

Funding opportunity for DARE UK community groups

1. Background

DARE UK Community Groups are collaborative environments established under the programme's *Community-led pathfinding* workstream to encourage different communities within the UK sensitive data research landscape to co-create components and pieces of work that align with the DARE UK programme's vision. With a focus on open communication and fostering the sharing of information and best practices, these groups will look to enhance sensitive data research and practice in the UK.

DARE UK Community Groups are modelled after similar groups at the [Research Data Alliance](#) and [IETF](#) and are established according to a charter outlined by the group convener, which covers the 'why', 'what', and 'how' of each group. Each group will be subject to an endorsement process prior to set-up and will be guided by a [code of conduct](#) to ensure that community management best practices are upheld. The DARE UK Community Groups are open to anyone to propose, join and/or contribute to, and they each serve a unique purpose.

There are two main community group categories: *Interest Groups* and *Working Groups*.

- **Interest Groups** are open-ended and focus on a broad-based challenge within the programme's scope. These groups will motivate Working Groups to address specific pieces of work.
- **Working Groups**, on the other hand, are short-term in terms of their longevity and focus on specific, tractable pieces of work. They are generally linked to an Interest Group but may come from anywhere, providing they are within the scope of the programme and the sensitive data research landscape the programme is aiming to serve.

The DARE UK programme is now making funds of up to £40,000 per community group available to enable capacity to support the activities of community groups until the end of DARE UK Phase 1 (end March 2024).

2. Purpose of DARE UK community groups

Drawing together a diverse network of researchers and relevant stakeholders, DARE UK community groups will work together to:

- Shape future research directions enabled by connecting different kinds of sensitive data and outline future scientific use cases.
- Propose solutions to address identified technical and governance barriers to enable better data connectivity and cross-domain analysis.
- Review and make recommendations evaluating different technologies, data standards, or governance models for more secure and efficient cross-domain linkage and analysis of sensitive data
- Share best practices and enable knowledge exchange.

These outcomes could be achieved through outputs including, but not limited to:

- Recommendation documents/green papers
- Open-source software (including documentation)
- Metadata schema
- Best practice standards

- Community events and conferences to enable knowledge exchange.

We invite all those interested in sensitive data research to propose new community groups to help grow the sensitive data research collaborative community.

3. Funding opportunity

Funds of up to £40,000 are now being made available for new or recently formed DARE UK Interest or Working groups, out of a total fund of £150,000. Funding would be provided only for activities to be undertaken between **a 5-month period from November 2023 to the end of March 2024**, and could be requested for activities such as the following:

- Salaries and overheads for community management, coordination, and administration.
- Workshops and events, including venue hire, travel, and subsistence.
- Support for communications and engagement activities for monitoring and dissemination of community group outputs, including website development and maintenance and software licenses.

Please note that although anyone can propose to form a DARE UK Community group, only those affiliated with eligible organisations are able to apply for funding.

4. Eligibility

The funding models for different kinds of eligible organisations are listed below:

- Higher Education Institutions, NHS bodies, Independent Research Organisations, Public Sector Research Establishments (not NHS), Academic Health Sciences Networks/Centres, non-profit Research and Technology Organisations: 80% full Economic Cost (fEC) under standard Research Council fEC rules.
- For industry delivery partners, HDR UK must comply with RGC2.3.1 to RGC2.3.11 of UKRI T&Cs.
- Charities: 100% fEC, but other rules to be applied:
 - They are undertaking research (this may be experimental, theoretical or critical investigation work to gain knowledge, skills or understanding vital to the Project);
 - They meet requirements for dissemination of their Project results;
 - They include their eligible costs for research purposes in the total research organisation involvement;
 - They make sure they are not applying for a grant towards costs that are already being paid by the public purse, such as labour and overheads.

5. How to apply

DARE UK community groups need to have completed an [Interest Group Charter](#) or [Working Group Charter](#). Detailed guidance on what to include in these is described in each charter template. Click on the links to access the charter templates or visit the [community groups page](#) on our website.

New community groups seeking funding to support their activities can still access funding but will need to submit a completed charter alongside their [funding application form](#). Existing DARE UK community groups need only submit the completed [funding application form](#).

All applications should be submitted by **18:00 on 28/09/2023** to enquiries@dareuk.org.uk, with balint.stewart@dareuk.org.uk in cc and the subject title: 'Community Groups Funding Opportunity Submission'.

6. Selection criteria

Funding will be prioritised to support community groups that bring together a new, diverse, and inclusive network of researchers and relevant stakeholders to achieve their goals through partnership working, evidenced by the inclusion of **Co-Chairs from multiple organisations** (at least two, but usually more) as well as broad-based representation amongst the wider group membership in the community group charter. Although the charter and funding application can be led by a subset of researchers (for example, the co-chairs of the group), we expect the plans to be co-developed with all members of the community group. Only applications that all members of the community group have been consulted on and support (please confirm end of Q1 of the funding application form) will be considered for funding.

In addition to the need to demonstrate broad-based community group representation in the community group charter, we are particularly interested in funding applications that support partnerships working to address needs in the following priority areas:

Technology evaluation and comparisons in:

- “Infrastructure-as-code” for TREs.
- Secure data exchange for digital federations.
- Federated analytics (remote query).
- Sight vs. no-sight data analytics.
- Automated linkage of sensitive datasets (by person, by place, etc.).
- Automated output checking for TREs (including evaluation of AI model outputs).

Reviews and recommendations of data standards in:

- Information models for digital federations.
- Digital object wrappers for application data exchange.
- Authorisation models and researcher credentials.
- Cross-domain data interoperability.
- Open metadata for automated discovery.

Reviews and recommendations of governance models for:

- Managing digital federations.
- Risk-tiering of TREs.
- Standardising researcher accreditation.
- Standardising TRE accreditation.
- Standardising data sharing agreements.

Defining effective public engagement strategies around:

- Building and running secure infrastructure.
- Conducting open, transparent research.
- Defining “public benefit”.

Teams must be able to commence in **November 2023** and complete all funded activities by **31st March 2024** (although the community group can continue operating after this date) – including evidencing that any salary support requested to coordinate and manage the community group be for personnel already in-post.

Questions to be used by the selection committee for assessment are listed in the relevant section of the [funding application form](#), and the [scoring criteria and weightings](#) have been clearly outlined.

Selection will be based on the scoring criteria until the maximum funding is allocated, **taking into account the portfolio of community group funding proposals** with a balanced overall spread across the strategic themes outlined above.

7. Timeline

- 31st August 2023: Funding opportunity opens.
- 28th September 2023: Funding opportunity closes.
- w/c 16th October 2023: Funding decisions communicated to applicants.
- November 2023: Funded community group activities commence.
- January 2024: Mid-point project expenditure report and check-in meeting to discuss progress and identify any bottlenecks.
- Mid-March 2024: DARE UK community group plenary event.
- End of March 2024: Final short report due detailing community group progress and outputs.

8. Enquiries

Please submit any enquiries or clarifications to enquiries@dareuk.org.uk with balint.stewart@dareuk.org.uk in cc, with the subject title: 'Community Groups Funding Opportunity Query'.

9. Terms and conditions

This award will be subject to the [UKRI standard terms and conditions for research grants](#). This award will also be subject to the DARE UK Interest Groups and Working Groups Code of Conduct: [DARE UK Community Groups Code of Conduct](#) and any additional HDR UK requirements as set out in the award letter.

10. Notes

An [Equality Impact Assessment](#) was conducted to assess and mitigate barriers to participation. For more information, please send an email to enquiries@dareuk.org.uk.