

Research Ready

Summer 2027 engineering and science
research placements

Request for proposals and applicant guidance notes
Deadline: Monday **29 October 2026, 16.00GMT**

Supported by:

LEVERHULME
TRUST _____

Contents

1. Research Ready at a glance	3
2. Programme overview.....	5
3. Placement programme design and criteria.....	8
4. Eligibility criteria	13
5. Placement duration.....	14
6. Funding guidelines.....	15
7. Timelines and submission deadline	15
8. Additional programme details.....	17
9. Monitoring, evaluation and learning	17
10. How to apply	17
Application form questions.....	18
Applicant and institution details.....	19
Research placement details	20
Case for support	21
Funding requested	23
Applicant declarations	24
11. Assessment of proposals	26
12. Contact details	27
13. Annex A: application relevant policies	27

1. Research Ready at a glance

Funding for UK university departments to design and deliver eight-week summer research placements in all natural sciences, technology and engineering research areas, supporting students and recent graduates from underrepresented groups to progress towards postgraduate research.

Who can apply? Any UK university that is eligible for Royal Society or Royal Academy Engineering funding and has the research capacity to host six placements for students and recent graduates from groups underrepresented in the proposed research area. Applications may be submitted by a single university or jointly by two universities. In either case, each application is for a total of six placements.	What is funded? Participant stipends, travel, events and activities, accommodation and administration costs to support an eight-week summer programme.	Deadline 29 October 2026, 16.00 GMT Applications open from 24 September 2026.
---	---	---

Research Ready is delivered by the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Royal Society as Leverhulme Centenary Partners, with generous support from the Leverhulme Trust.

What universities will deliver • Six eight-week research placements, in Science, Engineering or Technology for students and recent graduates from groups underrepresented in the proposed research area.	What successful hosts commit to • A robust, equitable UK-wide recruitment and selection process informed by evidence of underrepresentation. • Participation in cultural inclusion training and Community of Practice
--	---

• Meaningful research experience in disciplines within the remit of the Royal Academy of Engineering or the Royal Society, with a particular emphasis on emerging or interdisciplinary research areas. • Research placements supported by supervision, structured mentoring, skills development and postgraduate research preparation. • Inclusive recruitment, including outreach beyond the host institution and a fair, equitable selection process. • Accommodation, stipend payments, travel, induction, community-building activities and accessibility support. • A coherent programme shaped by evidence of underrepresentation, identified barriers and the intended positive action impact.	activity, alongside an EDI action plan and progress updates. • Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning requirements, including applicant profile data, programme reflections and long-term evaluation activity. • Safeguarding, risk management, participant support and quality assurance arrangements throughout delivery. • A September celebration event where participants share their work.
---	--

1. Apply Submit one proposal through the Academy's online grants system.	2. Selection Proposals are reviewed by a panel drawing on Academy and Royal Society expertise.	3. Recruit Successful hosts recruit supervisors and participants in early 2027.	4. Deliver Placements run in summer 2027 and conclude with a celebration event.
--	--	---	---

Introduction to the Academy and the Society

The **Royal Academy of Engineering** (the Academy) creates and leads a community of outstanding experts and innovators to engineer better lives. The Academy is deeply committed to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion in the engineering profession.

Our work is enabled by funding from the Department for Business, Innovation, Science, and Trade, corporate and university partners, charitable trusts and foundations, and individual donors.

The **Royal Society** is a Fellowship of many of the world's most eminent scientists and is the oldest scientific academy in continuous existence. We promote excellence in science so that, together, we can benefit humanity and tackle the biggest challenges of our time.

The Society recognises that diversity and inclusion are fundamental to scientific excellence and innovation and trust in science, and that a thriving research system must be open to talent from all backgrounds.

2. Programme overview

Programme purpose

The Royal Society and the Academy are [Leverhulme Centenary Partners](#), delivering Research Ready to provide fully funded summer research placements for students and recent graduates from groups that are underrepresented in STEM. The programme will support diverse participants to gain meaningful applied or discovery research experience across a broad range of engineering and science disciplines, with a particular focus on emerging and interdisciplinary research areas.

Through Research Ready, we aim to help remove barriers to participation and progression in research and contribute to a more diverse and inclusive research community that better reflects society and the diversity of needs and perspectives within it.

University hosts

Universities will design and deliver six research placements, recruiting students and recent graduates from universities across the UK. Up to 15

programmes in total will be funded. Each successful application will deliver six research placements, whether the programme is led by a single university or delivered in partnership by two universities. Research placements must be held at UK universities eligible for Royal Society or Academy funding.

