Brexit implications for UK participation in EU research funding (Horizon 2020)

28 October 2019 update: The UK remains eligible for all EU research and innovation funding (such as Horizon 2020) and calls until exit date. Exit date is now extended to 31 January 2020, with the possibility to leave sooner if the Withdrawal Agreement is approved by Parliament. The government’s ‘no deal’ guarantees are in place to ensure continuity of funding in a no deal scenario.

WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT - a deal is agreed:

- There would be a ‘transitional phase’ so that the UK would remain able, as now, to apply to all remaining H2020 calls to be announced until the end of the EC H2020 programme period (31 December 2020).
- Successful projects would be funded via the EC as now for their full duration.

GOVERNMENT H2020 GUARANTEES – if there is no deal

1. UK Projects submitted BEFORE exit date:
   - The H2020 GUARANTEE will underwrite all ongoing eligible and successful H2020 awards submitted before exit and to fund projects for their duration.

2. UK bids submitted AFTER exit date:
   - The H2020 GUARANTEE EXTENSION will underwrite UK successful bids to those H2020 calls open to third country participants from exit date to fund UK participation (as a third country) for their full duration, even if they last beyond 2020.

3. ‘IN FLIGHT’ APPLICATIONS FUNDING for mono-beneficiary parts of the European Research Council, Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions and EIC Accelerator. If UK bids submitted to the EC before exit date (irrespective of the EC deadline date) and are not evaluated by the EC, UKRI will manage the independent assessment of relevant UK bids and successful projects would be funded through additional UK government funding for their duration.
   - UKRI would manage the underwrites on behalf of government.

Researchers are encouraged to keep applying to Horizon 2020 (H2020):

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.
- Underwrite eligible UK participation in COST Actions until the end of 2020.

Guarantees include grants awarded through Public-to-Public Partnerships (P2Ps) and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) (such as IMI2, FET-Flagships, JPIs etc)
UK Research and Innovation (UKRI): Managing Authority for Underwrites

Under ‘no deal’, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) would manage the government H2020 guarantees. Projects will be transitioned from EC to UKRI T&Cs contracts, claims and payments will be made via JeS system.

As part of contingency planning, the EU Unit, JRMO (Vicky Byers) as the key liaison with UKRI has registered all QMUL H2020 projects on the UKRI Portal. Grantholders do not have to register their projects and will be kept updated by the EU Unit.

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

Frequently Asked Questions (updated 28/10/19):

Should I still apply for EU H2020 research funding?

The UK remains eligible to apply as now for EU H2020 funding until exit date. After exit, if there is a deal, nothing will change and the UK will be able to for all H2020 schemes until the end of the EC H2020 programme.

If there is ‘no deal’, the government’s H2020 extension guarantee will support UK participation in any future applications to Horizon 2020 calls open to third-country participants submitted after exit till end of the H2020 programme.

The UK will not be eligible for mono-beneficiary schemes, such as European Research Council (ERC) (Starting, Consolidator and Advanced), and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowships submitted after exit date and are thus not covered by the H2020 extension guarantee.

If applications have been EC submitted to these schemes before exit date under no deal, and if the EC does not assess the UK bids, relevant bids can re-submit for independent evaluation by UKRI under ‘in flight funding’. Please contact Vicky Byers v.byers@qmul.ac.uk for further information.

Will the EC evaluate UK ERC investigator and MSCA fellowship applications (‘in flight’) submitted before exit date under no deal?

It is not clear, but if UK submitted applications are not assessed by the European Commission, UKRI will manage the independent assessment of relevant UK bids to relevant mono-beneficiary Horizon 2020 calls submitted before exit. Government funding will be made available to support successful projects for their lifetime.

Researchers are encouraged to continue applying for H2020 funding.

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

Under no deal, UK would participate in H2020 calls as a third country under the Extension Guarantee. Third countries can bid to, participate in and lead the majority of Horizon 2020 projects, but cannot access:

- mono-beneficiary schemes
- some space and security projects which only allow participants from EU countries
- some multi-beneficiary schemes (for example Fast Track to Innovation (FTI))

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). Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Networks (ITNs) and Research & Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE) permit
third country participation - so the UK could still apply. Please speak to the EU Unit if you are interested in upcoming MSCA ITN or RISE (2020) deadlines in early 2020 asap.

