Centres for Doctoral Training

Town Meeting 13 June 2018

UK Research and Innovation

Welcome

- Dr Amanda Chmura, Associate Director
- Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

UK Research and Innovation

Introduction

- Dr Christina Turner, Senior Portfolio Manager
- Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Introduction

Time	Activity	
10.30	Introduction to the CDT call	followed by Q&A
11.15	Assessment	followed by Q&A
11.50	Documentation	followed by Q&A
12.40	Lunch	
13.20	*SFI/Facility questions*	
13.40	Finances	followed by Q&A
14.25	Post award	followed by Q&A

Please ask your questions in the appropriate session.

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Call - aims and purpose

- To support cohort-based doctoral research training in areas where both **breadth and depth of training** are required to address UK skills needs at the doctoral level.

- Focussed on the need for doctoral training, delivered specifically through the CDT not just the need for doctoral training in general
  - You should be maximising benefit of this mechanism and maintaining cohorts over a student's training
  - There are other mechanisms where student volume is sole need

EPSRC CDT call vs UKRI AI call

- In Jan 2018, EPSRC launched a call to support 90-120 CDTs
  - These are for Centres with training at least 50% in EPSRC's remit

- EPSRC was then asked to deliver 10-20 UKRI CDTs focussing on Artificial Intelligence – launched Feb 2018
  - On behalf of all UKRI
    - Worked closely with the other Councils to develop the priorities
    - Any Council remit or combination (inc. EPSRC)
    - No requirement to have **any** EPSRC remit
  - Must be at least 50% relevant to AI

- The two investments are being delivered as one call
  - All the information you hear today is relevant to both investments, unless explicitly specified

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Minimum call requirements

- Each centre must support at least 50 students
- UKRI will only support up to the **value** of 40 students' studentship costs (tuition fees, stipend, RTSG).
- At least 20% of the studentship funding must come from a non-UKRI source
  - This means the absolute minimum is equivalent to the studentship costs of 10 students (stipend, fee, and RTSG)
- Must provide training in Responsible Innovation
- Champion Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion plan

- We'll cover these in more detail in the other sessions

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Multi-,Inter-, and intra- disciplinarity

- Is encouraged across the whole call as appropriate to the centre vision.

- As stated in the outline call

    - key features of CDTs include - Students should… develop and enhance technical **interdisciplinary** knowledge, as well as broadening skills;

    - There should be mechanisms by which students funded through other routes can benefit from the training experience… and for the centre to reach out to the broader… community.

- Reflects EPSRC's Delivery Plan stating a desire to protect the UK's long-term capability and foster an expansion of multidisciplinary research

- These aspects can apply in many ways but are encouraged particularly in the AI call (which is about realising the benefits of AI across the whole UKRI remit) and the joint NERC/EPSRC call in renewable energy.

- We encourage all applicants to continue to consider the wider multidisciplinary aspects of their proposed research

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Outline stage outcomes

- Panels were rigorous. They stuck to the assessment criteria as written and the evidence within the application

- 200 applications for the EPSRC investment have been invited through to the next stage

- 37 applications for the UKRI AI investment have been invited through

- Unless asked to provide it by the panel, applicants have not received specific feedback.
  - A very small number of applicants received this.
  - It is at the bottom of the results email you received
  - For the EPSRC investment – if the general feedback isn't relevant to you then please ignore it.

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

UK Research and Innovation

EPSRC
Investing in research for discovery and innovation

Assessment

- Dr Christina Turner
- Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Process

- Full proposals must be submitted by 31 July 2018
  - All through EPSRC (EPSRC will coordinate with the other Councils as needed)

- Proposals will be sent out for external peer review
  - All Councils interested in a proposal will be involved in suggesting peer reviewers. For AI, another Council may lead this if appropriate for the remit
  - We've asked you for five reviewers (at least 3 must be international)

- PI responses will be requested once a sufficient number of comments have been received
  - Latest date for returns will be mid October but we hope to contact you before then

- Interview panels w/b 5 November
  - The AI applications will go to separate interview panels but held at the same time

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Separation of Duties

- External peer review comments
  - They see and only assess based on the content of an individual proposal

- Interview panel members assess a sub-set of the applications

- Roving panel members will provide an oversight and enable tensioning between panels

- EPSRC and/or UKRI will make the funding decision
  - This will not be based solely on the assessment of a proposal
  - Coverage of disciplines and priorities will also be considered

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Interview Panel

- Interviewers will not just be scientific experts/academics. Expertise will be appropriate to cover the set of proposals at that panel and to consider doctoral training. Some may specialise in doctoral training (not academic researcher), rather than a scientific topic.