Placements will last eight weeks and participants be funded above Real Living Wage levels to reduce financial barriers to participation.

Each participant must receive structured mentoring throughout the programme, alongside research supervision, skills development and wider participant support.

Research focus and positive action

Host universities should gather relevant evidence to understand patterns of underrepresentation within the discipline or disciplines and identify the underrepresented groups the placements are intended to support.

The placements are intended to be designed as a positive action intervention to help address underrepresentation identified through evidence that informs the participant eligibility criteria, recruitment approach and overall programme design. Hosts should design their placements to respond to the underrepresentation identified and support participants to gain meaningful research experience and progress towards postgraduate research.

Who the programme supports

Research Ready is designed to support participants in progressing from undergraduate study into postgraduate research. Universities applying to the programme must demonstrate, using appropriate evidence, that the groups they seek to target are underrepresented within Science, Engineering and Technology. Applications should describe the nature and extent of this underrepresentation and how the proposed activities will address barriers to progression. Groups that may be considered include students and recent graduates who are:

- women;
- from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds;
- socioeconomically disadvantaged;
- disabled; or
- otherwise underrepresented in STEM.

Examples and the relevant target group(s) will depend on evidenced underrepresentation in the proposed research area.

Cultural inclusion support to build inclusive research cultures

Research Ready will also support host universities to improve equity, diversity and inclusive practice within research environments. Hosts will be expected to attend three cultural inclusion training sessions arranged by the Academy and Royal Society. In addition, hosts will attend Community of Practice events, develop an EDI action plan, provide progress updates, and reflect on how their actions improve the experience of researchers from underrepresented backgrounds.

For university hosts, Research Ready will support academics to develop inclusive leadership skills and gain insight from a new generation of science and engineering talent.

Barriers the programme aims to address

Research Ready responds to barriers that can prevent underrepresented students from progressing to advanced-level degrees and research careers. These include:

- **Limited access to research experience:** Research opportunities are often difficult to find, depend on personal networks, and may be unpaid, creating barriers for students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds or without established academic networks.
- **Limited guidance on postgraduate research:** Information about postgraduate applications, funding and the research environment can be difficult to access and navigate.
- **Limited visibility of career pathways:** Clear information on research career routes, progression and funding is essential, particularly for less advantaged students, but is not always widely available.
- **Research culture and belonging:** Inconsistent application and supervision practices, limited access to informal knowledge, and fewer opportunities to connect with research communities can affect students' confidence, belonging and progression.

By combining paid research experience with structured support and inclusive practice, the programme aims to strengthen participants' confidence, networks and readiness for postgraduate research.

Process overview

Stage 1: Our call for proposals will be open on 24 September and close on 29 October 2026 at 16:00GMT. Host university proposals must contain details of their research placement programme in science or engineering

for the summer of 2027. These proposals will be reviewed by a panel and, if approved, university hosts will receive funding to deliver their proposed research programme for six student participants.

Stage 2: Once awarded, the university hosts must organise:

- finalising recruitment of research supervisors at their institution that will deliver their research placement programme
- the appointment of a candidate selection panel, with the option to invite an Academy or Royal Society Fellow to support the participant selection process.
- a call for participant applications and selection of students for the placements. Hosts may recruit from within their own institution, but we anticipate that most participants will be from other universities.
- embedding relevant data collection tools/forms provided by the Academy within student recruitment, reporting on progress and impact, and engaging in long-term evaluation of the scheme as required.
- agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with each participant setting out their acceptance of the placement, programme requirements, and Code of Conduct, issuing financial awards directly to participants and providing relevant training. The Academy and Royal Society will advise on points to include in the MOU.

Stage 3: Research Ready placements last eight weeks and take place between 28 June 2027 and 3 September 2027. The programme will conclude with a celebration event in September 2027, where participants will be asked to present their work in a poster exhibition.

Please refer to section 7 for a detailed breakdown of the programme delivery timelines and deadlines.

3. Placement programme design and criteria

To ensure consistency and fairness in the application process, this section provides applicants with guidance on the content requirements for each proposal. Applicants should review this alongside the assessment criteria (section 11) to ensure their proposal is as comprehensive as possible.

Prospective university hosts should take the following requirements into account when planning and designing their placements

Field of research

- Proposals must fall within the remit of the Academy, including engineering and technology, or the Royal Society's remit which includes but it is not limited to biological research, biomedical sciences, chemistry, mathematics and physics. Proposals should focus on discovery or applied research and cover emerging or interdisciplinary research areas. We would like to encourage universities to be creative and deliver a programme that builds on the strength and capacity of their staff and students as well as delivering maximum value to the undergraduate participants.
- Each funded programme will offer six placement opportunities in total. Research projects don't have to align but it is expected that students will have the opportunity to collaborate and share experiences during their time working on the project.
- If two institutions are collaborating together on the research, clear consideration should be given to how the students can collaborate and build a sense of community.