What are the in-flight applications?

Under no deal, if the EC stops evaluating UK bids to mono-beneficiary schemes submitted to the EC before exit date, UKRI will take over the assessment of relevant proposals and successful projects will be funded for their duration with additional government funding. ERC and MSCA individual fellowships projects awarded would not be portable outside of the UK.

It will also apply to calls for which the EC call deadline has not yet arrived, but where the UK application is submitted before exit (eg ERC Consolidator (2020) call). See UKRI’s in-flight applications Q&As.

What about applying to monobeneficiary H2020 call deadlines (for ERC and MSCA individual fellowships) after exit?

Not all H2020 schemes require third country participation including: European Research Council (ERC) grants (Starting, Consolidator and Advanced), Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) European individual fellowships and the SME instrument.

If there is a deal, nothing will change and the UK will be eligible ERC and MSCA individual fellowship calls till end of the H2020 programme.

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

You should continue to apply for ERC and MSCA individual fellowship bids

Is my collaborative project eligible for the underwrite under no deal - if my project no longer has the minimum number of Member States or Associated Countries?

Under no deal, it remains unclear how the EC may deal with projects that no longer meet the H2020 eligibility requirements (as the UK will become a Third Country). This includes having the correct ratio, or minimum requirement, of Member States or Associated Countries. For example:

- Collaborative grants that require a minimum number of Member States/Associated Country participants
- Grants that are open exclusively to Member States, e.g. some space and security projects.

If the EC terminates the project and the UK project is deemed feasible by UKRI to continue as a ‘standalone’ project, it will receive the Guarantee funding for the UK part for the project’s lifetime.

Funding will be capped at the remaining value of the original grant award.

If it is not possible to continue with the research as a ‘standalone’ project, the ‘Non-Viable Projects Process (NVP Process)’ allows beneficiaries to claim funding to cover their committed costs associated with closing the project down.

Grant holders must continue to comply with their grant commitments unless otherwise advised by the EC. Do not take any actions to terminate the EC grant agreement unless advised by funder.

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

If a deal is agreed, projects would be funded as before 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 re-contract UK projects under its T&Cs, and the JeS system will be used to manage claims and payments. The underwrite covers live and successful individual (including ERC and fellowships) and consortia projects before exit.

**I am an existing ERC or MSCA fellowship grantholder how is my funding affected after exit?**

If a deal is agreed, you will receive your funding from the European Commission and there will be no change for the full duration of the grant.

Under no deal, there is the UK government’s underwrite guarantee to fund ERC and MSCA bids submitted pre-Brexit that are successful. Funding will continue for the project full duration and will be re-contracted to the UKRI T&Cs and paid via the UKRI as part of the underwrite.

**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 (Starting, Consolidator and Advanced) 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 Extension Guarantee. PIs can still apply to the ERC Synergy call as this allows for one third country PI. The government is likely to set up alternative programmes but details are not yet published. 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?**

**Under no deal, it is still possible for a coordinator to be a third country.** The government and EC are aware that under no deal this is an issue still be clarified with the EC 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?**

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 QMUL 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 JeS system for new contracts based on UKRI T&Cs, payment and monitoring processes - guidance will be provided. The EU Unit will keep grantholders updated. See also **UKRI Q&A**

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

If there is a deal, 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.

**I have concerns about the inclusion of UK partners in H2020 projects how to report this?**
The UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has a dedicated inbox: (research@beis.gov.uk) for queries and to report issues. UK and EU researchers and research organisations can contact this inbox.

**Further official sources of information:**
- UK Government Fact Pack on how to prepare
- UK Government Overview: UK Participation in Horizon 2020
- UK Research Office in Brussels: UKRO BREXIT FACTSHEET RELEVANT TO UK AND INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCES FOR DISSEMINATION
- UK Participation in H2020 after Brexit
- UK Government's guarantee for EU-funded programmes under no deal
- EU funding after Brexit
- UK Government ERDF No Deal plans
- UKRI Portal
- UKRI ‘In-Flight’ applications Q&A
- UK Participation in other EU programmes
- European Commission Brexit Preparedness
- Visit Europe after Brexit
- UK Position Paper for FP9 (Horizon Europe)

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