

UK Association to Horizon Europe and the UKRI Guarantee

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We are delighted to see the announcement on 7th September 2023 that the UK will associate to Horizon Europe and Copernicus programmes. **This means that UK researchers will be able to fully participate in the Horizon Europe programme, including leading consortia, from the 2024 Work Programmes and onwards** – including any 2024 calls opening in 2023. For calls from the 2023 Work Programmes, UK institutions can continue to apply as Beneficiaries and will continue to be funded by UKRI through the UKRI Horizon Europe Guarantee.

This means that King's College London remains eligible to apply to all Horizon Europe Calls as a Beneficiary and can apply as Coordinator of collaborative calls from the 2024 Work Programme onwards. Association will give UK based researchers and businesses access to funding under the programme on equivalent terms as organisations in EU countries.

The UKRI guarantee

Due to the previous delay to the UK associating to Horizon Europe, the UK government has implemented a funding guarantee for affected projects. Any UK partner on a successfully evaluated Horizon Europe project in the 2021-2023 Work Programmes is eligible to receive their project funding via the UK government. This funding is being administered through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), the main research funder/research council in the UK. UKRI have released the information on the scope of the funding guarantee and how it will work in practice, including comprehensive FAQs – [the latest version of the document can be downloaded here](#). Any affected KCL projects/recently awarded grants have been contacted directly by the KCL Pre-Award International team.

Therefore UK applicants can still apply for EC funding and submitted applications are still being evaluated on this basis by the EC. Please note that for UK institutions to be eligible for the UKRI funding guarantee, **the UK partner(s) must be included as a project beneficiary at application stage**; if the UK partner(s) is included as an Associated Partner at application stage they will not be eligible for the UKRI funding guarantee or be eligible to receive funding from the EC for awards funded in the 2024 Work Programme.

Guarantee funding will be provided by UKRI and there will be no further evaluation by UKRI, but funding requests must be submitted on either the Je-S or Innovation Funding Service (IFS) portals (depending on the Horizon Europe funding scheme). European Research Council (ERC) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) grants will be hosted on the Je-S portal, with all other grants hosted by the IFS portal.

Frequently asked questions:

1. Can UK institutions continue to apply for Horizon Europe Funding?

Yes, UK institutions are still able to apply for Horizon Europe calls and are included by the European Commission as an eligible country in the process of associating to Horizon Europe (see the list of participating countries in Horizon Europe). The EC have also published a specific Q&A document on UK participation in Horizon Europe.

The UK will be treated as a fully associated country for the 2024 Work Programmes onwards. This means that it is the Work programme for the call being applied to that needs to be understood. If the call being applied to is in the 2024 Work Programme ('2024' will be in the call identifier) then even if the call deadline is in 2023 the UK will be treated as a fully associated country. However, calls under the 2023 Work programme, such as the 2023 MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships and 2023 MSCA Doctoral Network calls will be treated such as at application the UK institution should still go in as a beneficiary, but if awarded the funding will be through the UKRI funding guarantee and as applicable the UK institution will be changed to an associated partner – i.e. for any grants awarded under the 2021 – 2023 Work Programmes they will be treated as UKRI guarantee projects.

2. As a UK applicant what is going to change now the UK will be officially associated to Horizon Europe?

The main difference is that UK applicants will now not only be able to continue to apply to EC funding calls as they have been, but crucially they will be awarded as EC grants and means that for collaborative projects UK institutions can coordinate the project and for mono-beneficiary grants such as ERC and MSCA Postdoctoral fellowships, they will be awarded the EC grant (as opposed to through the UK funding guarantee). However, please note that this is for calls to the 2024 Work Programme onwards; any calls under 2021 – 2023 Work Programmes will continue to be awarded and administered as UKRI funding guarantee awards.

3. Should KCL be included as an Associated Partner or Beneficiary at application stage?

King's College London should be included as a Beneficiary in all Horizon Europe applications. This is required in order for King's College London to be eligible to receive both EC funding (for 2024 Work Programmes and onwards, for which the UK will be an Associated Country to Horizon Europe) and UKRI funding (through the UKRI Guarantee for projects awarded in the 2021-2023 Work Programmes).

