



**CaSDaR**  
Careers and Skills for  
Data-driven Research

CaSDaR Funding Call 1:

Review Process Guidance Document for Prospective Reviewers

Call Open: 05/11/2025

Application Deadline: 22/01/2026

Successful Project Announcement: 11/03/2026

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## 1. Executive summary

Part of the remit of CaSDaR is to provide an evidence base showing the value of embedding data stewardship into research workflows; we feel that a sustainable way of doing this is to fund data stewards in research organisations and to support them to write public reports to evaluate the process.

We are asking reviewers to assess applications for grants of £5k, for short-term projects of 8–10 weeks, and £70k, for longer projects of 6–9 months. The £5K Data Stewardship Mini Projects is geared towards upskilling prospective trainee data stewards and providing work experience; The £70k Data Stewardship Large Projects are aimed towards established individuals, and provide funding to complete a project at an organisation to display the value of embedding data stewardship practices in an organisation type, research project, or collection.

We intend that these projects will form an evidence base to display the relevance of introducing data stewards in the UK across multiple disciplines and organisations.

The information below gives an overview of the applications we anticipate receiving, the proposed timeline, and activities requested from reviewers in the review process. Recruited reviewers will be sent the relevant reviewer forms with accompanying instructions of how to fill them in.

## 2. Types of application

1. Applications for £5k funding –These are aimed at giving individuals an opportunity to upskill and experience data stewardship work. Individuals will be part of a training cohort and will be expected to maintain regular contact with that cohort throughout the duration of the 8–10 week project. We expect that this application form will be relatively lightweight and each application form will not be more than 5 pages/2000 words, so should not take longer than 1 hour per application form to review.

Examples of outcomes/projects include but are not limited to:

- Cataloguing or resource building for an existing collection e.g archive, tissue collections, sample collections
- Creating workflows for accurate metadata cleaning and enrichment
- Creation of a checklist to promote FAIR data at the point of data collection
- Generating README templates for file types/techniques commonly used across a group or project

- Supporting sensitive data sharing within a project or group by creating a process to get consent
2. Applications for £70k funding –These are aimed at providing use cases and an evidence base to show the value of embedding data stewardship into a project, therefore we anticipate that these projects will be more complex and will last 6–9 months. Applicants for this funding will be expected to work independently, and training will not be provided. We expect that each application will not be more than 8 pages/2800 words, therefore each should take approximately 2 hours to review.

Examples of outcomes/projects include but are not limited to:

- Work experience as a data steward embedded in a department
- A project to advance recognition of the data stewardship role at an organisation
- Framework for recognition of data stewardship activities in aligned roles e.g. librarian, technician
- Promotion of stewardship as a concept in disciplines with under-developed recognition of data
- Upskilling an individual to address an institutional need within an organisation to fulfil data stewardship responsibilities including buying out time for CPD

NB. Whilst teams can bid for the money, the expectation is that the funding will be used as salaries for individual/s within the team, or to be brought to the team, to show the value of human resourcing in data stewardship

### 3. Organisations who may apply for funding

The primary applicants for both schemes must be individuals employed at an organisation based in the UK (or the UK office of a multinational corporation) proposing to host this project. Organisations that are not normally eligible for UKRI funding may be considered for support through this flexible funding call, however, any funding awarded must comply with [UKRI's subsidy control regulations](#). Addressing this will not be the focus of the review process, and due diligence will be handled by the CaSDaR team.

### 4. Review Process

- Applications will be screened to remove incomplete or insufficient applications; in these instances, the network coordinator will provide a follow up conversation with those individuals.

- Applications will then be allocated randomly to reviewers. Projected **5 applications per reviewer** for the £5k projects and **3 applications per reviewer** for the £70k projects, however this is dependent upon the number of reviewers recruited.
- Reviewers will receive links to the relevant reviewer forms, and instructions on how to complete them.
- For the £5k projects, each application will be reviewed twice and for the £70k projects each application will be reviewed three times
- Once the reviews have been received, the scores for the applications will be ranked.
- The outcomes will be discussed in the review panel.

## 5. The reviews

- Reviews will be judged by reviewers on a 1-5 scale on the categories listed below.
- Reviewers will need to address [conflicts of interest](#) on the review form.
- We ask the reviewers to focus on the following criteria for review for both the £70k projects and the £5k projects:
  - The feasibility of the project: whether the outcomes are realistic within the given timeframe and budget
  - The degree to which the application addresses and explains the challenges that affect data stewardship in their area of work and how this relates to the objectives of CaSDaR
  - The degree to which the project proposal convincingly explains the impact of the project on the individual (for the £5k project) and for the local or national setting (for the £70k project)
  - The degree to which the project will advance an area that is currently underrepresented in data stewardship
  - The suitability of the organisational infrastructure and expertise available to support the project
- For the £70k projects, we also ask that in addition the reviewers consider the following:
  - The degree to which the project outlines how the impact of the project will be sustained beyond the funding period.
  - The degree to which the application represents a timely intervention for the area of work

There will also be an opportunity to provide feedback to the applicants.

We are interested in ensuring that areas/projects and organisations that are under-represented are considered, however this will be addressed with the reviewer panel.

## 6. Timeline

- 15/11/25: Registration of interest forms received
- 21/01/25: Applications received by CaSDaR
- 28/01/25: Applications sent to reviewers
- 27/02/25: Applications returned to CaSDaR by reviewers
- 05/03/25: Review panel (CaSDaR leadership team + reviewers) meet to finalise awards
- 11/03/25: Successful projects announced

## 7. Contacts

For more information on the CaSDaR Network+ visit our website: [www.casdar.ac.uk](http://www.casdar.ac.uk)

For specific information about this funding call visit our [CaSDaR £5k Projects Funding Page](#) or the [CaSDaR £70k Projects Funding Page](#).

If you have any questions about the review process, then please contact the CaSDaR Team at [casdar@soton.ac.uk](mailto:casdar@soton.ac.uk)

## 8. GDPR Statement

The CaSDaR Network is hosted at the University of Southampton and their privacy statement can be found here: <https://casdar.ac.uk/privacy-policy/>

Please be aware that as part of CaSDaRs Research on Data Stewardship Needs (approved via University of Southampton Ethics/ERGO number: 108977) we will be retaining information about applicant institutions, the domains in which the applicants work, and the details about their need for data stewardship within their institution in order to create an evidence base of data stewardship needs from our funding call. We do not have plans to share the reviews.

Any information that we retain about the reviewers and the associated reviews will be subject to restrictions in the University of Southampton's [data protection policy](#) and will not be shared with anyone outside of the CaSDaR executive leadership team unless reviewers agree to their information being shared with other UKRI Networks as potential reviewers.

## 9. ED&I

The CaSDaR Network+ is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities and fair treatment for all students, workers, staff, applicants, and reviewers. We will also ensure that

we run additional sessions to support applications, and the funding call will be discussed in EDI sessions run by CaSDaR to ensure that we receive feedback from diverse voices within the community. We will collect optional ED&I information as part of the funding call submission.