Research programme structure

- Each host will shape their own programme. For example, some universities might run a one-week lecture and workshop series. This may be followed by a seven-week research project with a supervisor to student ratio of 1:2. Some universities might run programmes where students participate in a research project together in small groups for eight weeks, while others might organise for each student to work in a different research group for the duration of the placement programme.
- In addition to working on research placement projects, we encourage universities to also incorporate research skills development into the programme. Examples might include data analysis, scientific writing, best practice for working in teams, how to communicate your research, how to network, etc. These skills might be built into projects or delivered as part of separate workshops.
- It is acknowledged that universities might need to engage a range of staff from graduate students to principal investigator and postdoctoral researchers to support students.

- At the end of the research placement programme, students will deliver a poster presentation (or similar) summarising their work and learnings to an audience of relevant stakeholders within the university. Students will also be invited to share their findings at the Research Ready celebratory event hosted by the Academy and Royal Society.

Participant recruitment

University hosts will be responsible for the application and selection process of the participants and the placement supervisors.

Proposals should set out how the recruitment and selection process will be fair, equitable and inclusive, including how applicants from outside the host university will be reached.

- **Placement supervisors:** following a review, university applicants will be notified of their proposal outcomes in December 2026. Universities must then finalise the recruitment of researchers to supervise and deliver the summer placement project and start the student application process. Please refer to section 7 for a full breakdown of the timelines.
- **Student outreach:** selected host universities must promote placement opportunities to appropriate audiences to attract applications. It is expected that students will be selected from the university's own student body and from other institutions. Universities are particularly encouraged to target and select students from post-1992 institutions or from institutions outside of the Russell Group (which [research highlights](#) already have good access to research opportunities). Universities will be required to share data on the profile of applicants.
- **Student selection process and awards:** The recruitment of researchers and students is left to the university's discretion. Hosts may invite a Fellow of the Academy or Royal Society to support the final selection process where this would strengthen the robustness of their approach.
- The proposed process will be assessed as part of host applications. Host universities should aim for a broad geographical spread of participants.

- Once the final participants are selected by the university, the university host must make awards and relevant payments directly to the students.
- Hosts are expected to agree a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with participants, including a Code of Conduct. The Academy and Royal Society will advise on key points to include.

Participant preparation and development

Placements must include:

- an effective induction process, including provision of relevant preparatory reading and materials
- structured mentoring by a PhD student or postdoctoral researcher, focused on helping participants make the most of their placement and develop a plan for their next steps. Hosts may use their own structured mentoring approach or use a template provided by the Academy and Royal Society
- networking opportunities across the sector, for example through participation in scientific meetings or engagement activities with industry
- opportunities to hear from Academy or Royal Society Fellows, including through online talks arranged by the Academy and Royal Society

Community and connection

We know that building a sense of belonging is key to any experience and universities are encouraged to also organise activities to promote a positive research culture and wellbeing. These might be delivered at the start to welcome students and may be ongoing to nurture a sense of community and belonging in the cohort.

Placements must include:

- provision of a working and/or social hub for participants
- social and community-building activities designed to support connection and belonging within the cohort
- engagement with other Research Ready hosts, for example through shared online talks, invitations to participants at other universities, or recorded sessions

Accommodation and financial support

As students will not necessarily be from the host university, the grant will include expenses for each university to provide accommodation for the duration of the programme. This is in addition to the above-living wage stipend to be paid to participants, and travel costs.

Placements must include:

- suitable accommodation for participants for the full eight-week placement period. Where possible, hosts should locate participants near each other to support community-building and enhance the placement experience
- clear, consistent and timely stipend payment arrangements

Equipment, accessibility and adjustments

Placements must include:

- provision of all necessary equipment and resources, including hardware, software, laboratory equipment, PPE and books
- ensuring the placement is accessible to all participants and making reasonable adjustments where required (additional funding can be provided for this. See section 6).

Host universities must also:

- demonstrate a clear commitment to implementing the cultural inclusion element of the programme by engaging with the training provided by the Academy and creating an EDI action plan
- engage in Academy / Royal Society induction events for hosts and for students, and in the September celebration event
- cooperate with requirements for Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
- give sufficient advance notice of placement schedule changes
- create a memorandum of understanding with participants in a form agreed with the Academy and Royal Society. This includes expectations that participants will join the Academy Awardee Excellence Community and share contact details for the purpose of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning; clarity that participants are not classified as employees; and agreement to a code of conduct

- provide and maintain a risk register with mitigations.

