

The logo for EPSRC, featuring the letters 'EPSRC' in a bold, purple, sans-serif font, with a thin teal horizontal line above and below the text.

Pioneering research
and skills

The logo for ESRC, consisting of the letters 'E·S·R·C' in a white, serif font, stacked above the words 'ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, all contained within a dark blue square.

Arts & Humanities
Research Council



Design for Wellbeing: Ageing and Mobility in the Built Environment

Call Type: Expressions of Interest

Closing date for Expressions of Interest: 12:00 noon on 10 September 2012

Closing date for full proposals for invited applicants only: 16:00 on 28 November 2012

Summary

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) is leading a call with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) for evidence led research into ageing and mobility in the built environment. The call is being run under the auspices of the Lifelong Health and Wellbeing (LLHW) cross-council ageing research programme which supports research addressing factors throughout life that influence health and wellbeing in older age.

The EPSRC, ESRC and AHRC invite research proposals from interdisciplinary consortia able to address the scope and interdisciplinary ambitions of the call.

There is up to £7M available through this call: EPSRC will commit up to £4M, ESRC up to £2M and AHRC up to £1M to support a maximum of five large multi-disciplinary projects of up to three years. A two stage process (an Expressions of Interest stage, followed by an invitation to submit a full proposal) will be used to allocate the funding. This call seeks Expressions of interest (EoIs) from consortia led by a Principal Investigator. The EoIs received will be assessed at a shortlisting panel in September 2012. Those judged to meet the assessment criteria for this stage of the process will be invited to submit full proposals. The deadline for submitting an EoI is 12:00 noon on 10 September 2012. Those invited to submit a full proposal will be notified by the end of September 2012. The deadline for submission of a full proposal will be November with the expectation that proposals will be announced by the end of March 2013.

Background

The Lifelong Health and Wellbeing (LLHW) cross-council ageing programme aims to:

- Target factors over the life course that may be major determinants of health and wellbeing in older age
- Identify and develop effective interventions that lead to improved health and quality of life in later life
- Inform policy and practice including the development of services and technologies to support independent living
- Increase capacity and capability in ageing-relevant research

The Research Councils have both individually and collectively, through LLHW, made a significant commitment to funding research and building capacity in ageing research over the past ten years. A number of the key investments relating to ageing and the built environment are due to end during the current Delivery Plan period (up to March 2015) and it is now timely for the Research Councils to review future needs. Relevant investments supported by EPSRC include SCEAM, i~Design 3, I'D GO TOO, KT-EQUAL and Inclusion through the Digital Economy. Cross-council research in the area includes projects funded under the New Dynamics of Ageing (NDA) programme.

In 2010, the Research Councils, in partnership with the UK Health Departments published 'A Strategy for Collaborative Ageing Research in the UK' under the auspices of the LLHW programme. Two of the key priority areas highlighted where the UK could achieve greater impact through cross-sector and collaborative working were: enhancing mobility and independence in an ageing population, and promoting physical activity in older age.

The LLHW programme, led by the Medical Research Council, ran a series of scoping activities in early 2012 to better understand the gaps and opportunities where LLHW can have the greatest impact in supporting high quality multi-disciplinary research. This call has developed as a result of discussions relating to the outputs from the above scoping activities, other expert advice and agreed Research Council priorities.

RCUK Ageing: Lifelong Health and Wellbeing

<http://www.mrc.ac.uk/Ourresearch/ResearchInitiatives/LLHW/index.htm>

A Strategy for Collaborative Ageing Research in the UK

<http://www.mrc.ac.uk/Utilities/Documentrecord/index.htm?d=MRC007289>

EPSRC Grants on the Web

<http://gow.epsrc.ac.uk/Search.aspx>

New Dynamics of Ageing

<http://www.newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk/>

Scope of the Call

This call is seeking to create a step change in interdisciplinary engineering, social science and design research for wellbeing in the built environment. Applicants are encouraged to take a whole systems approach to consider ways in which better design of the built environment can facilitate and enable mobility, physical activity and physical connectivity of older people within the community. Projects should consider ageing as a lifelong process and are encouraged to take a whole life course design systems view whilst focussing on quality of life in the older population. Projects should involve a wide ranging, high quality, interdisciplinary team consisting of all appropriate areas affected by the design including appropriate experience in a range of methods and skills to involve communities, older people and other relevant stakeholders in research.

