The SHAPE Catalyst
– Application Webinar

UKRI

Economic and Social Research Council

Arts and Humanities Research Council

ARC ACCELERATOR

Aspect | project

Contents

Quick Recap

The SHAPE Commercialisation Catalyst – What will it do?

- **Equip** social science, humanities and arts researchers to explore how they can sustain impact from their research by bringing a product, process, service or experience to market
- **Develop** research-based ideas
- **Build** ventures from these ideas
- **Deliver** impact at scale

enhancing society and the economy

What does SHAPE mean?

SHAPE

SHAPE stands for:
Social sciences,
Humanities and
Arts for
People and the
Economy

SHAPE Ventures

A SHAPE venture is one where the product or service is primarily built on SHAPE research.
SHAPE ventures are extremely diverse and can address a wide range of challenges.

The ARC Pathway

DISCOVER → **LAUNCH** → **ACCELERATE** → **SCALE**
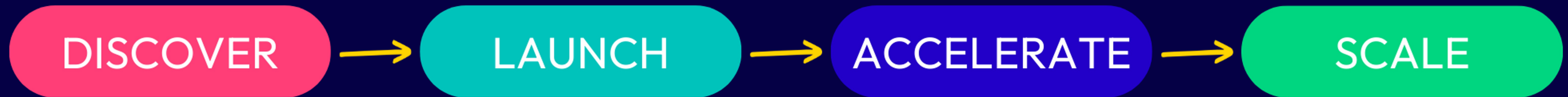
- Between 2023-2026, ARC is delivering the ESRC/AHRC SHAPE Catalyst through our 4-stage programme, the ARC Pathway
- Designed to guide SHAPE researchers on their commercialisation journey
- The four stages build on each other, but you can join at any stage
- **Recommendation**: start with ARC Discover and move along the ARC Pathway to be best placed to apply to the different stages

ARC Discover
ARC Pathway Stage 1

Outcomes

- Understand the different opportunities for impact
- Identify new audiences for your research
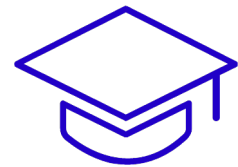- Be well-prepared to apply to ARC Launch

Details

- Two workshops - Discover 1 & 2
  - Discover 1: Discovering Research Impact (90min)
  - Discover 2: Discovering Your Audience (120min)

ARC Launch
ARC Pathway Stage 2

Outcomes

- Test your idea and identify your next steps
- Explore different routes to generating financially sustainable impact at scale
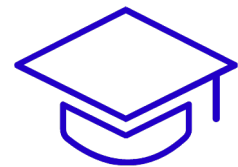- Be well-prepared to apply to ARC Accelerate

Details

- Five interactive training sessions (15h in total):
  - 4x virtual workshops (1.5-2.5h each),
  - 1x presentation session,
  - around 3h of self-study

ARC Accelerate
ARC Pathway Stage 3

Outcomes

- Validate your venture idea and develop a business model
- Gain entrepreneurial and sector-specific skills
- Benefit from specific mentors and coaches tailored to your needs
- Be ready to pitch for funding or investment

Details

- 6-month programme (time commitment: min. 3 days per week)
- Up to £62,500, with circa at 80% fEC provided by ESRC
- 40h+ training sessions, additional 1:1 support and homework
- Cohorts run from February to September

ARC Scale
ARC Pathway Stage 4

Still in design – opening in 2024

- Intended to bridge the gap between market validation and incorporation
- Focus on deal flow, team building and, where appropriate, fundraising

Formal details TBA

Eligibility & Application Process

Who is eligible to apply?

- Applicants must have a PhD or similar research or innovation experience
- Applicants must be based at an eligible UK research organisation
- For more information, visit the [ESRC research funding guide](#) and check if you are eligible for [research and innovation funding](#)

ARC Discover
- Application Process

- There is no formal application process for ARC Discover
- Sign up for ARC Discover workshops on **arcaccelerator.io/arc-discover**
- New dates will be released on an ongoing basis

ARC Launch
– Application Process

- Short application form focusing on your idea and the project's potential stakeholders
- Application content is covered in detail during ARC Discover workshops
- Apply via **arcaccelerator.io/arc-launch**
- Applications for next three cohorts are already open; new cohorts are released every 3 months

Key Questions
– ARC Launch

1. What is your project or research about?
2. Who are the various stakeholders of your project? Please outline the potential beneficiaries, users and customers
3. What is your idea for increasing the scale or sustainability of its impact?
4. What are you looking to gain from the programme?

