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# UK Democracy Fund

## Funding framework

January 2025

The Fund has three broad goals, and we seek non-partisan applications which can make impact in the following areas:

- **Enabling everyone to vote:** Building support for reforms to ensure a simple, seamless and accessible voting system fit for the 21st century.
- **Extending the right to vote:** Advocating in support of expanding the franchise for 16- and 17-year-olds and settled UK residents from overseas.
- **Increasing participation of everyone in our elections:** Making an effort to raise the turnout of low-propensity voters to improve fairness in our democracy. Low-propensity voters are groups of people who are less likely to register and vote based on analysis of electoral data. These include young people, racialised and minoritised groups and migrants, private renters and the vulnerably housed, and those with low incomes.

We are interested in campaigns and research applications which can support our goals and align to our funding priorities below.

Applications should demonstrate a focused and effective strategy, and a deep understanding of the issues and/or community you want to reach.

Only non-partisan applications will be considered.

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## Our funding priorities

In 2025, the UK Democracy Fund will be prioritising work under the first two of our goals: **Enabling everyone to vote** and **Extending the right to vote**.

### **Enabling everyone to vote**

The Fund seeks applications which can further our objectives of reforming the electoral system to be fairer and work better for us all. We are particularly interested in applications related to Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) and photographic Voter ID.

*Examples include:* [the campaign from Unlock Democracy](#) that we have funded on AVR, and research from Professor Toby James which we have commissioned on the [electoral data environment](#).

### **Extending the right to vote**

The Fund seeks applications which support extending the right to vote to 16- and 17-year-olds and settled migrants in the UK.

*Examples include:* Grant funding to [Politics in Action's campaign in Northern Ireland for Votes at 16](#) and to the Migrant Democracy Project's [Our Home Our Vote campaign](#).

### **Increasing participation**

The Fund may consider some applications to increase participation in elections, but this is unlikely to be at the same scale as in the run up to the 2024 General Election. We are particularly interested in research proposals which fill gaps in the sector's knowledge of barriers to participation, and insight into what works to mobilise low-propensity voters to participate.

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## Things to consider

- The Fund has clear funding criteria, therefore the first stage of the application process is to contact us as early as possible (weeks before the outline deadlines listed [here](#)). Reach out with a brief description of your idea in an email to [DemocracyFund@jrirt.org.uk](mailto:DemocracyFund@jrirt.org.uk) for an initial conversation. You do not need to have a fully realised strategy at this point. If we do determine that it is a good fit, we will ask you to submit a detailed outline, after which we will advise you as to whether to move forward with a full application in line with the [application process](#).
- The Fund will only consider non-partisan campaigns.
- The Fund has a wealth of [insight from research and campaigns](#) that we have funded in the past, and we encourage applicants to review this before sending in an application.
- What can be learned from the campaign or research that you are proposing? How does it build on existing research, insight, and best practice? How could this be useful for future campaigns, and how do you plan to capture and communicate this information?
- You can see a full list of our [current and past grantees here](#).

*This document was last reviewed in January 2025*

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