  - We expect panels to have 4-5 panel members plus observers and staff support

- Interviewers will ask broadly the same questions of all candidates – to explore fit to the criteria. Only a few questions will be technical, based on the reviewer comments/PI response

- 3 members of a CDT team will be allowed to attend the interview. This could include existing students, project partners etc. It is up to you but max. of 3 attendees

  - EPSRC investment - one exception - Proposals with an SFI component can have a 4th attendee. They must be from the Irish research Centre (this is because it's a whole CDT based in ROI supported through this single assessment process).

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Peer review considerations for interdisciplinarity

- Reviewers and panel members could be from a variety of disciplines and could be international

- Do not assume that they understand what is the normal process for your discipline. So, for example, just referencing standard procedures for some discipline specific aspects e.g. ethics may not always be sufficient.

- Similarly referencing standard University procedures on some aspects may not always be adequate.

- We will be sharing relevant CDTs across councils to attract co-funding where appropriate.

Contextual information from partners at interview

- For project partners collaborating on a large number of applications, they will be invited to provide this

- It will show the set of applications they are collaborating on, split into up to three tiers

- They can consider them all equal if they wish (all in one tier)

- Which tier a proposal is in will be shared with the interview panel.
  - This information will not be shared with applicants by UKRI.
  - They will not see information about the other proposals in that set
  - It will not be considered in isolation.
    - All partnership evidence provided will be taken into account
    - All evidence will be considered in terms of what would be expected given the nature/vision of the centre
    - Proposals will not be advantaged or disadvantaged as a result of having, or not having, this information.

- Its purpose is to avoid
  - Assumptions based on level of cash contributions
  - Assertions about priorities despite the panel not seeing full picture

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Assessment Criteria

- Full details are in the call document. What is written there is reflected in the peer review form
  - Quality of the training approach
  - National Importance of the CDT
  - Partnership and Engagement
  - ED&I
  - Management and governance
  - Value for money

- As with the outline stage, evidence is key
  - Panels will be using the criteria as written, and the evidence provided against them – the proposal as written

- Proposals not meeting the minimum call conditions will be rejected without any peer review assessment

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Engineering and Physical Sciences
Research Council

Documentation

- Dr Adam Luqmani, Portfolio Manager
- Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Engineering and Physical Sciences
Research Council

Centre Design

- Must be exactly 102 months (8.5 years)
  - 8 years is required to get 5 cohorts through 4-year doctorates
  - Extra 6 months to set-up, close off, etc.
- Centre title must be
  - 'EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training in….'
  - 'UKRI Centre for Doctoral Training in…'
- Start date
  - No earlier than 01 April 2019
  - No later than 01 October 2019
  - Please consider that an April start date means the grant finishes right at end of cohort five – no wiggle room!

- A lot of information about enhanced training was included in the outline call document – this is still valid and should not be forgotten.

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Document requirements - overview

- Je-S application form
- Cover letter. This is not seen by peer review
- Case for support – 15 sides. Should include pertinent track record of core team
- Pathways to Impact – 2 sides
- ED&I strategy – 2 sides
- Justification of Resources – 2 sides
- Cost table – 1 side
- Institutional support letters - 1 per institution named on the Je-S form
- Project partner letters - 1 per formal partner
- Technical annex for facilities if applicable
- No CVs should be submitted
- Do not use 'other attachment' type. This is not seen by peer review
- There are some additional document requirements for SFI if relevant. These are not seen by peer review.

Engineering and Physical Sciences
Research Council

Common issues

- 'Other' attachments where not specifically stated
  - At best - it will be returned for amendment, delaying assessment
  - At worst - it's missed and peer review don't see this evidence impacting on your competitiveness.
- Font – Arial 11 or character equivalent
  - Might as well use Arial if at all possible
- Providing CVs
- Including information in the cover letter for reviewers even though this document isn't seen by them
- Detailing disciplines but not the research challenges/novel research within project details/training approach case
  - Affects impression of remit and novelty
  - Affects reviewers'/panel's assessment

Responsible Innovation 1

- There is a collective responsibility by funders, researchers, and other innovators to consider the questions and dilemmas that science raises in terms of its impact (i.e. economic, social, or environmental)

- Each CDT must provide training in RI; equipping students for future careers and considering RI as part of delivering their doctoral project.

