

Guidance to grant applicants

SUMMARY OF KEY STEPS

1. Ensure your proposal meets the funding criteria as set out in this guidance;
2. Email secretary@reesjeffreys.co.uk to register your interest, providing a short outline of your proposal including the level of funding being sought, the outcomes you expect to achieve and how you believe your application aligns to the Fund's Objects. Do this as early as possible to allow time to meet application deadlines;
3. If the Trustees agree your proposal falls within the Fund's Objects and funding criteria, the Secretary will provide you with an application form and guidance notes.
4. Read the guidance and the application form carefully;
5. Complete the application form answering all the questions;
6. Email your completed application form to secretary@reesjeffreys.co.uk on or before the submission deadline. The deadlines are stated on our website.

ABOUT REES JEFFREYS ROAD FUND

We believe roads really matter to all of us:

- Whether we're making journeys as drivers, passengers, walkers or wheelers,
- Whether we're retailers, businesses and industries receiving and despatching goods, materials and services,
- Whether we're affected, positively or negatively, by the impact of roads and traffic.

We refer to Rees Jeffreys Road Fund as "RJRF" or "the Fund".

Rees Jeffreys Road Fund's charitable Objects are set out in our [Trust Deed](#). The Fund can only make grants that are in line with our Objects. To achieve these charitable Objects, the Trustees have identified the Fund's objectives as being:

To foster improvements in the engineering, management, design and use of roads to deliver safer, more environmentally sensitive, more aesthetically pleasing and more enjoyable outcomes.

We don't have the funds to deliver against all of our charitable Objects. Therefore, to make best use of the funds we have available, the Trustees set priorities for the types of proposals they will consider for grant funding.

WHAT YOU CAN APPLY FOR

The size of grants we award

Grants most commonly fall in the range £5,000 - £30,000. Trustees may consider making an award of around £50,000 to proposals they consider have the potential to make a transformational or significant contribution to the future experience or provision of roads in the UK. If applicants are considering applying for larger grants, they should discuss this with the Secretary as part of their initial expression of interest.

What we fund

Our focus is on the provision, use and enjoyment of **roads** in the UK (including Northern Ireland). Grant applications may include other forms of transport or mobility where this is relevant to, and integrated with, the use of roads. Trustees are generally looking for proposals that will have a transformational impact on how roads are provided or experienced in the future.

Trustees deliberately choose not to set a defined list of projects or activities we fund, as the Trustees are wanting to see innovative, new and novel ideas. However, as a guide these are the **outcomes** Rees Jeffreys Road Fund is interested in achieving:

- Projects that may lead to improved experience for road users, whether they are walking, wheeling, driving or a passenger. This might include improvements to safety but also increasing the pleasure or ease of mobility. This may include projects that seek to understand changing needs and behaviours of road users as well as influencing future behaviour.
- Projects that improve the way roads are provided, managed and maintained, their economic and environmental performance and the role roads play as part of an integrated transport approach.
- Projects that lead to improvements in managing roads in a sustainable and aesthetical way, including how roads sit within the urban and natural landscape. This includes both resilience to, and contribution to the mitigation of, the impact of climate change.
- Projects that support the capability and capacity of the highways and transport profession and nurture interest in highways-related careers, especially amongst under-represented groups.

Trustees favour proposals which include the following **features**. (Applicants should seek to meet as many of these features as possible):

- Proposals which have national rather than local significance or impact (we will consider local pilots, trials or projects which produces lessons or insights with potentially national application).
- We welcome proposals that can contribute to development or achievement of transport policy or guidance, especially those that will gaps in evidence or methods. For example, projects that contribute to the Safe System approach and could contribute to a reduction in people killed or seriously injured.
- Those which involve other funding partners, unless the application is for a very small amount of funding. Our website (useful Links page) contains a list of potential funding sources which applicants may find useful to refer to.
- Innovative topics and ideas, which are not already being researched or worked on elsewhere, and which will add to the UK's knowledge or ability to provide safe, sustainable and enjoyable roads. We expect applicants to demonstrate their awareness of existing work, be able to explain why their proposal is innovative, fills a gap or adds additional value to existing work, and why their proposal is the most appropriate method or approach to address a gap or achieve an outcome.

- Proposals that can evidence or strongly demonstrate buy-in from technical experts, stakeholders or decision makers (especially relevant highway authorities or Department for Transport). Where stakeholder engagement is part of the proposal, we look for a strong and clear plan for how such buy-in will be achieved.
- Proposals which can support tangible impact, change or improvements within a 24-month period.

