eSTEeM FAQs

1. How will projects be approved for eSTEeM funding?

Project plans should be submitted using a project plan submission form. The eSTEeM Coordination Group will review and scrutinse the plans to ensure that they meet eSTEeM's criteria. Proposers will be informed as to whether their plan has been accepted and may also be invited to have a further discussion with the directors to develop or refine their plan where necessary. Projects will then be signed off by the eSTEeM directors.

2. What funding is available?

Funding is limited but will be sufficient for most purposes. We will not be able to fund staffing beyond short term consultancies.

To maximise return we will be looking closely at value for money in the proposed projects' budgets. The primary resource is staff time; however, the work may involve travel, software development, etc. Funding may be used for:

- Travel expenses to visit Walton Hall and other purposes such as travel to meetings and workshops
- Incidental expenses (e.g. photocopying, telephone, postage)
- Additional computer hardware and software
- Consulting fees for ALs to help with interviews, analysing data, etc. These will need to be arranged through the eSTEeM manager
- Transcription costs
- Conference travel and fees
- Hospitality to arrange external meetings/focus groups but these must first be formally negotiated with the eSTEeM manager

3. Will I be given help in evaluation, e.g. analysing questionnaires?

eSTEeM will encourage you to take ownership of your own project evaluation; however, you will be supported in developing an effective evaluation strategy and advised about how to obtain the necessary permissions and carry out any necessary surveys i.e. SRPP/Ethics/Data Protection. We will help you to develop skills in qualitative/quantitative analysis and will be on hand to assist with interpretation.

4. I work outside the STEM Faculty however my work seems to fit the aims and remit of eSTEeM; am I eligible to apply and get involved?

Each faculty at The Open University now has its own scholarship and innovation centre. Therefore, in the first instance we would advise you to contact your relevant centre to discuss your scholarship proposal. Where possible, we welcome cross-faculty projects that will accelerate and increase the

impact of the University's excellence in scholarship applied across all disciplines for the benefit of OU students.

5. Can Associate Lecturers submit project proposals?
Yes! In Februray 2019, eSTEeM announced its first call for scholarship projects exclusively for STEM Associate Lecturers. Funding is limited and we anticipate funding up to a maximum of 5 proposals in this first round but we hope to have further calls in the future so keep an eye on our website for details.

Many eSTEeM projects require assistance with the collection of quantitative and qualitative data. Therefore, if you do not wish to lead a project but would be interested in being involved with a project, then please complete the skills register which can be found under the 'Resources' tab and return it to us at esteem@open.ac.uk. We will keep your details on file and when an opportunity arises we will try to match ALs according to their skills, experience and research area interest.

6. I'm thinking of submitting a project for external funding, what will be the relationship with eSTEeM?
Our long term aim is to be self-supporting or profit generating so we encourage all project leaders to consider external funding opportunities. eSTEeM can add value to projects seeking external funding through our well established processes so please come and talk to us. Many eSTEeM projects will provide pilot data that could underpin external bids.

7. I would like to get involved with eSTEeM but cannot fit it in at this time; will there be other opportunities to get involved at a later stage?
eSTEeM is always happy to hear from you at any time so if you have an idea for a project that you wish to discuss further please contact us esteem@open.ac.uk. Keep an eye on our website and follow us on Twitter @OU_eSTEeM for updates