

eSTEEem Project Proposal Supplementary Information

Before completing the proposal submission form, please ensure that you have conducted a search on the [eSTEEem website](#) and [Scholarship Exchange](#) to check whether there have been any similar research/projects in the area you wish to investigate.

You may find it useful to complete the eSTEEem initial planning activity which is available on the [eSTEEem website](#) to help you formulate and shape your project idea.

Selection criteria

Funding for projects will be limited, and the eSTEEem Coordination Group will be considering all projects based on the following criteria:

- How closely the project addresses one or more of the priority areas.
- The range and scope of the project (e.g. how many modules/schools within STEM will benefit).
- How it builds upon previous projects from across STEM/the University and other research.
- The breadth and diversity of the project team and others involved with the project and involvement of students as partners.
- The potential for impact of the project as based on the criteria within the [Impact Evaluation Tracking Tool](#) (IETT).
- The number of ongoing and/or unfinished projects by members of the project team.

The following deliverables should be produced as part of the project and will be made available through eSTEEem:

- Short news items/blog posts for the eSTEEem website and presentation at the eSTEEem Seminar Series.
- Short and final reports.

- Contributions to annual conferences i.e., papers, presentations, posters.
- Journal publications, book chapters.

Funding

The expected amount of funding for each project will be up to a maximum of £4,000 for the total duration of the project. Funding for external dissemination to UK or international conferences may be requested up to a maximum of £2,000. However, please note that any requests must be made to the eSTEE M Management Team before the submission of an abstract to a conference and is dependent on the remaining budget within eSTEE M for that academic year. Funding may be used for:

- Consultancies for Associate Lecturer involvement or students as partners engagement. These will need to be arranged through the Senior Centre Manager, eSTEE M.
- Other items negotiable with the Senior Centre Manager, eSTEE M once projects have been formally approved.

Sign off procedure for fully worked-up proposals

Before submission to eSTEE M, **all** project proposals must be reviewed and endorsed by your School Scholarship Lead. If you are based outside of a school, an eSTEE M Director will need to review and endorse the proposal.

Your time allocation must be approved by your Head of School. If you are an AL, your time allocation must be approved by your Line Manager, and the proposal must also be signed off by your Head of School.

If you are based outside a school, then your time allocation and the proposal must be approved by your Line Manager.

Please ensure that you contact your respective School Scholarship Lead/eSTEE M Director to discuss your ideas as soon as possible and **no later than Friday 4th September 2026**. This is an important deadline to meet as this will allow them sufficient time to support you and provide feedback on your draft proposal before the submission deadline.

Please also make sure that you allow enough time for your Head of School/Line Manager to sign off the proposal in advance of the deadline, below is a timetable with recommended dates by which to obtain the necessary approvals. If you miss

these deadlines, it is at the discretion of the Scholarship Lead, Line Manager and HoS as to whether they can support your proposal for this round.

Date	Activity
By Friday 4 th September 2026	Express an interest in submitting a proposal with your School Scholarship Lead, or eSTeEM Director, for staff based outside a school
Monday 7 th September 2026, 10.30–12.00	Pre-bidding Workshop
Wednesday 9 th September 19:00–20:00	Drop-in session for Access, Participation and Success (APS) and Continuation and completion
By Friday 11 th September 2026	Obtain endorsement from your relevant School Scholarship Lead
Monday 14 th September 2026, 19.00–20.00	Drop-in session for Curriculum design and assessment and Staff and student community, wellbeing and support
By Friday 18 th September 2026	Obtain Line Manager approval (ALs)
By Friday 25 th September 2026	Obtain Head of School approval for all central, regional and AL staff. Line Manager approval for staff based outside a school
17.00 Friday 9 th October 2026	Submission deadline
November 2026	eSTeEM Coordination Group Scrutiny Panel
November/December 2026	Proposers informed of decision
January/February 2027	Induction

If you are an AL, and possibly working across a number of schools, then please contact the Scholarship Lead of the School to which the proposal relates.

School	Scholarship Lead	Email
C&C	Soraya Kouadri Mostéfaoui	stem-cc-scholarship@open.ac.uk
E&I	Alice Fraser-McDonald	alice.fraser-mcdonald@open.ac.uk
EEES	Servel Miller	servel.miller@open.ac.uk
LHCS	Sarah Daniell	sarah.daniell@open.ac.uk
M&S	Cathy Smith/Sally Crighton	cathy.smith@open.ac.uk / sally.crighton@open.ac.uk
SPS	Jonathan Nylk	jonathan.nylk@open.ac.uk

Future project call timetable

If you are unable to develop a proposal during this round, then we anticipate a further call as detailed below.

