

Funding Application Form

1. Lead applicant(s) details	
Name of research organisation:	The Alan Turing Institute
Address:	British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB
Name of proposed grant holder:	Hari Sood
Email address of proposed grant Holder:	hsood@turing.ac.uk
List of community group co-chairs, their organisations and email addresses:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simon Li, University of Dundee, spli@dundee.ac.uk • David Sarmiento Perez, The Alan Turing Institute, dsarmientoperez@turing.ac.uk • Balint Stewart, DARE UK, balint.stewart@dareuk.org.uk • Lucy Cheesman, University of Sheffield, l.m.cheesman@sheffield.ac.uk • Madalyn Hardaker, King's College London, madalyn.hardaker@kcl.ac.uk
Please confirm that all proposed or existing members of the community group, as listed in the community group charter, have been consulted and support the submitted proposal:	Yes

2. Planned community group outputs and outcomes requiring funding, and approach to achieving these	
<p>The UK TRE Community emerged from a meeting of interested members at the September 2022 UK RSECon in Newcastle. Run fully by volunteers, we have held 5 community events, established 4 working groups and grown from 30 initial members to over 220, representing organisations across healthcare, academia, government, industry and more.</p> <p>We are already providing, and will continue to provide, support for teams working on most, if not all, DARE UK priority areas, as well as additional priority areas highlighted by the community. This activity includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defining standards for TREs, including evaluating and comparing multiple “Infrastructure-as-code” solutions • encouraging the community to compare sight/no-sight data analytics such as OpenSAFEly • facilitating community discussions on standardising information governance across TREs including data/risk tiering • working with the Standardised Architecture for Trusted Research Environments (SATRE) project to hold public engagement and TRE user sessions 	

and much more.

The primary aim is to be a community-driven, open, inclusive and collaborative space for members to share knowledge and work on common challenges together. This proposal focuses on supporting community collaboration on, and open sharing of, outputs related to the DARE UK priority areas and beyond and was written collaboratively by over 15 members of the community.

The proposed outcomes of this project fall into three work packages:

WP1. Strengthening the thriving community

Establishing clear governance structure and principles: The community has a [governing document](#) that needs to be updated given the recent growth of the community membership and scope. Having consulted the community at our September 2023 event, we will draft updated governance structures and principles, modelled on well-established groups like the [Research Data Alliance \(RDA\)](#) and [Internet Engineering Task Force \(IETF\)](#). This will include considerations for a sustainability model to safeguard the future of the community.

Creating a roadmap for the community: We will publish the community report from our September 2023 event and use direct inputs from the community to draft a roadmap. Alongside the roadmap will be considerations for the resources required to implement key community activity. The roadmap will include an ongoing plan for maintenance of the resource hub (see WP2) and the community itself.

WP2: Enhancing outreach and engagement

Maturing the UK TRE Community: Utilising landscape review work already undertaken by the DARE UK team and [SAIL](#), we will identify existing individuals and groups currently underrepresented in the UK TRE Community, and establish open onboarding processes relevant and applicable to their contexts. We will especially focus on groups who are underrepresented both in our community and within the sensitive data research space more generally. We will create a formal onboarding process to become a member of the UK TRE Community and an ongoing, openly accessible member list.

We recognise the need to work effectively with pre-existing groups such as [Safe Data Access Professionals \(SDAP\)](#), [Health Research Authority \(HRA\)](#), [ELIXIR](#), [RDA](#), [DataSHIELD](#), [FutureNHS](#), [AnalystX](#) and more. We will formalise our relationships with these groups and establish open collaboration principles between us to ensure effective knowledge sharing, signposting and non-duplication of work.

Laying public engagement foundations: A representative UK TRE community must include the voices of data subjects and members of the public. We will establish relationships and support ongoing community work with public engagement groups like [use MY data](#) and [Public Engagement in Data Research Initiative \(PEDRI\)](#), and include a public engagement activity pipeline in our community roadmap (WP1).

Delivering community events and collaboration spaces: Community events will be held in December 2023 and March 2024. These events are the core mechanism for community

discussion and engagement. The events will be supplemented with additional touchpoints as decided by the community - for instance via monthly town halls, or regular open governance meetings. We will also develop shared community workspaces and channels to further facilitate collaboration on solutions to common problems between community members.

WP3: Creating and empowering a community-sourced resource hub

Developing the UK TRE Community website: We will update [the website](#) to serve as an easy-to-use resource hub, collating and signposting users to relevant TRE resources and events, both those generated by the community, and others which may be hosted elsewhere. We will source community input into priorities for the website, content, and relevant resources.

Supporting effective content generation and discoverability: We will work with community members to identify outputs they can share and support them in ensuring these are easily accessible and reusable. This will include DARE UK driver projects, as well as other projects working on DARE priority areas. We will source additional content from within the community, promoting activity and outputs as relevant and prioritised by the community.

Any methods we develop for effective resource management will be shared with an open licence, allowing for their generalisation and applicability beyond the specific use-case of the UK TRE community.

Creating accessible contribution and engagement pathways: We will create contribution methods and guides to the resource hub for both technical and non-technical resources. This will be supported by open communication spaces via Slack and email, and open community meetings.

