

NOTE This is the first phase of our new website – your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

Strategic equipment grant

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
Funding type:	Grant
Minimum award:	£400,000
Publication date:	20 September 2020
Opening date:	N/A
Closing date:	Open - no closing date

Last updated: 19 October 2020

[Start application ►](#)

Grants for strategic equipment are for researchers at UK higher education institutions, research council institutes, UKRI-approved independent research organisations and NHS bodies.

Equipment could include cutting-edge technology that allows new research or increases the capacity and ability to carry out existing research.

We will support items of equipment worth £400,000 or more that improves UK scientific capability. The scheme is not intended for items of core underpinning equipment.

You can request up to 100% of the full economic cost of capital equipment. However, contributions from the host organisation are welcome. We will fund any non-capital costs at 80% of full economic cost, and the host organisation will need to fund the balance.

Applications can be submitted at any time, but there are rolling deadlines throughout the year.

Who can apply

Strategic equipment grants are open to UK higher education institutions, research council institutes, UKRI-approved independent research organisations and NHS bodies with research capacity.

Find out more about [institutional eligibility](#).

You can apply if you are resident in the UK and meet at least one of these criteria:

- are employed at the submitting research organisation at lecturer level or equivalent
- hold a fixed-term contract that extends beyond the duration of the proposed research project, and the host research organisation is prepared to give you all the support normal for a permanent employee
- hold an EPSRC, Royal Society or Royal Academy of Engineering fellowship aimed at later career stages
- hold fellowships under other schemes (please contact EPSRC to check eligibility, which is considered on a case-by-case basis)
- are a research technical professional resourced from the central funds of your institution and have a range of responsibilities and duties of someone with substantial research experience (you must have a letter from your head of department confirming this and that your contract extends beyond the duration of the project).

Holders of postdoctoral level fellowships are not eligible to apply for an EPSRC grant.

Clinical applicants must be employed or be on a fixed-term contract longer than the proposed project at an NHS trust, hospital, board, primary care trust or general practice.

Find out more about [individual eligibility](#).

We will not accept uninvited resubmissions of projects that have been submitted to UKRI or any other funder.

What we're looking for

We are seeking to fund strategic equipment worth £400,000 or more that improves UK scientific capability and supports cutting-edge research across our remit.

It could be a single item or a series of items that combine to form a single asset. This could include, but is not limited to:

- cutting-edge technology that enables new research
- high-specification equipment that improves existing research.

It does not include equipment that you would expect to find in a well-funded laboratory.

We wish to maximise use of equipment by encouraging a culture of equipment-sharing. You must have in place and justify a mechanism to share the equipment across departments, institutions or nationally as appropriate.

Your application should take into account the availability of equipment at a national level and research being undertaken nationally. You should consult any equipment roadmaps produced by us in consultation with the academic community.

Find out more about [our research areas and themes](#).

We will fund 100% of the full economic costs of your equipment. However, contributions from the host organisation are welcome.

You may request funding for other costs to support the equipment you have requested, including principal investigator time to manage the equipment or promote its use. We recommend that staff costs go towards supporting research technical professionals who play a major role in setting up and maintaining equipment and training users.

We will fund 80% of the full economic cost of non-capital items, and the host organisation will need to fund the balance.

Universities should consider an appropriate contribution to the equipment. This could include:

- a contribution towards the cost of the equipment
- investigator time
- funding a research technical professional.

How to apply

You must first submit an outline two-page business case through the [Joint Electronic Submission system \(Je-S\)](#).

Applications can be submitted at any time, but there are rolling deadlines throughout the year that you need to meet for your proposal to be assessed by a meeting of our external panel.

We strongly recommend you first discuss with your host university and the appropriate contacts at EPSRC (see contacts below) how your proposal fits in with the scheme.

When adding a new proposal you should select:

- council: EPSRC
- document type: outline proposal
- scheme: EPSRC outline
- on the project details page, you should select 'equipment business case outline'.

Your outline must include (in this order):

- name of principal investigator and host institution
- name and model of equipment
- vendor name and justification of your choice
- brief description of equipment and its functions and specifications
- cost of item and any associated maintenance and support costs. Please ensure the costs are as accurate as possible at this stage. The costs in a full proposal must be within 10% of the draft business case
- availability for use by the group managing it, by other groups at the institution, and by researchers at other institutions, including reasons for this balance of availability
- plans to support and maintain the equipment, including how the equipment may become financially sustainable after the end of the grant
- how this equipment will help to meet EPSRC, UKRI and regional strategies
- how the equipment fits into the strategy of your department and host institution
- contributions to cost, operation or maintenance from other sources including host organisation or project partners
- alternative options if your proposal is not accepted.

Find out more about [making your outline business case](#).

You should attach your documents as PDFs to avoid errors. They should be completed in single-spaced 11 font Arial or similar sans serif typeface.

We recommend you start your application in good time. You can save completed details in Je-S at any time and return to continue your application later.

When you submit the application, it will first go to your host organisation for review. Please allow enough time for this in meeting deadlines.

If your outline business case is successful, we will send you detailed guidance on how to submit a full proposal.

See the [Je-S handbook](#) for full advice on completing applications.

Find out more about [completing your application](#).

How we will assess your application

Outline business case

Your outline business case will be assessed by a panel of EPSRC staff.

We will assess your proposal first and foremost on whether the equipment will help to meet EPSRC strategies and challenges (primary), followed by evidence on demand for its use (secondary), plans to maximise its use (secondary), and justification of resources (secondary).

Full proposal

Your full proposal will be assessed by peer review. You may be able to nominate one reviewer, although this is not guaranteed. You will have the opportunity to respond to reviewer comments if your application gains enough support from them.

You will then be called to an interview with the external strategic equipment panel made up of experts drawn from across our remit. The panel will rank requests for equipment and advise on whether they should be funded.

Your full proposal is assessed first and foremost on quality and breadth of the science it enables (primary), followed by the equipment's strategic importance at both an institutional and national level (secondary major), plans for sustainability of the facility (secondary major), the applicant's ability and the appropriateness of the host institution (secondary), plans to manage the equipment (secondary), and justification of resources (secondary).

Contact details

For general queries about the strategic equipment process, please contact epsrcequipmentfunding@epsrc.ukri.org.

Additional info

Find out more about:

- [strategic equipment](#)
- [use of animals \(PDF, 34KB\)](#)
- [responsible research and innovation](#)
- [ethical considerations](#)
- [equality, diversity and inclusion](#)
- [other EPSRC funding options](#)
- [equality impact assessment \(PDF, 149KB\)](#).