28 th Call for Scholarship Project Proposals	January 2027
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Key information for Associate Lecturers

1. Please note there is a maximum threshold of 1.3 FTE for all OU work. In the first instance, you should ensure that you have capacity for this role within your OU workload FTE. If you are unsure, please contact [Tuition, Assessment, Curriculum and Quality \(Tuition\)](#) to check if you have the capacity to undertake this task. You can check directly via the [AL Workload Report](#) tool. Before applying to this Expression of Interest, you will need to firstly contact your line manager to discuss your workload, to establish AL role workload commitments and whether exceptionally undertaking this task from your AL role FTE will leave you with sufficient capacity to undertake key, expected AL tasks. If no capacity is available, in exceptional circumstances the faculty approval process to raise an Additional Duties Contract will be followed.

2. Project time is limited to up to a maximum total of 20 days (over 12–18 months) which may be shared among a number of ALs working on the same project.
3. Scholarship skills development and mentoring will be provided by eSTEeM.
4. Project proposals will require endorsement from your School Scholarship Lead, approval of your time from your Line Manager (for each AL on the project team) and approval from your Head of School.
5. Applying for an eSTEeM project for the first time may feel a little daunting, but please remember there is help and support available. If you have an idea, but not a defined project, and would like to discuss it further in the first instance, then please feel free to contact your School Scholarship Lead (details above), your Line Manager or the eSTEeM Management Team by emailing esteem@open.ac.uk.
6. eSTEeM projects often require assistance with a variety of tasks, such as the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, literature reviews or running focus groups with students. Therefore, if you do not wish to lead a project but would be interested in contributing to a project in this way, please complete an [AL skills register](#) and return it to us at esteem@open.ac.uk. We will keep your details on file and, when an opportunity arises, we will try to match them to the skills, experience, and areas of interest that you have told us about.

Students as Partners in Scholarship

We continue to encourage projects that actively involve students as collaborators/co-investigators in the project team (and not just as research participants). We are happy to provide guidance on how exactly this might be achieved in the context of your project plan and potentially put you in touch with students who might be interested in collaborating with you.

Please note that students who accumulate eight hours or more of working on an eSTEeM project will be able to claim a digital badge 'Student Partner in Educational Research' in recognition of their contributions to scholarship. Please also visit the [Students as Partners in Scholarship Framework](#) for more guidance.

Collaboration with other key stakeholder colleagues

Where possible, we would also like to further encourage collaborative proposals between the Student Support Hub/Educational Advisers, learning designers and professional services staff. Please contact eSTEEem if you need help in this area.

Some projects may require input from other units. Once projects have been agreed, you will be invited to discuss your needs with us. We will attempt to negotiate necessary resources from other units (e.g., software development) on your behalf or find other cost-effective solutions. For the benefit of the project proposal process, please provide as much information as you can; we accept this area may not be fully formulated.

Professional development

eSTEEem has developed a Badged Open Course [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning \(SoTL\) in STEM](#), which is freely available on OpenLearn. The aim of the course is to guide colleagues through the process of systematically designing, conducting, reflecting upon and evaluating an ethically reasoned SoTL inquiry. This resource is highly recommended for anyone who is new to scholarship and looking to submit a proposal.

Aligning your eSTEEem project with Applaud

Applaud is the Open University's Advance HE accredited professional development programme. Participants have the opportunity to demonstrate their eligibility for one of the four categories of Advance HE by reflecting on their practice as teachers or supporters of student learning. As a member of an eSTEEem project team, you are encouraged to consider whether you could use your project as evidence towards a claim of Advance HE fellowship through Applaud.

The requirements are set out in detail on the [Applaud](#) website and the scheme aligns with the Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education (PSF 2023) and is accredited by the Advance HE. Applaud is designed to be flexible and to align with a wide range of activities. Applaud claims take as their focus your practice in relation to student learning. You would be supported in the preparation of your submission by an Applaud mentor.

To find out more, visit the [Applaud website](#) where you will find detailed advice and guidance, a registration form, as well as forums for advice.