



Targeted call for rapid research

Experiences of access to legal advice for people with lived experience of modern slavery, particularly on recovery and outcomes

25 November 2021

Call Overview

About the Call

The Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (the Modern Slavery PEC) has re-opened a targeted call for proposals on a research project examining experiences of accessing legal advice for people with lived experience of modern slavery, particularly on their recovery and outcomes.

The aim of this research project will be to explore the experiences of people with lived experience of modern slavery in not accessing legal advice, particularly the impact on recovery and outcomes. The project should identify both barriers to accessing legal advice and also any promising practice which could improve outcomes.

The scope of the research is limited to people with lived experience of modern slavery living in the UK and excludes the impact of barriers to accessing legal advice for dependents and trafficked children. Projects may address all UK countries. We will accept proposals that choose to focus the majority of the research on England and Wales if an adequate justification is provided, but we would expect to see a comparative element with other UK jurisdictions.

The objectives are to:

- A. Assess the scale of survivors of modern slavery being unable to access advice on various areas of law and reasons for this;
- B. Identify promising practices in promoting access to legal advice for people with lived experience of modern slavery;
- C. Assess the impact of inability to access adequate and timely legal advice for people with experience of modern slavery on decisions to enter the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), NRM conclusive ground decisions, compensation claims, as well as any immigration or asylum claim outcomes;
- D. Assess the impact of being unable to access adequate and timely legal advice on the recovery and well-being of people with lived experience of modern slavery; and
- E. Explore patterns according to the type of legal advice; final case outcome received, characteristics of individuals; and how this is experienced in different regions of the UK.

Desirable objectives

- F. Assess the scale of survivors of modern slavery unaware that they are entitled to access legal advice and reasons for this.

A maximum budget of £70,000 at 100% full economic cost (FEC) is allocated for this project. The Modern Slavery PEC expects to fund one project for this work. Projects must be led by a UK higher education institution or approved research organisation eligible to receive UKRI funding, and the project must be in collaboration with at least one UK based third sector organisation.

Key Dates

Action/Activity	Deadline
Call announcement	25 November 2021
Call deadline	4pm (UK time) 11 January 2022
Decision to successful team	Week beginning 31 January 2022
Project start	w/b 28 February 2022 (tbc with successful team)
Delivery of final outputs	August 2022 (tbc with successful team)

Call Webinar and frequently asked questions

A call webinar was held on 1pm (UK time) 12 October 2021, this webinar went through the scope of the original call and answered questions from potential applicants. Following the webinar, a recording of it can be found on our [YouTube channel](#). If you have further questions, or questions on the amendments to the call, please email office@modernslaverypec.org. All questions and answers are published in an FAQ document on the [call's web page](#).

Updates to the call

Following helpful feedback, we have re-opened this funding call, originally launched September 2021, to include the following changes:

1. Project timeframe extended to six months (from four months), with scope to discuss timeframes with the successful applicant
2. Increase of maximum budget to £70,000 (from £65,00) at 100% FEC
3. We have amended the scope of the research to make it more flexible for research teams. We have made the objective on assessing the scale of survivors unaware that they are entitled to access legal advice (objective F) “desirable” rather than “essential”.
4. We have made the requirements for key elements of the research more flexible, so that they can be confirmed in collaboration with the Modern Slavery PEC rather than being pre-fixed at the point of application.

Introduction

About the PEC

The Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (the Modern Slavery PEC) was created by the investment of public funding to enhance the understanding of modern slavery and transform the effectiveness of laws and policies designed to prevent it.

It's designed to provide independent, impartial and authoritative insight and analysis on modern slavery based on high quality research it commissions, aiming to have a transformational impact on the understanding of modern slavery and the responses to it.

The Centre brings together academics, policymakers, businesses, civil society, survivors and the public on a scale not seen before in the UK to collaborate on solving this global challenge. The Modern Slavery PEC's approach is rooted in human rights.

Led by the [Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law](#) (part of the [British Institute of International and Comparative Law \(BIICL\)](#)) the Centre is a consortium of universities and Independent Research Organisations with a track record in world-class work on modern slavery. The Modern Slavery PEC is funded and actively supported by the [Art and Humanities Research Council](#), with additional support from the [Economic and Social Sciences Research Council](#), on behalf of the [UK Research and Innovation](#) (UKRI), from the Strategic Priorities Fund.

