

Molecules to Landscapes – Questions submitted through webinars (10/02/22 & 15/02/22)

Workshop

Q. Is the workshop only for those that are yet to create a consortium? Is lack of attendance viewed as being bad?

A. The workshop is for anybody interested in the Molecules to Landscapes call. Those with established consortia are very welcome to attend, as the workshop intends to explore some of the big challenges facing the management of agricultural landscapes. There are likely to be occasions within the workshop where you will be working with others outside of your consortia, in the hope to cultivate new discussions and thinking. Attendance at the workshop is **not** compulsory and will have no influence on the assessment panel's deliberations.

Application process

Q. It is indicated in the call description that we can be PI on only 1 proposal but also co-I on another proposal. Now what does count as PI? Is it only the named PI on Je-S or also the 2nd PI only mentioned in the case for support?

A. For the purposes of this call, we require two people to be identified as PIs in the proposal. Due to the limitations of only being able to have one person as named PI on the Je-S system, please explicitly state in the text who is the second named PI on the proposal. As both PIs on a proposal are classed as PIs, the restrictions around being involved in a second proposal apply to both persons.

Q. Can researchers be part of more than one bid?

A. For this call researchers may only be part of one bid or proposal.

Q. The deadlines for applications and project-start dates are very close. It looks like successful PIs will have extremely little time to recruit researchers once decisions are announced. Probably not possible unless they happen to have someone both lined-up and available already. Shouldn't project start-date window be later to allow time for effective recruitment, which is so important for project success.

A. Whilst we recognise the challenges these deadlines may pose to the research community, unfortunately, in these circumstances we are restricted by the deadlines stated. In order to facilitate a fast start, conditions will be applied to successful awards permitting any type of spend being a route to starting a grant. Please also note that activities other than a traditional research project may be part of a proposal.

Q. Any guidance regarding what is expected in the 2-page Capability to Deliver document?

A. We would like to see a demonstration of how the researchers, under the leadership of the PIs, have the prior expertise and skills needed to achieve the project's objectives, including evidence of openness to new approaches to build capability within and across the team. Of particular interest would be how previous experiences have shaped and informed the approaches proposed in the bid and accessibility to appropriate resources. Whilst papers and publications are an important evidence base, we would encourage careful selection of only those that lend evidence and help to justify your Capability to Deliver statement.

Q. Do the Co-Is have to be from separate institutes/organisations or can they be from the same one - as long as they come from separate disciplines - and the collaboration is a new one?

A. Yes, PIs can be from the same institution, but the disciplines need to be different, and the collaborations need to be new.

Q. Any restrictions on the size of the research team?

A. No, the only stipulation around research team make up is the need for two or more different disciplines to be represented in the proposal.

Funding

Q. Are future funding opportunities more likely to be awarded to consortiums that have been successful for this particular call?

A. In the event of future funding we will not be limiting the applications in any way but would expect the experience that successful consortia gain from this call would be likely to increase their competitiveness.

Q. The ambitions as stated by the stakeholders will be difficult to realise with such limited funding. Are there plans for follow on calls?

A. Whilst UKRI cannot give specific details of the future funding opportunities at this time, this is a strategically important area, and we anticipate future opportunities for this newly formed research community.

Q. Are RTOs (e.g., Agri-tech centres) able to be involved in this call e.g., as a subcontractor or advisor on a project?

A. Sub-contracting is permissible, but a case must be presented as to why this service is required as part of the proposal, following Section 2.55 of the [UKRI-BBSRC grants guide](#).

Q. Whilst funding only goes to UK Research Organisations. Could you clarify whether the grant can cover the expenses of industry partners and overseas colleagues to attend grant activities (e.g., workshops).

A. Expenses of industry partners and overseas colleagues cannot be met by this call, other than those covered as part of a subcontract.

Scope of projects and interdisciplinary working

Q. As projects can only last for up to 12 months is this call more about fostering new collaborations and creating a solid basis on which to proceed with more detailed research being expected in the future when further funding opportunities become available, enabling longer-term, larger scale projects to be explored?

A. Yes, we are interested in proposals that build capacity and capability and a research community capable of novel approaches to the challenges facing the management of agricultural landscapes. Whilst UKRI cannot give specific details of the future funding opportunities at this time, this is a strategically important area, and we anticipate future opportunities for this newly formed research community.

Q. It is stated that outputs of the projects should contribute to the development of an integrated system-wide approach and the identification of innovative solutions that will inform and develop future agroecological practices. Whilst it is likely that possible approaches to reduce impacts could

be identified within 12 months, research to ensure advice is based on sound scientific evidence will require a lot longer than 12 months. What are you looking for - Quick wins and/or long-term solutions?

A. We are looking for the foundations of a new interdisciplinary community that has the necessary skills, expertise and creativity to tackle these real problems. Pilot research can be included in the application in line with the scale of the funding the outcome of which would be expected to contribute towards a greater ambition to produce long term solutions to the identified challenge. Please also note that activities other than traditional research may be included as part of proposals.

Q. Would a project that aims at a primary research outcome be eligible? Or is the focus really on getting together several labs to probe the ground for future collaborative research?

A. As long as the primary outcome builds interdisciplinary capability and capacity within the area of Molecules to Landscapes, this is within the scope of the call. Research outcomes and non-research outcomes are both eligible.

Q. What kind of deliverables are you expecting? A network? Plans for a bigger project? Data?

A. The examples of deliverables given in the question would all be acceptable, as would any other deliverable that can contribute towards the call's objectives. We have kept the scope of the call deliberately open to allow for creative, novel, or innovative approaches.

Q. I was wondering if research into the socio-ecological aspects of agricultural systems is eligible as one of the two different disciplines?

A. Yes, we encourage involvement of researchers from any relevant discipline. We do remind researchers however that the interdisciplinary aspect of this call is fundamental, and that each proposal must be led by PIs from two different disciplines.