



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

SFC Announcement

Reference: SFC/AN/03/2023

Issue date: 23/02/2023

Additional research funding for universities in FY 2022-23



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Issue Date:	23 February 2023
Reference:	SFC/AN/03/2023
Summary:	Allocation of additional research funding for universities in Financial Year (FY) 2022-23 from the UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).
FAO:	Principals / Finance Directors / Board Secretaries of Scotland's universities, and the general public.
Further Information:	<p>CONTACT: Dr Cat Ball</p> <p>JOB TITLE: Assistant Director</p> <p>DIRECTORATE: Research & Innovation</p> <p>TEL: 0131 313 6660</p> <p>EMAIL: cball@sfc.ac.uk</p>

Table of Contents

Additional research funding for universities in FY 2022-23	4
Summary.....	4
Background.....	4
Additional flexible research formula funding.....	4
Purpose of funding	4
Conditions of funding	5
Monitoring.....	6
Acceptance of funding	6
Payment of funding	6
Further information	7
Annex A – Proposed funding allocations.....	8

Additional research funding for universities in FY 2022-23

Summary

1. I am writing to announce the allocation of additional research funding for universities in Financial Year (FY) 2022-23 from the UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). Funding must be spent by institutions by the end of March 2023.

Background

2. On 21 November 2022, the then Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (DBEIS) [announced](#) a package of support for the UK's research and innovation sector during the ongoing delay to any decision on association to Horizon Europe. The package is intended to help protect and stabilise the sector by providing immediate investment to researchers, universities and research organisations.
3. In December the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) [allocated £24.6 million \(m\) of this support](#) to the Scottish university sector to protect research capacity and capability, and to provide stability ahead of a final decision on Horizon Europe association. The funding was allocated through two components: £19.391m additional flexible research formula funding; and £5.219m additional research capital funding delivered through the Higher Education Research Capital (HERC) Grant. Funding must be spent by institutions by 31 March 2023.
4. SFC is now allocating a further £3.482m of additional flexible research formula funding from DSIT, to be spent within this current FY.

Additional flexible research formula funding

5. All universities in receipt of an allocation of SFC research funding for 2022-23 will receive an allocation of additional flexible research formula funding.
6. SFC has decided to allocate the additional £3.482m of funding using the same method as the previous additional funding in December, i.e. in proportion to universities' total Research Excellence Grant (REG) and Research Postgraduate Grant (RPG) for Academic Year (AY) 2022-23, as announced in the [University Final Funding Allocations for AY 2022-23](#).
7. Individual university allocations of the additional flexible research formula funding are set out in [Annex A](#).

Purpose of funding

8. This one-off immediate additional flexible formula funding is intended to deliver a boost to enable universities to strengthen research capabilities and capacity – for example, by

supporting research staff, developing research strategy, investing in essential research equipment or sustaining new areas of research.

9. Given the short timescale for expenditure, we anticipate that funding will likely be focused on supporting and building on activities that are already in train (although funding can also be used to support new activity).
10. As before, examples of activity could include (but are not limited to):
 - Developing, supporting and amplifying international collaborations and partnerships.
 - Recruiting and retaining talent, including internationally and at all career stages.
 - Promoting positive research cultures, research careers and the diversity of people involved in the research process.
 - Pursuing long-term research strategies, capacity building and strategic investment in research priorities.
 - Seeding or piloting cross-disciplinary activities within an institution and/or between institutions.
 - Supporting fundamental research and research into novel ideas that provides the foundation for later breakthroughs and impact.
 - Mitigating shortfalls in research income due to uncertainty over European Union (EU) research grants.
 - Providing overheads or additional investment that support funding from other sources.
11. Institutions should consider the purposes for which they utilise REG and RPG allocations.

Conditions of funding

12. Funding must be spent by institutions by the end of FY 2022-23 (by 31 March 2023). Any expenditure incurred after 31 March cannot be supported. Recipients may count activity from 21 November 2022 - the date of the original BEIS announcement of funding - towards their spend.
13. As before, funding allocations are conditional on the acceptance and satisfactory reporting by each university of their response to the following conditions of grant:
 - Funding must be used to support research activities including research training. It can be used to underpin and/or enhance current research activity (i.e. adding value to ongoing activities) but it must not be used to support wider, non-research related activity.
 - Recognising that university research is critical for Scotland's society and economy,

universities should give consideration to areas which support Scottish Government priorities such as those in the National Strategy for Economic Transformation, though funding does **not** need to be exclusively used for this purpose.

- Universities must comply with the conditions of funding outlined in SFC's [University Final Funding Allocations for AY 2022-23](#) letter (Annex C).

Monitoring

14. We will extend the accountability arrangements for the additional flexible research funding announced in December 2022 to incorporate this additional portion of funding.
15. As outlined in the publication of the previous allocations in December, universities must provide a brief, high-level written description of their approach to allocating and using this funding, including a high-level description of some of the activities supported. Descriptions should be a maximum of two pages in length and take into account the conditions below by highlighting, where appropriate, how activities link to Scottish Government priorities, such as those set out in the [National Strategy for Economic Transformation](#).
16. SFC will use the descriptions provided by institutions to develop an overview of how the sector responded to and utilised additional short-term research funding. This may inform our approach should future funding of this nature arise.
17. These reports should be submitted to Dr Cat Ball, email: cball@sfc.ac.uk, no later than the end of May 2023.

Acceptance of funding

18. Universities unable to spend this additional funding in line with the intended purpose and by the end of FY 2022-23 will be able to 'opt out' or opt to receive a lower amount. Institutions are required to accept or decline their allocation of additional funding and responses should be provided to SFC from the Principal or an authorised senior officer. Funding allocations shown in [Annex A](#) are therefore provisional and may be increased to ensure the total budget is allocated.
19. Responses should be sent by email to Graeme Scotland, Senior Budgeting & Reporting Officer, email: gscotland@sfc.ac.uk no later than **3 March 2023**.

Payment of funding

20. Funding will be paid in one instalment in March 2023. Funding is for FY 2022-23 only and must be spent by universities by 31 March 2023.

Further information

21. Please contact Dr Cat Ball, Assistant Director for Research & Innovation, email:
cball@sfc.ac.uk



Helen Cross
Director, Research and Innovation

Annex A – Proposed funding allocations

Institution	Additional flexible research formula funding allocation for FY 2022-23
Aberdeen, University of	£249,983
Abertay University	£16,471
Dundee, University of	£233,292
Edinburgh Napier University	£42,429
Edinburgh, University of	£1,173,834
Glasgow Caledonian University	£48,185
Glasgow School of Art	£15,440
Glasgow, University of	£732,645
Heriot-Watt University	£167,028
Highlands & Islands, University of	£40,404
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	£13,943
Robert Gordon University	£17,465
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	£4,603
SRUC	£40,870
St Andrews, University of	£242,877
Stirling, University of	£106,704
Strathclyde, University of	£301,936
West of Scotland, University of	£34,316
TOTAL	£3,482,425