Our aim and guiding principles for research

We support research which provides innovative, independent, impartial and authoritative insight and analysis on modern slavery. Our aim is to drive policy change and have a transformational impact on the understanding of modern slavery and the responses to it.

We aim to change the way in which modern slavery research is done through our guiding principles of effectiveness, equity and survivor-involvement. We aspire to facilitate new collaborations in modern slavery research including by supporting partnerships between those who have not previously worked together. By doing so, we hope to bring together the many different actors in the modern slavery space to maximise their collective influence.

The Modern Slavery PEC strongly encourages that applications involve people with lived experience in the design and/or implementation of the project. We design our calls with the aspiration for them to be inclusive to encourage a greater diversity of applicants and approaches to modern slavery research.

We intend for all of the research that we fund to align with our guiding principles. We therefore expect all research that the Modern Slavery PEC funds to support diversity and inclusion with respect to those who carry out the research and in terms of interdisciplinarity.

Background and context for this call

Improving survivor recovery and support, including access to justice, and understanding longer-term outcomes are priority research areas for the Modern Slavery PEC.¹ Improving evidence on this issue is a priority for multiple stakeholder groups working to address modern slavery. In 2020, six members of Survivor Alliance identified five research areas to address issues of sustainable freedom and wellbeing for survivors. Coping with trauma and recovery was ranked as the highest priority.² The Centre for the Study of International Slavery's evaluation of a long-

¹ The Modern Slavery PEC Strategy 2021-2024: <https://modernslaverypec.org/resources/strategy>

² Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre, Consultation on the Modern Slavery PEC's research priorities, January 2021, <https://modernslaverypec.org/assets/downloads/Research-consultation-report-final.pdf>

term support system set up by City Hearts recommended improving the evidence base on how outcomes relate to different systems, processes and levels of support and the Centre for Social Justice and Justice & Care identified good care for those exploited as a key principle for reform.³ The UK Government's research priorities for modern slavery highlighted a need for survivor informed evidence about the processes and systems needed to recover and reintegrate, and the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner includes among her current research priorities understanding victim and survivor experiences and longer-term outcomes.⁴

Through an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) open call process, the Modern Slavery PEC has recently funded five research projects which are all exploring longer term outcomes for people with lived experience of modern slavery. Further information about these projects can be found [here](#).

The PEC is seeking to complement these existing projects through three calls for additional research to fill other priority evidence gaps on the theme of survivor recovery. This call relates to research to explore the impact of access to legal advice on survivor recovery and outcomes. The other call focuses on evaluating the provision of distributed technology. Details about this can be found [here](#).

Existing research has examined access to the legal aid system⁵ and immigration legal aid market⁶ more broadly as well as access to immigration legal advice for survivors of modern slavery in England and Wales from the perspective of legal representatives and support organisers.⁷ Common themes identified by existing research include barriers for survivors in accessing legal aid funded asylum and immigration advice, such as a lack of or non-existence of providers in particular regions, a lack of specialist legal representatives, confusion around legal aid entitlements and the legal aid funding structure being inadequate to compensate for time spent on a complex trafficking case. **Survivor perspectives and the impact of not accessing legal advice on survivor recovery and outcomes remain under-researched areas.**

The outputs from this research project will contribute to the limited evidence base about the role of legal advice on survivor outcomes and build on the existing evidence about access to legal advice for survivors of modern slavery more broadly. The Modern Slavery PEC will use the findings to influence ongoing policy development in this area, including considerations on how to improve survivors' access to legal advice, as announced in the government's New Plan for Immigration in addition to the legal aid provisions set out in the Nationality and Borders Bill.⁸

In accordance with the Modern Slavery PEC's strategic objective of facilitating collaboration, successful teams will work cooperatively with the Modern Slavery PEC to ensure alignment with our objectives as well as to maximise impact.

