External Projects Team

Enterprise and Commercial Development

Quick Facts

Funding Body	Leverhulme Trust
Scheme	Research Project Grants
Budget	Research Project Grants may be for a maximum sum of £500,000. Most grants are awarded for sums of up to £250,000.
Intervention Rate	The Leverhulme Trust cannot fund any overhead rates. They will only fund staffing salaries and associated research costs like travel or consumables. No running costs can be included.
Project length	Grants may be held for up to five years. Most projects are funded run for two to three years.
Deadlines	Stage one bids can go in at anytime. 21 March, 1 September, 1 December annually for full applications.
Application Procedure	Research Project Grants are assessed via a two-stage process. In the first stage, applicants should complete an Outline Application form using the Leverhulme Trusts online application system.
Success Rate	Success rates are about 15%
Overview	Research Project Grants support innovative and original research projects of high quality and potential, funding the salaries of research staff engaged on the project plus associated costs directly related to the research proposed. The choice of theme and the design of the research lie entirely with the applicant.

More Details

The Leverhulme Trust was set up to support "scholarships for the purposes of research and education." The fund operates across all the academic disciplines, the ambition being to support talented individuals as they realise their personal vision in research and professional training.

With annual funding of some £60 million, the Trust is amongst the largest all-subject providers of research funding in the UK. The Trust places special weight on:

- the originality of the projects put to them;
- the significance of the proposed work;
- the ability to judge and take appropriate risk in the project;
- the removal of barriers between traditional disciplines.

Leverhulme only fund the best bids. If an application has not been successful, it is not because there are a large number of applicants, it is because the project was not good enough to fund. Frequently originality is the area that lets bids down.

The Research Project Grants aim to provide financial support for innovative and original research projects of high quality and potential, the choice of theme and the design of the research lying entirely with the applicant (the Principal Investigator). The grants provide support for the salaries of research staff engaged on the project, plus associated costs directly related to the research proposed, and the award is paid directly to the institution at which the applicant is employed.

Proposals are favoured which:

- reflect the personal vision of the applicant;
- demonstrate compelling competence in the research design;
- surmount traditional disciplinary academic boundaries;
- involve a willingness to take appropriate degrees of risk in setting research objectives.

Research Project Grants make up almost half (46%) of the grants given out by the Leverhulme Trust. Grants tend to be for around £250,000 and run over three years. Projects typically pursue 'problem driven' studies that are often innovative and cross established disciplinary boundaries.

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External Projects Team
More Details

Although the Leverhulme trust funds all areas of research there are some types of work they will not fund. These are outlined on the Research Programme Grants webpage. The Leverhulme Trust is keen to avoid people spending large amounts of time developing bids that are not appropriate, so they encourage people to ring them and check the eligibility of their project idea.

The Leverhulme Trust primarily focuses its funding on money for staff salaries. They expect at least 75% off grants to be spent on this. Staff research costs can cover research assistants and postgraduate students. Research assistants need a PhD. Tuition fees for maintenance costs of PhD students can be applied for. This can include over seas students.
Principal Investigators and co-applicants can apply for staffing cost replacements if they are employed on a continuing basis by the University.

The Leverhulme Trust can also offer up to 25% of funding for associated research costs, but this is a maximum not a target.

The Leverhulme Trust gave the following tips for people applying to bids at a workshop attended by the External Projects Team:
Avoid Jargon The people on the board are ex-business people. They make the final decisions on what projects are funded. They do not have specialist knowledge of research, so the language of your application needs to be really clear.
Original The Trust gives special attention to projects that are original. Projects need to be beyond incremental development and the immediate subject area.
Transcend Boundaries They like projects that remove barriers between disciplines.
Fresh Projects that have a fresh direction are popular.

Clear Project Projects have a higher chance of success if the idea is clear. This includes a clear methodology, a clear strategy for outcomes and a clear dissemination plan.
Importance The Leverhulme Trust wants to be able to see the importance of your research, so make sure you say why it is of interest.

Why Leverhulme Bids should show the Trust why you are applying to them and not elsewhere. If the project could be funded under a research council, they are unlikely to give you funding.
Referees Choose your referees wisely. The Trust has a lot of respect for their technical opinion.

Grants must be submitted using the Leverhulme Trusts online application system. To use this system, staff will need to set up a username and log in for themselves. The site can be accessed here: https://grants.leverhulme.ac.uk/Login.aspx. Once your bid is submitted, it must be approved by Staffordshire Universities External Projects Team. An email is automatically sent to the team by the Leverhulme Trust.
It is a two stage application process. Outline Applications can be submitted at any time and their assessment is normally completed within three months.

Timing for Detailed Applications:

Closing dates:	Time:	Anticipated announcement of decision:	Earliest possible start date:
1 September	4.00pm	early December	1 January
1 December	4.00pm	end March	1 May
21 March	4.00pm	mid July	1 September

For full applications approval by the External Projects Team must be completed by the 4pm deadline on the bid submission date. It is therefore best to submit your bid in advance of the deadline and to inform the External Projects Team ahead of time that you are planning on submitting a bid. The team can also advise you on how to develop your application to give it the best chance of success. The team can be contacted on this address: externalprojects@staffs.ac.uk

Before progressing with a bid it is highly recommended that staff read the Leverhulme Trusts guidance notes. These include the Frequently Asked Questions here: http://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/funding/FAQ.cfm. The External Projects Team is happy to meet with staff to go through these notes and discuss the eligibility of project ideas.

Further Information	
Website	http://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/funding/RPG/RPG.cfm
Help for outline applications	Matt Dillnutt mdillnutt@leverhulme.ac.uk 020 7042 9873
Help for full applications	Nicola Thorp nthorp@leverhulme.ac.uk 020 7042 9872

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