

## ILAS Interdisciplinary Stimulus Award

The Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences is a vibrant hub which promotes interdisciplinarity for all staff and students across all faculties in the University. Through a stimulating events programme including the Grand Challenges lecture series, plus a range of conferences, workshops and seminars, we provide spaces to engage with academic colleagues, practitioners and policy makers and to nurture new ideas and approaches that cross disciplinary boundaries. Our Visiting Fellows Programme and Interdisciplinary Research (IDR) Workshops bring researchers together from Health, Humanities and Social Sciences and Natural Sciences, both within the University and from across the world and promotes research that drives innovation, and makes a difference to society and culture.

Reports on interdisciplinary work recognise that it is not an end in itself, but a means to an end to achieve impact or derive new knowledge and that support should be focused on activities that remove disincentives and barriers to interdisciplinarity. For example, interdisciplinary activities may need more time as there may be more initial groundwork, planning and team building. Collaborators need space to develop their work and there must be flexibility and leeway to support projects which may evolve. Institutional disciplinary focused structures can also be a barrier for some individuals thereby limiting the potential for new, exciting and innovative interdisciplinary approaches. Cross-cutting funding mechanisms are needed to underpin IDR and small investments may be needed at the outset to enable and foster the longer term development of more ambitious projects.

The Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences currently offers two funding schemes; the ILAS Visiting Fellowship Scheme and Seedcorn Funded IDR Workshops with the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise. In addition, this ILAS Interdisciplinary Stimulus Award aims to support a wider range of interdisciplinary activities including research, scholarship, learning and teaching, dissemination, enterprise and outreach.

These could include, for example:

- Development of new teaching and learning approaches which break down barriers between traditional disciplines, for example, the new materials/collaborations between students of different disciplines or the development of interdisciplinary projects for UG students
- Coordinating/hosting an ID workshop, sandpit, research conversation, seminar or lecture
- Developing/establishing an ID network
- Conference attendance to disseminate and publicise interdisciplinary research and innovative teaching and learning
- Short term Research Visits or field trips

The funding could contribute to a larger project where the profile of the Institute as a fulcrum and a symbol of interdisciplinary activity at Keele will be strengthened and promoted.

## Applications

We invite applications from academic staff to support interdisciplinary activities that contribute to the Institute's mission. There will be a small amount of money available (£500 maximum per application) and applications will be considered on their individual merits and competitively against other applications received at the respective deadlines. We are keen to use the funding creatively and applicants are invited to make a case for funding support which should include

- An outline of the proposed work/activity, drawing out its interdisciplinary features
- Why the proposed work/activity is important /innovative and how it contributes to the ILAS mission to stimulate and nurture interdisciplinarity at Keele
- Whilst we recognise that some proposed activities are necessarily at an exploratory stage, you should indicate your ambitions, what you are hoping to achieve, the potential impacts of the activity and possible next steps.
- Why this funding stream is essential (for example because other Faculty or Research Institute funding is not available)

Applications will be reviewed regularly (see website for dates) by a working group with members drawn from the ILAS Steering Group. Chair's action will be taken if applications need urgent consideration.

When applications are considered for funding, the following grading system may be used

6	<b>Outstanding:</b> Very likely to contribute to highly innovative outputs, impact, and environment. Definitely value for money. Priority for funding.
5	<b>Excellent:</b> Likely to contribute to innovative outputs, impact or environment. Value for money. Fundable if budget/competition allows, but not the highest priority.
4	<b>Good:</b> Likely to contribute to outputs, impact or environment. Value for money. Fundable, if budget/competition allows.
3	<b>Satisfactory:</b> Seems value for money. May contribute to outputs, impact or environment. Low priority for funding.
2	<b>More information needed:</b> Not clear that it will contribute to outputs, impact or environment. Not clear that it will be value for money. Not fundable at this time.
1	<b>Case not proven:</b> Not fundable.

ILAS support for the activity will be agreed with the ILAS Manager and all materials associated with the activity must include the ILAS logo and acknowledgement of ILAS support and funding. Once the activity is complete the lead applicant will be expected to produce a short report and/or provide a short presentation at an ILAS event.