

a) Outline of Scoping Awards

The Research and Development Committee has devised Scoping Awards of £5,000 each for the specific purpose of taking stock in an area of research. Do please read the following description carefully, so that you submit a proposal that fits the requirement of being a scoping study.

Scoping studies should look to explore a new or emerging area for research, with the intention of assessing what we currently “know”. On the basis of this, it proposes work that could usefully be done in the future. It is particularly appropriate in a field that is not clearly defined and / or that draws on a number of literatures. So a scoping study will usually contain:

- Reasoned proposals for future research directions, with some indication of the opportunities and challenges that these might entail.
- Discussion of any weaknesses or gaps in the existing literature or evidence base that could be addressed by future research;
- A systematic literature review that captures the nature, range and extent of research activity to date, presented in a clearly structured way.

A SRHE scoping study has a very different purpose and emphasis from that of a SRHE research study. Whereas a research study is very often empirical in nature, a scoping study does not require or expect new empirical work. It would, however, be highly appropriate to include a means of checking whether your assessment and your proposals seem to have “face validity” with others.

Areas where a scoping study of recent research might be undertaken are:

- Role of universities
- Financing higher education
- Globalisation and internationalisation
- Academic Identity
- Student identity, engagement and satisfaction
- Access and widening participation
- Employability and employer engagement
- Increased use of technology enhanced learning and analytics

b) Selection process and criteria

The SRHE Research and Development Committee will be responsible for deciding upon the refereeing process and criteria for judging the successful proposals. A Selection Panel drawn from a range of research scholars in the field will determine the awards and their decision will be final. At this stage the Society does not take a view about which of the 3 over-arching themes of *Higher Education Policy, Higher Education and Society, and Higher Education Practice* is of most importance to its work. The Society’s commitment to capacity building in higher education and in developing a body of new research of wide application will be important factors in the selection criteria, as will be the Society’s public role in underpinning research impact and in supporting public engagement and public benefit.

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- These criteria set out by the Society's Research and Development Committee include:
 - Clarity of the aims of the study
 - Relevance to the themes proposed by the Society
 - Conceptual framework for the study, and relevance to the known research evidence or literature
 - Suggested research methods or approach including ethics
 - Feasibility of the study in the terms of the timescale and funding
 - Likely impact of the study on policies or practices through dissemination
 - Public benefit, research impact and research engagement for the public.

The Awards are intended for work of a conceptual nature, which have the potential to make a contribution to the field of higher education research, contribute to the work of the Society and be of public benefit. Applicants for these awards would normally be expected to be researchers in the field of higher education research and to have published in the field.

A Selection Panel drawn from the SRHE Research and Development Committee and other experienced researchers has been established to reach selection decisions with respect to all research awards conferred by the Society.

The Panel will convene (electronically and/or face-to face) on an *ad hoc* basis to make timely decisions in respect of the Society's Research Awards and Scoping Study Awards.

The Selection Panel will:

- Receive research proposals
- Develop a scoring pro-forma using the criteria set out by the Research and Development Committee and develop a refereeing procedure which will provide a record of the process by which successful proposals are decided
- Agree which proposals will be awarded funds according to the criteria set out by the Research and Development Committee
- Appoint one member of the Panel to be the named link person between the award holder and SRHE
- Report its decision-making processes to the Research and Development Committee following each award decision.

The decisions of the Selection Panel will be final.

c) Requirements from supported research projects

Recipients will be required to produce the following:

- i) Reports:**
 - An interim report of 1,000 words (normally after 6 months)
 - A Literature review of approximately 5,000-7,000 words (normally after 12 months).
- ii) Submission of a journal article or book chapter** (6-12 months after submission of final Literature review)

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- iii) **Additional requirements:** (6-12 months after submission of final Literature review)
- contribute a short article for the SRHE member newsletter, SRHE News
 - provide a presentation or other contribution to a SRHE network or similar event
 - submit a paper/presentation for the SRHE Annual Research Conference.

Projects will be expected to start within 3 months of the outcome being notified to successful applicants.

d) Application procedures for SRHE Scoping Awards

The on-line application form is available separately via the SRHE website at <https://srhe.ac.uk/research/research-scoping-awards/>

Applicants are requested to detail the scheme of research, proposed methods, time plan, budget, proposed outcomes and outputs, and research benefits for the understanding of higher education and for the Society. The details of two referees and a brief Curriculum Vitae are also required to support each application.

Applicants will also be asked to address any ethical issues arising from their research proposal as part of the application process. All award holders will be required to demonstrate that they have conformed to any institutional (and/or professional) requirements concerning ethical approval. Where an applicant is successful but does not have any institutional designation they may be asked to provide further information with respect to ethical protocols.

All applications for the Scoping Awards must be completed using the on-line form by 1st September 2025. Supporting CVs and references must preferably be uploaded with the application (otherwise e-mailed to srhe@srhe.ac.uk) also by 1st September 2025.

For joint applications, referee details are only required for the lead applicant. Referees should not also be applicants themselves for these awards, nor be currently serving members of SRHE Governing Council/SRHE Standing Committees. Previous Award Winners should not reapply for a period of 3 years since their award.

e) Outcomes

The outcomes for all Scoping Award applications will be communicated via e-mail to the lead applicant by **1st December 2025**. In this e-mail, SRHE will also endeavour provide some brief reviewer feedback on all applications received.

f) Funding

Funds will be awarded in two stages; an initial award of up to one half of the funds with the remainder to be awarded on successful completion of the project including receipt of reports and other requirements as detailed. Monies may be withheld if reports are not submitted or if within such reports there is insufficient evidence that agreed milestones have been achieved. All monies will be dealt with by SRHE office.

g) Duration

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A project may be suspended for a limited period (but normally for no more than one calendar year) under certain exceptional circumstances such as ill health, pregnancy, bereavement or change of employment. In the event of non-completion the Society will retain the right to withhold payment and seek reimbursement of any monies paid under the terms on which the awards are made.

h) Further information

Applicants wishing to discuss any aspect of their proposal or seek advice on eligibility should contact srhe@srhe.ac.uk Tel +44 (0) 207 427 2350, Address: SRHE, Society House, Regents Wharf, 8 All Saints St, London N1 9RL.