4. Eligibility criteria

Eligibility criteria for hosts

- This programme is open to Science, Engineering and Technology departments of UK universities.
- A university may be involved in a maximum of two applications to this call. It may act as the lead applicant on one application only and may participate in a second application as a partner institution. Each application, whether submitted by one university or by two universities in partnership, must propose a total of six placements. Where two universities apply together, the application should clearly set out how responsibility for the six placements, programme delivery and participant support will be shared between the institutions.
- The university must have a department(s) or school(s) that can accommodate the requirements of the proposal. This includes being able to provide any computers, labs or other equipment that are necessary for the programme but not covered by the funding.
- Hosts must be able to accommodate students in the summer of 2027 for eight weeks. All placements without exception will take place between 28 June 2027 and 3 September 2027.
- Hosts must be able to recruit six participants, including students and recent graduates from universities other than the host institution.
- Hosts must provide placement students with the appropriate supervision, training, structured mentoring, and a meaningful project for them to work on.
- Hosts must commit to participating in the programme's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning activities, including sharing aggregate demographic data on student applications. Please refer to section 9 for further information.

Eligibility criteria for students

Research Ready placements are positive action opportunities for students and recent graduates from groups that are underrepresented within the research area(s) proposed by the host university.

Underrepresentation criteria may include socio-economic disadvantage, gender, disability, and ethnicity. University hosts must provide a rationale, backed by data on representation and disadvantage, for the criteria they propose to apply.

As a minimum requirement, universities must apply the following participant eligibility criteria:

Essential criteria (all required)

- Be resident in the UK and eligible to pay UK home fees.
- Have, or expect to have, the right to live and work full time in the UK for the duration of the programme.
- Be either:
 - in the penultimate year of an undergraduate degree in a Science, Engineering or Technology-related field; or
 - have completed an undergraduate degree in a Science, Engineering or Technology-related field **within three years of the placement start date**.
- Not currently be studying, or have previously studied, a Master's or PhD. Students studying an integrated Master's degree are not eligible.

Please note that the specific eligibility criteria met by each applicant (both unsuccessful and successful) **must be collected at the recruitment stage**.

This anonymised data should be submitted to the Academy as part of the evaluation of the scheme. Applicants for the placements must be willing to provide their eligibility data. A form will be provided for this purpose.

Please also see our [Data Retention Policy](#)

(<https://raeng.org.uk/media/duhjwap2/raeng-privacy-policy-grant-or-award.pdf>).

5. Placement duration

Proposals must outline an eight-week undergraduate research placement programme for six students for summer 2027. The earliest permitted start date is 28 June 2027, and all placements must end on or before 3 September 2027.

6. Funding guidelines

Across host universities, we will standardise some costs including:

- The student stipend: this is set at above Real Living Wage level, at £15.50 per hour, for 37 hours per week - £573.50 per student per week (this will be updated if necessary following the October 2026 Real Living Wage review).
- Student travel: £250 per student to cover the entire placement.
- The costs of events and activities: £250 per student to cover the entire placement.

In addition, we will provide universities with:

- Accommodation costs: £300 per week per student maximum
- Administration costs: £5,500 maximum to plan and deliver the programme.
- **Additional funds may be provided after selection of students, if required to support reasonable adjustments for participating disabled students. The team at the Academy and Royal Society will contact you about this.**

In your proposal, please provide us with the cost of the programme including the administration, accommodation, stipend, travel and events costs.

The funding cannot be used to purchase any equipment / hardware or to upgrade university systems. However, subject to Academy approval it can be used for software, subscriptions, etc. that are necessary to run a programme on the equipment that exists within the facilities.

Please note that if host universities do not manage to recruit a full allocation of students, or participants withdraw from the programme, the final expenditure statement will need to reflect the underspend. These funds cannot be reallocated.

7. Timelines and submission deadline

The **deadline** for all proposals is **29 October 2026 at 16:00 GMT**.