15
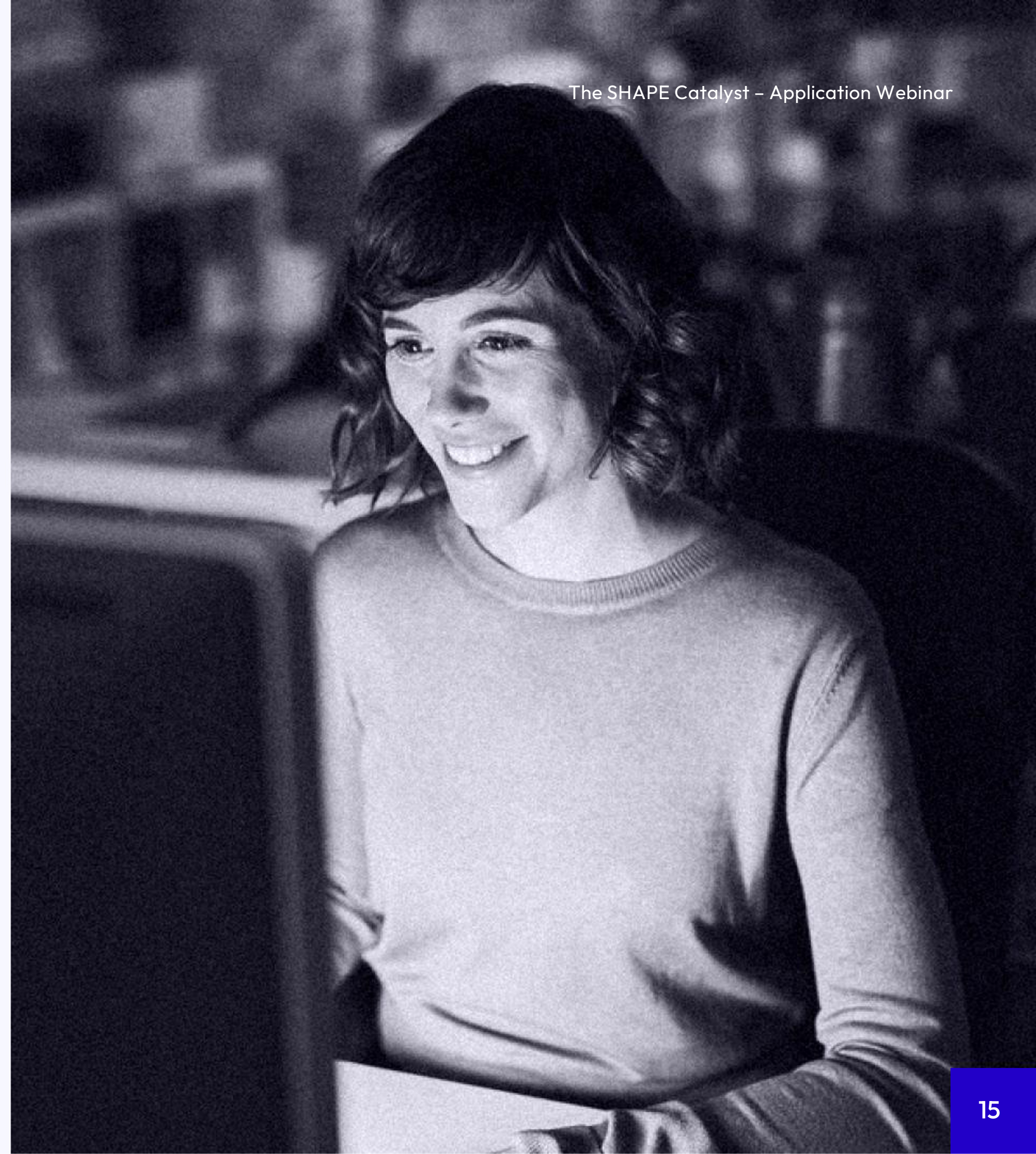
Beneficiaries, Users, Customers
– ARC's Definitions

01 Beneficiaries

Anyone whose quality of life is improved by your product or service, whether or not they are aware they are benefitting

02 Users

Anyone who actively 'uses' your product or service to achieve some benefit to themselves or another

03 Customers

Anyone who transacts or exchanges value with you to obtain your product or service

These three groups might overlap.

16

ARC Accelerate
– Application Process

Expression of Interest
(Cohort 1: open 03/07-31/08)

- 1-page application form focusing on venture idea and research background
- Letter of support from Technology Transfer Office
- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to full application stage
- You can apply directly via **arcaccelerator.io/arc-accelerate**

Full application and interview
(Cohort 1: open 18/09-15/10)

- 3-page application form and pitch template*
- Letters of support from line manager and HoD
- A shortlist of those who have submitted full applications will be invited to interview
- Interview consists of 5min pitch and 15min Q&A

*Same template used in last ARC Launch session, where participants present their ideas and receive detailed feedback

Key Questions – ARC Accelerate

1. What is your idea? Describe it in 75 words or less.
2. What is the problem you are trying to solve and for whom?
3. How do you know people need what you are offering?
4. Why is your product, process, service or experience the best solution to that problem?
5. Describe the research that you aim to make the basis of your venture.

ARC Pitch Template
– Key Themes

The Problem

What is the problem you are trying to solve and for whom?

The Solution

What is your solution to the problem you have identified? How does your idea differ from existing solutions?

Market Validation

How do you know people need what you are offering? Have you spoken to anyone about it so far? If yes, what have you learned from these conversations?

What is Market Validation?

