

# Project Grant: Guidance for Applicants

The Sciencewise Expert Resource Centre for Public Dialogue In Science and Innovation (Sciencewise-ERC), funded by the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) helps policy makers commission and use public dialogue to inform policy decisions in emerging areas of science and technology. It consists of a comprehensive online resource of information, advice and guidance together with a wide range of support services aimed at policy makers and all the different stakeholders involved in science and technology policy making, including the public. The Sciencewise-ERC provides co-funding to Government departments and agencies to develop and commission public dialogue activities. This document provides guidance to applications for this funding.

For further information please log onto [www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk](http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk)

## 1. Background to the Sciencewise-ERC

### Project Grant

Sciencewise was originally an open grants scheme, which funded a number of science engagement projects. This has been revised with the new round of funding (from 1st February 2008) and projects are now commissioned directly with policy makers in line with priority areas for engagement in science and technology.

Grants are awarded to 'Commissioning Agents' i.e. Government departments and agencies, to procure and manage their own dialogue and engagement projects, with the support and guidance from the Sciencewise-ERC team. Grants are provided for a proportion of the total project cost and there must be a financial contribution from the Commissioning Department, usually 50%.

## 2. Eligibility Criteria

Projects are usually commissioned directly in line with our priority areas for projects and upcoming policy making. Please refer to the projects pages on our website for more information on our current priority areas. We do not usually accept unsolicited applications and meeting the following eligibility criteria does not provide any indication or guarantee that a project application will be taken forward.

- **Who?** Funding can be given to Government departments, agencies and Executive Non Departmental Public Bodies (providing there is support from a central Government department)
- **What?** Funding is given for projects that carry out public dialogue to inform national science and technology policy making. There must be a clear policy 'hook' and a

clear policy-owning department. The project dialogue must comply with the **Government's Approach to Public Dialogue on Science and Technology (our 'Guiding Principles')**. The public dialogue must be 'upstream' with a clear mechanism to inform policy.

- **How Much?** Sciencewise-ERC grants are given on a co-funding basis. Typically, fifty percent (50%) of the total project costs are expected to be provided by the Commissioning Department and other stakeholders as appropriate.

### 3. Application Process

It should be noted that projects are funded directly with eligible Government departments or agencies. The first step is to contact a member of the Sciencewise-ERC team to discuss whether the project is appropriate and in a priority area.

- Priority areas are listed on the website at **www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk** on the projects page
- Contact us in the first instance to discuss your project idea at:  
[Sciencewise-ERC](#),  
B329, Harwell IBC, Oxon OX11 0QJ.  
**Helpline:** 0870 190 6324;  
**E:** [enquiries@sciencewise-erc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@sciencewise-erc.org.uk);  
**W:** [www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk](http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk)
- If the project seems to fit our criteria, we will arrange an initial meeting to discuss the potential project and other partners, offer advice for dialogue methods and explain the application process and project requirements.
- If it is agreed in principle to fund the project, we will guide you through the Business Case submission and provide a template for this: **SWP03: Business Case template**
- Once the project is approved by BIS, a Standard Offer letter will be sent to the Commissioning Agent.
- Following further discussions, including methods of invoicing, a formal Grant Offer

Letter is prepared and sent to the Commissioning Agent which must be signed and returned to the Sciencewise-ERC.

- Assistance is provided to the Commissioning Agent to prepare a specification for the Work in order to issue an Invitation to Tender (ITT) for the delivery of the dialogue project.
- A Commissioning Team must be appointed by the Commissioning Agent to manage the process of choosing a delivery contractor, and must include representatives from the Sciencewise-ERC.
- The Commissioning Agent will be expected to set up a Working Group and/or Project Oversight Group to assist in the commissioning process and oversee the delivery contract.
- Please note that the dialogue contract will be between the Commissioning Agent and the appointed delivery organisation and will be managed by the Agent, not the Sciencewise-ERC.

### 4. Delivery and Reporting Requirements

- Document **SWP02 outlines the requirements for funded projects** (e.g. reporting, meeting attendance, promotion, evaluation).
- Help is provided to develop the project specification (ITT) for issuing to prospective bidders. An example specification can be provided (document **SWP04: Example spec for project ITT**).
- Once the project has been commissioned, a Sciencewise-ERC Dialogue and Engagement Specialist (DES) will monitor the delivery to check progress.
- Regular progress reporting is required on agreed timescales.
- Invoices are to be submitted to the Sciencewise-ERC on an agreed frequency and are to be accompanied by document **SWP05: Progress report template**.