



International Centre to Centre Research Collaborations: full proposal stage

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
Funding type:	Grant
Total fund:	£15,000,000
Publication date:	5 May 2020
Opening date:	17 November 2020
Closing date:	18 February 2021 16:00 UK time

Last updated: 8 January 2021

[Start application ►](#)

This opportunity is now only open to applicant teams who were successful at the outline stage.

This initiative aims to provide leading UK research groups with the opportunity to work in partnership with the best international researchers.

Your full proposal should closely match your outline proposal in terms of:

- research proposed
- international partners
- funding requested.

We aim to support 10 to 15 research consortia for projects of three to five years' duration.

Who can apply

To be eligible, applicant teams must have submitted an outline proposal to the earlier deadline of 8 September 2020 and been invited forward to submit a full proposal.

Please also note that UK applicants may only be named as investigator (either principal or co-investigator) on one proposal to this call.

EPSRC welcome diverse research consortia and the inclusion of early career researchers in the applicant team.

Industry engagement is strongly encouraged where appropriate, subject to standard EPSRC funding rules.

At the outline stage applicant teams were required to satisfy one of two eligibility criteria (full details of these eligibility requirements are given in the Eligibility section of the outline call document). This was assessed at the outline stage.

Standard UKRI eligibility requirements apply for research organisations in this activity.

See the [list of eligible organisations](#).

For information on the eligibility of organisations and individuals to receive EPSRC funding, see the [EPSRC funding guide](#).

What we're looking for

Full proposals should closely match the original outline proposal in terms of the research proposed and international partners. In costing the full proposal careful consideration should be given to the value for money of the proposed research.

Costs requested may be below those requested at the outline stage if suitable savings can be identified. However, the overall cost requested from EPSRC at the full proposal stage cannot be more than 10% above the value of the outline proposal.

Proposals may consist of a single research project or a suite of related research activities in a defined research topic. We are open to proposals either to develop new international collaborations or build on existing relationships.

As noted at the outline stage, research projects funded through this call must be predominantly in EPSRC remit. Full proposals not meeting this requirement in the judgement of EPSRC staff will be rejected without recourse to peer review.

Up to £15 million is available from EPSRC for this call, and we aim to support 10 to 15 research consortia for projects of three to five years' duration.

In terms of staff resource, we expect at least two full-time equivalent postdoctoral research staff to be requested on each proposal. PhD studentships may not be included in the costs sought from EPSRC.

We would expect to see funding requests to support travel, subsistence and consumables for the UK investigators and research staff to visit or have extended work placements to a partner's laboratory overseas and/or for resources to enable different approaches to building and sustaining collaborations, which reduce the need to travel. We would expect the budget requested for the travel or alternative resources to be sufficient to support the collaboration between the centres.

Support for the proposed international collaboration is subject to standard EPSRC funding rules. International co-investigators may not be requested in this call.

Support may also be requested for visits by overseas partners to the UK of up to 12 months per individual. This support may include a contribution to the visitor's salary if necessary to facilitate the visit. The application may include estates and indirect costs for any visiting researcher, regardless of whether the support being requested includes a salary contribution or is only travel and subsistence.

[Further guidance on the types of support](#) that may be sought from EPSRC is given on the EPSRC website which should be consulted when preparing all proposals.

Equipment over £10,000 in value (including VAT) is not available through this call. Smaller items of equipment (individually under £10,000) should be in the Directly Incurred – Other Costs heading.

Find more information on [equipment funding](#).

How to apply

You should prepare and submit your full proposal using the research councils' [Joint Electronic Submission \(Je-S\) system](#)

Although proposals may be multi-institutional, only one application form should be submitted for each bid. Single-form applications are required in order to facilitate integration across the UK research partners. Joint proposals on separate Je-S forms will not be accepted.

The lead institution must be based in the UK and must be eligible to hold EPSRC grants.

When adding a new proposal, you should select:

- council: EPSRC
- document type: Standard Proposal
- scheme: Standard
- call/type/mode: International Centre to Centre 2020 Full Proposals.

Note that clicking 'Submit document' on your proposal form in Je-S initially submits the proposal to your host organisation's administration, not to EPSRC. Please allow sufficient time for your organisation's submission process between submitting your proposal to them and the call closing date. EPSRC must receive your application by 16:00 on 18 February 2021.

[Guidance on the types of support](#) that may be sought and advice on the completion of the research proposal forms are given on the EPSRC website which should be consulted when preparing all proposals.

Full proposals invited following a successful outline stage must have the 'Related Proposals' field completed in Je-S. Please use the option 'Successful Outline.'

Guidance on writing an application

In addition to the completed Je-S form, applications must include the following components.

Case for support

Up to 10 sides of A4 in total, including:

- track record of the applicants (up to two sides of A4), this section should include the track record of the international academic partners
- description of the proposed research (up to six sides of A4), the case for support should describe the whole planned research project or programme, including the contribution of the international partners. Clear reference should also be made to the additionality of the proposed partnership, and what this grant would enable which would not otherwise be feasible
- management plan, including risk management strategy (up to two sides of A4), as part of this please consider the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on your project and how you will mitigate the risks related to international travel.