Key event	Description	Start date	Deadline/ end date
Academy's request for proposals open	Open for applications. Eligible universities are invited to submit proposals.	24 Sept 2026	29 Oct 2026
Review period	All proposals will be reviewed by a panel which can include a Academy or Royal Society Fellow.	29 Oct 2026	Nov 2026
Awards confirmed	The Academy will inform all university host applicants on the outcome of their proposal.	10 Dec 2026	14 Dec 2026
Agreements circulated for hosts signature	Agreements will need to be signed by representatives of the university and the Academy for them to be finalised.	5 Jan 2027	19 Jan 2027
Universities announce their award and confirm academic supervisors for the placements	Universities will confirm arrangements with academic supervisors and mentors. During this period, universities must also finalise arrangements for student applications and outreach.	19 Jan 2027	3 Mar 2027
Universities open a call for student applications	Universities must ensure to embed data collection requirements within their student recruitment.	19 Jan 2027	3 Mar 2027
Review period for student applications	Universities will review all student applications and select successful applicants. A Fellow of the Academy or Royal Society must be part of the final decision-making process.	Mar 2027	Apr 2027
Research placements take place	Placements start in June and end eight weeks later or before 3 September 2027.	28 Jun 2027	3 Sept 2027
Celebration event	Students attend a celebration event.	Sept 2027	

8. Additional programme details

Awardee Excellence Community

Students who successfully complete the programme, including the research presentation at the graduation, will join the Academy's [Awardee Excellence Community](#). The Academy will provide recommended text to share with selected students.

The Awardee Excellence Community brings together awardees, alumni and partners from across the Academy's programmes from all career stages and disciplines to share their expertise, collaborate and contribute new perspectives to the Academy's work. Members will have the opportunity to meet, learn from and support other Academy awardees, as well as a broader cross section of Academy Fellows through a programme of events, and opportunities to connect in person and online.

Grant Agreements

If you are successful, your funding will be awarded under the 'RD&I terms and conditions' found on the [Academy's website](https://raeng.org.uk/grants-policies) (<https://raeng.org.uk/grants-policies>). This agreement has been developed to ensure funding aligns with our Academy values, is used for the purposes for which it was awarded and is managed in compliance with our own funders' agreements, UK legislation and funding best practice.

All award funds will be paid directly to the university, without exception. The university is required to use the funding to implement their proposed placement programme and cover the expenses outlined in their application.

9. Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Universities will be expected to engage in the programme's monitoring, evaluation and learning activities. These will include the collection of quantitative and qualitative data on the emerging impact and progress of the programmes as well as reflections on challenges and best practice.

10. How to apply

All applications must be submitted via the Academy's online grants system, available here: <https://grants.raeng.org.uk>. All applicants must first register and provide some basic login details to create a profile.

The application should be submitted by the primary contact person for this proposal. We recommend leaving plenty of time to complete the application form ahead of the deadline and thoroughly going through your application prior to submission. While the guidance notes are embedded within the system itself, we recommend you keep this document to hand when completing the application form. Many of the questions have prescribed word limits which are designed to keep your answers focused and indicate the level of detail we require. In such cases, the number of words you have used will be displayed beneath the question and updated in real time.

Applicants can download a PDF of their application after submission, which is recommended for reference. There is only one application stage and those meeting the eligibility criteria will enter the assessment stages.

To ensure that all applicants are treated fairly, and the Academy and Royal Society's standards and values are upheld, applicants should be aware of our wider policies and practices as they apply to their application. Please refer to Annex A for more information.

Reasonable adjustments for prospective hosts

We want to ensure all applicants can participate and present their best selves during the application process, and for the duration of the programme if you are successful.

If you need any adjustments or changes to support your participation in the process or throughout the programme, please contact Genevieve Dobinson-Addo by telephone (020 7766 0697) or at Genevieve.dobinson-addo@raeng.org.uk to discuss your needs.

All information shared will be treated confidentially in line with GDPR principles. For more details, please see the Academy's privacy policy.

We encourage you to get in touch at least 10 working days before the submission deadline, so we can respond accordingly and tailor possible adjustments to your circumstances

Application form questions

After logging into the online grants management system and selecting 'Research Ready' in the 'Start application' section, you should be presented with the 'Instructions' screen.

Here you will see some general instructions on how to use the system, as well as links to each of the sections of the application form given below:

- Applicant and institution details
- Research placement details
- Case for support
- Funding requested
- Applicant declaration

At any stage in the application process, you can save your work and return to it later. You can answer the questions in any order you like, so you may skip some sections to return to later if you wish. We recommend viewing the application early on to understand what is required. You should also ensure that you have all the necessary documentation to hand when you start completing the application.

The word counts provided for each question are maximums. We value concise, focused responses, and applicants do not need to use the full word count for every question.

Applicant and institution details

Q. Lead Applicant name and contact details

Please note that this application should be submitted by the primary contact person for this proposal.

Please provide your name and contact details including postal address and a telephone number.

