

PRODUCTIVITY INSIGHTS NETWORK

CALL OUTLINE

ROUND 3: PRODUCTIVITY
PROJECTS FUNDING



Economic
and Social
Research Council



About the Productivity Insights Network

The Productivity Insights Network (PIN) was established in January 2018 and is funded by the [Economic and Social Research Council](#). As a multi-disciplinary network of social science researchers engaged with public, private, and third sector partners, our aim is to change the tone of the productivity debate in theory and practice. It is led by the [University of Sheffield](#), with co-investigators at the [Cambridge Econometrics](#), [Cardiff University](#), [Durham University](#), [University of Sunderland](#), [SQW](#), [University of Cambridge](#), [University of Essex](#), [University of Glasgow](#), [University of Leeds](#) and [University of Stirling](#). For more information on our team [click here](#).

Our three year programme of work to December 2020 aims to provide new insights on the productivity puzzle in the UK. We are committed to growing the Productivity Insights Network through the participation of academic, public, private, and third sector partners who bring new insights to the productivity debate – for more information on joining the network [contact us here](#).

The work programme of the Productivity Insights Network is designed to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and the engagement of academic and non-academic partners. There are three core streams of activity that are being developed, they are:

Core Work Programme:

Led by the core PIN team. As well as undertaking reviews of the [existing evidence base](#) and identifying opportunities for new directions in interdisciplinary research, the core team develop new thematic, place and sector-based insights on the productivity puzzle.

Open Research Work Programme:

As an open network PIN invites proposals to undertake research that advances or explores new directions in productivity research in conjunction with key user communities. Funding is available for interdisciplinary teams to address research gaps emerging research priorities This is our third open call. Details on previously funded projects [can be found here](#).

Responsive Work Programme:

As well as open funding calls, PIN is working closely with a number of partners to respond to requests and to develop briefings on real time basis.

Overview of the Funding: Small Projects and Pioneer Projects

The third open call for Productivity Project Funding is live from Monday 9th December 2019 until Friday 31st January 2020 at 16:00. We are looking to fund new interdisciplinary directions in productivity research across the social sciences that engage partners and deliver impact. Applications must be both interdisciplinary and involve non-academic partners. Applications must be collaborative, with preference given for projects which are either, interdisciplinary, involve a non-academic partner, or which draw on evidence from different fields. International partners are welcome, provided there is a UK-based scholar as lead applicant.

You can see an overview of the projects that received funding in the previous rounds for both the Small Projects, Pioneer Funding and Targeted Small Grants [here](#). All applications must demonstrate how the funding will support a clearly defined piece of interdisciplinary social science research with an identifiable outcome which makes a contribution to productivity research and engages with non-academic audiences.

Level and duration of award

Grant name	Value	Duration	Time frame
Small Project Funding	£10,000	4 months	February 2020-June 2020
Pioneer	£50,000	7 months	February 2020-Sept 2020

Applications will not be considered for less than £5,000, and the maximum small grant is £10,000 over 4 months and the Pioneer is up to £50,000 over 7 months.

Please ensure you are able to carry out your project as planned within the specified timeframes as no extensions will be granted. (i.e. all resources can be implemented for your planned project).

Please contact us at productivity@sheffield.ac.uk if you have any questions on this matter.

Eligibility

Proposals are welcome from public, private and third sector organisations. Postgraduate students are not eligible to apply however applications from early career researcher are welcomed. International partners are welcome to apply, providing the focus of the work is on the productivity puzzle in the UK. Where there is an international dimension to the project it is not anticipated that the Productivity Project Funding will support overseas travel or attendance at conferences. Applicants can be named in more than one application but cannot act as the lead investigator in more than one application.

Eligible costs

Productivity Project Funding is intended to cover the direct expenses, including:

- project planning and development costs (cost of travel for discussion in the UK; initial workshops with potential partners)
- travel and maintenance for UK scholars; including travel to disseminate results of the research through engagement and impact events
- research assistance and administrative support
- workshops or events to advance the programme of research or engagement and impact associated with the project (i.e. the costs of travel and maintenance for key participants)
- consumables, travel (non-international) and subsistence.

