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Trusts and Foundation Grants Workshop

Hosted by Peaceful, Secure & Empowered Societies IRT

11 November 2025

**WORLD
CHANGING
GLASGOW**

THE  TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES
**GOOD
UNIVERSITY
GUIDE
2022**
**SCOTTISH
UNIVERSITY
OF THE YEAR**



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Workshop programme

- 1) Welcome & Introductions
- 2) Overview of Trust and Foundation Grant Opportunities
- 3) Learning from Experience
- 4) Breakout Group Session



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Welcome & Introductions



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Overview of Trust and Foundation Grant Opportunities



Introduction to trusts and foundations

Historical traditions

Accelerate progress
where needed most

Outside government
policy decision-making

More flexible - give
funding to the ideas they
think are the most
interesting, relevant or
worthy

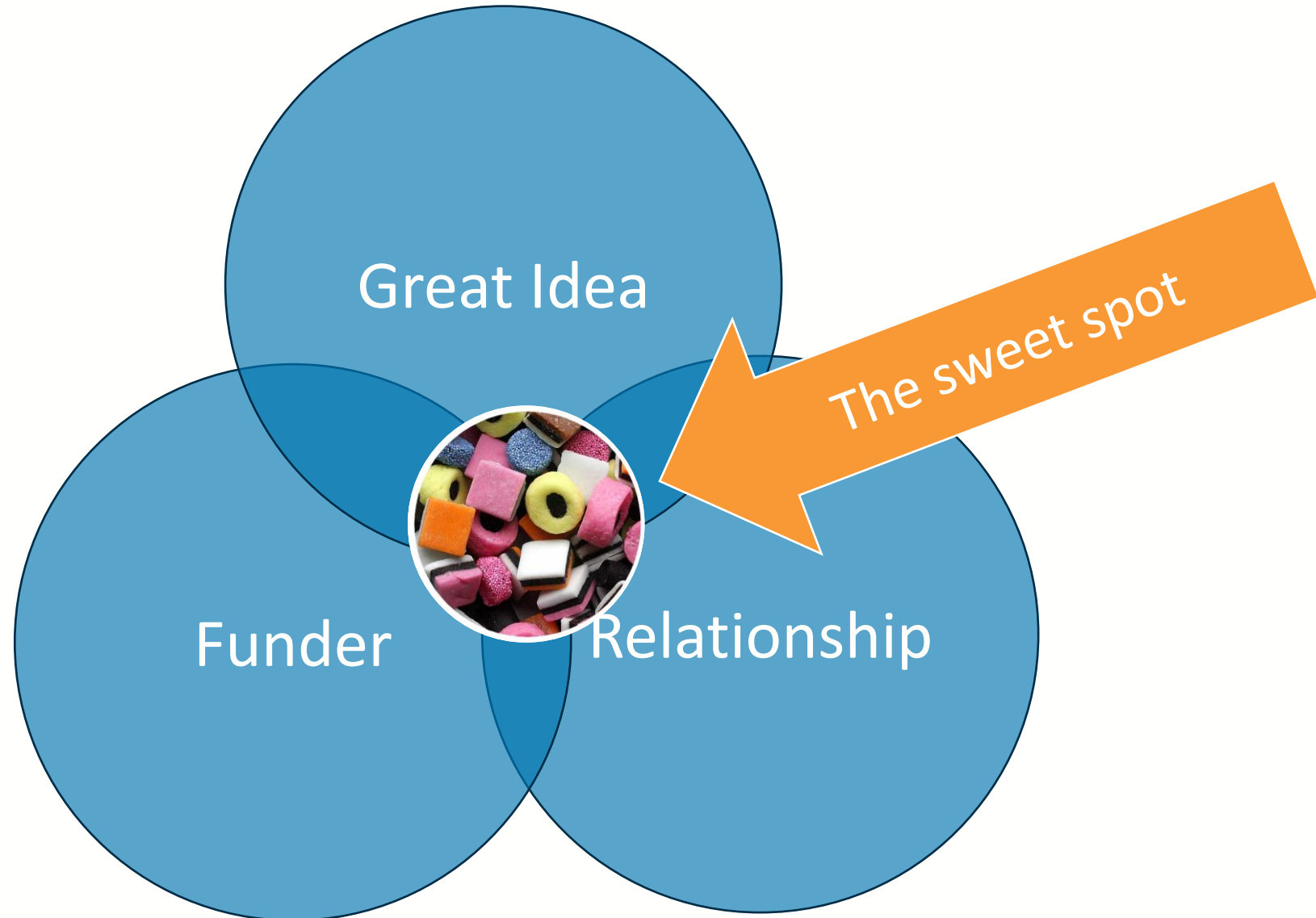
Potential to fuel real
change in the world to
benefit people, planet
and society