Justification of resources (JoR)

Up to three sides of A4, to include a detailed description of the international partners' financial contributions to the project.

If the international partners are in the process of applying for funding in parallel, and their participation in the project is contingent upon success in that process, then this should be clearly indicated in the JoR.

Please include in your JoR the stage reached in that process, if applicable, and estimated date of decision. This date should be no later than three months after the planned start date of the EPSRC award.

Work plan

One side of A4.

CVs

Up to two sides of A4 for each named researcher, visiting researcher and researcher co-investigators only.

Letter of support from each project partner

Must be included from all named project partners. Must be on headed paper and be signed and dated within six months of the proposal submission date. No page limit.

Technical assessment

A technical assessment for the use of any major facility, where applicable. No page limit.

The Je-S form should list each international partner organisation, which may be a university, public sector research organisation or publicly funded research institute, as a project partner, giving their estimated financial contribution to the research programme as cash/in-kind contributions as appropriate. The named contact on the Je-S form should be the lead investigator from that research organisation. Proposals with no appropriate international partners listed as project partner on the Je-S form will not be considered, even if the partners are cited elsewhere in the documentation.

Applicants should use the ethical information section on the Je-S form to demonstrate to peer reviewers that they have fully considered any ethical issues concerning the material they intend to use, the nature and choice, current public perceptions and attitudes towards the subject matter or research area. EPSRC will not fund a project if it believes that there are ethical concerns that have been overlooked or not appropriately accounted for.

All relevant parts of the ethical information section must be completed. If the research will involve human participation or the use of animals covered by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 it is recommended that applicants pay particular attention to the guidance highlighted below. EPSRC reserves the right to reject applications prior to peer review if the ethical information sections are not completed correctly.

See [further guidance on completing the Je-S ethical information form](#).

Other relevant guidance includes:

- [EPSRC's policy on animal use in research](#)
- [EPSRC Responsible Innovation Framework](#).

Please note that on submission to EPSRC all non-PDF documents uploaded onto Je-S are converted to PDF, the use of non-standard fonts may result in errors or font conversion, which could affect the overall length of the document.

In addition, where non-standard fonts are present, and even though the converted PDF document may look unaffected in the Je-S system, when it is imported into the research councils' grants system some information may be removed. We therefore recommend that where a document contains any non-standard fonts, for example,

scientific notation or diagrams, the document is converted to PDF prior to attaching it to the proposal.

Find more advice on [preparing your proposal](#).

How we will assess your application

Proposals will be assessed in a two-stage process:

1. expert peer review
2. prioritisation panel meeting at which a rank-ordered list will be produced.

EPSRC reserves the right to group proposals by topic and rank on separate lists or at different panel meetings. Panels will assess the proposals against the assessment criteria described below.

For applications where overseas partners' participation in the project is dependent on a separate funding application and assessment process, the EPSRC funding will be suspended until the partners' funding is confirmed. This decision point should be no later than three months after the planned start date of the EPSRC grant.

Assessment criteria

A. Quality (primary)

The degree of research excellence of the proposal, making reference to:

- novelty, relationship to the research context, timeliness and relevance to identified stakeholders
- ambition, adventure, and transformative aspects or potential outcomes
- suitability of the proposed methodology and the appropriateness of the approach to achieving impact.

B. Importance (secondary major)

The national importance of the research. How the research:

- contributes to, or helps maintain the health of other disciplines, contributes to addressing key UK societal challenges, and/or contributes to future UK economic success and development of emerging industry(s)
- meets national needs by establishing/maintaining a unique world leading activity
- complements other UK research funded in the area, including any relationship to EPSRC portfolio.

C. Applicant and partnerships (secondary)

The applicant's ability to deliver the proposed project, making reference to:

- appropriateness of the track record of the applicant(s)
- balance of skills of the proposed project team, including collaborators.

D. Resources and management (secondary)

The effectiveness of the proposed planning and management and on whether the requested resources are appropriate and have been fully justified, making reference to:

- any equipment requested, or the viability of the arrangements described to access equipment needed for this project, and particularly on any university or third-party contribution
- any resources requested for activities to either increase impact for public engagement or to support responsible innovation.

E. Fit to the call (secondary)

Including:

- added value to the UK research base of the proposed research partnership
- unique features of the joint research team
- appropriateness and timeliness of proposed international partnership
- track record of UK applicant team working together.

Feedback

No prioritisation panel feedback will be provided, although the panel outcomes will be published after the meeting on EPSRC Grants on the Web.

Submissions to this call will count towards the [Repeatedly unsuccessful applicants policy](#).

