

REF 2029

Research Excellence Framework

**Welcome to the REF 2029
Town Hall on
Applying to be a
panel member**

REF 2029

Research Excellence Framework

Thinking about applying for a REF panel role?

3 March 2025



Information session on applying to be a panel member for REF 2029

What are the panels for, how are they recruited, what's it like to be on a panel?

Rebecca Fairbairn, REF Director and Greg Walker, Chair of REF 2029 Main Panel D

Who are we looking for?

Simon Macklin, Chair of the REF People and Diversity Advisory Panel

Writing a great application

Greg Walker, Chair of REF 2029 Main Panel D

What is the Research Excellence Framework?

REF is owned and led by the four UK higher education funding bodies







- It:
 - informs allocation of around £2bn of block-grant funding each year
 - provides accountability for public investment in research
 - continually evolves, alongside our research base
 - (given the connection to allocation of funds) inevitably drives behaviour and therefore is a significant policy instrument across the UK

Open recruitment

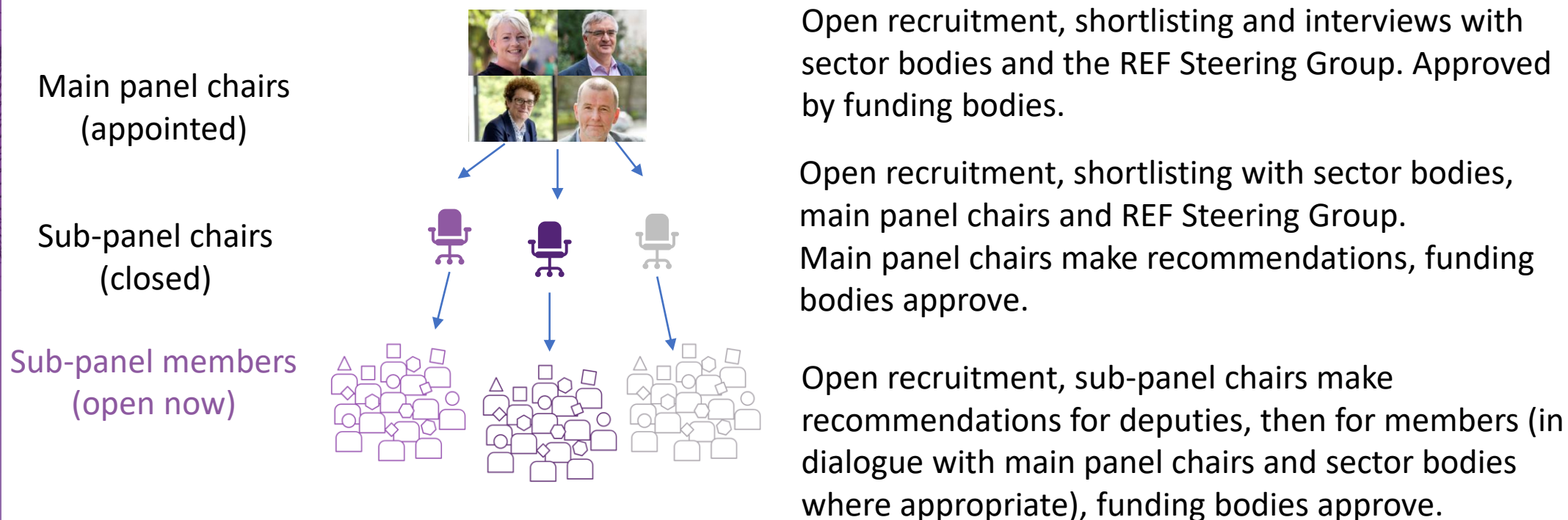
- We have been using open recruitment for all REF 2029 panels.
- EDI and broader diversity are priorities
- The recruitment of sub panels members presents a **key opportunity**
- We are seeking to **balance key principles of REF 2029** including
 - confidence in the quality of outcomes,
 - transparent and fair processes,
 - breadth of participation, diversity and inclusion
- Working with sector bodies to help ensure that panel appointments are robust
- Recruitment will be based on the **excellence of individuals**