What we don't fund

We are only able to provide funding for proposals that fall within our Objects. Following the criteria set by the Trustees, Rees Jeffreys Road Fund does not fund proposals:

- Which fall more appropriately to be funded by others (such as local or national government agencies, highways authorities or research or funding bodies).
- Which are only focused on roads outside the UK where the findings can't apply to UK roads.
- That seek replacement funding or ongoing revenue/running costs support.
- Which replicate or are very similar to existing pieces of work, whether this is in the academic, statutory, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.
- That relate to private roads.
- That relate to the provision of car parks. (Such as school parking or similar.)
- That relate to private land which does not allow free public access 24/7 over at least a 5-year basis.
- That are likely to lead to unsustainable or insensitive increases in traffic.
- Operational road safety schemes, such as speed cameras, crossings, footpaths and traffic calming. In exceptional circumstances an application might be considered where national application of some new lessons or findings can be demonstrated.
- Road safety education aimed at children and young people that replicates the wide range of existing education and training techniques and materials already available.
- The provision of training or education products that are not to be made available free of charge to the target audience, unless the case for charging a fee is exceptionally strong and will not be a potential barrier to participation.
- That relate to political campaigns or political campaigning as defined by the Charity Commission.
- That develop technology or data where there is no clear path to the future funding and maintenance/management of the technology/data.
- Where the prime benefit is for wildlife, biodiversity or nature. Proposals must have at their core a focus on roads, road management and/or maintenance etc., with benefit for wildlife or nature being a secondary consideration.
- Which seek funding for commercial ventures - these are unlikely to be funded. See Applicant Status section below for more details.

Examples of past awards made can be found at <http://www.reesjeffreys.co.uk/past-projects/>. However, applicants should note that trustees' expectations and views on what will have an impact on the future provision or experience of roads in the UK changes over time. Therefore, it should not be assumed that funding will be provided for proposals just because we have funded similar proposals in the past.

Find more guidance on:

- Information about applicant status (commercial, not-for-profit etc) on page 6
- Applications for physical projects (roads, car parks, laybys etc) on page 7
- Applications for academic funding on page 8

HOW TO APPLY

Registering a request for funding and the application process

Anyone considering applying to the Fund must, in the first instance, contact the Secretary at secretary@reesjeffreys.co.uk to register their interest or make an enquiry using the online form on our website [Grants - Rees Jeffreys Road Fund](#). When contacting the Secretary by email applicants are asked to provide a short outline of their proposal with an indication of the amount of funding being sought.

At this stage if the proposal is not considered suitable, for example because it does not fit with the priorities or criteria identified by the Trustees, it may be rejected by the Chair of the Trustees (who may consult with other Trustees in making their decision). A list of all rejected grant enquiries is reported to the next Trustee meeting.

Applicants must allow sufficient time for their enquiry to be considered. We recommend you make your enquiry at least 6 weeks before the application deadlines shown on our website.

Completing the Application Form

If the Trustees consider the proposal falls within the priorities set by the Trustees, the applicant will be invited to make a full application for funding. All applicants are required to complete the application form provide by the Secretary.

Applicants should ensure that all information is included in the application form, as the Trustees do not see any email correspondence between the applicant and the Fund's Secretary.

Applications might include within the application itself or in annexes budgets, project milestones, site maps or CVs for participating specialists, researchers or academics. The size of attachments or annexes should be kept to a minimum, and no more than a few pages.

All documents must be submitted by email to secretary@reesjeffreys.co.uk no later than 5pm on the closing date for submissions. Closing dates are published on our website. The Secretary reserves the right to edit or exclude large, complex files.

All applications are acknowledged. Please get in contact if you have not received an acknowledgement within 10 working days of emailing your full application.

Common problems with application forms you should seek to avoid:

- Ensure the 250-character summary at the beginning of the application form explains the project and its benefits (Note we are asking for “250 characters”, not “250 words”).
- Answer the “so what” question – what difference will this proposal make to how UK roads are experienced or provided?
- Make sure you have the right partners and support to deliver your project in practice – for example, local highways authority(s); adequate analytic and technical skills; partners who can help you carry out your project on the ground; engagement of people or organisations who will ultimately make decisions in practice.
- Think about where other funding might come from – we favour proposals where others help with funding the cost of the proposal.
- Check that what you write can be understood by a wide range of trustees from different backgrounds– use simple language and explain any technical terms.