....and beyond



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Engaging with trusts and foundations





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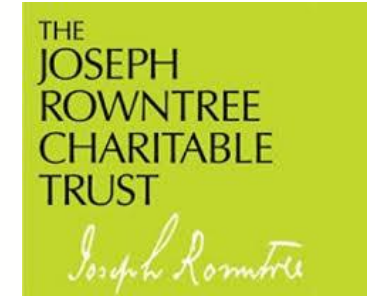
Trust continuum* (academic scholarship to radical solutions)

LEVERHULME
TRUST

Academic, ideas, scholarship



Ideas, innovation, discovery



Innovative, imaginative, radical solutions



Independent
Social Research
Foundation

Critical, innovative and rigorous research



Ideas, policy, implementation

...and everything in between

*Within the scope of COSS



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LEVERHULME
TRUST _____



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LEVERHULME
TRUST

Blue skies
research and
scholarship

Applicant
responsive
mode (topic
and research
mode)

Crosses
disciplinary
boundaries and
willing to take
risks for
knowledge or
understanding

Fundamental /
higher-risk
research (esp
when other
funding not
available)

Original,
important,
significant



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**Independent
Social Research
Foundation**



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Public benefit
foundation funded
by a group of private
philanthropists with
interests in academic
and social sciences

Promotion of new
modes of inquiry
and development of
interdisciplinary
expertise, methods
and better
understanding of
social entities and
processes

Support research
foregrounding
innovative,
interdisciplinary
thinking

Heterodox
projects that
challenge
existing
theories

Interdisciplinary
work that brings
together diverse
disciplines to
develop new
methods and
insights



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Discovery Research + Climate and Health

Accelerator

Researchers of Black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage supported to be in a stronger position to reach next career stage

ECA (Early Career)

Develop research identity; deliver shifts in understanding; lead own research programme

Discovery: Bold and creative discovery research that has the potential to improve human life, health and wellbeing

Climate and health research and policy development that put health at the centre of climate action

CDA (Career Development)

Develop research capabilities, drive innovation, shifts in understanding

Discovery Awards

For established researchers and their teams and framed by the research challenge



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THE
JOSEPH
ROWNTREE
CHARITABLE
TRUST

Joseph Rowntree



University
of Gloucestershire

THE
JOSEPH
ROWNTREE
CHARITABLE
TRUST

Peace and Security

We support approaches to defence and security which prioritise peace, non-violence and human rights

Power and Accountability

We support those working for a world in which power is more equally shared and powerful institutions are accountable to wider society

Rights and Justice

We support those who uphold equality and human rights in support of racial and religious minorities

Sustainable Future

Imaginative and inclusive approaches to tackling the climate crisis and building a just and equitable economy to protect the planet for future generations

Northern Ireland

Supporting those whose work to promote peace, equality, inclusion and human rights contributes to ongoing transformation of the NI conflict



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**Nuffield
Foundation**



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Overview



How can we
build a
prosperous and
fair society?

How can we
build a
sustainable
society?

How can we
build an inclusive
society?

How can we
rebuild and
maintain
effective,
accountable and
trustworthy
institutions?

How can we
ensure people
and society
benefit from
rapid
developments in
science and
technology?

Education

Justice

Welfare



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Case Study



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Nuffield Foundation Funding Priorities

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Foundation

A
prosperous
and fair
society

An inclusive
society

Science,
technology
and society

Climate
change

Trustworthy
and
effective
institutions

Education

Justice

Welfare



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Impact at Nuffield

Nuffield
Foundation

“We expect all the research we fund to make a different in the real world, but the bar is higher for the Strategic Fund”



Rigour

We have high standards in all that we do, achieving a quality that gives us influence and impact.

“Proposals must work collaborative across research, policy and practice...with active involvement of all relevant parties to fully address stated objectives”



Collaboration

We convene and connect with individuals and organisations to maximise our collective impact, recognising that we will not bring about change on our own.