³ Centre for the Study of International Slavery, Fresh Start: Integrating Survivors of Modern Slavery, 2017, p.29 <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/csis/Fresh.Start.A5.pdf>

Centre for Social Justice and Justice & Care, It Still Happens Here: Fighting UK Slavery in the 2020s, July 2020, <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/It-Still-Happens-Here.pdf>

⁴ Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Annual Report 2020-21, July 2021 p.86

<https://www.antislaverycommissioner.co.uk/media/1642/independent-anti-slavery-commissioner-annual-report-2020-2021.pdf>

⁵ Justice Committee, The Future of Legal Aid, 21 July 2021, <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/6979/documents/72829/default/>

⁶ Jo Wilding, Droughts and Deserts, A report on the immigration legal aid market, June 2019, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333718995_Droughts_and_Deserts_A_report_on_the_immigration_legal_aid_market

⁷ Dr Samantha Currie and Dr Matthew Young, Access to legal advice and representation for survivors of modern slavery, May 2021 <https://modernslaverypec.org/assets/downloads/Legal-advice-report.pdf>

Young Legal Aid Lawyers (2020) 'A sector at breaking point: Justice denied for victims of trafficking' <http://www.younglegalaidlawyers.org/sites/default/files/200621%20YLLAL%20trafficking%20report.pdf>

⁸ HM Government, A New Plan for Immigration Policy Statement, published on 24 March 2021

[https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-plan-for-immigration;](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-plan-for-immigration)

HM Government, Nationality and Borders Bill, 6 July 2021

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-02/0141/210141.pdf>

Aim, scope, and objectives of the research

The aim of this research project will be to explore the experiences of people with lived experience of modern slavery in not accessing legal advice, particularly the impact on recovery and outcomes. The project should identify both barriers to accessing legal advice and also any promising practice which could improve outcomes.

The scope of the research is limited to people with lived experience of modern slavery living in the UK and excludes the impact of barriers to accessing legal advice for dependents and trafficked children. Projects may address all UK countries. We will accept proposals that choose to focus the majority of the research on England and Wales if an adequate justification is provided, but we would expect to see a comparative element with other UK jurisdictions.

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Desirable objectives

- F. Assess the scale of survivors of modern slavery unaware that they are entitled to access legal advice and reasons for this;

Key elements of the research

The successful applicant will be expected to develop a methodology in collaboration with the Modern Slavery PEC. This is expected to include the following components (to be confirmed in collaboration with the Modern Slavery PEC):

- Quantitative research with an appropriate number (rationale to be provided) of legal practitioners and those supporting people with lived experience of modern slavery to assess the scale of not accessing legal advice and develop case studies on specific law firms or law centres providing legal advice to people with lived experience of modern slavery, including those using innovative methods to provide advice to people that are hard to reach.
- Applicants should set out their proposed approach to measuring wellbeing/recovery for example through use of existing wellbeing scales or survivor informed outcomes.
- Qualitative research with an appropriate number (rationale to be provided) of people with lived experience of modern slavery, which would be subject to ethics and data sharing approvals.
- In line with the PEC's guiding principle of survivor involvement, the methodology should demonstrate how [input of people with lived experience of modern slavery](#) is built in throughout the design and delivery of the research, whilst ensuring survivor engagement is appropriate and takes account of [safeguarding and ethics implications](#).

Required outputs

The successful applicant will deliver a full report as well as a summary briefing for policymakers.⁹ The outputs will be co-produced with the PEC team so there should be ample time included in the proposed project timeline for the sharing of drafts to enable comments and feedback to be incorporated.

- The full report should be no more than 10,000 words (excluding references/annexes).
- The summary briefing should be no more than (2,500 words).
- Both should provide key recommendations for policymakers and other actors as appropriate.

The project team will also be invited to present interim findings to the PEC team and other relevant audiences at a suitable mid-point during the research.

Project milestones and timeline

Milestones and timeline	
Application process	
Action/Activity	Deadline
Call announcement	25 November 2021
Call deadline	4pm 11 January 2022
Decision to successful team	Week beginning 31 January 2022
Project start	w/b 28 February 2022 (tbc with successful team)
Project milestones and deliverables	
Action/Activity	Deadline
Revised workplan and methodology (provided to PEC by project team)	Late-February 2022
Delivery of full draft of project report	Mid-July 2022 (subject to discussions with successful team)
Delivery of PEC Research Summary	Mid-August 2022 (subject to discussions with successful team)
Delivery of final outputs	August 2022
Collaborating on PEC dissemination activities e.g. events, webinars, meetings (see Eligible Costs)	August 2022

Additional information for applicants

Ways of working with the PEC

Collaboration and co-operation are key values for the Modern Slavery PEC. As such we will work jointly with the successful research team from the outset and will co-design and co-create research outputs that are timely, relevant, accessible, and have the potential to deliver policy impact. The Modern Slavery PEC and the successful research team will agree regular touchpoints throughout the project cycle to facilitate this collaboration.

