



UPEN Participation Fund: Member guidance



What is the Participation Fund?

The UPEN Participation Fund supports direct involvement in existing UPEN activities, enabling members to contribute to work taking place across UPEN's three programme areas: People, Place and Practice.

If your institution is a UPEN member, you are eligible to apply. **It is not necessary to have made a donation to UPEN to be eligible to apply.**

The Fund is designed to help members participate meaningfully in ongoing UPEN Programmes work, whether through contributing expertise, supporting existing outputs, or helping deliver activity within UPEN's programme strands.

Aligning with UPEN goals

The Participation Fund is a targeted, endorsement-based model that ensures applications are aligned with UPEN's goals and connected to active work within the network.

What are the application routes?

There are two routes to apply:

1. Via current funding opportunities listed on the UPEN funding page

The UPEN Funding webpage now includes a 'Current Funding Opportunities' section. This will display all active opportunities per workstream (People, Place, Practice), each with:

- A short description
- A named contact person
- The UPEN inbox email (hello@upen.ac.uk) for initial enquiries

2. In response to a direct invitation from UPEN

Applicants who have been invited to submit an application by UPEN can apply directly, after sharing their idea with the relevant named UPEN contact **before** applying. If the idea aligns with the work area, the applicant will be encouraged to submit an application.

How to apply?

Complete the application form on the UPEN website ([link](#)). Please be aware this includes two mandatory questions that **MUST** be answered before any applications will be considered.

1. How are you applying?
 - In response to a direct invitation
 - In response to an advertised funding opportunity
2. Who have you discussed your application with?



- The form will terminate if no valid contact is provided.

How to share information about the Participation Fund within your institution

We recommend institutions include the following short summary:

The UPEN Participation Fund is now open under a new, clearer application model. All current funding opportunities are listed on the UPEN Funding webpage, each with a named contact. All UPEN members are eligible to apply, but all applicants must first discuss their idea with the relevant UPEN work area. Applications can only be submitted in response to a listed opportunity or a direct invitation. For more information, visit the UPEN Funding page or email hello@upen.ac.uk.

Here are four ways of maximising your chances of a successful application:

- Ensure your idea aligns with UPEN's goals and current activities.
- Be clear whether you're applying to a listed opportunity or responding to a direct invitation.
- Speak to the named contact or a UPEN workstream lead before applying.
- Tell UPEN who you have spoken to - this helps progress your application smoothly.