

Funder Groups Guidance

A) Choosing the RIGHT Funder Group	
a) Why is this important to Imperial?	<p>This data is used to determine the additional government funding Imperial receives (known as “Quality-Related” or QR funding). The amount of funding we receive depends on a calculation that includes factors such as quality of research and volume of research income.</p> <p>Entering the correct funder group is important because it directly affects the proportion of funding received by the College and maintains data quality.</p>
b) Why is Quality-Related (QR) funding important?	<p>QR funding is one aspect of the UK’s Dual Support System. This means universities are given a block grant each year from Research England and, in addition, individual academics can apply for grant-funding for their own specific research.</p> <p>Imperial uses its QR funding across a range of research development activities, including infrastructure costs such as permanent academic and support staff salaries, equipment and the Library.</p>
c) Who determines the funder groups?	<p>The funder group categories are determined by Research England. The Oracle Grants System records this data when an award is set-up by Research Services / Joint Research Office.</p> <p>Selecting the right funder group ensures that College data is correct and we receive the correct proportion of government funding to support research across the College.</p>
d) What other funding is affected by the funder group categories?	<p>Research England provides additional support for any funding the College receives from a UK, EU or Overseas Peer / Open charity (see definition in Section 2) which is known as the “Charity Support Fund” (internally referred to as C-stream). Selecting the correct funder group will increase Imperial’s C-stream allocation.</p> <p>Similarly, Research England also provides additional support for industry collaborations known as the “Business Support Element” (internally referred to as B-stream). Selecting the right funder group will increase Imperial’s B-stream allocation.</p>
e) Originating Funder	<p>The funder group should always be selected based on where the funding originally comes from. This will be the case if a lead organisation is passing some funds to the College on behalf of the funder i.e. joint collaborations. The originating funder should always be recorded in Oracle Grants and the funder group updated accordingly.</p> <p>For example, if UCL are leading an EPSRC project with Imperial as a joint partner, then EPSRC would be the originating funder and the funder group would be Research Council.</p> <p>Income received from a multinational company should be coded depending on the location of the office making the award.</p>
f) Existing Funders	<p>If a funder already exists in Oracle Grants, never assume that the assigned funder group will also apply to the new award being set-up. Each funding scheme may have a different submission process, so the previous categorisation will not automatically apply to every award from that funder.</p> <p>For example, an existing award may be categorised as “Charity Peer / Open”, but the new award may not have been selected by peer review or through open competition, so this would be classified as “Charity Non-Peer / Non-Open”.</p>

If in doubt, contact the Research Office for advice at rs.compliance@imperial.ac.uk

B) Funder Group Categories

The following category descriptions are available on the [HESA website](#) (HESA is the Higher Education Statistics Agency which gathers statistical data on behalf of Research England)

1) Research Councils

Select “OST Research Councils” if funding has come from any of the following organisations which are the core Research Councils plus The Royal Society and British Academy:

- UKRI – UK Research and Innovation
- AHRC – Arts & Humanities Research Council
- BBSRC – Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council
- EPSRC – Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
- ESRC – Economic and Social Research Council
- MRC – Medical Research Council
- NERC – Natural Environment Research Council
- STFC – Science and Technology Facilities Council
- The Royal Society
- British Academy

2) Charities Peer / Open

Funder Group Options:

- UK- Based Charity Peer / Open
- EU-Based Charity Peer / Open
- Overseas Charity Peer Open

This is only for charities that run an open competition allowing any academic from any Higher Education Institution to apply for their grants, **and** who make funding decisions using an independent peer review process. Follow these steps to make an assessment:

i) Check Charitable Status	<p>A UK Charity must be listed on one of the following websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charity Commission • Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator • Charity Commission of Northern Ireland • Or is it an exempt charity <p>Some UK charities (e.g. the Royal Academy of Engineering) frequently act as a distributor of Government or public funding, and not all schemes can be treated as charity funding. Instead, the funder group must reflect the original source of funds which will usually be made clear in the funding call details or award letter which should be retained for audit purposes. If you are unsure, please contact the Research Office.</p> <p>EU Charities and Overseas Charities won't be listed in one single place, so check the organisation's website to see if its activities and legal status meet the UK government definition of charitable purpose.</p> <p>As a further check, consider how the organisation generates its own funds. If it is reliant on public donations then it is probably a charity, but if its income is generated from financial investments (e.g. a Trust or Foundation), and is not exclusively distributed for charitable purposes, then it may not count as a charity.</p>
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ii) Determine Country Location	<p>Is the organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based in the UK In one of the EU Member States <p>If based in any other country, it will be classified as 'Overseas'.</p>
iii) Check if "Open Competition"	<p>Did the organisation allow more than one organisation to apply for the funding through direct competition? This will <i>usually</i> be indicated by an open call being published on the funder's website.</p> <p>Funding with a selective or restricted call may still meet the criteria for open competition provided that the funding stream is available to <i>at least</i> two organisations. If in doubt, please contact the Research Office for advice before proceeding.</p>
v) Check "Peer Review" Status	<p>Does the website explain how it makes funding decisions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If it takes independent scientific advice on which applications to fund, then this will count as Peer Review But if its own Trustees or Board Members make the decisions in isolation, this is not genuine Peer Review and cannot be counted. <p>This information can sometimes be determined by looking at Annual Reports or Accounts if available on the organisation's website, or accessed via their entry on the Charity Commission website.</p>
vi) Check duration of award	<p>An award can only be considered awarded through open competition for a maximum of seven years. Awards longer than seven years must be subject to external peer review at intervals of no more than five years and compete with other demands on the charity's funds.</p> <p>If this is not explicitly set out in an award letter or contract, it will be necessary to obtain confirmation of this from the funder OR change the funder group to 'Non-Peer/Non-Open' after the seven year period is complete. If you think this may apply, please contact the Research Office for advice before proceeding.</p>
vii) Supplements/Extensions	<p>Where the duration of a grant awarded through open competition is extended by more than a year part way through the project, the following criteria must be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any extra funding should compete with other demands on the charity's funds and there should be an external peer review process to agree that the project can be extended. For no cost extensions, there should be an external peer review process to agree that the project can be extended. <p>In these cases, it will be necessary to obtain confirmation from the funder that these criteria have been met.</p>

