LJMU is being allocated funding from the Research England Policy Support Fund (PSF) to support the development of impactful research and to build personal capacity to work with policymakers, and other stakeholders or communities. A proportion of this funding will be ringfenced for projects with Public Engagement or Participatory Research elements.

**Details of the fund**

A key aim of the fund is to support universities to link effectively with policy research priorities and opportunities, from the local to the international. The funding supports universities in undertaking research with local, regional, national and international structures (including parliament, central government, devolved administrations, local government, health and education bodies, the justice system and other regulatory organisations).

Allocations may be used to build on activity already under way, and to build capacity for future activity. Relevant activity which might be funded includes:

* New research activity working in partnership with policymakers, particularly to better understand local, regional or national challenges;
* Extending existing research activity;
* Facilitating the use of existing research and the exchange of knowledge between universities and policymakers;
* Activity aimed at improving the dialogue between universities and policymakers including co-production (and relevant capacity building in participatory approaches);
* Activity and training to better equip academics, including postgraduate researchers and early career researchers, to communicate effectively with policymakers;
* Partnerships and collaborations aimed at supporting evidence-based policy making;
* The exchange of people, e.g. staff secondments, contributing towards professional doctorates in policy, joint PhDs, etc.
* Proposals around Public Engagement or Participatory Research training and development

**Application and review process**

Completed application forms should be emailed to[**impact@ljmu.ac.uk**](mailto:impact@ljmu.ac.uk) on or before **5pm Monday 10th October 2022**. Applications received after 5pm will not be considered. Results will be ratified at the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (URKEC) on 10th November 2022 with results announced on **Friday 11th November 2022**.

Applications are welcome from individual academics, faculty administrative teams and LJMU professional service teams.

Applications of up to £10,000 will be considered. However, in highly exceptional cases, requests for slightly more funding will be accepted where a strong and clear rationale is provided. Applicants can request funding spanning two financial years (2022/23 and 2023/24) for longer terms projects, but applicants must specify how the funds will be spent in each financial year. For those requesting the funding over one year, activities will start in November 2022 and will be concluded by 31st July 2023. For those requesting funding over two years, (spanning financial years 2022/3 and 2023/4) it is important to note that although the project may span financial years the allocation itself for each year must be spent within that financial year. Unspent funding cannot be rolled into the next year. Therefore, it is imperative that applicants explicitly outline the intended spend for each year in their application if applicable.

**Eligible costs include:** Research Assistant salaries, activities related to research and data collection, engagement with stakeholders, training and development events, workshops, travel and conference attendance.

**Activities which will not be supported by the fund include:** Buyout of teaching and costs associated with publishing a journal article.

**Process:** Application forms will be reviewed by a panel which will include Dr Diana Leighton (Head of Research Excellence and Research Strategy & REF Manager), Keith George (Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange), Lucy Day (Impact Officer) and Emily Walker (Impact Officer). The University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee will make the final decisions on recipients.

Activities that have previously received SPF or PSF funding may be considered where there is evidence that previous funding has led to impact or robust relationships with key stakeholders.

**Post award processes:** Recipients will be allocated a faculty code to spend against. All codes will close on 31st July 2023 with no spending permitted after that date (please note that there is no facility to rollover unspent funds into the next financial year).

Research Assistant (RA) salaries. Please detail if you are intending to engage an existing RA staff (contract extension), advertise a new RA post, or recruit via Unitemps for a new short-term post (<12 weeks; <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/unitemps>).

If you intend to employ an RA who is already on an existing contract you will need to provide their name(s) and dates of employment (on this project) so that the details can be transferred across to the correct cost codes.

If you intend to employ an RA through Unitemps, please visit the [Unitemp webpages](https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/unitemps) to complete a booking form. The account code for booking an RA is 5558. Unitemps pay rates are provided [here](https://teams.ljmu.ac.uk/3/POD/Shared%20Documents/Unitemps/Unitemps%20Pay%20Rates.pdf).

All other expenditure should be made through i-buy, using the codes provided above. If you intend to purchase something on iBuy from an organisation or person not already on the system, a [new supplier form](https://teams.ljmu.ac.uk/2/fin/LJMUFIN/Procurement/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2F2%2Ffin%2FLJMUFIN%2FProcurement%2FProcurement%20Forms&FolderCTID=0x012000551D3EE99F6C154E812AA11EFF108BF7&View=%7B9E819FC2%2DB436%2D4E46%2DB2C6%2D3253C3216329%7D) will need to be completed. If anything is purchased on an LJMU credit card, then the code must be used on the reconciliation.