Points to consider when completing the application form

- Clearly state the purpose for which funding is sought, including the proposal objectives. Explain the problem your proposal addresses and explain *how* your proposal will address the problem. Answer the “So what..?” question - what difference will this proposal make? How will the project result in a change to how roads are experienced or provided in the UK?
- Applicants should demonstrate the involvement of sufficient partners and stakeholders to ensure that the proposal can draw on appropriate technical skills or expertise; involve organisations who can support delivery of the project on the ground; involve stakeholders or partners who can help increase the likelihood of buy-in from people or organisations who will be responsible for the practical delivery of the outcomes, or who will be ultimate decision makers in practical delivery or application of the findings. The Fund is interested in seeing how applicants propose to secure support for decisions to implement innovative or contentious improvements at a national and/or local level, for example, what steps are proposed to engage and secure buy-in from both political and various statutory-body decision-makers.
- Proposals must have a defined and workable methodology, give a clear indication of the practical application of the results of their work and how these will be demonstrated and disseminated.
- Applicants should demonstrate that they have researched the existence of similar pieces of work, and explain how the proposal is different, innovative or new. (It might be helpful to include a short 1 or 2 page annex listing existing work to demonstrate this has been fully considered.)
- The Fund will expect research applicants to have signed up to the ESRC Framework for Research Ethics or otherwise to an equivalent code subject to RJRF agreement. Framework for research ethics – UKRI

- Proposals that involve use of data sets held by others should explain fully how access to the data set will be achieved and permission obtained to use the data set for the purposes proposed.
- Proposals should set out how success will be evaluated and measured and include costs for a formal and/or independent evaluation where this is appropriate. Try to quantify how you will measure or demonstrate the change or outcome you propose to achieve.
- The Fund will consider applications to meet the cost of disseminating important and valid research findings, so that the lessons may be replicated and adopted elsewhere. These costs should be included in the budget.
- Provide a project timetable showing dates for milestones, including for evaluation and dissemination of the findings.
- Provide a breakdown of costs. Overhead costs may be included where these are reasonable and are essential to the delivery of the project. Applicants should set out the full costs of their proposal, including VAT (The Fund will not make any separate or additional payments in respect of VAT.)
- Set out the amounts of funding that have been secured from other sources. Demonstrate how the proposal contributes to the achievement of RJRF's Objects and explain why financial support is being sought from the Fund.
- The Fund generally appreciates being recognised in any final publications, reports or communications. For physical projects, applicants should include any cost of recognising the Fund on a plaque or display board.
- Applicants should ensure that all information is included in the application form, as the Trustees do not see any email correspondence between the applicant and the Fund's Secretary prior to the formal application being made.

Making use of RJRF funded toolkits

Applicants are encouraged to make use of two toolkits developed through the Future Transport Visions Group and funded by RJRF. Applicants should explain in the application form how they will use the toolkits where this is relevant to the proposal:

- Gender Equality in Transport Toolkit
- EYPiCs Engaging Young people in Consultation

Use of AI

Applicants may use AI to assist in the development of their proposal or application, but applicants remain responsible and accountable for:

- The accuracy of data or evidence that is used to inform the application or proposal.
- Safeguarding data protection, privacy and security of any data considered as part of developing the application or proposal.

The Fund is interested in learning more about how applicants use AI to assist them with developing their grant application and proposal. From April 2026 applicants will be asked to explain:

- Whether you used AI in developing their proposal or making the application

- How you used AI
- Where you used AI
- What AI tool you used.

Trustees reserve the right to use their discretion to consider the answer to these questions when making a decision about awarding grant funding.

The Fund does not currently use AI to inform decisions on awarding grant funding. Any changes in this policy will be included in future updates of this guidance.

Applicant status

Applications can be submitted by individuals or organisations. Applicants may be expected to demonstrate their status as a bona fide person or organisation, including for example, details of not-for-profit status. The Fund will only make grant payments to individuals or commercial organisations where safeguards are in place to ensure that grant funds are used for their intended purposes and deliver public benefit.

