Welcome to the EPSRC Centres for Doctoral Training Webinar – Full proposal stage

19 June 2023

The webinar will start at 15:00

Welcome to the EPSRC CDTs webinar!

- The webinar will start at approximately 15:00
- Technical difficulties: email students@epsrc.ukri.org
- Please wait for the end of the presentation before submitting questions
- Submit questions through the Zoom Q&A function (not chat function)
- Detailed questions specific to your CDT proposal: email us directly at students@epsrc.ukri.org
- We aim to publish answers to submitted questions on the funding opportunity page. The webinar will be recorded to help us prepare this
- Full details are on the [funding opportunity page](www.ukri.org/opportunity) (www.ukri.org/opportunity and search for EPSRC CDT)

Background

- While working to develop a UKRI collective talent approach, EPSRC continues to support doctoral training through our three routes

- Implementing the recommendations from our review of EPSRC-funded doctoral education

- Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs) deliver high quality, cohort-based doctoral education

- EPSRC expects to commit up to £324 million through this opportunity, aligned to our strategic delivery plan

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EPSRC – Our delivery plan objectives:

People	Places	Ideas	Innovation	Impacts
Investing in people, skills and teams Embedding equality, diversity and inclusivity	Local, national and international partnerships, nurturing excellent research and strengthening clusters across UK nations and regions World-leading capital and digital infrastructure	Investing in 3 discovery research priorities: • Physical and Mathematical Sciences Powerhouse • Frontiers in Engineering and Technology • Digital Futures	Co-working with business Connecting research and innovation Accelerating translation, commercialisation and knowledge exchange	Mission-inspired research with four priorities: • Engineering Net Zero • AI, Digitalisation and Data: Driving Value and Security • Transforming Health and Healthcare • Quantum Technologies.

Supported by a World Class Organisation

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Outline stage

- At outline stage we assessed **335** applications with 7 parallel, virtual panels

- Following the portfolio balancing activity, with advice for our Science, Engineering and Technology Board, we have invited **124** outlines forward to submit a full proposal

- General feedback will be provided in the system generated notification

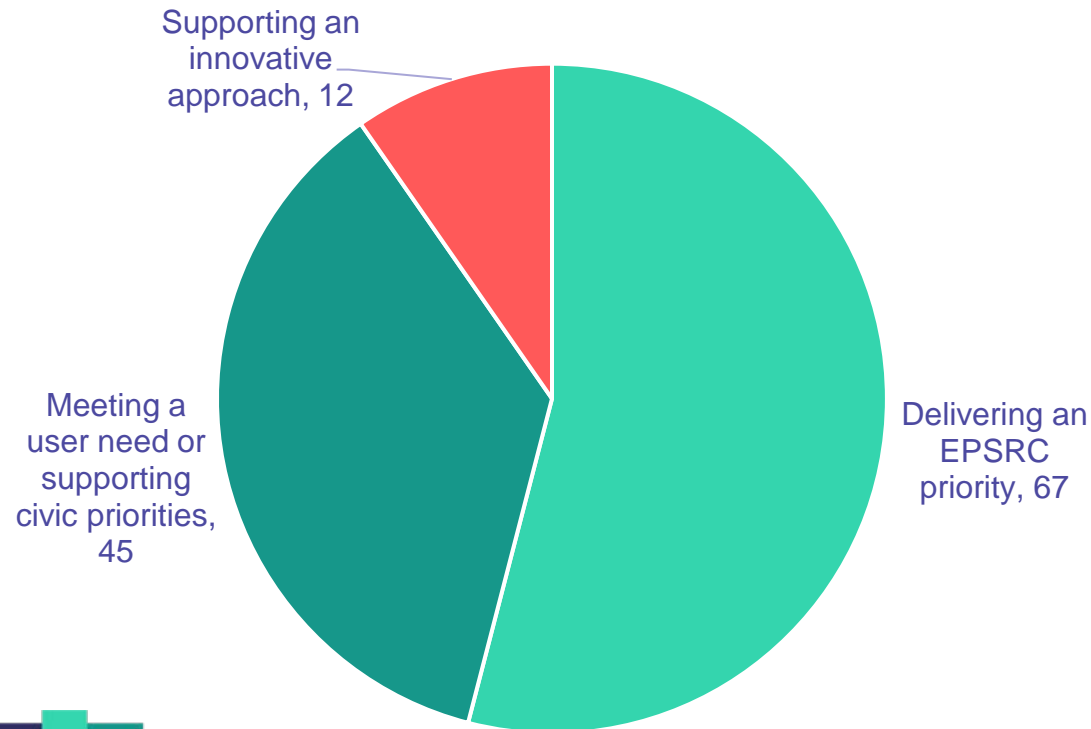UKRI — Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Outline stage