Some of your details and those of your institution should be automatically generated by the system, as you provided these at registration. Please ensure the contact email address is correct and will be valid for the entirety of the application process as this will be the main method of communication for your application.

Q. Position within Lead institution

Please provide the name of your position within your organisation. (100 words)

Q - Co-applicant university name (if applicable)

Please provide the details of the co-applicant university. (100 words)

Q - Co-applicant name and contact details (if applicable)

Please provide the name of the co-applicant and contact details including postal address and a telephone number. (100 words)

Q - Position within co-applicant institution (if applicable)

Please provide the name of your position within your organisation. (100 words)

Q - Is your organisation a named applicant in any other application for this round of Research Ready funding?

Please let us know which other applications you are part of. (100 words)

Q – Can you confirm that you meet the eligibility criteria for host universities, including the requirement to engage in the programme's monitoring, evaluation and learning activities?

Please refer to section 4 for eligibility criteria and section 9 for monitoring, evaluation and learning.

Please tick the box to confirm.

Q – Statement of support – co-applicant only)

Please provide a statement of support from the co-applicant university showcasing their commitment to this applicant. This letter should be authored by the co-applicant project lead or a senior member of the university leadership team (document upload)

Research placement details

Q – What is the proposed research area?

Please describe the research area that your placements will focus on, and identify the relevant Natural Science, Engineering and/or Technology discipline or disciplines. (100 words)

Q – What is the proposed start date for your placements?

Please provide the proposed start date of the placements. The programme must run for eight weeks. The earliest permitted start date is 28 June 2027, and all placements must end on or before 3 September 2027.

Q – What is the proposed end date?

Please enter the expected end date of the project. All placements must end on or before 3 September 2027 and must last eight weeks in total.

Q - Maximum hours per week required per student placement

Please indicate the maximum number of hours per week that the students will be required to commit to the programme. Stipend costings have been based on a 37-hour week.

Case for support

Q – What is the proposed research project?

Please provide a short summary of the research project or projects that participants will work on during the placement. Your response should describe the research focus, the key questions or challenges the project will address, the methods or activities participants may be involved in, and how the project fits within the relevant Natural Science, Engineering and/or Technology discipline or disciplines. (300 words)

Q- University impact

How will the proposed research focus for the placements benefit or impact on your research objectives as an institution? (200 words)

Q- National underrepresentation

Please describe the current national challenges relating to underrepresentation in the specific Science, Engineering and Technology disciplines targeted by your proposed placements. Your response should be appropriately evidenced and should identify the underrepresented groups you intend to reach through your placements and why you have targeted them. (300 words)

Q - Student selection criteria

What eligibility criteria will you use to select students? (200 words)

Q – Inclusive recruitment

Please explain your outreach plan and how you would create an inclusive and equitable recruitment process which encourages a wide range of applications. Please note how and where you would advertise this opportunity, specifically outlining how you plan to reach students from post-1992 institutions, those outside of the Russell Group and achieving a broad geographical spread. (200 words)

Q - The research programme

Please provide a short summary of the placement programme you plan to deliver. This must include:

- Details on the research experience, programme structure and what success will look like for students. (300 words)

- How your institution(s) will provide appropriate academic, pastoral and practical support to help participants engage fully with the placement. (200 words)
- How your placements will positively impact students and increase progression to science engineering and technology advanced degrees and careers. (150 words)
- How you will provide structured mentoring for the students and whether you intend to use the structure provided by the programme or follow your own structured framework. (150 words)
- How you will ensure an inclusive experience for the students and build a sense of community and belonging. Please include the details of any staff involved who have preexisting experience and expertise in designing postgraduate programmes aimed at supporting underrepresented groups. (200 words)
- Details on administration, accommodation, stipend payment arrangements. (200 words)

(1,200 words maximum).

Q - University collaboration

How will the lead and co-applicant university collaborate on delivering this project. How will you ensure that the students have a consistent experience and the cohort are able to collaborate with one another.

Q – Safeguarding

The Academy and Royal Society have a duty of care to safeguard the health and wellbeing of anyone participating in its programmes and applies its own policy (<https://raeng.org.uk/grants-policies>) to its work. The Academy has identified this programme as requiring safeguarding considerations.