If you can only find evidence of the charity being either peer reviewed or open, but not both, then classify it as Non-Peer / Non-Open. **If in doubt, contact the Research Office for advice.**

For all awards classified as Peer / Open, evidence for the classification must be kept on file to satisfy future audits, e.g. funding call details, copies of annual reports, correspondence with funders.

3) Charities Non Peer / Non-Open

Funder Group Options:

- UK Charity Non Peer / Non Open
- EU-Based Charity Non Peer / Non Open
- Overseas Charity Non Peer / Non Open

Following the assessment process above in Part (2), if a charitable organisation does **not** meet the criteria for Peer Review **and** Open Competition, select the relevant Non-Peer / Non-Open option above based on the location of the charity (see Part (2ii)).

4) Government Bodies

Funder Group Options:

- UK Central Government and Local Authority
- UK Health and Hospital Authority
- EU-Based Government Bodies (including European Commission)

These categories are only for grants or contracts from government departments or health organisations operating within the UK or EU.

i) Check the list of UK Government Departments and organisations	<p>UK Government departments and bodies must be listed on the government website.</p> <p>This funder group includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Government departments • Local authorities • Non-departmental government bodies e.g. British Council • Any organisation financed from central Government funds.
<p>ii) Check whether a UK Health or Hospital authority*</p> <p><i>*NB While the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) combines this with UK Government, Imperial maintains a separate category in Oracle Grants.</i></p>	<p>Check whether the funder is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A UK Health and Hospital Authority (not private) • The National Health Service (NHS) • A general medical or general dental practice. <p>Note that awards from the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) are classified as UK Government because the source of funding originates from the Department of Health.</p>
iii) Check the lists of EU Government departments and organisations.	<p>EU Government departments and bodies may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A government department, agency or body in one of the EU Member States • A European Commission grant-funding programme such as Horizon Europe • A European Commission department or executive agency.

5) Industry

Funder Group Options:

- UK Industry, Commerce and Public Corporations
- EU Industry, Commerce and Public Corporations
- Overseas Industry, Commerce and Public Corporations

These categories are used for industry-based funding. Follow these steps to make an assessment:

i) Check Organisation Type	<p>Is it a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial or commercial company • Publicly owned trading body (usually a statutory corporation)
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	<p>Company names may be followed by the suffix PLC, Ltd, Inc, Gmbh, SPA or B.V etc.</p> <p>Registered UK businesses can be found on the Companies House website.</p>
ii) Check Financial Independence	<p>Does the organisation have a “substantial degree of financial independence?” – i.e. it does not rely on funding from government and can raise funds by other means. If in doubt, please contact the Research Office for advice before proceeding.</p> <p>NB - wholly owned subsidiary companies of universities are not classified as industry but “UK Other.”</p>
iii) Multinational Organisations with multiple sites	<p>If funding is from a multinational company with numerous sites, the location of the office making the award (rather than the invoice address) will determine which of the three funder group options to select in this category.</p>
iv) IC Consultants	<p>Check the funding contract to see where the funding originates from. If it is industry, select the location of the originating funder.</p> <p>NB: IC Consultants also manage funds from non-industry sources so it is important to check the originating funder.</p>

6) Other

Funder Group Options:

- UK Other
- EU Other
- Overseas Other

These funder groups should be used for funding that does not meet any of the categories listed above. This could be a broad range of possible organisations, including other higher education institutions, Non-Governmental Organisations, Trusts, Foundations and individual donors.

Where Imperial is a partner on an award led by another higher education institution, select the funder group based on the **originating** funder. For example, if UCL are leading an EPSRC project with Imperial as a partner, then EPSRC would be the original funder.