When considering applications for grant funding from individuals or organisations who are not charities, several points are considered:

- Trustees assure themselves of the 'mission fit' or match between the applicant or organisation's aims and RJRF's purposes and interests;
- Trustees assess the individual or organisation's track record for delivering the proposed activities, and that the applicant is genuine, reliable and competent to carry out the activity being funded;
- Trustees consider the governance/constitutional form/arrangements of the applicant and the applicant's reputation, and consider the risks that the applicant will not use the funds appropriately;
- Trustees consider the scope of the applicants' operations and any conflicts with RJRF's purposes, activities, funding, or other interests;

Particular attention is paid to the likelihood that the funding may give rise to private or commercial benefit. Trustees carefully weigh up the potential public benefit of a proposal and take steps to include in the grant Terms and Conditions any features which will help secure public benefit, such as research findings being made freely and publicly available.

Trustees will seek to assess that any private or commercial benefit is insignificant or incidental to the public benefit that is likely to be achieved by the proposal. They will have regard to both to the nature and amount of commercial benefit and assess whether it is no more than a necessary result or by-product of carrying out RJRF's purpose and securing public benefit.

Funding for physical projects

RJRF occasionally supports provision, improvements or works to roadside areas but only where the applicant can clearly demonstrate the project will produce lessons or insights that could potentially have national application.

The applicant must also demonstrate the wider public benefit the proposal will provide along with reassurance that the project would not result in an unsustainable growth in motor traffic. Proposals should achieve as many outcomes as possible:

- Offering better access to countryside amenities such as viewing spots associated with an AONB, generally linking to established trails.
- Providing information about local features/points of interest and options for accessing them in environmentally sensitive ways, including any nearby Rees Jeffreys Road Fund Roadside Rests.
- Providing all types of road users with a safe place to stop, generally to appreciate a view of the countryside or coastline.
- Proposals which are integrated with other transport options, such as public transport, walking and cycling and access via rail services.
- Proposals which cater for and/or promote sustainable transport options (e.g. facilities for walkers, cyclists etc).
- Creating an inclusive approach, such as supporting access and facilities for disabled people.
- Making best use of a site, beyond the provision for stopping vehicles or parking.

Applications for physical projects must include:

- A site plan and project brief, and letter of endorsement from the appropriate highways and planning authorities and other relevant landowners.
- Formal agreement from the appropriate planning authority and highways authority to implement the works.
- An assessment of the impact of the proposal on traffic across the wider local area. Ideally the local highways authority should provide a comment about sustainability or impact on traffic levels created by the proposal, and if appropriate, indicate their commitment to complementary measures to address possible traffic issues.
- A realistic long-term plan of how the site will be maintained (kept clear of litter, maintenance of surfaces and equipment, preventing the site becoming overgrown with foliage) with agreed responsibilities. This could be achieved by involving volunteers if the applicant has a sustainable approach for actively involving volunteers in this kind of role over the long term.
- Clear and detailed plans for inclusion of information and signs to enable road users (whether pedestrians, cyclists or drivers) to make best use of all the opportunities available (ideally this will include the provision of a plaque to recognise Rees Jeffreys Road Fund's contribution).
- Evidence that the application represents good value for money. RJRF will typically commit no more than £30,000 per site (usually less) and generally prefers to be a contributing rather than a main funder.

Applications for academic funding

Universities and other academic institutions may apply for funding for research projects, parts of research projects or PhD funding under the normal grant process. Applications for funding to support study of a PhD should be submitted by the

university or place of study, in conjunction with the student. When making an application for funding for either research projects or PhDs, universities should note:

- Applications need to closely fit the general criteria and priorities for funding.
- Rees Jeffreys Road Fund is not an academic institution, and applicants should not assume that Trustees are aware of practices, concepts or language applicable to the academic environment. Applicants should explain any references to other academic work or frameworks or concepts and not assume the Trustees will either know what these are or be able to look up academic research references.
- Applicants will need to demonstrate awareness of similar studies and projects across the UK in both research and operational fields, not just academic peer reviewed studies, and be able to demonstrate how their proposal is different, novel or innovative and adds value.
- Applicants should pay attention to demonstrating how their work could be translated into practical application, and how they will ensure the project is able to move beyond theoretical research stage in a short period of time.
- Applicants may consider applying for funding for parts of projects, such as:
 - extended field work or additional survey work, to support a larger project that is funded by other sources. This might include, for example, comparative analysis, access to datasets or enhanced sampling questionnaires.
 - activities such as co-creation or impact generation events or novel dissemination programmes.
 - funding for a secondment into another organisation as part of the PhD studies where this will significantly add value to the findings.
- Applicants should explain how such additional work adds value to knowledge or information about roads and highways and add to the ability to apply that knowledge in practice.
- For applications for funding for PhDs, the applicant should supply a CV for the student and explain their suitability to undertake the programme of study.

