Brexit implications for UK participation in EU research funding

This updated briefing note provides key latest information on Brexit implications for UK participation in EU research funding under Horizon 2020 (H2020) to support Queen Mary grintholders and researchers considering application to future funding calls.

26 March 2019 update:

The European Council have agreed an extension of Article 50 until 22 May 2019, on the condition the UK parliament ratifies the Withdrawal Agreement before 29 March 2019.

If parliament rejects the Withdrawal Agreement again, the UK would have an extension until 12 April 2019 to indicate an alternative plan. If nothing is agreed, then the UK still risks exit from the EU on the 12 April 2019 without a deal in place. The UK and EU priority remains to negotiate a deal.

The UK remains eligible for EU H2020 research funding until exit.

UK eligibility until the end of the H2020 programme depends on ratification of the Withdrawal Agreement by the UK and EU.

Regardless of the Brexit outcome, the government has guaranteed to underwrite all live and successful Horizon 2020 awards submitted before exit and to fund projects for their duration.

The government also guarantees a post-EU extension underwrite to fund successful UK participants under H2020 schemes open to third country participants submitted after exit until end of 2020.

These underwrites will ensure research collaborations can continue and should give confidence to Queen Mary researchers that they are able to bid for EU R&D collaborative funding, whatever the outcome.

However, under ‘no deal’ mono-beneficiary schemes, such as most European Research Council grants and Marie Skłodowska-Curie European Fellowships, will not be covered and government is considering national programmes to avoid a funding gap.

The government also guarantees to underwrite the UK’s full allocation for structural and investment fund projects, including the European Regional Development Fund, until the end of 2020.

Under ‘no deal’, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) will manage the H2020 underwrite, transition of projects and payments to UK grintholders.

The EU Unit, JRMO is the key liaison with UKRI regarding provision of grant data to UKRI, and will work with UKRI regarding the administration of any underwrite for QM projects.

For queries please contact: Vicky Byers, EU Section Manager v.byers@qmul.ac.uk 0207 882 7251

Frequently Asked Questions (updated 26/3/19):

Should I still apply for EU H2020 research funding?

The UK remains eligible to apply for EU funding until exit date. After exit, UK eligibility for funding will depend on the withdrawal agreement being ratified between the UK and EU, in this case, nothing will change and the UK will be eligible for all H2020 schemes.

Researchers are encouraged to continue to apply for to bid with EU partners for funding until end of 2020, whatever the outcome. The government’s Post-EU extended guarantee underwrite will ensure research collaborations can continue to be funded. For those interested in mono-beneficiary schemes,
such as European Research Council (ERC) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie European Fellowships, the situation is more complex please contact Vicky Byers v.byers@qmul.ac.uk for further information for future calls scheduled after exit date.

**How will existing EU research funded projects be funded after exit?**

If the UK and EU ratify the Withdrawal Agreement, the UK will remain eligible for individual and consortia bids for remaining H2020 calls until the end of the current work programmes (31 December 2020). Projects would be funded for their duration.

Under ‘no deal’, the government has guaranteed to underwrite live and successful projects post exit for their full duration, even if a submitted project is notified of its success after exit. UKRI will manage any underwrite of Horizon 2020 (and any remaining FP7 projects). UKRI will transition H2020 projects to the UK system and make the contracts and payments. The underwrite covers live and successful individual (including ERC and fellowships) and consortia projects before exit. More detailed UKRI guidance is to follow.

**Can I still apply for H2020 research funding if there is no deal?**

Yes, under the ‘Post-EU Extended Guarantee’ the government commits to fund successful UK participants under those schemes open to third country participants (ie multi-beneficiary) from exit for their full duration (even if this is beyond 2020). Queen Mary researchers are encouraged to continue to engage with EU partners in consortia bids under eligible schemes (and taking into account consortium minimum eligibility).

**BUT:** not all H2020 schemes require third country participation including: European Research Council (ERC) grants (Starter, Consolidator and Advanced), some Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) grants (eg European fellowships) and the SME instrument.

Under ‘no deal’, the government is looking at national programmes for mono-beneficiary schemes to avoid a funding gap but details are not yet published.

The EU Unit, JRMO will update researchers as soon as further information is known.

**Will the UK be awarded H2020 European Research Council projects if there is ‘no deal’?**

Under ‘no deal’, the mono beneficiary schemes, such as European Research Council (ERC) grants (Starter, Consolidator and Advanced) and some Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) grants (e.g. European fellowships) where no third country participation is required, the UK would not be eligible as a third country beneficiary. These schemes would not be covered by the Post-EU Extended Underwrite. The government is likely to set up alternative programmes but details are not yet published. The government has not clarified if ERC grants in the middle of the evaluation process will be funded in the case of ‘no deal’. The EU Unit, JRMO will update researchers as soon as further information is known.

**If I am coordinator how will partner payments be made if there is no deal?**

The government and EU are aware that under no deal this is an issue still be resolved and will need to be clarified with the EU in due course. The EU Unit will advise QM coordinators when guidance is provided.

**Under no deal, how will my H2020 project be funded by the underwrite – do I need to register on the UKRI portal?**

Prepared by Vicky Byers, EU Unit Manager V1.0 (26/3/19)
Under ‘no deal’, UKRI will manage the underwrite that will be used to fund and pay H2020 and remaining FP7 projects via its portal. The EU Unit is the key liaison with UKRI and has already provided basic grant data for all Queen Mary projects. The portal will remain open after exit so that further successful projects can be registered.

Individual researchers do not need to register on the UKRI portal. All data will be centrally managed by the EU Unit, JRMO.

UKRI will support the transition of grants to the UK re contract, payment and monitoring processes - guidance will be provided. The EU Unit has recently been involved in discussions with UKRI on the practicalities of administering the underwrite. The EU Unit will keep grantholders updated.

**How will my European Regional Development project be funded and after exit and can I apply for further ERDF funding?**

If the Withdrawal Agreement is ratified between the UK and the EU, the UK would continue to participate in the European Regional Development (ERDF) programmes until the end of the 2014-2020 programme period as now.

Under a ‘no-deal’ scenario, the underwrite guarantee also includes structural and investment fund projects, including the European Regional Development Fund, will allow new projects to be funded will continue to sign new projects after EU exit until programme closure.

**Will the UK be eligible for the successor EU research programme, Horizon Europe?**

The government has stated its intention to negotiate access to the successor EU research programme, Horizon Europe (2021-27) as an Associated Country. Both the UK and EU agree on the value of UK participation in European research programmes. QM has been involved in the consultation on Horizon Europe and is working to support lobbying of government for UK association.

**Further official sources of information:**

- [UK Government Overview: UK Participation in Horizon 2020](#)
- [UK Research Office in Brussels Brexit Bulletin](#)
- [UK Government Horizon 2020 No Deal plans](#)
- [UK Government ERDF No Deal plans](#)
- [UK Government Fact Sheet: Parameters for Extending Article 50](#)
- [UKRI Portal](#)
- [European Commission Brexit Negotiations & Preparedness](#)

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