitted electronically to iaa@essex.ac.uk by the deadline date on the application form.
6. Applications will be considered by the university’s ESRC IAA Fund Awards Panel as stipulated on the application form. The panel comprises the IAA Director, Professor Nick Allum (Department of Sociology), Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research), Head of Research Development, Deputy Director (Enterprise), Knowledge

\(^1\) Note that we do not issue open calls for the Excellence in Knowledge Exchange programme since this is planned and delivered by the IAA team.

We do, however, welcome suggestions and requests for relevant training sessions throughout the year; please email iaa@essex.ac.uk
Exchange Manager (Social Sciences), Research Impact Officer (Social Sciences), and an external research user(s) representing the public, private, or third sector. The panel will rank the applications and allocate funding up to the total available for that call.

7. Applicants will normally be informed of the results within two weeks of the awards panel meeting.

8. Successful applications may be asked to provide information about their project for publicity purposes.

9. Projects should be completed within 12 months. Project leads are expected to meet / communicate regularly with an allocated member of the university’s IAA team, and project leads will be required to report on progress against agreed milestones using an electronic reporting framework.

10. Project reporting will be considered annually by the university’s IAA team which will report back to the ESRC against agreed KPIs (see Appendix I below).

Terms and conditions of awards

1. Successful applicants are expected to start the impact outputs and activities as soon as possible and to complete them within 12 months of the official start date.

2. The award will be withdrawn if a successful applicant subsequently leaves the university.

3. The balance of an award outstanding at the end of 12 months will automatically revert to the Fund, unless prior warning and justification is given to the IAA Director.

4. Staff costs may be claimed through this scheme but these must be direct costs only. A maximum of one year’s teaching replacement per IAA grant, pro rata for grants of different lengths, or for those with less than full-time contracts. The staff replacement should normally be based on the most junior point of the lecturer scale [i.e. Grade 9, Spine Point 37; currently £253.55 per day, incl. NI and pension], calculated per day or per module of teaching replacement. Research Assistants (RAs) may be costed into proposals, at the following rates: Postgraduate RA @ £193.26 per day (incl. NI and pension); Postdoctoral RA @ £205.31 per day (incl. NI and pension).

5. Award-holding departments will administer the spend against the allocated funds and reports will be run by the university’s IAA team to monitor spend.

6. Successful projects will be listed on the university’s ESRC IAA webpages.
Appendix I: ESRC IAA Key Performance Indicators

ESRC have set a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the overall Impact Accelerator Account programme. To assist the IAA team in meeting their reporting obligations to ESRC, our new electronic reporting framework (currently under development) allows ongoing updating of narrative and reporting metrics against the Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts identified by the ESRC (listed below). The university’s IAA team will provide guidance for successful Project Leads / PIs to complete the electronic reporting process,

**IAA KPI 1: Outputs**
- Cash and in-kind contributions from external non-academic partners
- Further collaborative projects / proposals following engagement supported by IAA funding
- Joint publications / outputs with external non-academic partners
- Number of strategic events participated in (both ways)
- Any case studies developed
- Number of new partners participating in collaborative projects / proposals
- Number of events and attendance (numbers of people participating in each event)
- Number of people completing entry / exit surveys / interviews
- Engagement with other HE institutions

**KPI 2: Outcomes**
- Engagement with non-academic organisations (what? with whom?)
- Increased number of researchers (from Essex, and elsewhere) participating in KE / Impact / commercialisation activity (who? what?)
- Increased income from engagement / impact activities

**IAA KPI 3: Impacts**
- Evidence of policy and / or practice change in external non-academic organisations
- Evidence of new business models or approaches adopted by external non-academic organisations
- Evidence of cost-savings, increased turnover / profit, jobs at the external non-academic organisation as a result of the project
- Increase in / commitment to co-produced research and / or R&D expenditure