Please explain how you will ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of **all** individuals involved in programme activities and with specific reference to those individuals undertaking summer placements. (300 words)

Q – Cultural inclusion – Lead applicant

Please confirm your commitment to participating in and implementing the cultural inclusion element of the programme, including attending

training and Community of Practice events, developing an EDI action plan, and providing progress reports. Please also outline the action your school or department has taken to date to improve inclusivity within the research culture in your field, and what you would like to improve further. (400 words)

Q – Cultural inclusion – Co-applicant

Please confirm your commitment to participating in and implementing the cultural inclusion element of the programme, including attending training and Community of Practice events, developing an EDI action plan, and providing progress reports. Please also outline the action your school or department has taken to date to improve inclusivity within the research culture in your field, and what you would like to improve further. (400 words)

Q - Challenges:

Please include details of any anticipated challenges or potential risks and detail how you plan to overcome/mitigate for them. (300 words)

Q – Programme support:

Are there any areas where you feel like you may need additional support?

Q – How will you assure the quality of the participant experience?

Please explain how you will monitor and maintain the quality of the placement experience across all participants, including how you will gather feedback, respond to issues during delivery and involve relevant expertise, such as Academy or Royal Society Fellows, where appropriate. (100 words)

Q – What preparatory work will you undertake before the placements begin?

Please outline the key steps you will complete between confirmation of funding and the placement start date to ensure the programme is ready to deliver. This may include supervisor and mentor preparation, participant onboarding, project set-up, accommodation and payment arrangements, and any induction or accessibility planning. (200 words)

Funding requested

Q – What is the total value of the funding requested?

Please note that funding calculations should be provided based on **six** placements..

Maximum value for Six placements is £ £50,428. Breakdown to be provided in the cost table that follows.

Q – What are your programme costs?

Please provide a clear breakdown of your programme costs. 500 words.

Fixed costs are the same for all universities to ensure fairness and consistency.

- Student stipend: **£4,588 per student**. This is based on 37 hours per week for eight weeks and is set above Real Living Wage levels at £15.50 per hour.

Capped costs may vary by university, but the programme will only reimburse costs up to the limits below.

- Student accommodation: up to **£300 per week per student**.
- Administrative expenses: up to **£5,500**.
- Student travel: up to **£250 per student** for the full placement.
- Events and activities: up to **£250 per student** for the full placement.

Applicant declarations

Q - Is the proposed work in an area with direct military applications or in an area with potential for [dual use](#) application.

Please note: the Academy does not use this question to screen out applications that fall within dual use or explicit military use areas. Instead this information is used to help us appropriately manage any risks, including with respect to the review of your application, and should you be successful, to help us best support you in managing your research/innovation. Failure to declare any potential dual use application of your work may lead to your application being automatically rejected.

Q - Have any generative AI tools been used in the preparation of this application?

The Academy has aligned with other UK funders around the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools in funding applications through the Research Funders Policy Group joint statement.

Applicants are fully responsible for all of the content presented in their grant application(s). While these tools may be used to assist in various aspects and the grant process does not penalise the use of generative AI tools, applications must reflect the applicant 's own ideas, work and voice.

Applicants must provide clear acknowledgement if they have used generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools in the process of writing their grant application and a failure to declare use may result in your application being removed from the review process.

Tick box

Yes/No

Q - Please provide details on how generative AI tools were used in the preparation of your application.

Details should be provided on the following:

- specify the generative AI tool or platform used
- describe how the tool(s) were used
- where possible include any prompts that were used and how the resulting outputs were incorporated into this application

Q – Applicant declaration

I confirm here and by submitting this application that:

- All information is accurate at the time of submission, and I will update the Academy of any material changes which may affect the project
- The ideas presented are my own and not plagiarised or containing IP that is not owned by myself, except for that IP that I have express permission to utilise in this way
- All contributions have been appropriately referenced or credited including the use of any online tools such as AI generative tools used in developing my application
- I understand that failure to cite and declare references or sources for material information will result in my application being removed from the process, or the uncorroborated information disregarded
- I understand that The Royal Academy of Engineering will disclose the information submitted in this application to reviewers for the purpose of assessing this application. Any external reviewer we ask to assist us has agreed to keep this information confidential.
- I have the express permission of any individuals whose contact details I have shared as part of this application process, to share these details with the Royal Academy of Engineering for the purposes of administering the application
- I understand that The Royal Academy of Engineering or other third party evaluators may contact me for the purposes of Monitoring and Evaluation of this programme
- I have read and understood the Application Guidance

Once your application is complete a "submit application" button will become available at the top right of the page.