Individual professional learning

Rees Jeffreys Road Fund operates a separate grant scheme called Ready for the Future, which provides course fee funding to individual transport professionals to study or learn skills that are in short supply or under-represented in the sector. Further information is available from our website.

[Ready For The Future Grants - Rees Jeffreys Road Fund](#)

Bursaries for Transport MSc studies

Bursary funding for Transport MSc studies is made via a separate process to our general grants scheme. Further information is available from our website.

[Bursaries - Rees Jeffreys Road Fund](#)

HOW REES JEFFREYS ROAD FUND MAKES GRANT DECISIONS

The Trustees determine each year the amount that will be spent on grant making and from time to time review the priorities identified for grants.

Applications for funding are determined by the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund Trustees. The Trustees of the Fund meet twice a year to consider all grant applications. Applications for funding at other times are considered by exception, at the discretion of the Chair of the Trustees, where for example, the timing of an application is critical to securing matched funding.

The Trustees' decision will be notified promptly following their meeting. Where possible feedback will be provided. The decision of the Trustees is final.

In deciding applications for funding, the Trustees consider a number of factors to support robust decision making, including:

1. How well does the proposal align with the RJRF objectives?
2. Is RJRF the most appropriate funder?
3. Is the proposal going to deliver new outputs and outcomes?
4. Does the proposal appear to offer good value for money?
5. Will the proposal generate a replicable product/solution?
6. Does the proposal approach/methodology look robust?
7. Is the quality/knowledge/experience of project team likely to enable the project to be delivered successfully?
8. Does the timetable look sensible?
9. Is the proposal cost/contribution sought reasonable?
10. Are other contributions to the proposal costs locked in?
11. How strong is the communications and dissemination plan?

These criteria are aimed at reducing the risk of non-delivery of public benefit or loss of funds. Ultimately decisions about which grants to award is at the discretion of the Trustees using their collective expertise and knowledge as to which proposals are mostly likely to achieve public benefit.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A GRANT IS AWARDED?

Grant Offer

RJRF will provide successful applicants with a formal grant offer letter which sets out the amount of the grant, the project towards which the grant must be put, and the terms of funding including dates of grant instalment payments and relevant milestones. The Fund does not enter into other types of funding agreement or contracts provided by applicants.

For most projects funds are likely to be released in staged payments, in accordance with achievement of milestones. The final instalment of a grant is typically dependent upon delivery of an evaluation report and a short statement of public benefit.

Successful applicants will be expected to agree to spend the funds for the purpose agreed in a given timescale, to maintain auditable records of expenditure and to produce a report (and other promotional material as requested) in an agreed form to evidence completion and outcomes from the project.

RJRF reserves the right to apply specific conditions to the award of grants where considered necessary. Conditions may relate, for example, to how the project findings are to be communicated; release of grant payments being dependent upon match funding being secured. Grantees are asked to sign that they accept the terms and conditions of the grant.

RJRF reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a grant, where projects fail to make adequate progress or secure match funding within 12 months of the grant offer.

Grant Monitoring and payment

The performance of grantees and delivery against milestones is monitored by the Secretary and reported to the Trustees at each Trustee meeting in the Project Update report. This allows for any issues to be addressed, including where projects are at risk of not delivering public benefit. The payment of the grant by instalments reduces the risk of loss of funds should a project fail to proceed as planned. RJRF will be as flexible as possible when making grant payments, subject to the need to protect the funds for which it is responsible.

The Trustees review the provision of grants on an annual basis. At the February Trustee meeting each year the Trustees review statistical analysis of grants awarded and use this information to decide on any change in approach to grant making. The Trustees also record the public benefit achieved by grants made as part of the content of the Trustee Annual Report and Accounts.

Appeals and Complaints

RJRF does not provide any appeal process and does not offer a right of appeal against funding decisions made. Decisions made by the Trustees are final.

Any applicants who wish to raise a complaint about the grant awarding process, or any member of the public or other person/body who wishes to complain about RJRF grant awarding process, should do so in writing the Chair of the Trustees as soon as possible after they become aware of the matter they wish to complain about.

Complaints can be addressed either in writing to RJRF's registered office or by email to secretary@reesjeffreys.co.uk.

The complaint will be acknowledged within 28 days. The Chair of the Trustees will consider the matter and if necessary, discuss this with other Trustees. The Chair will respond to the complaint within 2 months.

Secretary, Rees Jeffreys Road Fund, April 2026