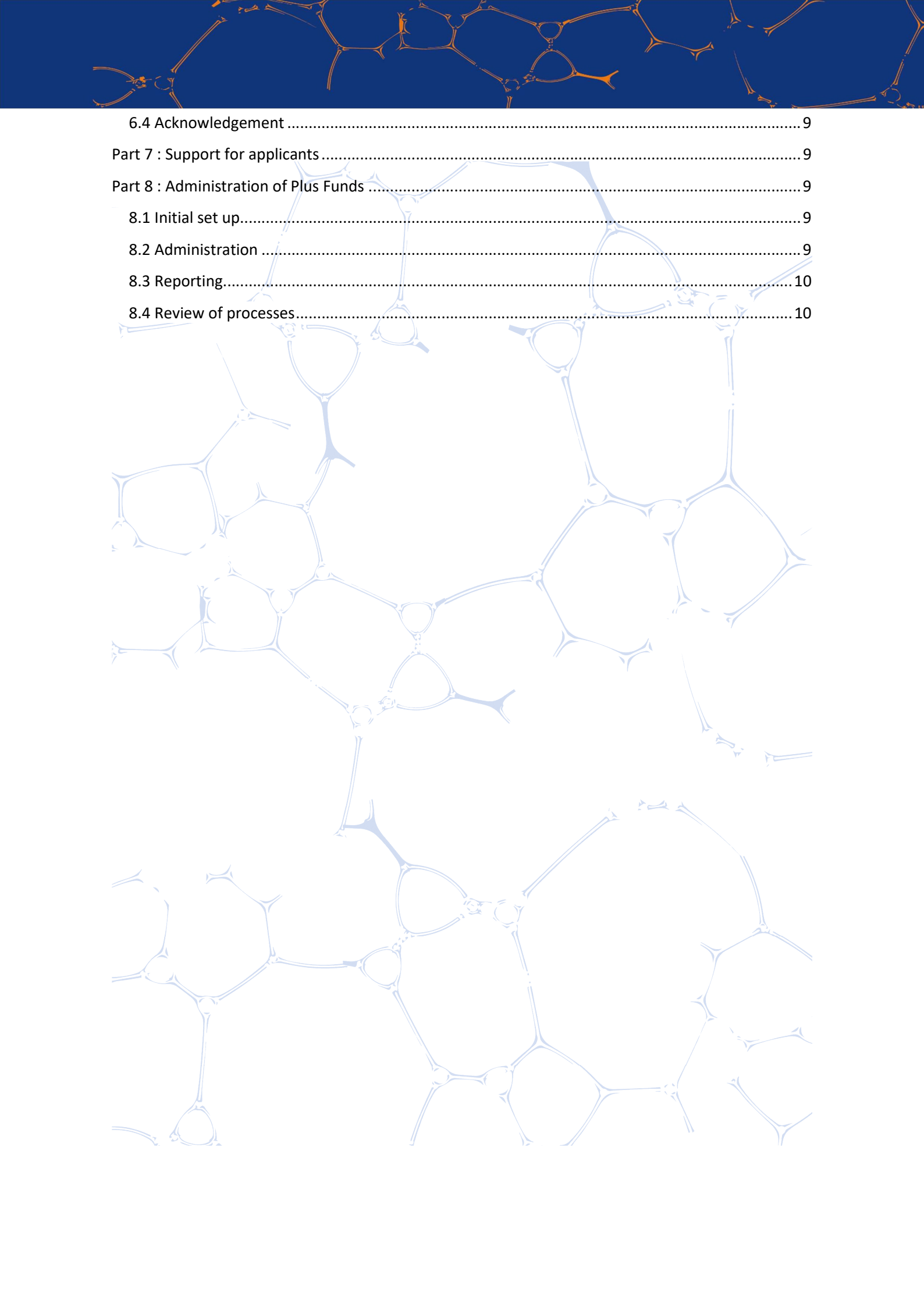


# FLF Development Network – Governance Document March 2021

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## Part 1: Summary

The FLF Development Network Plus Fund is a pot of flexible funding available to researchers associated with the FLF Development Network. The funds (minimum £300K over three years) are designed to support the delivery of novel training and networking opportunities in response to other elements of the programme. Funding will be awarded via a rolling open call, supporting well-defined initiatives that develop and deliver transferable skills, training experiences, or resources – whether short-term or recurrent.