- RI is not just about ethics

- The amount of consideration of RI will depend on the Centre
  - It can impact on project choice, centre vision, and centre pathways to impact
  - It can impact on individual project design, individual project pathways to impact and follow on plans

- We expect Centres to carefully consider what is appropriate given the vision/topics of the centre

- The annex in the call document describes how RI might be considered across the centre and goes beyond the mandatory training component

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Responsible Innovation 2

- ORBIT – this is an EPSRC commissioned activity related to RI in ICT. They have some useful resources, and can offer some support. However, it is entirely optional whether you wish to consider this. Other sources of resources and information relevant to the principles of RIR area may be available

- Proposals not providing RI training will be rejected by UKRI without further assessment

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy

- We are not prescriptive about what this strategy should look like

- You should consider the issues and challenges of relevance to your centre and develop a strategy that aims to tackle these

- We are looking for improvement, not ultimate fixes
  - You will need to come up with tangible, measurable deliverables so that progress can be monitored

- CDTs are major investments, we expect you to be ED&I champions within your communities, leading the way, not just isolating ED&I to considerations of centre management.

- It's about the whole approach and environment not just the centre's students (e.g. also the staff cohort?)

Letters of support

- Letters will only be accepted where a tangible, demonstrable contribution is being made to the centre
  - We will not accept letters expressing general support
  - Do not include letters only confirming participation on an advisory board
- Letters should be specific to the Centre and detail the contributions to be made, reflecting the values on the Je-S form
- Letters should include the advantages to the partner of engaging with the centre, and the advantages to the students of having that partner on board
- These letters can also provide useful evidence for national need, employability, and enhancement of prospects by this CDT)
- You can include up to 3 non-project partner letters
  - These should be used where someone can't be a partner because they will benefit financially from the grant, but are nevertheless making a tangible contribution

Case for Support

- Across the documentation you need to be confident that you have provided enough evidence to strongly meet the assessment criteria

- We have not prescribed how you should write or format your Case for Support except that it must include some track record information

- Consider how to make it easiest and the most digestible for the people assessing your proposal

- Consider what information will be provided in the other documents
    - Avoid repetition, especially with the Je-S form sections – consider this as more space to make your case.

UK Research and Innovation

Finances

- Dr Christina Turner
- Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Cost table

		E	F Minimums	G	H	I	J	
	Total costs per student (over 4 years)				**Grand Totals of direct contributions**			
4	Stipend (inc. any enhancement)		£59,108.00		UKRI		£0.00	
5	Fee		£17,040.00		Other Funder		£0.00	
6	Research training support (RTSG)				**Total Centre cost**		**£0.00**	
7	**Total cost per student**	**£0.00**						

	Cohort costs	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	Cohort 5	Sub-totals	Validation Test	
11	**Total number of students**						0	V1	NO
12	**Total studentship costs**	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
13	**UKRI contributions**								
14	UKRI - stipend costs (indicative)								
15	UKRI - fee costs (indicative)								
16	UKRI - RTSG costs (indicative)								
17	**Total UKRI studentship costs**							V2	NO
18	UKRI - Start-up/set up costs								
19	UKRI - Management staff costs								
20	UKRI - Other delivery costs								
21	**Total UKRI non-studentship costs**						£0.00		
22	**Other Funder direct contributions**								
23	Other funder - stipend costs / HEIs/Institutions							V3	NO
24	Project partners								
25	Other funder - fee costs / HEIs/Institutions							V4	NO
26	Project partners								
27	Other funder - RTSG costs / HEIs/Institutions								
28	Project partners								
29	**Total Other Funder studentship costs**						£0.00	V5	NO
30	Non-studentship costs / HEIs/Institutions								
31	Project partners								
32	**Total Other Funder non-studentship costs**						£0.00		
33	**MRC clinical top-up** (if appropriate)								

- You do not need to fill in every cell and some you can't

- The orange cells should match your two Je-S form funding headings

- Costs have been set up this way to give you flexibility.

- We have provided this is a protected spreadsheet should you wish to use it

- It must include **all** UK-based students you wish to support through the centre, not just the minimum 50

What not to include

- Row 33 is only available to the AI applicants (must have been flagged in the outline). The rest of the table is the same for both investments

- For EPSRC remit proposals with SFI component (must have submitted EOI when outline was submitted)
  - Don't include the SFI contributions, or the ROI-cohort students on this table. There is separate documentation to capture these.

- Do not include in-kind contributions in this table
  - These are captured elsewhere

- Do not include institution Estate/Indirect costs
  - We know they are there, but all institutions will be covering these.
  - We want to ensure people aren't penalised because some have included this and some haven't
  - Feel free to mention it in the institutional support letters.