⁹ See examples here: <https://modernslaverypec.org/resources?type=summary>

Ethics and Safeguarding

There may be a need to collect primary data, e.g. via survey, semi-structured interviews or focus groups, from key informants and organisations that work in this sector, in which case the applicant should detail their proposed plans and processes for gaining ethical approval before data collection begins. See the section below on working with people with lived experience where we outline our safeguarding and collaboration expectations.

The Modern Slavery PEC strongly encourages that applications involve people with lived experience in the design and/or implementation of the project. Where a project undertakes new research directly involving vulnerable groups or people with lived experience modern slavery, projects should carefully consider ethics and safeguarding implications. In the ethics statement, applicants should include reference to organisational policies and processes around safeguarding, developing project specific policies where appropriate.

Data protection/GDPR

All data must be collated and stored in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and, if necessary, the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016. Applicants should detail their systems and processes for dealing with data securely. Proposals must cover how data will be transported/transferred, handled, analysed and stored, including retention schedules, within the Ethics Statement.

Any and all datasets produced in the course of this research will remain the property of the successful applicant. The final report will be co-branded with the Modern Slavery PEC, whilst the summary briefing will be branded as a PEC output ([example](#)). Both the successful applicant and the Modern Slavery PEC will be free to use the final report as they wish after the end date of the project.

For more information on how we handle your data please visit our [privacy policy](#).

Budget

A maximum budget of £70,000 at 100% full economic cost (FEC) is allocated for this project. The Modern Slavery PEC expects to fund one project for this work.

The project must be led by a UK higher education institution or approved research organisation which is eligible to receive UKRI funding¹⁰, and the project must be in collaboration with at least one UK based third sector organisation. Higher education institutes and approved research organisations will receive 80% FEC. UK based third sector organisations are eligible to collaborate as consultants and will be funded at 100% FEC through the lead organisation. International organisations are not eligible for this particular call. The combined third sector organisation budget must account for no more than 30% of the total cost. Costs for third sector organisations must be broken down by item in the budget spreadsheet.

We request that Principal and Co-Investigators are involved in only one application submission per call. There is no limit to the number of applications a higher education, research organisation can submit, nor to the number of applications a third sector organisation can collaborate on.

Eligible Costs

We will fund costs which are in line with AHRC's policies¹¹, with the following exceptions:

¹⁰ <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/>

¹¹ <https://ahrc.ukri.org/documents/guides/research-funding-guide1/> (from page 52)

- All staff costs, including academic time, must be costed as Directly Incurred due to the profiling of the award. We unfortunately cannot pay DA (Directly Allocated) Investigator costs but support the inclusion of PI/Co-I time as a DI cost.
- Any costs for travel must be realistic under the current circumstances and we request that any activity involving travel has appropriate mitigations and alternatives suggested
- Given the short-term nature of the project we will not be awarding costs for equipment such as audio recording equipment or laptops
- The design of the written outputs will be arranged by the Modern Slavery PEC and so design costs will not be eligible
- Dissemination activities will be led by the PEC in collaboration with the research team. Costs relating to dissemination should therefore be limited to researcher time only.

Working with people with lived experience

As per our guiding principles for researchers, the Modern Slavery PEC encourages researchers to include people with lived experience in all aspects of their research project. We encourage all projects to consider whether they should have a specific safeguarding policy or framework. According to organisations such as UK Collaborative on International Development Research (UKCDR), safeguarding means ‘taking all reasonable means to prevent harm from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur’.¹² Policies should include consideration of rights of people with lived experience and whistle-blowers, and how the project addresses questions of equity, fairness, transparency and accountability. This should include all parts of the research chain, from research funders, planners and practitioners to participants and local community members, where everyone has the right to be safe from harm.¹³

We request that the following principles are adhered to when working with people with lived experience:

- Ground rules are established with the participants, including use of terminology, and agreed rules about withdrawal from discussions or activities
- Signposting to resources to support participants (the Modern Slavery PEC can assist with these) and consider funds to support this if appropriate
- People with lived experience are paid for their time (including being participants on interview panels and focus groups) and that this is done so in a manner appropriate to participants (considering cash payments or use of vouchers)
- Carrying out a risk assessment, specifically considering risks for those with lived experience

¹² <https://www.ukcdr.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/safeguarding/>

¹³ <https://www.ukcdr.org.uk/resource/guidance-on-safeguarding-in-international-development-research/>