Risks

1. Due to the large and diverse size of the community, we may struggle to reach consensus on governing principles and values. We will agree a minimal set of governing principles applicable to all interested parties. Where subgroups of the community feel strongly about particular issues, we will support the creation of working groups.
2. Members of the community may not have time to contribute as much as they'd like due to their competing priorities. Given our commitment to establishing clear governance structures and a sustainability pathway for the community, and our experience of supporting and encouraging community input, we'll be able to support contributions well beyond this funding window.
3. The community may struggle to maintain momentum after the funding window. Our current and planned ways of working will be premised on voluntary contributions and governance by unpaid members of the community. This has worked successfully to-date and will mean that any funding that comes into the community will supplement existing efforts, rather than be critical to them.

(Words: 998)

Assessor questions:

Do the planned outputs or outcomes:

- align with the DARE UK programme's vision and objectives?

- address a need within one of the priority areas listed in the Selection Criteria?
- have cross-domain relevance and importance?
- are timely given current trends, context and needs?

Does the approach described for achieving these:

- seem feasible, and comprehensively identify any risks to delivery and how they will be managed?
- if applicable, summarise any previous work and describe how this will be built upon and progressed?
- maximise translation of outputs into outcomes and impact?
- explain how the broader community will contribute to the success of the work?

3. Community group capability and capacity to deliver:

Why is your community group well-placed to deliver the proposed work?

The community is already established

We have a broad membership including TRE operators, developers, funders, researchers, members of the public, public engagement specialists and information governance professionals, ranging across academia, industry, government, healthcare and more.

We have established a number of community resources already, including [governing principles](#), a [mailing list](#) and [Slack workspace](#), and an [open-source website](#).

This means we are able to begin delivering the proposed work packages immediately, without first having to assemble the community.

Expertise of community management team

Since inception, we have learned directly from members what works for this community, and how best to move forwards. This provides us with a robust foundational understanding of the UK TRE landscape from which to deliver this proposal.

The community management team is well embedded in teams and networks across the TRE landscape. We are represented across all DARE driver project teams, community spaces including SDAP, the NHS Higher Education Information Governance Working Group, and connected to wider groups including those listed above. We have direct connections to all organisations represented in our community, including the [Office for National Statistics](#), the NHS, and commercial TRE providers including Microsoft, AWS and Google.

Finally, the community management team is made up of individuals with experience of building, deploying, operating and using successful TREs, and we are invested in creating a thriving, sustained, open ecosystem.

Hari Sood is a Research Application Manager at the Alan Turing Institute, and co-founded UK TRE Community. He is responsible for delivering the work package on community management and engagement for the [Turing Data Safe Haven](#) project.

Simon Li is a Senior Research Infrastructure Engineer at the University of Dundee, and is involved in operating and developing the Health Informatics Centre trusted research environment. He has taken the lead in driving the open-sourcing of HIC's TRE, and co-founded the UK TRE community.

Lucy Cheesman is the Research Data Services Manager at the University of Sheffield. She has implemented a TRE at the University, including development of wraparound IG policy and processes. She also holds a senior role on the [Data Connect](#) project, supporting the Yorkshire and Humber Sub-national SDE.

David Sarmiento Perez is a Research Project Manager at The Alan Turing Institute where he supports the development of Turing's TRE by establishing plans, ways of working and processes that allow team members to deliver their best work.

Madalyn Hardaker is Head of e-Research Data Governance at King's College London, working on their TRE and across research computing services. She has been leading cross-functional teams in the research space for the last ten years and has implemented numerous frameworks including ISO 27001:2013.

Connection to best practice in community-driven development

We are well connected to successful communities and thought leaders in the space of effective community engagement that we can learn from. This includes [The Turing Way](#) project, Turing's [Open Research Community Management](#) team, the [Society of Research Software Engineering](#), the [Software Sustainability Institute](#), and many open community driven projects including JupyterHub and DataSHIELD.

(Words: 496)

Assessor questions:

Does the proposed community group have:

- the relevant skills and expertise to deliver the proposed work?
- the appropriate leadership and management skills to deliver the work?
- the necessary breadth of community representation to deliver the work?

4. Project plan:

Provide a project plan (e.g., in the form of a Gantt chart), including any milestones. Note that your funded activities will need to commence no earlier than November 2023 and that you will need to complete all funded activities by 31st March 2024.

	Tasks	Nov 23	Dec 23	Jan 24	Feb 24	Mar 24
WP1	September report outputs					
	Scope emergent community priorities for the roadmap					
	Review and iterate community governance & principles					

WP2	Identify underrepresented individuals and groups within the community						
	Identify and hold scoping calls with other community groups						
	Pull together existing landscape review work within community into one cohesive resource						
	Establish ways of working with other community groups						
WP3	Engagement with all DARE UK Driver projects and projects working on DARE UK priority areas						
	Identify required support for community outputs and resources						
	Establish comprehensive contribution pathways						
	Resource Hub development						
	Sustainability proposal including contribution pathways and governance						
	Milestones						
WP1	Initial roadmap skeleton based on September report	●					
	Finalise updated community governing principles for community review	●					
	Publish roadmap covering community priorities and resource needs					●	
	Publish community governance and principles					●	
WP2	Host December community event	●					
	Creation of landscape review resource	●					
	Creation of open community member list		●				
	Host March community event			●			
WP3	Draft proposal for resource hub content and design	●					
	Resource Hub: Minimum viable product				●		
	Sustainability proposal including contribution pathways and governance					●	
	Next iteration of resource hub						●
(500 words max)							
Assessor questions:							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the planned activities and outcomes feasible in the timelines given? 							

5. Resources and cost justification:

What will you need to deliver your proposed work, and how much will it cost?

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