It is anticipated the Plus Funds will provide funding that enables:

- the building of proof-of-concept for new ideas
- the running of events which promote the values, cultures and behaviours supported by UKRI (such as EDI and positive research cultures)
- commercialisation of research
- collaborations with industry-based FLFs
- engagement with new partners
- public engagement

Collaborative applications will be encouraged to further networking, interdisciplinary working relationships and EDI.

## Part 2: Eligibility

### 2.1 Who can apply?

The Plus Funds are open to all researchers registered with the UKRI FLF Development Network, specifically FLFs from Cohorts 1, 2 and 3, and 40 named early career colleagues nominated by UKRI (hereafter referred to as FLFs for brevity).

As the FLF Development Network aims to encourage interdisciplinarity and network building, we encourage applications from multiple FLFs and institutions working together.

Project teams can involve others outside the FLF Development Network but their membership will need to be justified in the application.

The Lead Applicant (Principal Investigator) will be the main point of contact with the Plus Funds Team and will be responsible for collecting information for the application and submitting the Final Review at the end of the project.

### 2.2 Eligible applications

More than one application to the Plus Funds by an FLF may be possible – the award of funds for multiple projects/activities will be at the discretion of the Plus Funds Review Group, on a case-by-case basis.

Resubmission of applications may be possible if feedback on the original unsuccessful application has been addressed. Any resubmission should indicate in a brief cover letter the changes made to the original application.

Top-ups of funding for existing Plus Funds projects may be possible at the discretion of the Review Group if the applicant can demonstrate a justifiable need and clear benefits.

Applications for follow-on funding for projects may be possible if it can be shown the initial project achieved impact and a strong case is made for the delivery of further benefits.

### 2.3 Eligible project duration

Projects may start at any time, and must be scheduled to finish prior to the close of the Network in November 2023.


### 2.4 Eligible funding requests

Plus Funds may be requested up to a maximum of £25,000 per application. Proposed activities will be assessed for evidence of sensible and justifiable use of funds.

## Part 3: Scope

### 3.1 Activities in scope

The Plus Funds are broad in scope so that FLFs may be creative and proactive in their design and delivery of opportunities to support their peers and communities. Successful applications will reflect the FLF Development Network's signature themes and spheres of influence.

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE		SIGNATURE THEMES		
		Navigating uncertainty	Collaborating inclusively	Transforming thinking
	E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuously reviewing and updating worldview</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mutually beneficial, equal global partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative contributions to global or grand challenges</li> </ul>
	D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging with policymakers</li> <li>Participation in public debate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnering with the public and marginalised communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge exchange</li> <li>Commercialising research</li> </ul>
	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thinking outside the box</li> <li>Openness to radical solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building coalitions to tackle systemic issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leveraging opportunities</li> <li>Identifying intervention points</li> </ul>
	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diverse networks and mentors</li> <li>Willingness to 'unlearn'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leading others positively</li> <li>Intercultural awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing others' capacity to lead and innovate</li> </ul>
	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creative problem-solving</li> <li>Reflective and adaptive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tackling unconscious bias and inclusion</li> <li>Knowledge exchange</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity of purpose</li> <li>Courage and resilience</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Costs in scope

The majority of funding requested should usually be for use against consumable and equipment costs (unless other costs are justified by the application) or for buying out support roles (where appropriate).

#### 3.2.1 Costs usually within Plus Funds scope:

- Accommodation



- Equipment
- Venue hire
- Directly incurred staff costs - including PhD students, post-doctoral research assistants or administrators (for work they would not be expected to undertake through their institutions under their current contract, and where the costs are justified by the extent of the project)
- Event catering
- External facilitator or fees
- Speaker travel expenses – where justified
- Workshop materials
- Relevant software or hardware - e.g. online surveys
- Development costs for websites or blogs
- Costs related to enabling participation for EDI
- Other consumables

### 3.2.2 Costs usually out of Plus Funds scope:

- Fees for workshops that would usually be supplied by the FLF Development Network
- Salaries of FLFs and additional staff that would usually be paid for by the institution/organisation
- Equipment, software or projects that the institution/organisation would normally be expected to provide or fund
- Projects that have already been externally funded to 100%
- Individual conference attendance
- Unjustified contingency costs

The above lists are offered as a guide only, any queries about other project costs email should be emailed to [hello@flfdevnet.com](mailto:hello@flfdevnet.com).