The built environment refers to the whole system of the human made outdoor built environment and the indoor environment. Nursing, care and residential homes are within the scope of the call; research solely focussing on domestic housing is not. Research into the design of furniture, fixtures and fittings found in the domestic environment is also within remit when considered as part of the whole system. Engineering interventions and design of the built environment should be informed by robust evidence generated within the project. Consideration should be given to location (e.g. on the urban rural spectrum) and the full range of different environments which older people use.

The use of the term wellbeing is intended to convey a state of encouraging enhanced mobility within the environment, increased connectivity and social interaction and increased levels of physical activity. Projects will be expected to contribute ambitious and transformative research in the following areas:

- Understanding the relationship between the built environment, mobility and activity in older populations including care homes and residential homes
- Evidence based and user-centred design and engineering approaches, in the context of the whole system, that are driven by a desire to increase and enable mobility and activity, decrease isolation and enable greater independence
- Understanding what environmental designs encourage activity/inactivity and how these can be engineered to facilitate older users to increase their physical activity

A major challenge for this area is appropriate engagement of a breadth of stakeholders, including older people living in the community, throughout the research process. There is a need to engage practitioners and older people throughout the research process to ensure maximum potential for uptake of research outputs. There should also be a concerted effort to include project partner organisations who can offer data or information which will aid and shape the research and work with the project to increase knowledge exchange. Approaches should consider use of novel methodologies for

robust evidence generation that inform the design process and create decision tools for policy makers and industry. For example:

- Methodologies for measurement of key aspects of the built environment and linking these to health and wellbeing outcome measures
- Standardisation of measurements of the built environment to enable comparative data analysis

The Research Councils are keen to maximise the added value of funding a group of projects in this area. Applications should give consideration to this when developing their proposals and include appropriate costs for networking. Projects are also expected to take issues around resilience and sustainability into consideration including how future climate change will affect the design outputs.

Outside the remit of the call is research **solely** focussing on:

- Design of care services
- Design of domestic buildings or their interiors

Funding available

There is expected to be up to £7M to fund up to five multidisciplinary projects for a maximum duration of three years.

Equipment

The Research Councils have limited funding for capital equipment. Where possible, researchers are asked to make use of existing facilities and equipment, including those hosted at other universities. If equipment is needed as part of the research proposal, applicants must follow the new rules for requesting equipment over £10,000 in value. Individual items of equipment up to the current OJEU procurement threshold can be included on research proposals submitted through this call, but research organisations will be expected to make a contribution to the cost. All requests for single items of equipment above the current OJEU threshold will need to go through a separate process which will assess the strategic need for the equipment and how to ensure maximum usage. The need for these items of equipment will be assessed through the separate Strategic Equipment peer review process. Please note that the AHRC does not have a budget to fund capital expenditure.

EPSRC Equipment Process:

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/ourportfolio/themes/researchinfrastructure/subthemes/equipment/process/Pages/default.aspx>

Eligibility

This call is being led by the EPSRC on behalf of the LLHW programme and therefore EPSRC funding and eligibility rules will apply.

Consortia are expected to consist of interdisciplinary teams broadly reflecting the contribution of funding partners. Proposals outside the scope of this call will not be accepted and rejected at an early stage.

Applicants are expected to read the 'Our Portfolio' section of the EPSRC website (<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/ourportfolio/>) and include how the proposed research aligns to the strategy described within relevant Research Areas. Proposals should also aim to deliver novel transformative and fundamental research in engineering.

Applicants should also read the 'Strategic Priorities' section of the ESRC website and include details of how the proposed research will address the strategic priorities:

<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/15733/refining-our-strategic-priorities.aspx>

The AHRC element of the project should be within the field of design, which is identified as an area of current strategic need in the AHRC 2011-2015 Delivery Plan. The AHRC, in partnership with the Design Council, are currently undertaking a scoping study into the subject, with the aim of identifying the future academic direction of research in this area. Please read the following page on their website for details of the specific disciplines that we would encourage as part of the consortia:

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/News/Latest/Pages/Measuringthevalueandroleofdesign.aspx>

AHRC 2011-2015 Delivery Plan:

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/About/Policy/Documents/DeliveryPlan2011.pdf>

For information on the eligibility of organisations and individuals to receive funding through this call, see the EPSRC Funding Guide:

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/apprev/basics/Pages/fundingguide.aspx>

As this call is a targeted funding opportunity higher education institutions, and some research council institutes and independent research organisations are eligible to apply. A list of eligible organisations to apply to EPSRC is provided at:

<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/Pages/Eligibilityforrcs.aspx>.

