

EPSRC call for evidence

EPSRC has an open and transparent call for evidence to which organisations and stakeholder representative groups can input evidence about the current research environment at any time.

The call for evidence complements but does not replace the active engagement between EPSRC and its partners, where we continuously collect very valuable intelligence about the state of our portfolio. Instead, the call for evidence provides a complementary and transparent route to input into our evidence base and strategy development.

EPSRC expects that strong evidence submitted through the call for evidence will be submitted on behalf of an organisation or group, and will provide a current substantiated analysis of an aspect of the engineering and physical sciences research, training and innovation landscape.

How to submit to the call for evidence

The call for evidence should be completed on behalf of an organisation or group. Respondents are requested to provide contact details to enable EPSRC to follow up on their submission if necessary.

To submit to the open call for evidence, please email callforevidence@epsrc.ukri.org with the following information. Fields marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory.

- 1) Submitting organisation*
- 2) Your name and role/position in the submitting organisation*
- 3) Details of the evidence being provided in this submission
 - Title of evidence*
 - Author's name*
 - Year*
 - List of contributors
 - Link to evidence (if you have access to a copy of the evidence, you can attach this to your email as one of the following document types - doc, docx or pdf)
- 4) Please describe what this evidence tells us about
 - the **quality** of research, the international standing, or the UK's unique capability in this area? Up to 1000 characters including spaces
 - the **National Importance** of the research in this area? Up to 1000 characters including spaces.
 - the UK **capacity** in this area, in terms of the people pipeline, training and skills, or equipment and infrastructure? Up to 1000 characters including spaces
- 5) Please provide up to 5 key words or phrases to describe the relevant research
- 6) Please identify between 1 and 3 relevant EPSRC themes*

7) Please identify between 1 and 3 relevant EPSRC Research Areas*

Please note: a separate submission should be made for each piece of evidence being provided.

When submitting evidence please explain what this demonstrates relative to the quality, national importance and capacity of a research area or areas (as defined in the 'Definitions of quality, national importance and quality' section below). We are particularly interested in evidence with an international perspective. Evidence should be timely and relate to the research area within the context of the last 5 years.

To support our process for the triaging and reviewing submissions of evidence about the EPSRC portfolio, evidence should be tagged to the relevant [research areas and themes](#).

What will the evidence be used for?

Submissions will be reviewed twice a year. Evidence submitted will be used to inform the monitoring and ongoing strategies for our portfolios. All evidence submitted will be considered by EPSRC, but submitters should be aware that strategic decisions are made on the basis of a body of evidence, knowledge and information. All submissions will be considered as part of this wider body of evidence to form forward strategies that also balance external constraints and emerging trends across our portfolio.

What does EPSRC regard as evidence for the call?

Pieces of evidence are documents that identify facts or information that indicate a conclusion around the criteria of national importance, quality and capacity. These facts may be research area, discipline or theme specific and can be used to build an assessment of the change in activities over the last Delivery Plan period and inform decision-making around future strategies. Evidence should be timely and not historical pieces of evidence with little relevance to today's environment.

Factual evidence is

- Evidence that has been published in the form of a report or publication (see below)
- Evidence where points made cite references that have not been misrepresented
- Evidence focused on potential future opportunities e.g. horizon scanning.

In addition to published reports, this category may include the outputs of activities such as theme day reports or community workshops, especially if a wide collection of experts contributed. Internal working group outputs may also count as evidence; however, their outputs will be tensioned against other returns of this nature.

Opinion data should not be included, especially where:

- It represents the views of an individual alone,
- Points made cannot be linked to published evidence or credible internal analysis i.e. are observational or perceived in nature.

We will not accept individual research publications in journals as evidence against quality, national importance or capacity. A formal and publicly accessible meta-analysis may be eligible where appropriate and demonstrates against the criteria as defined below

Reviews may be cited as evidence if they demonstrate against the criteria as defined below.

Definitions of Quality, National Importance and Capacity

The overall **Quality** of a research area takes into account:

- The international standing of the Research Area;
- Its potential to lead to transformative or disruptive research;
- Whether the area provides the UK with a unique capability in an international context.

The **National Importance** of a Research Area takes into account:

- how the Research Area contributes to, or helps maintain the health of other research disciplines, contributes to addressing key UK societal challenges, contributes to current or future UK economic success and/or enables future development of key emerging industry(s);
- the extent to which the Research Area has the potential to meet national strategic needs by establishing or maintaining a unique world leading research activity (including areas of niche capability);
- how the Research Area fits with and complements other UK research funded in the area or related areas in EPSRC's portfolio.

The **Capacity** definition takes into account:

1. The balance of people:
 - The numbers, international standing and quality of the researchers in this area.
 - The balance of researchers at different career stages, profile or shape of the people pipeline.
 - Evidence of leadership and potential leadership
 - The destination of PhD students
 - Flexibility in skills, knowledge and attitude of the cohort
 - The risks of losing capacity
 - Trends in people issues over time e.g. the speed of change

2. The range of accessible facilities & equipment:
 - The relevance of facilities/equipment e.g. the age of equipment, whether it is state of the art or how critical it is to the research process
 - The value of the facilities/equipment for the research community – identify who uses them and how they are used
 - Researchers' ability to use facilities and equipment
 - Mid- range facilities – how useful they are and what other areas the model could be extended to
 - Equipment replacement programmes – consider what is needed for a research field e.g. by looking at what has been needed historically
3. The coverage of research themes across the Engineering & Physical Sciences
 - Mechanisms for interdisciplinary working
 - Comparison of top down (strategy) vs. bottom up (how people actually work)
 - The flexibility of the UK's capacity, including how well researchers are able to respond to emerging challenges.
 - International benchmarking
 - UK researchers' engagement in addressing societal challenges
 - Leading UK researchers' involvement in Grand Challenges
 - Level of support to align with EPSRC strategic aspirations