### 3.2.3 Support and resources provided by the Network

Given the current and ongoing need for distance events in place of face-to-face activities, a range of software, online services, facilitators and background support will be made available by the Network to Plus Fund projects to support FLFs in running high-quality online events. These costs will usually sit outside the funding requested by Plus Funds applications and be covered centrally. Please contact the Network at [hello@flfdevent.com](mailto:hello@flfdevent.com) to clarify what support is available and what costs should be requested in the application.

## Part 4: Timeline

### 4.1 Timescales

This is a rolling funding call so applications may be made at any time. Applications submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month will usually be reviewed within two weeks.

A Plus Funds Review Group will be held monthly so applications can be assessed on an ongoing basis.

The Review Group will aim to notify applicants of their decisions within 6 weeks of receipt of application.

Applications submitted after the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month may be rolled over to the next meeting of the Plus Funds Review Group.

Applications need to be made well in advance of the proposed activity start date to allow time for: the application to progress, the transfer of funds after decision, any further project planning required once the decision has been communicated to the applicant. Retrospective funding of projects will not be possible.

Applications will close on 1 September 2023, to allow for final accounting and reporting.

#### 4.2 Significant dates

- Official launch of Plus Funds at Research Encounters 11/12 March.
- Final Plus Fund Review Group be in September 2023, so any application for funding will need to be received by 1 September 2023 to enable its inclusion in the process.
- All Plus Funds projects need to be completed by the end of the FLF Development Network in November 2023.

## Part 5: Application Process

### 5.1 Application form

To apply for Plus Funds the lead applicant will complete a 2-3 page *Application Form*, and submit this with any supporting documents via email ([hello@flfdevnet.com](mailto:hello@flfdevnet.com)).

The *Application Form* includes a project outline and evidence for how the proposed activity meets the Plus Funds criteria.

### 5.2 Initial checks


Applications for use of Plus Funds will be initially reviewed by the Community Manager and/or Project Manager to ensure all sections of the application have been completed. If information is missing, the proposal will be returned to applicant for clarification. After these checks, applicant names and identifying characteristics will be removed to ensure anonymity.

Each application will be checked by the Project Lead for EDI, to ensure EDI impacts and unconscious bias have been considered.

Following these initial reviews, applications will be sent to the Review Group for consideration.

### 5.3 Review Group

Decisions on funding will usually be made by a group of up to five 'peer reviewers', drawn from the Network and FLF communities. Usually the applicant will receive a response within six weeks.



This Review Group will meet for a half day monthly (or bimonthly depending on demand) to discuss proposals. The Group will aim to turn around applications with full funding within six weeks.

Proposals will be considered on a first-come first-serve basis at each Review Group. If there are more applications than the Group can assess in the allocated time, proposals that have been received later may need to roll over into next monthly Review Group.

The membership of the Review Group will rotate each month, but will consist of:

- Members of the Network's Project Board
- Members of the Network's Advisory Board
- UKRI representative
- FLF Peer Reviewers

The Review Group will be administered and chaired by the Project Manager, with support from the Community Manager.

#### 5.4 FLF Peer Reviewers

An invitation to become a Plus Funds Peer Reviewer will be made to all FLFs at the start of the Plus Funds scheme. One or two FLF Peer Reviewers will attend each Review Group.

In advance of the Review Group, the Project Manager will check:

- The Peer Reviewer is a member of the FLF Development Network
- The Review Group will not be considering a funding proposal from that Peer Reviewer in the meeting

#### 5.4 Decision making process

All proposals will be assessed against the weighted assessment criteria in the *Application Form* to ensure parity of approach in decision making. Reviewer responses will be aggregated by the Review Group to reach a decision.

In making their decisions, the Review Group will aim to ensure a proportion of the Plus Funds is available for each of the Networks' three strands (individuals, cultures and societies) so that no strand area is under/over-resourced.

Where applications similar in nature or topic to other Plus Funded projects are received, the Review Group reserves the right to suggest collaboration between applicants.

The Project Manager will be responsible for conveying the decision of the Review Group, and for delivering feedback and further information where required.

#### 5.5 Review Group decisions

Successful applicants will be informed of the decision by email.

Proposals that do not meet the criteria sufficiently will be emailed with reasons for rejection that relate back to the assessment criteria for applications. Re-submission will be permitted

once feedback has been addressed. Where appropriate, applicants will be offered support by relevant Network representatives in resubmitting a revised proposal.

Where applicants feel that feedback has been unfair or unclear, they are directed to contact the Community Manager at [hello@flfdevnet.com](mailto:hello@flfdevnet.com) for further information.