Associated Partners implement action tasks without receiving EU funding. They cannot lead a consortium, and do not sign the grant agreement but there is no limit to the research tasks they can undertake. One example of this is where legal entities participate in a Horizon Europe grant but are not based in a Member State or Associated Country. While Associated Partners are not required to have a capital or legal link to a specific beneficiary, the other beneficiaries in the consortium take on the responsibility (through consortium agreements or contractual arrangements) to ensure proper implementation of the Associated Partners' elements of the project, as well as compliance with specific obligations of the grant agreement that are extended to Associated Partners.

4. [The announcement of full association was made on 7 September 2023 so does this mean any project yet to be awarded after this date will now be funded by the EC?](#)

No. Full association of the UK has an effective date of 1 January 2024 which means the UK is classed as a fully associated country to the 2024 Work programme onwards. Any calls awarded under the 2021 – 2023 Work programmes (the Work programme year is in the call identifier) will be treated as UK funding guarantee grants if awarded. Full details of the UK funding guarantee can be found [here](#).

5. [I have received a letter from the commission about my successful application as part of a collaborative call \(not applicable to ERC or MSCAs\), what next?](#)

If your application was to a 2024 Work Programme call, you will receive funding from the European Commission. If your application was to a 2021-2023 Work Programme call, the International Pre Award team will support you to move King's College London from a Beneficiary to an Associated Partner and assist with finalising the Grant Agreement Preparation process (GAP).

6. [Why do we have to change to Associated Partner status on collaborative calls at award stage?](#)

We only have to change to Associated Partner on projects funded under the 2021-2023 Work Programmes. This is because the UK will be an Associated Country from the 2024 Work Programme onwards and will be eligible to receive Horizon Europe funding for 2024 Work Programme calls. For projects funded in the 2021-2023 Work Programmes, the UK is a

third country and is therefore not eligible to receive Horizon Europe funding. However Horizon Europe allows institutions based in third countries to take part in projects as an Associated Partner. The UKRI guarantee ensures UK institutions and researchers are still funded to participate in the project.

7. [When should we change to Associated Partner status on successful projects?](#)

This decision will be made on a case-by-case basis and with the support of the Pre-Award International team. Once a UK partner is funded through the UKRI underwrite, it will remain on that funding for the entire duration of the project. Therefore, should the UK associate to Horizon Europe after a UK institution has accepted Associated Partner status, they will still have to stay on that funding stream regardless of the UK's new status.

8. [Can a UK institution still coordinate a collaborative project if it is funded through the UKRI guarantee?](#)

While The UKRI underwrite scheme allows institutions to play an active role within the project with no reduction in budget there are a few limitations to the role.

As an Associated Partner, UK Institutions will not be able to remain as a Coordinator on Horizon Europe projects. Therefore, at application stage if KCL is the coordinator we will ask you to have a backup Coordinator agreed in principal to avoid any delays at Grant Agreement preparation stage. Associated Partners are able to lead on non-management work packages.

Most new applications will be to the 2024 Work Programme and therefore KCL will be eligible to act as Coordinator. Please speak to the Pre-Award International team should you wish to coordinate a collaborative Horizon Europe project - the team can be contacted at eu-researchoffice@kcl.ac.uk.

9. [Is there any risk that my project will not be covered by the UKRI funding guarantee scheme?](#)

If all the documentation is submitted to the UKRI via their funding portals, the UKRI funding is guaranteed and there is no further evaluation of the project. The latest update on the funding guarantee scheme covers all calls in the 2021-2023 Work Programmes.

10. Will my "UKRI" ERC award be recognised as an ERC award?

The UKRI guarantee clearly states that the award holders will need to acknowledge UKRI as the source of funding, so the sector will explore how the prestige of an ERC award can be recognised for those grants that are funded through the UKRI Frontier Research Guarantee. The guarantee will use the scheme and call names given in the following table. For the purposes of applying for UK visas, the Je-S scheme names will be included on the list of approved schemes for the Global Talent Visa, where appropriate.