Contact details

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Queries regarding the submission of proposals through Je-S should be directed to the Je-S helpdesk:

01793 444164

jeshelp@rcuk.ac.uk

Please contact your university research office for help and advice on writing your proposal and allow enough time before the closing date for your organisation's submission process.

Additional info

Background

Research is of course an international endeavour and many challenges that we face are global. As well as maintaining the strength of UK research, we want UK researchers to be able to work with the best collaborators around the world.

This call is the second round of a new EPSRC funding initiative which aims to provide opportunities for leading UK research groups to work in partnership with the best international researchers.

The objectives of this call are:

- to enable high-profile, best-with-best international collaborations focused on excellent research with impact
- to contribute to EPSRC strategy by supporting high-quality research collaborations which align with our [research area strategies](#) and address the priorities related to [Delivery Plan objectives](#)
- to further the UK's strategic needs in international science and innovation partnerships.

Find more information about [EPSRC's portfolio and strategies](#).

Additional grant conditions (AGCs)

Grants will be subject to the standard UKRI research council grant conditions. However, the following additional grant condition will be added to grants funded through this call.

RGAC 1 – Withdrawal of funding

If the overseas partners' funding to collaborate on this grant is either not agreed by the relevant funding agency or is withdrawn after the project has started, the EPSRC reserves the right to terminate the EPSRC grant. This is in line with Research Council Research Grant condition RGC 24.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

The long-term strength of the UK research base depends on harnessing all the available talent. In line with the [UKRI diversity principles](#), EPSRC expects that equality and diversity is embedded at all levels and in all aspects of research practice.

We are committed to supporting the research community in the diverse ways a research career can be built with our investments. This includes career breaks, support for people with caring responsibilities, flexible working and alternative working patterns.

With this in mind, we welcome applications from academics who job share, have a part-time contract, need flexible working arrangements or those currently committed to other longer, large existing grants. For more information, please see [equality, diversity and inclusion at EPSRC](#).

Please also see [support available for applicants with caring responsibilities](#).

Responsible innovation

EPSRC is fully committed to develop and promote responsible innovation.

Research has the ability to not only produce understanding, knowledge and value, but also unintended consequences, questions, ethical dilemmas and, at times, unexpected social transformations.

We recognise that we have a duty of care to promote approaches to responsible innovation that will initiate ongoing reflection about the potential ethical and societal implications of the research that we sponsor and to encourage our research community to do likewise.

Responsible innovation creates spaces and processes to explore innovation and its consequences in an open, inclusive and timely way, going beyond consideration of ethics, public engagement, risk and regulation.

Innovation is a collective responsibility, where funders, researchers, interested and affected parties, including the public, all have an important role to play. Applicants are expected to work within the [EPSRC Framework for Responsible Innovation](#).

A source of information and advice for UK researchers engaged in international research collaboration is [Trusted Research](#).

Guidance on journal-based metrics

As part of our commitment to support the recommendations and principles set out by the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#).

UKRI reviewers and panel members are advised not to use journal-based metrics, such as journal impact factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an investigator's contributions or to make funding decisions.

The content of a paper is more important than publication metrics, or the identity of the journal, in which it was published, especially for early-stage researchers.

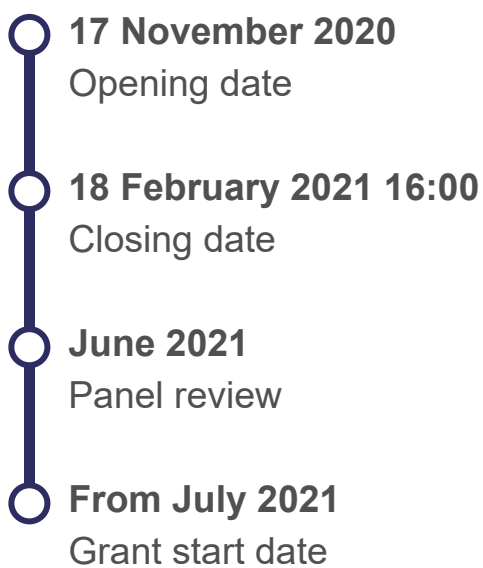
Reviewers and panel members are encouraged to consider the value and impact of all research outputs (including datasets, software, inventions, patents, preprints, and other commercial activities) in addition to research publications.

We advise our peer reviewers and panel members to consider a broad range of impact measures including qualitative indicators of research impact, such as influence on policy and practice.

Supporting documents

- [International Centre-to-Centre Research Collaborations: Equality Impact Assessment \(PDF, 226KB\)](#)
 - [International Centre-to-Centre Research Collaborations: Outline stage call document \(PDF, 218KB\)](#)
 - [International Centre to Centre Research Collaboration Call – Webinar Presentation – 18 June 2020 \(PDF, 339KB\)](#)
 - [International Centre to Centre Research Collaboration Call – FAQ \(PDF, 192KB\)](#)
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Timeline



NOTE This is the first phase of our new website – let us know if you have [feedback](#) or would like to [help us test new developments](#).