IAA Impact RAPID RESPONSE Grants on Migration, Displacement, Minorities and Marginalisation – March 2026

Overview:

SOAS has successfully secured a 5-year, £1.25 million Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) from 2023-2028, to develop impact in the areas of migration, displacement, minorities and marginalisation.

As part of this initiative, the IAA offers **Rapid Response Grants** on an ongoing basis until 31 August 2027**.** These grants fund projects that aim to create enhanced impact from ongoing or recently concluded SOAS research in the areas of migration, displacement, minorities and marginalisation, through stakeholder engagement. Partners may be research partners or research users from the public, private or third sectors (e.g. commercial businesses, NGOs, policymakers, industry bodies, charities, heritage organisations, social enterprises, local councils, community organisations, creative practitioners, activists).

Purpose and Scope

The Rapid Response grants are designed to address **urgent needs or arising topics** emerging from policy changes, current events, or unfolding research findings. They are not intended to fund new research or traditional impact projects, but rather to support impact initiatives that respond to developing needs.

The scheme is **flexible and responsive,** SOAS researchers may submit a proposal as soon as an emergent need arises, and projects can start immediately once the grant is awarded. All projects must be completed, and funds spent, within 6 months of award.

All funded projects and activities should aim to:

- Build new, or strengthen existing, relationships with non-academic partners;
- Identify opportunities to scale-up and develop further partnerships including by evidencing potential uses/market for the research;
- Facilitate a two-way exchange of knowledge and/or skills with non-academic partners;
- Develop measurable societal, cultural or economic impact activities;
- Design methods for assessing impact outputs;
- Ensure feasibility of the project's outcomes within a set budget and timeline.

The IAA advises applications of **£2,500 to £5,000** per project. All funds must be spent within 6 months of receiving award**.**

Examples of supported impact activities include, but are not limited to:

- Running workshops or other collaborative activities designed to explore or develop an interactive knowledge transfer partnership that may lead to innovative commercialised outcomes and impacts.
- Producing materials (e.g. working papers, policy briefs, podcasts, arts-based outputs, educational toolkits, data visualisations, facilitated discussions, etc) or activities to enable stakeholders to apply your research findings in practice. Your IAA grant may support your research users to help you design this or pay for the services of a third-party supplier.

- Co-designing and delivering capacity development activities with non-academic partners to increase specialist knowledge with practical application.
- Supporting non-academic stakeholders to engage with your existing body of research.

Eligibility

The scheme is open to all SOAS' staff members, including SOAS researchers, SOAS Research Associates, SOAS PhD students. Early Career Researchers are encouraged to apply. Non-academic partners are also encouraged to apply with a SOAS party as the lead of the project.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will initially be assessed for suitability and fit to the objectives of the Rapid Response call. All eligible proposals will be sent to a panel consisting of members of IAA team, a member of the IAA Internal (academics) and external (non-academic) Advisory Board, and academics with engagement/ policy/ KE/ innovation in research experience. Please refer to the timelines below for ongoing application and announcement schedule.

Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:
- Potential for delivery of impact
- Depth of engagement with non-academic partners
- Clarity of impact measurement approach
- Timeliness of proposed activities
- Quality, feasibility and appropriateness of approach
- Cost effectiveness and appropriate use of funds

Reporting:

In addition to planned project outputs, all grantees are required to:
- Attend an update meeting halfway through the project with the IAA Impact Development Manager
- Provide a post for the IAA blog (500-700 words) covering the project impact on the grantee, the non-academic partner, and targeted population, if applicable, at the end of the project.
- Provide a brief written update on impact realised in at the end of the project.
- Submit all receipts for project expenses should be kept for financial reconciliation.

Other Requirements:
- Grantees are required to participate in the ESRC Festival of Social Science in November 2026 by running a public engagement workshop to showcase their research impact project to a non-academic audience.
- Grantees are required to attend one of the RKED Impact training sessions during the grant period.

How to Apply

All applicants should read through the IAA FAQs prior to submission to understand our framing of impact.

Complete the **Rapid Response Grants Application form**.

Please contact iaa@soas.ac.uk with any questions.