## Part 6: Successful applications

### 6.1 Funding process

When an application is successful, a funding confirmation email will be sent to the lead applicant soon after the decision. The lead applicant must confirm acceptance of the funding offer within one week of receiving this email or the offer may be withdrawn.

Funding distribution will be overseen by Edinburgh Innovations (EI). Where possible, EI will pay invoices and other associated costs directly, or reimburse the Lead Applicant. In special situations, invoices may be sent directly to UKRI for payment.

- The Budget table included in the Application should reflect expected monthly spend. This will allow EI to anticipate large financial outlays related to the Plus Funds.
- Where possible, invoices and quotes should be submitted to EI for direct payment. Where this is not possible, the Lead Applicant may choose to cover the cost of the payment, and request reimbursement from EI. Alternatively the Network will consult with UKRI about larger payments.
- Projects will be asked to submit brief updates on spend against budget in their monthly reporting and provide receipts for costs incurred.

The funding must be used for the purpose awarded and should be spent at the close of the project.

- Any funds remaining (over £100) at the end of the proposed activity must be returned to the Plus Funds team.
- Equipment or fixed assets purchased will remain the property of the FLF Development Network

### 6.2 Additional documentation

On the successful award of funding, the lead applicant may be asked to provide additional information required for the Network's UKRI reporting commitments (for example, number of participants in proposed activity).

Applicants may also be asked to provide a blog and/or video about their project for use on the FLF Development Network website.

### 6.3 Review points

PIs for funded applications will be asked to complete brief monthly update surveys to include progress against predicted milestones/spend/impact, as well as overall RAG (red/amber/green) status for their project.

PIs are also expected to submit brief updates on spend against budget in their monthly reporting and provide receipts for costs incurred.

At the close of the proposed activity, the lead applicant will be asked to complete a *Final Review* to be returned within one month by email to [hello@flfdevnet.com](mailto:hello@flfdevnet.com). This will include:

- Impacts, outputs and outcomes
- Review of EDI considerations and the efficacy of any mitigation taken
- End-of-project financial report (including receipts)

Information gathered from the Plus Funds final reviews will be analysed by the Community Manager and Project Manager and any issues highlighted within the reports brought to the Project Board for consideration and action.

#### 6.4 Acknowledgement

Where possible the support of the FLF Development Network should be acknowledged e.g. on websites/blogs, printed materials, event marketing.

*This activity was supported by the Future Leaders Fellows Development Network and funded by UKRI.*

### Part 7: Support for applicants

A range of help and support materials will be made available to applicants via the FLF Development Network website:

- *Application Form (with Review Matrix)*
- *Guidance for Applicants*
- *Finance/Budget Table Template*
- Contact for help: Bridget Mellifont, Community Manager ([hello@flfdevnet.com](mailto:hello@flfdevnet.com))

### Part 8: Administration of Plus Funds

#### 8.1 Initial set up


Governance of the Plus Funds and the application process have been developed by the Network's Project Team, with oversight from the Project Board, Advisory Board (include FLF Representatives), UKRI, and the Network's Lead for EDI.

The weighted assessment criteria used for decision making has been developed by the Network's Project Team, in consultation with the Advisory Board, with FLFs and the Project's Lead for EDI. The assessment criteria are reflected in the Plus Funds *Application Form*.

#### 8.2 Administration

The Project Manager will manage the administration of the Plus Funds in collaboration with the Finance Lead.





The Community Manager will track impact through ongoing communication with FLFs and assessment of their scheduled reports.

The Plus Funds pot (initially consisting of minimum £300K) will be reviewed against the FLF Development Network budget by the Director and Project Manager each year and topped up as appropriate.

### 8.3 Reporting

The Review Group will update the Project Board and Advisory Board on Plus Funds as and when appropriate. Reports may include:

- Progress of awards and current distribution of funding
- Larger projects that may require additional 'sign-off'
- EDI issues highlighted within the Plus Fund process and activities
- Any emergent themes

Progress reports will be made to UKRI on a three- and six-monthly basis with an overview of the Plus Funds activities, alongside data to include:

- Type of activity and outline agenda/objectives
- Dates, duration, region
- No. of participants
- Value of support awarded
- Outputs, outcomes and impacts

### 8.4 Review of processes

The governance, documentation and administration of the Plus Funds will be reviewed on an ongoing basis so that, where appropriate, the process can be amended to ensure the effective administration of the scheme or in response to any reported issues, EDI concerns or administrative difficulties raised by FLF participants or the Project Team.

The assessment criteria will be reviewed at the second Advisory Board meeting in July 2021.

