

Peer Review for Research Funding Applications

1. OVERVIEW

This document details UON's policies and procedures for the peer review of research funding applications and other similar proposals. UON is committed to developing its research. The development and submission of high-quality funding applications are essential to this. The research funding environment is becoming ever more competitive, and the aim of this panel is to support the quality of funding applications to increase the chance of funding.

2. OWNERSHIP

The Research, Impact and Innovation department owns and manages this policy on behalf of the University. This policy will be reviewed by the Research, Innovation, and Impact Committee (RIIC) on a 3-year basis or amended in response to changes in future legislation and/or case law.

3. PROCEDURE

- 3.1. All external research funding applications of a value of £20,000 or greater must be subject to internal peer review. This policy is voluntary for contract research, consultancy, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs), tenders and collaborative bids where they are being reviewed by a partner institution.
- 3.2. The peer review of applications must be initiated one (1) month prior to the deadline by which the application must be submitted to its proposed funder if the application is for £20k to £100k. Bids over £100k need to be initiated six (6) weeks prior the submission date. Only in exceptional circumstances will the required lead-in time be altered for specific applications, on the agreement of the Peer Review Panel Chair.
- 3.3. The Peer Review Panel Chair will be responsible for the overall management, coordination, and delivery of the peer review procedures, supported by the RIFS administrator where relevant.
- 3.4. The Peer Review Panel will consist of UON's research leaders, Institute Directors Professors and Associate Professors alongside RIFS team membership to enable academic/professional colleagues across UON to benefit from their experience and expertise.
- 3.5. All applications of a value of £20,000 to £100,000 will be reviewed by one panel member. Applications above £100,000 should be reviewed by two panel members. One member from the panel will review each application with a value

of £20,000 or more. Applications will usually be reviewed on a rotational basis, although where specialist knowledge and expertise is required a specific colleague(s) may be approached.

- 3.6. It is anticipated that reviews of applications will be undertaken and returned to applicants usually within five (5) working days for bids up to £100k and ten (10) working days for bids over £100k from receipt by the reviewers.
- 3.7. The undertaking of peer review of applications should be accounted for and recognised within the other duties element of the workload allocation model.
- 3.8. The Peer Review Funding Panel will receive all completed peer reviews and determine what steps (if any) needs to be undertaken by the applicant. Based on the assessments received, this could be:
 - a. Approve the progression and future submission of the application with no/minor amendments; or
 - b. Approve the progression and future submission of the application subject to major/material amendments being made, which may require the application to be resubmitted to the panel for approval; or
 - c. Reject the future progression and submission of the application.

If there is dispute between reviewer and funder applicant the Dean of Research, Impact and Innovation will make the final decision.

- 3.9. All funding applications approved will still need to be signed off by the respective Deans/Directors, Dean of Research/Director of Enterprise and Employability and the Chief Financial Officer or nominee.
- 3.10. Guidance on feedback will be provided to panel members. When reporting back on application, peer reviews should provide commentary against the following criteria:
 - a. The originality and potential contribution to knowledge of the application;
 - b. The rigour and robustness of the application's design and methodology;
 - c. The value-for-money of the application; &
 - d. The strength of the application's proposed outputs, dissemination, and impact.

- 3.11. UON's RIIC will oversee the peer review policy and procedures and will require annually:
 - a. Analysis of the quality of applications submitted to support training developments; &
 - b. Periodically reviewing the policy and procedure to ensure that they are effective, efficient and fit-for-purpose.
- 3.12. All applications for peer review must be uploaded onto Pure ahead of review and no later than one (1) month prior to the submission date set by the funder.
- 3.13. The Peer Review Panel Chair will allocate the applications for peer review to a relevant reviewer(s) to ensure the workload of peer review panel members is equitably spread over time and ensure there are no conflicts of interest. Any reviewer can declare a conflict of interest and a different reviewer will be nominated.
- 3.14. When peer review panel members are requested to undertake a review, they will be provided with the necessary guidance as to the scheme/funder to which the application is being submitted to, and all other relevant information.
- 3.15. Where a funding body limits the Higher education institution (HEI) to one application per call the Peer Review panel will advise which is the strongest application if we have more than one being developed for submission within UON.
- 3.16. All Peer review reports and outcomes will be electronically stored.

4. VERSION CONTROL

Version Control	Author	Approval	Date Written	Updates	Current Status	Approval of Revision
1.0	Dean of Research, Impact and Innovation	REC 19.01.23	February 2023	N/A	Final	19.01.23

Record of Amendments

Dates	Version Number	Details of Change	Approval
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