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Five dimensions to impact

Nuffield
Foundation

Informing
change to
policies,
systems or
legislation

Informing
practice
change

Changing
attitudes or
perceptions

Providing
opportunity
and building
capability

Advancing
understanding
or awareness
of an issue

Credible communications and engagement plans



Examples of impact

Informing change to policies, systems or legislation

- Respond to policy consultations
- Sustained and tailored engagement with policymakers
- Contribute to policy-focused initiatives
- Sit on policy advisory groups
- Produce or contribute to evidence synthesis focused on a policy topic

Providing opportunity and building capability

- Host and attend events and other convening activities
- Use available resources at host organisations and the Foundation to develop communication and engagement plans and strategies
- Share learnings and best practice (e.g. create and deliver CPD, toolkits)

***All impact activities must consider audience: collaborations with policy and practice stakeholders are central to the project**



Examples of impact

Improving understanding or awareness of an issue and Changing attitudes or perceptions

- Hold or speak at relevant events
- Join related advisory groups
- Secure media coverage
- Post on blog sites or social media
- Engage with policy and practice

Informing practice change

- Publish articles in practitioner-focused publications
- Present at practitioner conferences
- Engage / meet with practitioner groups



Funds' distribution – per organisation

Grant distribution per organisation - 2019-2024

■ Foundation ■ Government ■ Institute/Centre ■ University ■ Other





Funds' distribution – per country

Grant distribution per country - 2019-2024

■ England ■ Scotland ■ Wales ■ Northern Ireland





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Learning from experience



Speakers

- Dr Anna Chadwick (Law)
- Professor Bernhard Reinsberg (SPS)
- Professor Edward Sosu (Education)
- Dr Rebecca Tapscott (SPS)

Sharing experiences from across the following trusts and foundation: Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland*, Gerda Henkel Foundation, Leverhulme Trust, Nuffield Foundation, P4NE (Partners for a New Economy).



Feedback from the speakers

- Know your funder:
 - Understand mission and focus – fit is critical
 - How does your research help to advance these goals?
- Prepare: if you will be speaking to them, make sure you know their scope of work
- Know the guidelines:
 - Ensure project fits scope and ambition, and is feasible and cost effective
 - Answer the question the call is asking: sometimes funders launch calls that are slightly outside their normal remit – respond to what they are asking
- Delivery and follow-up: project management and timely delivery of reporting is key and note unique funder restrictions
- Relationship management: once you have the grant, undertake more soft relationship management – sending small project updates from time-to-time outwith official timetable of reports, attending events they invite you to when possible
- Talk to others who have been successful with that funder: critical information can be shared that might not otherwise be shared



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Nuffield Foundation Grantee case study

Nuffield
Foundation

Edward Sosu School of Education

Peaceful, Secure & Empowered Societies IRT Workshop, 11 Nov, 2025, ARC, Studio 2

Our project

[Research](#) | [Projects](#)

Understanding school attendance, education and labour market outcomes

 May 2022 - April 2024

Researchers: **Dr Markus Klein** | **Dr Edward Sosu**

Precursor



Nuffield on the radar – key funder of research on educational inequalities



ESRC SDAI on socioeconomic inequalities in school attendance

Thinking of next steps



Nuffield Foundation event in Edinburgh –

Key insight with regards to focus and priorities

Funding Journey

Initial Application - 2020

- Rejection with feedback
 - Need to focus on contemporary data
- Request for resubmission

Follow-up application - 2021

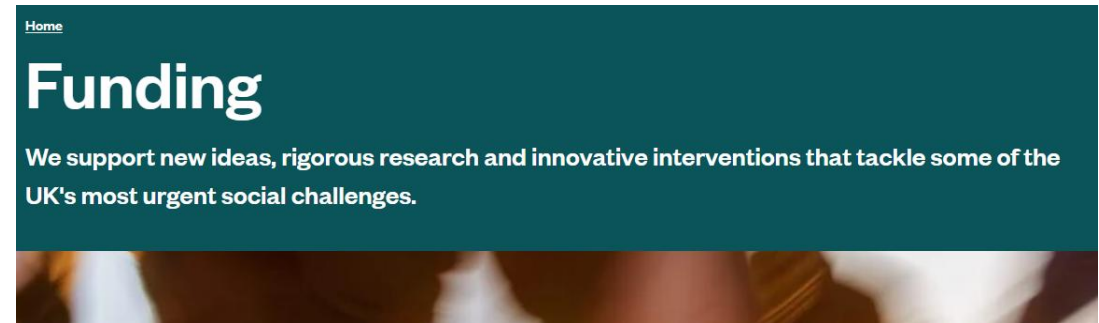
- Stage 1:
 - More current data and clearer comparative analysis across UK
- Stage 2:
 - Full application
 - Response to reviewers
 - Ranged from substantive, methodology, to budget

