



RAI UK

Collaboration Grants (Round 1)

Opportunity status:

Open

Funders:

UKRI via RAI UK

Funding type:

Grant

Total fund:

Up to £200,000

Award range:

Up to £50,000

Publication date:

13th Oct 2025

Registration open:

13th Oct 2025

Grantlounge Registration due date (mandatory):

7 Nov 2025

Submission Deadline:

27th Nov 2025

Notification

Mid-December 2025

Apply for funding to support collaboration in the domain of Responsible Artificial Intelligence, to ensure society deploys and uses AI in a responsible way. This funding covers travel and subsistence for UK researchers to collaborate within the UK or internationally, or for UK-based researchers to host international visitors (i.e., flight and subsistence, accommodation in the UK).

Your proposed collaboration should primarily focus on research that aligns to the mission of Responsible Ai UK (RAi UK). Learn about the RAI UK programme at <https://www.rai.ac.uk/>.

You and your organisation must be eligible for UKRI funding (see conditions below).



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Who can apply

Grants are open to:

- UK higher education institutions
- public sector research establishments
- research council institutes
- UKRI-approved independent research organisations and NHS bodies with research capacity.

UK Businesses, third sector, or government bodies can be funded as part of the project but cannot lead the project (restrictions apply, see funding below).

[Read the guidance on institutional eligibility.](#)

The lead applicant will need to be resident in the UK and hold a contract at the submitting research organisation that extends beyond the duration of the proposed project.

We particularly encourage early career researchers to apply.

This call is not part of any UKRI repeatedly unsuccessful applicant's policy.

What we are looking for

For this funding opportunity:

- we will consider proposals to collaborate with UK-based or international research organisations (including universities, public sector research organisations and publicly funded research institutes);
- the application should lie within UKRI remit
- partnerships can involve one or more research organisations in one or more countries;



- we are open to proposals to either develop new collaborators or to build on existing relationships;
- collaborations that include convening of communities for focused events with clear research objectives are also welcome;
- partners may be in a low- or middle-income country. However, we do not require compliance with Official Development Assistance (ODA) criteria for this funding opportunity;
- industry and other non-academic engagement are also welcome and, where appropriate, applicants are encouraged to engage with their partners to co-develop ideas and plans for further collaboration in the future.

Proposals not meeting these requirements in the judgement of RAI UK will be rejected.

Focus areas

The following dimensions of responsible AI research are examples of current interests:

- *AI sustainability*: evaluating the energy, water and other demands from AI data centres and predicting such demands in specific jurisdictions or their impact on local communities. Also, Frugal AI approaches to reduce the compute requirements of AI models.
- *AI deployment cost and benefits*: methodologies to understand how organisations implement AI and the resulting costs and benefits to them (workforce, market positioning etc..) both in the short and long term.
- *AI Skills*: funding to organise public engagement events, teacher training, teaching material development (based on research outputs), or other relevant activities.
- *AI Engineering*: investigating disciplined approaches to the design and development of dependable AI systems that are assured for safety, security, reliability, usability, etc.

While researchers are free to select from a range of types of activity with partners, we seek short-term projects to:

- Evaluate the feasibility of developed methodologies for responsible AI.
- Deliver policy engagement activities that enhance conversations involving policymakers, researchers, practitioners, end-users, and the public.

We encourage projects to leverage the synergy of the proposed collaboration and demonstrate clear routes to impact to address both imminent and long-term needs of industry, society and government. Please make it clear where the project looks to build on connections to existing networks and research programmes.

If novel toolkits or frameworks are proposed by a project, a customer/end-user for such outputs should be included as a partner in the project and the project should evaluate the use of such toolkits or frameworks.

For international collaborators (e.g., industry or academic partners), please complete the checklist in RAI UK's Trusted Research section and complete the checklist for



academia by CPNI and NCSC. **Based on the answers to this checklist, you may need to escalate this within your institution or department for a decision (and the tight timescale for doing so).**

Further guidance on getting the most out of international collaboration while protecting intellectual property, sensitive research and personal information has been released by [NPSA](#).

Funding available

Up to £200,000 funding is available and we expect to fund around 10 projects. We expect projects to request no more than £20,000 and, with *exceptional justification*, we may consider projects requesting funds up to £50,000.

Grants will be funded at 80% of the stated Full Economic Cost (fEC). The remaining 20% must be contributed by the academic institution (or their industry partners) submitting the proposal. Matched funding is encouraged.

Project co-leads from non-academic organisations (including outside the UK, with due regard for Trusted Research requirements) may be included in project costs, *up to 30% of the total fEC*.

We recognise that some partners may be employed by a government-funded organisation. To avoid the double counting of public funds in the costings, no salary costs will be covered for permanent employees from government bodies.

PhD studentships or funding associated with PhD studentships are not eligible for inclusion in the costs sought from RAI UK.

How to apply

Applicants should ensure they are aware of, and comply with, any internal institutional deadlines that may be in place.

Applicants are responsible for registering their intent to submit during the stated registration period.

Proposals should be prepared using the provided submission template, completing all of the sections, and submitted in a PDF format via *the online application portal*.

Once you submit your proposal you will receive a confirmation email, including details of your submission.

RAi UK must receive your application by 12:00 on the day of the relevant submission deadline.

How we will assess your application

Proposals that meet the assessment criteria will be considered by a panel of experts drawn from RAI UK's network in order to select the final successful proposals.

Only general feedback will be given to unsuccessful candidates.

Assessment criteria



All submitted proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Fit to funding opportunity (primary)

This includes:

- added value to the UK research base of the proposed collaboration
- unique features of the joint research team and capability to deliver, including the added value to research outcomes from the collaboration
- appropriateness and timeliness of proposed collaboration in the context of responsible AI.
- track record of UK applicant team working together.
- meets national and international needs by establishing or maintaining a unique world leading activity.
- relationship to the RAI UK mission and focus areas where relevant.
- potential for planned outcomes to impact on RAI UK programme and beyond.

Quality (primary)

The research excellence of the proposal, making reference to:

- the effectiveness and appropriateness of the approach to deliver the proposed work.
- the novelty, relationship to the context, timeliness and relevance to identified stakeholders.
- the ambition, adventure, transformative aspects or potential outcomes.
- the suitability of the proposed methodology and the appropriateness of the approach to achieving impact.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and Responsible Research & Innovation

(secondary)

- Plans to embed responsible innovation practices in the project
- Adequate consideration of EDI in terms of the research or knowledge exchange

Resourcing (secondary)

- Adequate and fully justified resourcing
- Risks to resourcing fully identified and mitigated, including appropriate plans to manage finances during the lifetime of the activity
- Consideration of risks of delays in completing the project within the timeline specified.

Contact details

Queries regarding the submission of proposals should be directed to: Info@rai.ac.uk

Grant additional conditions (GACs)

Projects will be expected to commit to adhere to open-source, open-data and open-innovation guidelines.



Awards will be confirmed upon acceptance of the non-negotiable Terms and Conditions, including the fixed end date of 31 March 2026, which will be set out in the Award Letter.