**LSE REF Strategy Committee**

**REF budget: targeted assistance guidance notes**

1. **What is the REF targeted assistance fund?**

The REF Strategy Committee (REFSC) has a budget to support various aspects of the School’s preparations for the next REF, expected to take place in 2020 or 2021. Part of this budget has been set aside to assist named individuals to enable them to produce 3\* and 4\* research outputs who would otherwise struggle to achieve this. Targeted assistance may take the form of:

* support for fieldwork, travel and subsistence in order to undertake research;
* provision of research assistants including occasional research assistants;
* teaching buy-out for one or two terms (two terms being the maximum);
* sabbatical/research leave – one term maximum;
* costs of proof-reading and copy-editing manuscripts.

All of the above must be genuinely expected to lead to the production of 3\*/4\* research outputs which would otherwise be difficult for the individual to produce and which are not already supported by other forms of funding.

1. **Who can apply**

Applicants must be permanent members of LSE faculty or research staff on the New Research Staff Career. Applications should be made on the application form below and supported by the applicant’s Head of Department/Institute, Research Centre Director or Chair of Departmental Research Committee.

1. **Deadlines**

The fund operates on the basis of an **open call for proposals.** Permanent members of faculty are free to submit applications at any time, for consideration by REFSC. REFSC currently meets once per term, so applications will be considered at the meeting following the submission of the application. REFSC dates for the current academic session can be found on the School’s Committees and Working Groups website:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/governanceAndCommittees/committeesAndWorkingGroups/home.aspx>

1. **Selection criteria**

REFSC will assess applications according to the following criteria (in order of priority):

* The plausibility that the funds will result in improved outputs for the named individuals (REFSC will only support those genuinely capable of producing 3\*/4\* research outputs);
* The importance of the bid to the submitting unit’s REF submission;
* The anticipated effect of the bid on the School’s REF profile;
* The research trajectory including planned and published research outputs likely to be graded 3\*/4\* in the REF.

In addition:

* Poor performance will not be rewarded: where sabbatical/research leave is funded this will be brought forward for each individual, not given in addition to what they would otherwise qualify for;
* Buy-out for marking is not considered appropriate and will not be funded.

REFSC will also take into account:

* whether individuals have been previous recipients of targeted assistance from any REF budget (this information will be provided to REFSC by the Research Division);
* Whether other support such as mentoring may be more appropriate and/or used in conjunction with REF funding;
* Whether other sources of funding may be more appropriate. REFSC **will not make awards** where the departments or institutes concerned might be expected to support the initiative, whether from their RIIF budget or other available funding, unless there are good grounds. Neither will the REF budget be used to displace external funding, nor for applications covered by STICERD grants or other funding sources available within the School. Any proposals which are deemed to support activity for which external funding is available will be rejected.

REFSC will consider all applications on their merits according to the criteria set out above and will monitor the allocation of funds for equality and diversity purposes. To this end, all names of applicants will be removed from applications prior to consideration by REFSC to mitigate unconscious bias.

1. **If your application is successful**

Funding will be provided to successful applicants through a **specific research account** set up by the Research Division for which the Department Manager will be the designated grant holder.

March 2016

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**LSE REF Strategy Committee**

**REF budget: targeted assistance application form**

**Please read the REF targeted assistance guidance notes before you fill out an application form.**

**Section A. Applicant Details**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Title and name of applicant:** |  | **Name of lead academic unit:** |  |
| **Amount applied for:** |  | **Start/end dates & duration:** |  |

**Section B. Application Information**

**B.1. Please describe your reason(s) for applying for targeted assistance and what you plan to do. Explain the benefits of this application to your Department’s research agenda and how this is expected to prepare you for the Research Excellence Framework (REF). (max 1500 words)**

**B.2. Please provide a breakdown of your budget and a justification**

**B.3. Have you applied elsewhere for financial support in relation to this proposal? If yes, please give brief details and include details of outcome, if known.**

**B.4. Ethics: Are there any ethical implications arising from this application? If yes, please contact** [**research-ethics@lse.ac.uk**](mailto:research-ethics@lse.ac.uk) **in the first instance for further advice.**

**C. Statement of support**

**Please provide a statement for support (not more than 150 words) from your Head of Department/Institute or Chair of Departmental Research Committee.**

You can attach an emailed statement or a letter of support. Statements for support should include an explanation of **why the Department/Institute RIIF funds or other funds cannot be used to support this application.** It should also include **a confirmation that there will be adequate** office space and **resources** to support this application, if appropriate.