Award of funding and implementation


Thoughts on developing an application for Nuffield Foundation

Understand their mission and focus

- ...Rooted in our founding **mission to advance social wellbeing**, and shaped by today's economic and social challenges, our funding **supports work that furthers understanding, shifts public debate**, and ultimately **improves lives for individuals**, families and communities across the UK.
- ...Our **purpose**: to **improve people's lives** within a just and inclusive society.



The role the foundation plays – how does your research help to advance these goals?

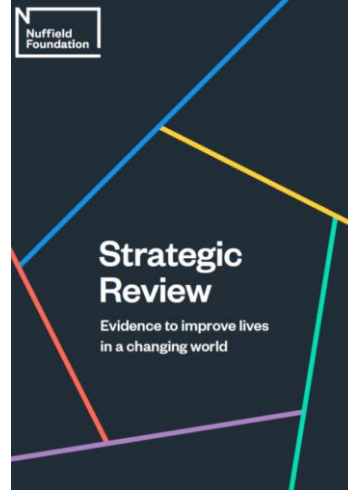


We will use our resources to generate evidence, convene debate and promote innovation to deliver lasting social benefits by:

- influencing policy
- improving practice
- funding innovative interventions
- backing groundbreaking institutions

Core Areas: Education, Justice and Welfare

Familiarise yourself with the key priorities



Our priorities

A prosperous and fair society

How can we build a prosperous and fair society, where people are secure and can fulfil their potential?

An inclusive society

How can we build an inclusive society, where people thrive and feel they belong, in the context of changing demography and ways of life?

Science, technology and society

How can we ensure that developments in science and technology work for people and society?

Climate change

How can policies to address climate change be developed in a way that promotes a prosperous, fair and inclusive society?

Trustworthy and effective institutions

How can we build and maintain the effective, accountable and trustworthy institutions that our society and democracy needs?

[Read our Strategic Review](#)

Examine previously funded projects

- Avoid proposing already funded work
- Make links to funded work
- Undertake some intelligence of overall budget range

Search results 1 of 639 Sort by: Newest ↓

 <div>New</div> <p>Education 2026 - 2028</p> <p>Noise in early years settings for children from under-privileged backgrounds</p> <p>View project → ☆</p>	 <div>New</div> <p>Justice 2026 - 2028</p> <p>Exploring the child arrangements of separated families</p> <p>View project → ☆</p>	 <div>New</div> <p>Education 2026 - 2027</p> <p>Education pathways for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children</p> <p>View project → ☆</p>	 <div>New</div> <p>Education 2026 - 2027</p> <p>Student employment and subsequent education and labour market outcomes</p> <p>View project → ☆</p>
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Consider the assessment criteria

What we will fund

We are looking for proposals that meet our assessment criteria:

- **Relevance:** Is the proposal relevant to at least one of the priority questions?
- **Impact:** Is there a clear path to how the research and related activities might make a difference to people's lives?
- **Conceptual framework:** Is there a clear conceptual framework?
- **Rigour:** Is the research methodology appropriate and rigorous?
- **Experience:** Does the team have the appropriate experience, expertise and potential?
- **Value for money:** Is the budget requested appropriate, and does it offer good value for money?

Grant management process

- Hands-on and systematic support
 - Direct working with Programme Head
- Compulsory advisory group and specified meetings
- Help with developing communication strategy
- Interest is in main public output and not academic papers per se
- Support for networking and dissemination (inc. office in London)
- Flexibility with requests if justified



Success rate

- On average, 1 in 10 Outline applicants are invited to submit a Full application (10%).
- Success rates for Full applications vary from round to round, but generally, around half of Full applications secure funding (50%).

A large, solid orange arrow pointing to the right, which serves as a background for the text.

