

Finance

This document describes the finance processes and requirements for *Creating Safer Space* projects.

The funding for projects is disbursed by Aberystwyth University (AU), but originates from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). The funding forms part of the UK's foreign aid spending, through its Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF). AU has a duty to ensure that the money is spent in accordance with AHRC terms and conditions. For this reason, we ask you to please ensure that the requirements below are followed throughout the course of your project.

We recognise that working practices vary in different countries, so please contact creating-safer-space@aber.ac.uk as soon as possible if it would be difficult for your organisation to meet any of these requirements. We might be able to develop alternative arrangements, which are better suited to your circumstances.

Please be aware that this guidance may change over the course of the project.

Basic requirements:

- All funding is to be spent on legitimate project expenses only, based on your budget in the project application form.
- All financial transactions on the project must be recorded. Receipts, invoices or other evidence of expenditure must be kept for all transactions (apart from Overheads), and copies must be provided to us.
- All expenses must be based on good value for money.

Please see the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) below for further information.

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Process for Payments

All parties due to receive funds from AU must sign a Collaboration Agreement. Project activities cannot begin until the agreement is fully signed. AU will also verify your organisation's bank account and register it on our finance system.

Your organisation sends us an **invoice** to request the first payment. You can request a payment for up to 3 months of planned expenditure, but you cannot ask for more than the maximum amount stated in the Collaboration Agreement. You also need to send us a **forecast** for how you plan to spend the first payment, on the Claim Form (Sheet 1) embedded in the Collaboration Agreement.

Your organisation proceeds with the research, retaining records of expenditure and associated evidence. We do understand that projects do not always run smoothly, so please contact us if any unexpected problems emerge – we may be able to help!

AU checks the documentation, and (if applicable) asks the Lead Organisation of the project if they are happy to authorise payments to Co-Investigators. Provided we do not have any questions, we will make the payment to your organisation within 30 days.

Is the project coming to an end?

YES

NO

Within one month of completion of the project, your organisation needs to provide the following:

- An **expenditure statement** in the local currency (Claim Form, Sheet 2), together with **evidence** of expenditure.
- A final **report**.
- A **bank statement** (if you wish) to evidence the amount of funding you received from us in the local currency.
- Any **unspent funds**, or any funds not accounted for.

Your organisation can request the next payment when you have spent at least 75% of the previous payment. Please provide us with the following:

- An **invoice** in GBP.
- A **forecast** in GBP for how you plan to spend the next payment (Claim Form, Sheet 1).
- An **expenditure statement** in local currency of the previous payments (Claim Form, Sheet 2), together with **evidence** of all expenditure.
- An **interim progress report** (Claim Form, Sheet 3).
- A **bank statement** (if you wish) to evidence the amount of funding you received from us in the local currency.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will our project receive payment?

In most cases, AU will distribute funding to the Lead and to the Co-Investigator Organisations involved in the project separately. In order to do this, we have to sign a Collaboration Agreement with both the Lead Organisation and the Co-Investigator Organisations.

If the Lead Organisation wishes, they can also apply for all funding instalments to be transferred to them directly so that they can distribute them to the other parties themselves. If this is the case, then only the Lead Organisation on a project will enter into a Funding Agreement with AU, but the Lead Organisation must enter into an agreement with the Co-Investigator Organisations.

What information should be included on the invoice?

- Your organisation's name, official address, contact telephone number and e-mail address.
- The recipient's name, email address and address: Finance and Contracts Officer, creating-safer-space@aber.ac.uk, *Creating Safer Space* project, Department of International Politics, Aberystwyth University, Penglais Campus, Ceredigion, SY23 3FE, Wales, UK.
- The reference number for your project (13398-xx, given in the Collaboration Agreement).
- The total amount requested (this can be up to 3 months of planned expenditure but should not exceed the maximum amount per instalment stated in the Collaboration Agreement).
- The date of the invoice.
- The bank account details (account number, IBAN, SWIFT, or other applicable codes)

How do we provide evidence of expenditure to you?

Our funder requires us to report on actual spending, and to show evidence of all expenditure.

Please e-mail us scanned copies of all evidence of expenditure (payslips, timesheets, receipts, invoices, tickets etc). Each receipt should be clearly numbered, and the number should be included on the Claim Form (Sheet 2), to enable us to cross-reference expenditure.

The Declaration Box on the Claim Form needs to be signed and dated by an authorised representative (e.g. Finance Manager) of your organisation. Investigators on the project are usually not allowed to authorise expenditure statements. The appropriate receipt numbers also need to be added to the following sentence in the Declaration Box: *I confirm that the attached copies of receipts and other evidence of expenditure (numbered to) are true copies of the original documents.*

What do we do if it is not possible to obtain a receipt?