All recipients will be required to complete a short evaluation at the end of the funding.

**Frequently Asked Questions:**

**Are research activities overseas with academic partners and non-governmental organisations permitted?**

International activities are permitted within the remit of the fund but are dependent on University travel and covid restrictions at the time the researcher is due to travel. The funding can be used to address issues outside of the UK and co-investigators external to LJMU can take part in the research. A non-UK research assistant can be employed but they would need to be recruited via their employer which could be time consuming. Due to the timescales involved we would only be able to work with NGOs that are established partners that have been through the GCRF due diligence process at LJMU.

**Does the project need to go on GaP?**

No, as an internal funding call the project does not need to be costed on GaP.

**Can researchers submit more than one application?**

Yes, if the projects are distinctly different however researchers should bear in mind the time pressures on the assessing panel and if possible, aim to prioritise the project they most want support for. We anticipate that the call will be highly competitive so recommend that researchers only submit an application if the proposal strongly meets the criteria outlined above. Applications that go over the word count or are received after the deadline will not be considered.

**Why is the application deadline so strict?**

We are hugely sympathetic to the challenges that researchers face in trying to meet the funding call deadline, and we do appreciate that there are often genuine reasons why an application cannot be submitted on time. However, to be fair and consistent across the board to those that did meet the deadline we have to decline any requests for mitigating circumstances to be considered. Although an internal call, it is a competitive call subject to the same rigour that external calls would expect. If LJMU is serious about instilling high standards amongst researchers, internal funding calls need to be perceived by staff as competitive and worthy of the same diligent consideration as external ones, time management being a part of that.

**Why are there only funds available to support policy work?**

A key aim of the fund was to support universities to link effectively with policy research priorities and opportunities, from the local to the international. The funding supports universities in undertaking research with local, regional, national, and international structures (including parliament, central government, devolved administrations, local government, health and education bodies, the justice system, and other regulatory organisations). As the money comes from Research England, they are the ones to specify this and therefore LJMU cannot use the funds for non-policy related work. We also have to report on what the money has been spent on so it’s incumbent upon us to ensure that the projects we select for funding are closely tied to the aims of the fund.

**A selection of useful comments from reviewers on the successful applications from 2021-22:**

• An excellent application with clearly delineated goals and outcomes – all with a strong connection to policy and community with strong impact.

• This application builds on existing research in this field which has already demonstrated its impact and importance to current policy issues in regard to xxx. It demonstrates highly developed research questions and methodology. It is likely to yield robust, high quality research outcomes and to further expand the researchers’ and the University’s reputation in this field.

• A detailed project that has already demonstrated through earlier stages that it has strong connections with the xxx community. It also has potential as a next REF impact case study and ongoing funding through external sources.

• This is an excellent application with cultural, economic and policy implications for xxx in the UK. It captures historical data and involves former staff of xxx so is a template for oral history collections. It also could act as a template for future such projects and influence cultural, educational, and historical preservation policies.

• Strong, clear proposal. Clear pathway to impact.

• Potential for influence across a range of stakeholder groups.

• Clear pipeline of activity and outcomes are presented. Existing connections to important stakeholders; potential to inform international standards of practice in developing regions.

**Selected comments from reviewers on the unsuccessful applications:**

• This project seems a little unformed and needs more depth and detail.

• This application needs more detail in all sections with clearer approaches, methodology and outcomes.

• Could perhaps show stronger links between government reports, impact, and research.

• The application needs a stronger narrative in regard to policy, outcomes, and impact.

• It would benefit the application had it demonstrated a wider argument for policy development/engagement and community impact.

• Ambitious project, yet key tasks and pathways to impact are not made explicit.

• Difficult to understand how the project aligns with the aims of the fund.

• Longer term impact difficult to discern.

• Proposal is rather broad. I would like to have seen a clearer timeline of activities.

• Ambitious project within specified timeframe.

• Need a more planned approach based at this stage on hypotheses e.g., getting the policy makers involved early.

• Very early stage i.e., pre-research. It would have been good to see greater policy relevance within the application and see the proposed activity in the context of policy gap or change.

• Would like to have seen a more evidence-based foundation to the proposal.

• Quite vague on partnerships and collaboration to facilitate dissemination and influence.

• No mention of research ethics which would be required for this project.