- Validating your idea with potential customers, partners and other stakeholders
- It's about finding the information you need to launch your venture

- o *Does my venture solve a problem? For whom is that a problem?*
- o *Is it a big enough problem that they would pay for it?*
- o *What would it need to do and look like in order for them to pay? How much would they pay?*

- During ARC Accelerate, we spend a lot of time on market validation
- We **don't** expect you to fully validate your idea before you apply, but you should aim to have a few market validation conversations

20

What are we looking for?

- Ambitious ideas from arts, humanities and social science disciplines that can sustain economic or non-economic impact through the commercialisation of research
- Individuals or teams with research insights that can be developed into scalable products, processes, services or experience innovations

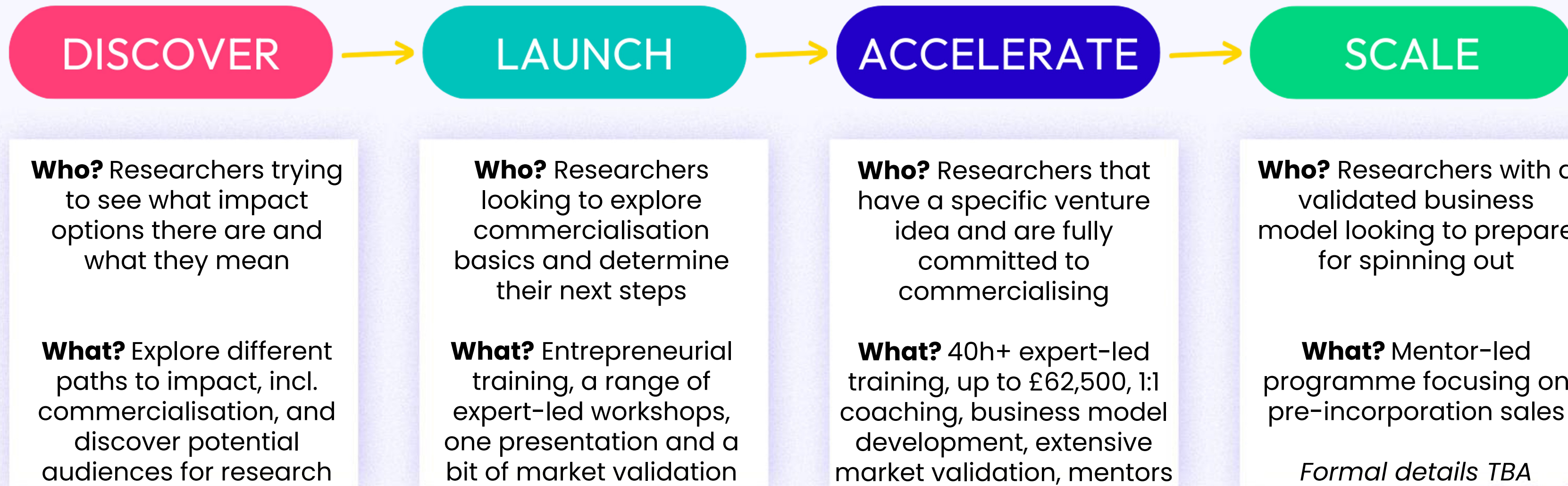➤ This is **not** research funding

What are we looking for?
– Application Forms

- We are **<u>not</u>** looking for specific answers to the questions or specific types of ideas
- You don't need to know all the details yet – the programme is designed to help you figure those out
- It's likely that your idea and your plan on how to progress it to the next stage will change during the programme

The ARC Pathway

DISCOVER → **LAUNCH** → **ACCELERATE** → **SCALE**

DISCOVER

Who? Researchers trying to see what impact options there are and what they mean

What? Explore different paths to impact, incl. commercialisation, and discover potential audiences for research

LAUNCH

Who? Researchers looking to explore commercialisation basics and determine their next steps

What? Entrepreneurial training, a range of expert-led workshops, one presentation and a bit of market validation

ACCELERATE

Who? Researchers that have a specific venture idea and are fully committed to commercialising

What? 40h+ expert-led training, up to £62,500, 1:1 coaching, business model development, extensive market validation, mentors

SCALE

Who? Researchers with a validated business model looking to prepare for spinning out

What? Mentor-led programme focusing on pre-incorporation sales

Formal details TBA

Timeline

	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February
ARC DISCOVER	Discover 1 Workshop Discover 2 Workshop		Discover 1 Workshop Discover 2 Workshop	Discover 1 Workshop Discover 2 Workshop	Discover 1 Workshop Discover 2 Workshop			
ARC LAUNCH			Cohort 3 Start Date Cohort 4 Start Date	Cohort 3 End Date	Cohort 4 End Date			Cohort 5 Start Date
ARC ACCELERATE	Expressions of Interest open	Expressions of Interest close	Full applications open	Full applications close Interviews take place	Applicants informed of outcomes			Cohort 1 Start Date

➢ **ARC Discover**: open for signups on Eventbrite or ARC website
➢ **ARC Launch**: open for applications on ARC website

Questions?

Contact us:
hello@arcaccelerator.io

Thank you!