



Building Societies' 250th Anniversary Awards

Call for applications for grant funding

The Building Societies Association is looking to award **four grants of up to £10,000** each to fund research into UK building societies.

These grants are to mark the 250th anniversary of the founding of the first known building society in the world. In 1775, Richard Ketley, the landlord of the Golden Cross Inn in Snow Hill, Birmingham asked his regular customers to each save some money until all had used the funds to buy their own house.

The research projects might examine, but are not limited to, the following topics: the comparative performance of building societies to other providers, building societies' approach to risk and their impact on system-wide resilience, financial inclusion and the social impact of building societies, the regulatory burden and its impacts, technology and innovation practices, governance arrangements and pricing behaviour in building societies.

Comparison with cooperative and mutual banks and credit unions in other countries is welcome, but there must be a specific analysis of UK building societies in any project. Both theoretical and empirical studies are welcome.

We would like researchers who are awarded funding to join a panel session at the 6th Research Workshop into the Future of Financial Mutuals, to be held at Bayes Business School in early September 2025. This will give researchers the opportunity to share a brief outline of their proposed research with other academics, receive feedback and demonstrate the range of research that will be forthcoming on UK building societies.

What we will fund:

Grants are given to fund the costs of conducting the research. This includes researchers and their relevant expenses. We will not cover IT hardware or software.



We permit applications from those who have successfully secured other sources of funding, but applicants must demonstrate that the aspects of research to be funded are distinct from existing funding.

All awards must be paid in 2025.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all applicants. We encourage applications from a diverse range of researchers.

How to apply

In less than two sides of A4 clearly describe:

1. Your proposed work in terms of context, the question the project addresses, aims and objectives, potential applications and benefits.
2. Who will be conducting the work?
3. Explain how much grant you are applying for, what the grant will be used for and justify the cost.
4. Planned research timetable

Please send your application to: Andrew.gall@bsa.org.uk

Key dates:

February 2025: Call for applications opens

9 May 2025: Call for applications closes

June/July 2025: Grants awarded

Early September 2025: Researchers who are awarded grants join a panel at Future of Financial Mutuals Research Workshop, Bayes Business School, London

Grants must be paid by the end of 2025, though the research activity is likely to continue to take place after this date.

Evaluation Committee

- Prof Barbara Casu, Bayes Business School, City St George's, University of London
- Prof Franco Fiordelisi, University of Essex
- Andrew Gall, Building Societies Association
- Prof David Llewellyn, Loughborough University
- Prof John O.S. Wilson, University of St Andrews

Contact: Andrew.gall@bsa.org.uk