Thank you



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Workshop programme

Breakout Group Session

Learn to think like a trust or foundation



Instructions

- 1) You will be given a short summary of one of the trust or foundations discussed today
- 2) With your group, decide on a topic (from amongst your disciplines) that might suit this funder
- 3) Write a three-line case for support in the style of the trust or foundation (supplementary use of the internet is allowed) – 10 minutes
- 4) Share your case for support with the group – 5 minutes



Tips for success with trusts and foundations

- **Get to know them!**
 - Familiarise yourself with their history as it informs their present and future:
 - Leverhulme (commitment to expanding scholarship supporting research and education); Nuffield (set up post WW2 to support post-war construction and societal transformation); JRCT (Quaker trust want to produce positive social change)
 - Read, and re-read, the guidelines: there is important information there including
 - How many times you can submit the same idea (often only once)
 - Guidance on strategy alignment
 - Indication of the type of language needed (very different from UKRI, EU, etc)
 - What they see as outputs: eg a journal article may be of less value than the interview tool you want to develop
- **They are like elephants:** they have long memories and big ears
 - Long memories: small staff groups who often work closely with leadership, trustees and grantees (and could remember you for all the wrong reasons)
 - Big ears: many T&F share trustees and leadership, and staff may move from one to another and will share intelligence
...and last but not least...
- **Engage with your CRSO (College Research Support Office)** just like when applying for other grants
 - Contact your Project Coordinator (they lead on the processes, reviews, budget, and basically get you across the line to submission)
 - Get in touch with me (MaryMargaret.McRae@glasgow.ac.uk) and I can support in the framing, development and curation and alignment of your proposal to the trust or foundation's strategy and guidelines
 - Get in touch with your Knowledge Exchange focal point (depends on your School) if knowledge exchange and impact figures in your application (which it often does more frequently with proposals to trusts and foundations)
And if you forget one of us, we're usually pretty good at looping people in!



Further information

- **Leverhulme Trust** <https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/>
 - Early Career Fellowships <https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/early-career-fellowships> ; Major Research Fellowships <https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/major-research-fellowships> ; Research Fellowship <https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/major-research-fellowships> ; Research Project Grants <https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/research-project-grants>
- **Independent Social Research Foundation** <https://isrf.org/>
 - All funding: <https://isrf.org/funding>
 - Early Career Fellowships: 2027; Mid-Career Fellow: 2026; First Book Fellow: 2026/27?; Political Economy Fellows: 2026?
- **Nuffield Foundation** <https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/>
 - Main Grants (Research, Development and Analysis Fund) <https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/funding/research-development-and-analysis-fund> ; Racial Diversity UK Fund <https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/funding/racial-diversity-uk-fund> ; Strategic Fund <https://gla.sharepoint.com/sites/CollegeSocialSciences/SitePages/Submission-Management--Nuffield-Foundation-Strategic-Fund--Call.aspx?ga=1>
- **Joseph Rowantree Charitable Trust** <https://www.jrct.org.uk/home>
 - All programme grants (Northern Ireland, Power and Accountability, Peace and Security, Rights and Justice, Sustainable Future): <https://www.jrct.org.uk/when-to-apply>
- **Wellcome Trust** <https://wellcome.org/>
 - Main Grants (Research, Development and Analysis Fund) <https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/funding/research-development-and-analysis-fund> ; Racial Diversity UK Fund <https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/funding/racial-diversity-uk-fund> ; Strategic Fund <https://gla.sharepoint.com/sites/CollegeSocialSciences/SitePages/Submission-Management--Nuffield-Foundation-Strategic-Fund--Call.aspx?ga=1>



Further information (part II)

- **John Templeton Foundation** <https://www.templeton.org/>
 - Supports interdisciplinary research focused on: Religion, Science & Society; Life Sciences; Mathematical & Physical Sciences; Character Virtue Development; Individual Freedom & Free Markets
- **Lloyds Register Foundation** <https://www.lrfoundation.org.uk/>
 - Priorities include: safer maritime systems; safer sustainable infrastructure; skilled people for safer engineering; Global Safety Evidence Centre; Heritage
- **Friends Provident Foundation** <https://friendsprovidentfoundation.org/>
 - Works towards a fair and sustainable economic system that serves people and planet.
- **Esmee Fairbairn Foundation** <https://esmeefairbairn.org.uk/>
 - Improve the natural world, secure a fairer future and strengthen the bonds in communities in the UK
- **Gerda Henkel Stiftung** <https://www.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de/en/>
 - Supports the historical humanities and focuses on research projects that explore current issues in a larger historical context

Questions about these or others? Feel free to contact me!

On behalf of the Peaceful, Secure & Empowered Societies IRT

Thank you for attending!