NOTE: FOR THE PIONEER FUNDING (i.e. PROJECTS UP TO £50k) REPLACEMENT SALARY COSTS, TO COVER TEACHING, ADMINISTRATION OR OTHER DUTIES, ARE NOT AWARDED TO REPLACE THE APPLICANT AT THE LEVEL AT WHICH THEY ARE EMPLOYED, BUT FOR A JUNIOR LEVEL REPLACEMENT. YOU ARE EXPECTED TO USE SCALES AND SALARIES FOR AN EARLY CAREER LECTURER OR EQUIVALENT (EXCLUDING OVERHEADS AND INDIRECT COSTS BUT INCLUDING ON COSTS) – E.G. c.£40K PER YEAR FTE.

The following items **are not** currently eligible for funding: institutional overheads, or any element that should properly be ascribed to institutional overheads; computer hardware including laptops, electronic notebooks, digital cameras, etc; books and other permanent resources; the preparation of camera-ready copy, copy-editing, proof-reading, indexing, nor any other editorial task; payment to the principal researcher(s) in lieu of salary.

Applicants should not apply for expenditure that will take place over more than 7 months in the case of the Pioneer Grants or 4 months in the case of the Small Grants. The administration of the scheme is undertaken solely by the Productivity Insights Network with all aspects of the application process, assessment process and award process managed by the University of Sheffield.

Confidentiality

The PIN peer review process is undertaken anonymously with all reviewers required to treat proposals in confidence and keep any personally retained documentation (paper or electronic) secure. Reviewers will review all proposals using the template below.

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest might arise as a result of direct, or indirect, personal, academic, financial or working relationships. If you think that your involvement in assessing a particular Productivity Project Funding proposal might be perceived as a conflict of interest, you should declare this to Professor Philip McCann or Professor Tim Vorley as soon as possible.

Equal Opportunities

It is our intention to ensure that the deliberations are fair and equitable and we will achieve this through paying close attention to the scoring criteria and definitions, and by challenging any imprecise language used by reviewers which might allow unconscious biases to creep into the panel's discussions. The PIN is committed to equal opportunities in all of our activities. Reviewers should ensure that they avoid any bias in the assessment of proposals and final reports due to gender, disability, age, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or religious belief. Comments by the reviewers must not contravene this policy. Defamatory or otherwise actionable comments should also be avoided.

Protection of Ideas

The integrity of reviews is dependent on the selflessness of reviewers. Productivity Project Funding proposals must be treated as strictly confidential and seen for the purpose of review only. After assessment any personally retained documentation relating to the review should be destroyed. Reviewers must not take advantage of any information obtained as a result of their role.

Scoring System

Reviewers will select a score of 1-5 to indicate their assessment according to the six criteria (C1-C5) in the table below. Detailed comments in support of these scores will be made in the free text overall assessment section. Both the scores and the free text will be used during the selection process.

Criteria description		Score 1-5	Comments	
C1	Potential contribution to the productivity debate			
C2	Research design and methods			
C3	Strength of team & external partners			
C4	Value for money			
C5	Outputs, dissemination and impact			
Criteria Scale				
Poor	Fair/Some weaknesses	Good	Excellent	Outstanding
1	2	3	4	5

The Selection Process

All proposals will be assessed in 2 stages;

Stage 1 – Proposal review

Based on the five criteria in the evaluation form the Productivity Project Funding proposals will be scored by a minimum of two reviewers.

Stage 2 – Award Panel

Following the initial review of proposals, the applications will be considered by an awards panel (see Table 2) including a representative from the ESRC. The panel will meet, either virtually or in person, with the final decisions based on reviewing ranked scores by reviewers while also looking to build a portfolio of Productivity Project Funding projects across the thematic areas and in accordance with the priorities of PIN. Divergent scores will be reviewed by the Primary Investigator.

Member	Function
2 x PIN Co-Investigators (academic)	To assess the proposal in relation to the academic objectives of PIN
External independent academic reviewer	To provide an external perspective on the academic excellence of the proposal
ESRC representative	To ensure protocols adhered to in selection

Timetable

The Productivity Project Funding call will open on **9th December 2019** and close at **16:00 on 31st January 2020**. All applications will be reviewed by the panel and notified of the outcomes in line with the following timeframe.

- Call launch – Monday 9th December 2019.
- Call closes - 16:00 on Friday 31st January 2020.
- Final decision and summary feedback communicated by 14th February 2020.
- Grant begins – 28th February 2020.

Submissions:

- To download an application form, visit the [PIN website](#)
- Submissions should be sent to this email address: productivity@sheffield.ac.uk

Contact:

- For all enquiries about the Call, please contact productivity@sheffield.ac.uk and join our mailing list [here](#).