

The Geological Society – Outreach Small Grants Application Guidance

1 Introduction:

The Geological Society offers a number of small grants to assist with the running of public engagement events that align with the annual theme of Earth Science Week (11 – 17 October 2026). In 2026, the Earth Science Week theme is “Critical Minerals for a Thriving Society”, highlighting:

- How critical minerals support essential needs and how the development of new technologies can affect which minerals are considered critical
- How geoscience knowledge is essential for identifying, mining, refining, transporting, and using critical minerals responsibly
- How mineral use impacts Earth’s systems, including landscapes, water and air quality, and the global carbon cycle

These small grants are intended to provide seed funds to support individuals looking to develop their skills in public engagement, trial a novel concept in outreach, or test an activity with new or different audiences.

The 2026-27 application cycle opens on 1 August 2026 with applications for this year’s research grants and bursaries to be submitted by end of day 17 October 2026. Preference will be given to those that occur within Earth Science Week itself. However, we will consider applications for activities that take place between the 1 September and 30 November.

All events must be aimed at the general public, with a focus on public engagement or scientific outreach. Queries should be addressed to outreach@geolsoc.org.uk.

Eligibility:

Individuals or organisations may apply to support running events with a public engagement and outreach focus taking place in the UK or Ireland. Please note that you do not need to be a Fellow of the Society to receive an Outreach small grant, and we welcome applications from organisations/individuals who have previously applied for or received funding.

We will consider joint applications – please clarify in your application a lead contact as well as the details of all organisations/individual organisers involved.

Activities covered:

Grants will be awarded in line with the Society’s objective of promoting all forms of education, awareness and understanding of the Earth.

It is not strictly necessary to follow the theme of Earth Science Week 2026, but we will prioritise funding proposals that align with the Earth Science Week aims and recent themes. In addition, we encourage applicants to consider:

- Ways to adapt activities to different audiences or age groups
- Activities that foster an emotional connection with geoscience, promoting a sense of curiosity, awe and wonder
- Activities and events aimed at widening participation and prioritising inclusivity, including innovative SEND outreach and activities tailored to different accessibility requirements
- Activities and events that encourage, foster and demonstrate creativity
- Exploring the evolving role of geoscientists in society
- Public engagement, networking and community building opportunities

Finance:

Applicants may request up to **£250**, with no minimum award. All reasonable expenses will be considered, provided they are clearly justified. Examples of where funds might be used include:

Allowable costs include travel or other expenses for speakers/participants, publicity materials, room and equipment hire, and materials for demonstrations/activities

Non-allowable costs include staff salaries, events aimed at an academic audience, projects aimed solely at delivering curriculum to school children, events with an unjustifiable barrier to inclusion (e.g., a ticket fee or exclusionary setting).

We are happy to part-fund events that have already secured additional funding elsewhere – please clarify details of this in your application.

Payments will generally be made by BACS. If your application is successful, we will require BACS details to make payment. Funds will be transferred within one month of the grant being awarded – which may be after the event has taken place.

2 Applications:

Applications must be submitted using the online form. The forms ask applicants to consider a range of information, including:

- How the event will support the Geological Society's objective of promoting all forms of education, awareness and understanding of the Earth.
- Who your target audience is, and how many individuals you hope to reach.
- What efforts you have made to reduce barriers to this event to ensure that it is inclusive.
- A breakdown of your expected costs.

Organisations/individuals may submit applications for more than one event, provided that it is clear that additional resources are required for each separate event. Please note, the grant scheme is designed to widen participation in Earth Science Week as far as possible, so where multiple applications are made, it must be clear that each event is distinct and requires specific additional funding.

3 Expectations of the successful awardee:

The grant may be used only for the purposes described in your application as approved by the Society. If you are unable to use the grant for the specific purpose for which it was intended, please contact the Society before spending any portion of the grant.

If any significant changes are likely to be made to the activity's scope or scale, before or during implementation, or if the activity is delayed, please inform us immediately to obtain approval for any variations. If changes are made without our agreement, we may consider reclaiming any funds not used for the intended purpose.

The Geological Society will provide successful applicants with the Earth Science Week logo, which must be used in all marketing materials. The Society will also supply its own logo for use where appropriate.

Post-activity report:

Following the award period, awardees will be asked to complete a short report providing feedback and evaluation of their event, due one month after the event takes place.

In addition to the project report, awardees should provide an account of how the money was spent and receipts where possible for audit purposes.

- Awardees must ensure acknowledgement of funding from the Society in all publications relating to the funded project.
- Successful applicants may be asked to write a piece for the Society's magazine, Geoscientist, and blog.
- Reports may be published on the Society's website.

4 Timetable:

Call for applications open:	1 August 2026
Call for applications closed:	17 October 2026
Results of application:	Rolling
Activity window:	1 September – 30 November 2026
Post event report:	Due 1 month after the event has taken place

5 Support:

Inquiries

For queries that are not explained in this document, please e-mail: outreach@geolsoc.org.uk

Disability support

We welcome applications from disabled applicants and will accommodate adjustments to the procedures to ensure that these applicants are able to participate fully in the selection process. Adjustments to the application procedure could include:

- Extension of the application deadline
- Additional support to complete the application form

If you have any queries about accessing the support described in this section, please use the contact details above.

6 Privacy statement:

The information that you submit with your form will be processed by the Geological Society for the purposes of administering your grant application. It will only be shared with external referees from the relevant committees as part of the review process.

For more information, please refer to our Privacy Notice on our website www.geolsoc.org.uk/privacy.