



Oxford Martin School

2019/20 Call for Expressions of Interest

Application Guidelines

James Martin believed in the power of human ingenuity and the incredible potential of technology. He also understood that a vital task for the 21st Century was to understand how technological development could deliver improvements for society. Invention and innovation are not straightforward, and breakthroughs are rare. Moreover, significant barriers exist between invention and implementation. Research into solutions for complex global challenges requires not only ingenuity and new thinking, but also an understanding of how those ideas can best be deployed.

In the Oxford Martin School 2019-20 funding round, we seek proposals on novel or state-of-the-art technologies that create solutions for the major challenges of the 21st Century.

We invite Expressions of Interest that address one or both of the below:

- The development of **novel or state-of-the-art technologies to address a major contemporary challenge**. We take a very broad definition of technology and welcome informal enquiries prior to the development of a proposal on what constitutes a technological advance.
- The provision of novel ways of addressing **barriers to the deployment, uptake or adoption of an innovative technological solution**. Such barriers might be economic, social (for example acceptability) or involve legal, regulatory or governance structures. Again, we welcome informal enquiries prior to proposal development.

The Oxford Martin School aims to support new ways of conceptualising, analysing and addressing the challenges of the 21st Century. Proposals must demonstrate a feasible pathway to implementation at scale, but we encourage adventurous ideas – we have a significant appetite for risk.

The School judges research projects by their scale, excellence, impact and additionality. In the context of this call, **scale** means addressing a contemporary challenge of global significance. The projects need to demonstrate outstanding research **excellence** and that, if successful, they will have significant **impact** in contributing to a solution. The School looks to demonstrate **additionality** by bringing together innovative research groupings and supporting projects that cannot be supported through existing funding mechanisms.

All prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the School's Research and Programmes Manager, Dr Ella Adlen, ahead of submission.

More than a funder

The Oxford Martin School aims to find solutions to the most pressing challenges of our time, in particular issues that cannot be understood by work in any one academic field alone. We seek to create exciting and novel research consortia from across the University. An Oxford Martin research programme is not solely a funding arrangement but entails a partnership: we provide strong support for our researchers both in the unique challenges of interdisciplinary research and in disseminating the outcomes to effect real world change. We offer flexible, pragmatic funding and fundraising support: in return, we expect our researchers to engage actively in our community.

How will we decide?

First and foremost, we will judge your expression of interest against the School's research funding criteria:

- Scale and significance: does the project address a contemporary challenge of global significance?
- Academic excellence: does the project involve research of the highest international standard?
- Impact: will this research make a major positive difference in the world beyond academia, and how will this be achieved?
- Additionality: what is novel about the proposed research, and why should this research be funded by the Oxford Martin School, rather than by another funder?

Your Expression of Interest should therefore demonstrate in summary form that you:

- Are addressing a key research question that facilitates novel or state-of-the-art technologies in the creation of solutions for the major challenges of the 21st Century.
- Have the academic expertise and leadership in the relevant area and are eligible to apply.
- Have a clear pathway of impact so that the results of the project, if successful, will be taken up by policy-makers or practitioners.
- Are proposing an idea that would not be easily fundable through conventional research channels.
- Are willing and able to commit to being part of the Oxford Martin School's community of interdisciplinary and impact-focused researchers.

Eligibility

We view the combination and selection of our Programme's Lead Researcher(s) as vital to the success of the programmes.

All prospective lead applicants (Lead Researchers) must be on a permanent contract or have a senior fellowship position that extends beyond the length of the proposed research. Please be aware of your Department or Faculty's policies; if you are not eligible to apply for research funding as a Principal Investigator in your own name, you are not eligible to submit an Expression of Interest.

Applications to the Oxford Martin School usually include Lead Researchers from more than one Department and successful proposals are very likely to pull together novel combinations of researchers from different fields. If we can be helpful in building partnerships across the University, please get in touch. We are particularly interested to receive expressions of interest from consortia

that span different divisions, though this is not a requirement. Please contact us if you intend to be named in multiple applications.

The School expects to provide funding for at least 20% of our Lead Researchers – we do this because we want this programme to benefit from your full involvement and for the School to benefit from your membership. We view 20% as the ideal minimum amount, but we are flexible as to whether you are able to contribute more or, in some circumstances, less. We are aware that senior academics have a number of ongoing demands and commitments; however, you must be able to demonstrate that you have the time to lead an interdisciplinary research programme at the School.

The length of the programme is flexible and in the past has been 1-5 years in length. The budget is also flexible and in the past has ranged from £100k upwards, with this funding round having a maximum amount of £1m.

The Oxford Martin School does not support research external to the University of Oxford.

Matched funding

Where other potential matching funds are available or highly likely, this should be made clear and will be considered positively by the committee, but this is not a requirement. Where other funding has not been identified the School can work with you to identify and secure further resources.

The process

For the first stage of our selection process, we are seeking short Expressions of Interest from eligible academics. We request that you provide a short (**maximum of four pages**) description of the proposed research and a short (<2 page) CV for each proposed Lead Researcher.

We are not prescriptive about the structure of the Expression of Interest, but a typical one might comprise:

- A non-technical summary (300 words);
- The context and statement of the problem;
- A description of the proposed research and anticipated outputs (~2 pages);
- An outline of how the work, if it is successful, will effect change;
- Detail of matching funds (if available) and plans for funding continuing work; and
- A statement of your future anticipated interactions with the School.

At this stage we are interested in the subject to be researched, approach to be taken, and the suitability of the lead applicants. If we decide to request a full proposal, we will then need more details of the research, the timetable and the team. We do *not* require costed proposals at this stage, but please provide a rough estimate of budget and length of the proposed programme. Please note that the Oxford Martin School will meet directly allocated, directly incurred and estates costs, but not indirect costs. Real costs associated with the project will be allowable.

Deadline for Expressions of Interest: 5pm on Monday 11th November 2019

The Expressions of Interest will be considered by the Management Committee of the Oxford Martin School. All information will be treated in strict confidence.

Requests for full proposals will be issued in mid-December. The deadline for full proposals will be in early February, and it is hoped that final decisions will be made in March. It is envisaged that the research teams would be able to start work Michaelmas Term 2020.

We anticipate that the Oxford Martin School will contribute up to a total of £1 million per project over a period of two to five years.

If you have research or strategic queries, please contact Dr Ella Adlen, ella.adlen@oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk, ext 87367. Please submit administrative queries and your Expressions of Interest to Claire Jordan, claire.jordan@oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk.

www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/research/funding