Call	Je-S Scheme Name	Je-S Call Name
ERC Starting Grant	UKRI Frontier Research Guarantee	Horizon Europe Guarantee ERC Starting Grants 2021 (invite only)
ERC Consolidator Grant		Horizon Europe Guarantee ERC Consolidator Grants 2021 (invite only)
ERC Advanced Grant		Horizon Europe Guarantee ERC Advanced Grants 2021 (invite only)

11. How portable is my ERC award once it has been funded under the UKRI funding guarantee scheme?

Under the UKRI guarantee ERC grants can be transferred to another institution within the UK. The previous flexibility to move ERC grants to other institutions anywhere within the EU will no longer be available to the UKRI-funded projects.

12. I have been awarded a Horizon Europe grant in the 2021-2023 Work Programmes – how do I apply to the UKRI Horizon Europe funding guarantee?

The Pre-Award International team are leading the submission of funding requests to UKRI through the relevant portal and are in contact with KCL award holders. The team can be contacted at eu-researchoffice@kcl.ac.uk.

The Pre-Award International team have started submitting requests both through the Innovate and Je-S portals as and when the grant agreements for the projects are finalised or once the European Commission has confirmed it will no longer support the project. KCL

award holders will be given access to the funding request for their project, but the Pre-Award International team will create, draft and where possible submit the requests to UKRI through the relevant portal.

UKRI are seeking to make the process of applying for guarantee funding as simple as possible, given that these grants have already been successfully evaluated by the European Commission. The application process is therefore more streamlined than standard Je-S and IFS applications, with UKRI only requiring basic details and supporting documentation (including the proposal and proof of successful evaluation). Once funding requests are submitted, grant offers will be issued 30-90 days later, and grants with early start dates will be prioritised by UKRI where possible.

For these collaborative projects the status of the UK organisation will be changed from 'beneficiary' (from an EU Member State or Associated Country) to 'Associated Partner' (from a non-associated Third Country). As an Associated Partner, UK institutions will not sign the Grant Agreement but will be linked to the project via the Consortium Agreement (CA) – they will be subject to all the technical and scientific terms but not the financial provisions as normally set out in the CA. There is no limit to the research tasks of an Associated Partner, and as such UK organisations can lead work packages and can chair the steering committee and other committees. However Associated Partners cannot lead collaborative projects.

Please contact eu-researchoffice@kcl.ac.uk if you have any queries, and rest assured that if you have been awarded a Horizon Europe grant, the Pre Award International team are aware and will support the process to request funding from UKRI.

13. For MSCA projects funded through the guarantee, is it possible for UK beneficiaries to transfer some of the UKRI funding to cover project-wide activities?

Under Horizon 2020 this was fairly common, the project coordinator 'retained' a portion of the costs allocated to the separate beneficiaries on Innovative Training Network and Staff Exchange projects, in order to support centralised coordination activities on behalf of the whole network.

This practice will remain the same and is allowed under the UKRI guarantee, provided that proof of payment can be provided in line with UKRI's standard terms and conditions. UKRI is expecting research organisations to keep an adequate record for internal auditing procedures.

14. Will UKRI fund ERC grants which are awarded to an EU institution and later transferred to King's?

Awardees of ERC Starting, Consolidator and Advanced grants through calls in the 2021-2023 Work Programmes who applied to be hosted outside the UK may move their project to the UK and be funded through the UKRI guarantee, subject to the following conditions:

1. No direct costs have been incurred under the ERC grant, i.e. the project has technically started but there has been no project spend
2. The ERC grant must be terminated before you apply to UKRI for guarantee funding. Formal notification from the EC granting authority that confirms this termination must be included with your UKRI guarantee application
3. Formal notification from the EC granting authority that confirms this termination must be included with your UKRI guarantee application alongside an up-to-date letter of commitment from a UK-based Host Institution