If you are normally eligible for ESRC 'managed mode' and AHRC 'responsive mode' funding but are not eligible for EPSRC funding please refer to the appropriate Research Councils contacts using the email addresses provided at the end of the call document.

How to apply

Assessment Process

Assessment will be by a two stage process.

1 – Expressions of Interest

Applicants should complete an EoI form. The Research Councils will only accept a completed form and no other form of application, workplan or letters of support. Applicants should complete the attached form and return it to LLHWDesignforWellbeing@epsrc.ac.uk no later than 12:00 noon on 10 September 2012.

The seven page EoI form should contain the following sections:

- Named PI and track record of the team (one page)
- Proposed research vision and fit to call (three pages)
- Potential routes to impact, key stakeholders and likely project partners (two pages)
- Summary of Resources Required for the Project (one page)

The PI should be named, with contact details, and the appropriateness of the team highlighted to explain how that mix of skills and disciplines will produce transformative research aligned to the aims of the call.

The proposed research should be explicit in how the research will achieve the aims of the call within the funding period. The key methodologies and transformative approach should be clearly explained.

The potential routes to impact section should emphasise how the research will be useful, usable and used. It should also identify key stakeholders and likely project partners who can catalyse the uptake of the research.

EoIs will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Quality of research ideas
- Fit to the scope of the call
- Appropriate interdisciplinary capability of the research team (including the Principal Investigator)
- Feasibility of the routes to Impact

An independent panel will assess the EoIs based on the above criteria and short list a selection to be invited to the full proposal stage.

2 – Full Proposal Stage

After shortlisting the EoIs, only those invited to submit a full proposal will be asked to do so through the Research Councils' Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) System (<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/>).

The full proposal should expand on the challenges outlined within the Eoi and consist of the following completed documents:

- Je-S Form
- Track Record of Applicants (two sides)
- Case For Support (six sides)
- Pathways to Impact (two sides)
- Justification of Resources (two sides)
- Statements of Support from project partners

Guidance on Preparing a Proposal:

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/apprev/preparing/>

Full Proposal Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Research quality
- Fit to the call
- National importance
- Impact
- Expertise of the Applicants and research team
- Resources and Management

Full Proposal Assessment Procedure

Full proposals submitted to this call will be sent to independent peer reviewers, including at least one nominated by the applicant, using the standard research review form which can be found on the EPSRC website: <http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/forms/rev/Pages/default.aspx>. The postal peer reviewers' role will primarily be to comment on the quality of the research. Those with sufficiently favourable reviewers' comments will be invited to respond to the reviewers' comments and then rank ordered against each other through a prioritisation panel.

Applicants invited to the full proposal stage will be provided with additional guidance outlining what areas and themes reviewers will be asked to assess in relation to this specific call.

User Engagement Strategy

As a part of their Pathways to Impact, successful applicants will be required to develop and execute a strategy for engaging with potential users of the research funded in the project (any resources required for this should be included and justified in the application). This strategy should be reviewed and updated regularly as part of the formal management of the grant.

The strategy should cover:

- how and when potential users have been / will be identified
- what form the engagement will take
- what steps will be taken to ensure that outputs of the research are made available to potential users
- suitable metrics for determining the success of the strategy in delivering value to users

Additional grant conditions

In addition to the standard terms and conditions for grants, successful applicants will be required to apply the terms and conditions of the LLHW programme. More detailed guidance will be given to those invited to full submission stage.

Key dates

Call for Expressions of Interest	May 2012
Call for Expressions of Interest submission deadline	12:00 noon on 10 September 2012
Applicants informed of outcome and full proposals invited	26 September 2012
Deadline for submission of full proposals	16:00 on 28 November 2012
Prioritisation panel	March 2013

Contacts

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