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Cost table

		E	F	G	H	I	J		
Total costs per student (over 4 years)			Minimums						
4	Stipend (inc. any enhancement)		£59,108.00		**Grand Totals of direct contributions**				
5	Fee		£17,040.00		UKRI		£0.00		
6	Research training support (RTSG)				Other Funder		£0.00		
7	**Total cost per student**	**£0.00**			**Total Centre cost**		**£0.00**		

	Cohort costs		Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	Cohort 5	Sub-totals	Validation Test
11	**Total number of students**							0	V1 NO
12	**Total studentship costs**		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
13	**UKRI contributions**								
14	UKRI - stipend costs (indicative)								
15	UKRI - fee costs (indicative)								
16	UKRI - RTSG costs (indicative)								
17	**Total UKRI studentship costs**								V2 NO
18	UKRI - Start-up/set up costs								
19	UKRI - Management staff costs								
20	UKRI - Other delivery costs								
21	**Total UKRI non-studentship costs**							£0.00	
22	**Other Funder direct contributions**								
23	Other funder -	HEIs/Institutions							V3 NO
24	stipend costs	Project partners							
25	Other funder -	HEIs/Institutions							V4 NO
26	fee costs	Project partners							
27	Other funder -	HEIs/Institutions							
28	RTSG costs	Project partners							
29	**Total Other Funder studentship costs**							£0.00	V5 NO
30	Non-	HEIs/Institutions							
31	studentship costs	Project partners							
32	**Total Other Funder non-studentship costs**							£0.00	
33	**MRC clinical top-up** (if appropriate)								

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Validation tests

- Your centre must support at least 50 students so the validation on row 11 checks this (V1)

- You cannot request studentship funds equivalent to more than 40 students so row 17 checks that the total UKRI request is no more than 40 times an individual student's costs (V2)

- V3 - Other funder expenditure must include stipend costs equivalent to 10 students' stipends (rows 23 and 24)

- V4 - Other funder expenditure must include fee costs equivalent to 10 students' fees (rows 23 and 24)

- V5 - The contribution to studentship costs from non-UKRI sources must be at 20% of total studentship costs – i.e. total on row 29 is min. 20% of J12

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

RTSG vs Centre delivery

- RTSG is the money needed to support an individual student's project e.g.
  - Consumables
  - Conference fees, travel, and subsistence
  - Facility access to run experiments for their research
  - Specialist training
- You should indicate an average amount in the proposal but we recognise students may get a different amount depending on their individual project needs.
- We do not set an amount – it should be what is appropriate
  - Remember that it impacts on the amount of leverage you require
- Centre delivery includes management costs, coordination costs, and those related to the standard cohort training package being offered e.g.
  - Training course development for courses they will attend as a cohort
  - Attendance of external courses by the whole cohort access e.g.
    - facility summer schools for general facility/technique training;
    - One day RI workshops
- You do not need to re-invent the wheel. If a course exists that you can access and serves your purposes, you can request costs to send students
  - The outline call documentation included some examples of this
- Remember that the tuition fee covers delivery and attendance of existing institutional-based courses.

Profiles - draft

- Centres will not have bespoke expenditure profiles

- All start-up costs for new centres will be paid in Q1 of the grant

- Studentship costs will be paid based on a standard bell curve assuming same #students per cohort.

- Delivery costs will be paid linearly across the grant's duration

- Since 2015, all grants (including training grants) have had held payments. This will not be the case for the 2018 CDTs to allow us to create a better spend profile

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

![UK Research and Innovation]

![EPSRC — Investing in research for discovery and innovation]

Post award

- Dr Maggie Wilson
- Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Annual Monitoring inc. Financial Monitoring

- Centre will be required to complete and submit a monitoring document on an annual basis

- This includes information about applications rates, student's backgrounds, and ED&I information. These are stats which are used at a gross and rounded level.

- This is in addition to the usual student Je-S submission

- For the 2018 CDTs we will also require some financial reporting.

  - Large investments – need to be confident that money is being spent as intended and on track.
  - We will intervene if necessary before payments are released.

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

UKRI representation and Mid-term review

- All CDTs must have an UKRI contact

- If you are successful you will be informed as soon as possible who this is

- In most cases they will be from EPSRC but for the AI investments they could be from another Council. Some CDTs may get more than one (though there will be one 'lead' contact)

- It is expected that CDTs maintain reasonable contact with their UKRI rep. As a minimum, they must be invited to advisory board meetings at least annually, with reasonable notice.

Mid-term Review

- There will be one - expected once the third cohort has started

- We reserve the right to make adjustments (including financial) depending on the outcome
  - This may include constraints on payment for new student cohorts

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council