If it is not possible to obtain a receipt, then the person making the purchase should write a self-receipt (e.g. using a receipt book). This should specify the date, the amount of money spent (in local currency) and the nature of the purchase. It should also include the name and signature of the person making the purchase, and where possible, it should be counter-signed by the provider of the service. Self-receipts will only be accepted for small amounts of expenditure (less than £20

GBP equivalent), and it can only form a very small proportion of overall project expenditure. Please let us know in advance if you anticipate any difficulties with this.

What evidence of expenditure will we need to provide for staff costs?

Evidence of expenditure will need to be provided for staff costs, as described in the below table:

Staff member	Evidence required at start of project only	Evidence required for each claim sent in during project
Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators (already employed at Lead Organisation)	Employment contract, confirming salary rate.	Evidence is not required, but hours must be in line with the project proposal.
Staff employed specifically on the project, e.g. Co-Investigator, Research Assistant, Project Manager.	Contract of employment on the <i>Creating Safer Space</i> project, confirming hours and salary.	Timesheets (if part-time) and payslips.
Current employees of the organisation, e.g. fieldworkers or technical staff.	Employment contracts, confirming salary rate.	Timesheets and payslips.

Are we allowed to pay staff *per diems*?

Per diem payments (daily allowances paid to employees to cover costs incurred during travel) are allowed under certain circumstances only. Please contact us in advance if you would like to include *per diem* payments in your expenses claims.

Are there special rules for large purchases?

Please contact us in advance if you would like to make any purchases or payments above £5,000, as we will need to ascertain that such purchases comply with procurement regulations.

Can I fly business class, or stay at an expensive hotel?

All expenses should be based on good value for money. For example, travel should be standard class on public transport and economy class by air. Please contact us for further advice if there are important reasons to travel business class or to stay at expensive hotels.

What are the rules on currencies and currency exchange fluctuations?

The currency in the Collaboration Agreement is GBP, and payments to your organisation are capped in GBP. We normally make payments in GBP, so please check that your bank is able to receive GBP payments. If it is essential that you receive payments in Euros or US dollars, please let us know and we may be able to arrange this.

Our overseas partner organisations normally have bank accounts that automatically convert our payments to the local currency. Please do let us know if your organisation would prefer that we make payments to a foreign currency account instead.

Currency exchange fluctuations are sometimes a challenge for our projects, and we normally adopt the following approach:

- Your organisation provides us with an invoice for an advance payment, and a forecast for expenditure, in GBP.
- We make the payment to your organisation in GBP.
- Your organisation uses the funding to cover the cost of project expenditure.
- When you request the next payment, expenditure should be recorded on the Expenditure Statement section (Sheet 2) of the Claim Form in the local currency.
- If you wish, you can provide a bank statement to show how much you originally received in the local currency, and then we record any underspend in the local currency. If you do not send a bank statement, [Oanda](#) will be used to check that your expenditure matches the amount we paid you in GBP. We will let you know if there is any significant underspend at any point during the project.
- By the end of the project, you will be expected to have provided evidence of expenditure for all funding received in the local currency. If you have any funding left in the local currency, you will need to reimburse us.
- Please bear in mind that the total funding that your organisation will receive is capped in GBP.

Please get in touch if you have any concerns about currencies, or if you would like to suggest a different approach.

We would like to make some changes to our project plans. Are we allowed to do this?

We appreciate that research projects often face unexpected problems and opportunities, and there may be good reasons to change project plans.

Aims and Objectives: Please contact us before making any changes that may affect the aims and objectives of the project, or your ability to achieve these. We will need to check that your plans remain compliant with funder requirements.

Planned Activities: You are welcome to make small changes to planned activities without contacting us, but any such changes need to be fully justified in the Interim Progress Report (Claim Form, Sheet 3). In rare circumstances, the *Creating Safer Space* Executive Committee may determine that such changes were not justifiable in the context of the project or contrary to funding requirements, and your organisation would then be required to reimburse the funding. If in doubt, please contact us ahead of time.

Project Expenditure: We cannot pay you more than the maximum amount of funding set out in the Collaboration Agreement, but you are welcome to move small amounts of money between areas of the budget without contacting us. For example, if you are organising a workshop, you might find that travel for participants is a little more expensive than planned, while consumables are slightly cheaper. Major changes to budgeted expenditure (more than 10% variation) require our prior approval. It will not be possible to make any changes to the salary costs of the Investigators or to Overheads. All expenditure needs to be for planned project activities. If in doubt, please contact us ahead of time.