Application process

To apply for this call applications must be made through our online form (<https://modernslaverypec.submit.com/>) and include the following attachments or sections (where word limits are specified, please note that the panel will not read past the maximum word count):

1. **Team information** including a breakdown of team members, institutions or organisations and contact information
2. **Project description** (500 words maximum) which is suitable for a general audience. We may use this text for our website, so please ensure it's accessible to non-experts, and avoid acronyms or jargon where possible
3. **Project Narrative** (2,500 words maximum) outlining how the research team intend to approach the project, including:
 - a. A clear definition of the scope of the research, including any additional changes to the scope beyond those specified in the call documentation
 - b. A clear explanation and justification for the chosen approach and methodology responding to the aims and objectives and key elements outlined in this call
 - c. A detailed timeline incorporating the milestones and deliverables outlined in this call document
 - d. Details and relevant experience of each team member involved in the delivery of the project, and a description of why they and their organisations are best placed to address the research question
 - e. A description of how the project will support an equitable partnership between the higher education/research organisations and the third sector organisations
 - f. A list of the top two or three risks that might impact delivery of the project and how these will be managed within the team
4. **Ethics and Safeguarding Statement** (500 words maximum) describing the proposed methods and safeguards which will be put in place for working with vulnerable people and/or their data
5. **Budget Table** (a template can be downloaded on the online form) detailing the costs of each organisation, cost need to be broken down by item, adding a new line for each item, including items within third sector organisation costs. Full instructions are included in budget template
6. **Justification of Resources** (500 words maximum) explaining the reasons why each budget line is being requested (excluding Estates and Indirects)
7. **Equality, diversity and inclusion data**, the Modern Slavery PEC is committed to inclusive and diverse research which represents the range of communities and people with lived experience from different ethnic, racial and other backgrounds, . The equality, diversity and inclusion information will be used to help us to monitor the range of applicants to Responsive Research calls. This information will not be used to assess application and will not be passed on to the panel.
8. **Additional documentation**, this is not a requirement of the call, but projects may submit letters of support, GANTT charts, visual evidence, risk registers or other complementary documentation. This will not be scored, but will assist in project set up and timelines should the applications be successful.

Assessment process

The assessment panel will contain a mixture of experts including Modern Slavery PEC staff, policymakers, industry experts and people with lived experience of modern slavery. With this in mind, applicants should ensure language is clear and that technical terms and acronyms are clearly explained.

The panel will score applications, using the AHRC grading system¹⁴ against the following headings:

1. Project narrative:
 - a. Scope
 - b. Methodology, and how it relates to the aims, objectives and key elements of the call
 - c. Timeline, milestones and deliverables
 - d. Breakdown of team, organisations involved and inclusion of third sector organisation
 - e. Equitable partnerships between higher education organisation and third sector organisation
 - f. Alignment with the Modern Slavery PEC's guiding principles for research: equity, effectiveness, and survivor involvement
2. Ethics, including ways of working with third sector organisations and vulnerable people, with specific attention given to safeguarding policies
3. Budget and justification of resources, including the distribution of funds and tasks between organisations

All applications will be reviewed by an assessment panel convened by the Modern Slavery PEC that will include external independent reviewers. Each panel member will, independently score the applications using the six point AHRC grading scale. Applications must score an average of 4 out of six (very good) or higher from the majority of panel members against each point in headings one and two in order for it to be assessed at the panel meeting. Projects with large discrepancies will be discussed at the panel meeting and the chair of the panel will decide on any disputes.

Call webinar and frequently asked questions

A call webinar was held on 1pm (UK time) 12 October 2021, this webinar went through the scope of the original call and answered questions from potential applicants. Following the webinar, a recording of it can be found on [the call web page](#). If you have further questions, or questions on the amendments to the call, please email office@modernslaverypec.org. All questions and answers will also be shared in the call's FAQ document (found on [the call web page](#)).

Contacting the Modern Slavery PEC

The Modern Slavery PEC team can be contacted at office@modernslaverypec.org. Please allow two working days for a response and note that the Modern Slavery PEC office will be closed for Christmas break from 5pm 17 December 2021 to 4 January 2022.

If you would like to discuss partnerships with other researchers and practitioners, please sign up to our [Google Group](#) to get in touch with others in our network.

¹⁴ <https://ahrc.ukri.org/peerreview/peer-review-handbook/the-review-process/grading-scale/>