11. Assessment of proposals

Proposals will be reviewed and scored in line with the matrix detailed in Table A below:

Table A

Section	Review criteria
Research opportunity and strategic fit	• Strength and quality of the of the proposed research. • Potential for students to participate in meaningful research. • Coherence of the six placements as a programme.
Programme and student experience	• Evidenced and good rationale for student selection criteria. • Clear articulation behind why the programme is set up in a specific way to make a positive impact to students. • Quality programme content and structure (eg exposure to engineering / science research, preparation for postgraduate opportunities, building cultural inclusion
Inclusive practice	• Use of evidence to identify underrepresentation. • Strength of rationale for target groups. • Alignment between identified barriers and programme design. • Appropriateness of the proposed positive action approach. • Commitment to reflection and improvement of institutional practice
Delivery and administration	• Clear project plan with identified risk and mitigations in place. • Quality of outreach and recruitment strategy • Ability to attract applicants beyond the host institution • Delivery process is clear with rationale to support the proposed programme and amount of funding put towards administration. • Quality of plan on how to reach underrepresented students, especially from other universities.

	• Value delivered relative to cost
Cost and value	• Clear overview of costs and pricing. • Is within budget while ensuring a high quality programme and depth of the engagement.

Successful applications will be selected at the Academy and Royal Society's discretion. We will take a portfolio approach to final funding decisions. This means that, when considering all fundable applications, we may take account of how each proposal contributes to addressing the national issue of underrepresentation in Science, Engineering and Technology and to ensuring the supported offer is as broad and balanced as possible. This may include consideration of the spread of disciplines or course areas, the underrepresented groups targeted, and the geographical reach of proposed opportunities.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application in December 2026. Please refer to section 7 for a detailed breakdown of the programme delivery timelines and deadlines.

12. Contact details

If you have any questions, please contact Genevieve.dobinson-addo@raeng.org.uk

13. Annex A: application relevant policies

Equity, diversity and inclusion: The Royal Academy of Engineering is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion and welcomes applications from all underrepresented groups across engineering.

Before you commence your application, you will be asked a few diversity monitoring questions to help the Academy monitor and assess our equity, diversity and inclusion policy. It will only be used for statistical purposes with access restricted to staff involved in processing and monitoring the data. No information will be published or used in any way that identifies individuals. The Academy will retain personal information as per our [Data Retention Policy \(https://raeng.org.uk/media/duhjwap2/raeng-privacy-policy-grant-or-award.pdf\)](https://raeng.org.uk/media/duhjwap2/raeng-privacy-policy-grant-or-award.pdf) in line with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

The information will be treated as strictly confidential, nonattributable and will not be seen by anyone involved in any selection processes. You will

need to complete the diversity monitoring section before you can see the grant application form, but can choose “prefer not to say” as responses.

National security: The Academy is the UK’s National Academy for engineering and technology and seeks to increase the potential positive benefit that innovations can have for society, while reducing the risks of harm. Hence, in all our activities, we seek to minimise the risk that technology developed as part of work that we support could be misused by a foreign state to build a capacity to target UK interests in a hostile fashion or to control or repress their population. There is a risk that for some grant activities, failure to protect IP and a lack of due diligence into collaborators could result in sensitive technology being transferred to and misused by a hostile or repressive foreign state. As such all applicants must ensure they are familiar with the Academy’s [National Security Risks Policy](https://raeng.org.uk/policies) (<https://raeng.org.uk/policies>).

Use of generative AI tools in funding applications and assessment: The Academy has aligned with other UK funders around the use of generative AI tools in funding applications through the Research Funders Policy Group [joint statement](https://wellcome.org/about-us/positions-and-statements/joint-statement-generative-ai) (<https://wellcome.org/about-us/positions-and-statements/joint-statement-generative-ai>).

Regarding the use of AI, applicants are fully responsible for all the content presented in their grant applications. The grant process does not penalise the use of generative AI tools, but it is imperative to ensure that the application reflects the applicants own voice and ideas. It is not acceptable to solely rely on generative AI tools to write the entire grant application from start to finish. While these tools may be used to assist in various aspects, the application must primarily represent the applicant's own work.

Applicants must provide clear acknowledgement if they have used generative AI tools in the process of writing their grant applications. This includes disclosing the name of the tool used and describing how it was utilised. The following style should be employed for referencing:

“I acknowledge the use of [insert AI system(s), version number and link] to generate materials for background research, styling, proofreading, etc.”.
Or, *“I acknowledge the use of [insert AI system(s), version number and link] to generate materials that were included within my final assessment in modified form”.*

Subsidy control

The UK subsidy control regime began on 4 January 2023. As part of this regime, the Academy is required to report to the UK Government on how

award funding is being used when applications collaborating with commercial enterprises are awarded. The regime determines the lawfulness of monetary awards made using public sector resources when given to businesses and other organisations that are engaged in economic activity.