The REF 2029 Main and sub panels

			
Professor Louise Kenny CBE	Professor Tom Rodden	Professor Jane Falkingham	Professor Greg Walker
Main Panel A Medicine, Health and Life Sciences	Main Panel B Physical Sciences, Engineering and Mathematics	Main Panel C Social Sciences	Main Panel D Arts and Humanities
Sub-panels 1-6	Sub-panels 7-12	Sub-panels 13-24	Sub-panels 25-34

Recruiting REF main and sub-panels

The REF panels will be composed of leading experts in their respective disciplines. They play a crucial role in the REF. The panels are responsible for developing assessment criteria and assessing the quality of research submissions against the established criteria.



What will happen?

Support and ways of working

- Panel meetings will be a mix of face-to-face and virtual.
- Panels will come together to calibrate approaches.

Time commitment

- 40 to 60 days of time over the course of the exercise.
- Split into one third for the criteria setting, and two thirds for the assessment phase.

REF2029 timetable

AW 2024-5

Policy releases:

- Open access
- Volume measure; Codes of practice guidance (VM)

2025

Spring – panel recruitment

Summer –

Contribution to knowledge and understanding; engagement and impact

Summer – Expert panels begin guidance development

Winter – PCE criteria and definitions

2026

- Final full guidance is set

2027

- Submission intentions deadline

2028

- Submission deadline
- Assessment phase begins

2029

- Results published

Criteria setting



Submissions



Assessment

What will panels assess? (what do they need criteria for?)

Institutions prepare submissions in

- **People, Culture, and Environment** (25% weighting): Emphasizes research culture and replaces the previous 'environment' element.
- **Contribution to Knowledge and Understanding** (50% weighting): Focuses on research outputs and includes broader contributions to the discipline.
- **Engagement and Impact** (25% weighting): Assesses impact case studies and accompanying statements

REF 2029 Advisory Panels



Professor Alis
Oancea

Chair of the REF
2029 Research
Diversity Advisory
Panel (RDAP)

Professor Simon
Macklin

Chair of the REF
2029 People and
Diversity Advisory
Panel (PDAP)

What are the panel roles?

Main Panels

Main panel chair

Sub-panel chairs

Specialist experts in (champions of) :

- International
- People, Culture and Environment
- Experts in research use, application, and wider benefits (impact assessors)
- Interdisciplinarity (diverse approaches to research)

Sub-panels

Sub-panel Chair

Deputy chair(s)

Members

We want to hear from individuals with **varied expertise** who can bring **unique perspectives** to the panels. **Experiences beyond academia**, including other sectors, policy work, and community-based experience are also highly valued; this includes **diverse lived experiences** and those with an **understanding of diverse research practices, outputs, impacts and engagement practice**.

The application form

1. Your knowledge and understanding relevant to the role

2. Your experience relevant to the role

3. Your skills relevant to the role

4. Your motivations for applying for the role

What makes a great application

- 1 Be specific about your expertise
- 2 Make your application easy to grade
- 3 Explain – why is it relevant - don't just list all your roles
- 4 We're following a strict process, we can't extrapolate
- 5 Answer the questions directly
- 6 What's shaped you? How have you shaped others?

What will I be paid?


Panel members will be paid a fee for their role across the duration of the REF:

- **Sub-panel chairs: £18,000** in total, split across
 - Criteria phase: £6,000
 - Assessment phase: £12,000
- **Sub-panel deputies: £13,500** in total, split across
 - Criteria phase: £4,500
 - Assessment phase: £9,000
- **Sub-panel members: £10,000** in total, split across
 - Criteria phase: £3,334
 - Assessment phase: £6,666
- **Main panel specialist experts: £18,000** in total, split across
 - Criteria phase: £6,000
 - Assessment phase: £12,000

Total panel fees apply across the whole duration of the REF.

Thank you and stay in touch

- Use QR code to sign up for **REF updates** straight to your inbox.
- Please visit **get involved** on our website to view current opportunities.
- Email us at **info@ref.ac.uk** if you have any suggestions about how we can improve our guidance for you.

 @ref2029.bsky.social

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