

## INCLUDE+ Exploratory Studies Funding Call 2024

**INCLUDE+ is inviting proposals for work that seeks to enhance digital equity through rapid response projects. Proposals can be pilots, connective or creative projects which embrace an element of risk or experimentation, and can be formulated in response to policy or wider environmental, social or technical change.**

We are particularly interested in projects around key themes of **wellbeing, civic culture or precarity**, but would consider other themes and topics fit to INCLUDE+ more broadly. We invite Project Proposals up to the value of £5k, beginning within 2 months of funding being confirmed and lasting no more than 4 months.

Proposals responding to this call will be reviewed quarterly by the INCLUDE+ Management Group in accordance with our [INCLUDE+ Process](#), [INCLUDE+ Principals](#) and fit to call.

Project proposals should be emailed to Rosie Wilkinson (INCLUDE+ Co-ordinator: [r.h.wilkinson@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:r.h.wilkinson@leeds.ac.uk)), with the subject line 'Application Submission'.

### 2024 submission deadlines

- **24th May** (applicants informed of outcome 17<sup>th</sup> June)
- **13th Sept** (applicants informed of outcome 7<sup>th</sup> Oct)
- **8th Nov** (applicants informed of outcome 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec)

## Background to INCLUDE+

INCLUDE+ is a network exploring how social and digital environments can be built, shaped and sustained to enable all people to thrive. The five-year programme of activities (2022-2027) builds a knowledge community around in/equalities in digital society that will comprise industry, academia, the public and third sectors in response to the UKRI Equitable Digital Society theme.

We ask how wellbeing, precarity, and civic culture feed and are generated by, wider structural inequalities (bureaucratic, algorithmic, data-driven, discursive, normative). Secondly, we ask how those socio-technical structures are negotiated, lived, felt and intervened into by the communities we work with. Third, we explore and build alternatives through digital forms of civic action that intervene into the world. Our intention, together with a diverse range of collaborators, is to [co]dissect and [co]create digitally equitable futures and provide practical outputs, recommendations and methods that might get us there.

### INCLUDE+ Values

At INCLUDE+, we value all forms of expertise (professional and lived) and aim to offer an equitable platform for this to be shared. We seek a diversity of perspectives and allow all voices to be heard, particularly those which tend to be suppressed. We aim to ground our work in the [INCLUDE+ Principles](#) – which implementation is expected to be co-shaped by the funded project.

## What are we looking for?

This funding call follows an existing portfolio of funded research, each of which culminated in a series of indicative questions for the future. We imagine that this research fund could be used to pay for workshops, desk-based work, travel or accommodation costs, prototypes, or other research related activities.

We are looking for projects that:

1. Will take up questions from previous projects or advance previous projects
2. Will adhere to our [INCLUDE+ Principles](#) and value all forms of knowledge
3. Might respond to an emerging issue or might be considered higher risk

## Who Can Apply?

Applications are open to all organisations that are able to engage with our due diligence processes. The lead applicant must be affiliated with a registered organisation, with financial and administrative capacity to manage the grant funding, including a company bank account. They **do not** need to be linked to a Higher Education Institution (HEI) or research organisation and, whilst we welcome applications from interdisciplinary teams which include academics, this is not a grant condition. We are particularly interested in proposals linked to the third sector, public sector and industry.

## Funding Available

The projects will be funded for up to a maximum of £5,000 per study. This is funded at 100% of direct costs to both Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and all other organisations.

We expect to fund 5-6 exploratory studies in 2024.

## How Project Proposals will be assessed

We will assess your application in terms of your (1) proposed project idea and its link to the themes of INCLUDE+; (2) whether it advances existing work within INCLUDE+; (3) and, how your proposal responds to INCLUDE+ Principles.

Resources that can be requested under this call, and subject to UKRI funding regulations, include:

- Investigator and researcher time
- Travel and subsistence appropriate to delivery of the project
- Equipment

This is not an exhaustive but rather, indicative, list of eligible resources. If you have any questions about costing eligibility, please contact Rosie Wilkinson ([r.h.wilkinson@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:r.h.wilkinson@leeds.ac.uk)).

## Applying and Submitting

Submit the Project Proposal form and supporting documents by email to INCLUDE+ Coordinator Rosie Wilkinson, [r.h.wilkinson@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:r.h.wilkinson@leeds.ac.uk), with the subject line 'Application Submission'.

### Process of Application:

- Project Proposal submitted (see dates above)
- Notification of outcome (see dates above)
- Projects run for up to 4 months

### Additional Grant Terms and Conditions:

Awards will be made under UKRI standard terms and conditions. Please note that this award is a contribution towards the incurred costs of a project activity from an existing UKRI award. Please ensure that no commercial in confidence information is provided as part of your proposal.

Project leaders will be required, as a grant condition, to produce 2 outputs:

1. Contribute to the [IN+ Process](#), resources and blog through participation, content and dialogue (such as blog posts, interviews, short summaries, to be negotiated): **ongoing**
2. Produce a final report detailing the future questions and areas (format is negotiable): **within 1 month of the project end date.**

These reports will be published on the INCLUDE+ website.

## Frequently asked questions

### I am not an academic/researcher; can I still apply?

Yes, absolutely. We value all forms of expertise and are keen to fund projects across a range of sectors, including industry, the third sector, public sector and NGOs.

### I am registered as self-employed for tax purposes. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes, but you would need to collaborate with a registered organisation who could act as the lead applicant. We may be able to suggest a partnership if you require help with this.

### Can applicants from outside the UK apply?

Yes. Your organisation will need to be able to cooperate with our due diligence processes but support is available and our Network+ extends internationally.

### Is any support available to develop my proposal?

Yes. We recognise that many applicants will face barriers to accessing funding and we are committed to making our processes as equitable as possible. Please get in touch if you require advice or assistance.

### Still have more questions?

Please contact the INCLUDE+ Coordinator, Rosie Wilkinson, if you have any further queries or would like to speak to a member of our Management Group: [r.h.wilkinson@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:r.h.wilkinson@leeds.ac.uk).