- There were significantly more high quality proposals than we could invite back

- We saw a wealth of well-made cases for interdisciplinary cohort-based doctoral education to benefit the UK research and innovation system

- While respecting the confidentiality of individual proposals, we will draw on this as evidence in developing the case for future doctoral investments

- Outline summaries published in a pdf document in the supporting documents at the end of the funding opportunity
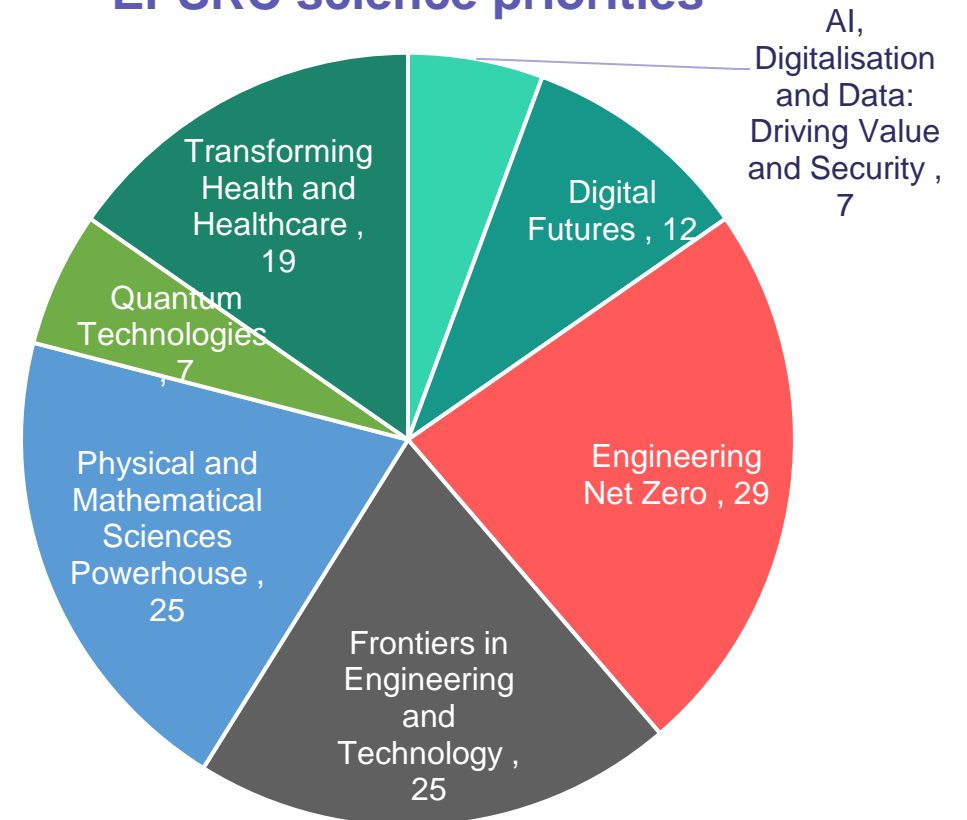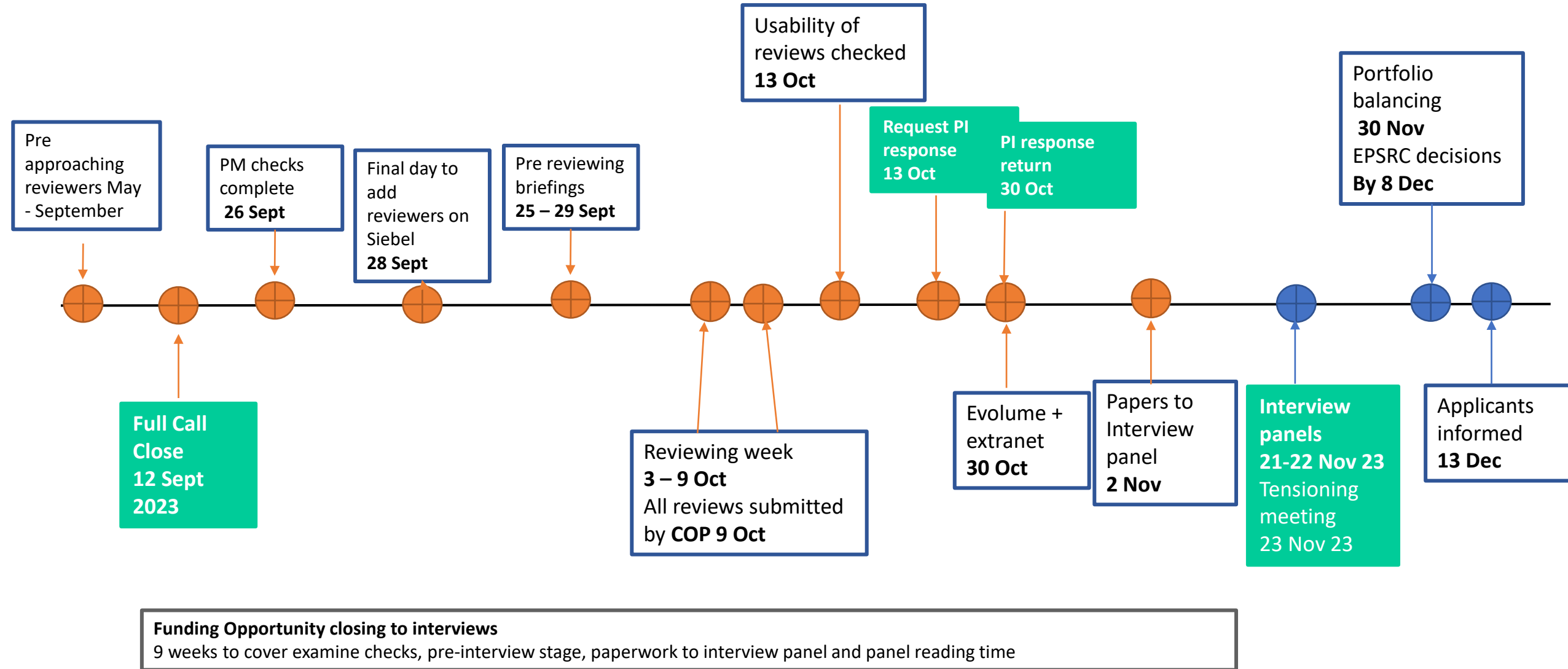
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Outlines by focus area and science priority

Focus areas

- Supporting an innovative approach, 12
- Meeting a user need or supporting civic priorities, 45
- Delivering an EPSRC priority, 67

EPSRC science priorities

- AI, Digitalisation and Data: Driving Value and Security, 7
- Digital Futures, 12
- Engineering Net Zero, 29
- Frontiers in Engineering and Technology, 25
- Physical and Mathematical Sciences Powerhouse, 25
- Quantum Technologies, 7
- Transforming Health and Healthcare, 19

CDT Full proposal timeline

Pre approaching reviewers May - September

PM checks complete **26 Sept**

Final day to add reviewers on Siebel **28 Sept**

Pre reviewing briefings **25 – 29 Sept**

Usability of reviews checked **13 Oct**

Request PI response **13 Oct**

PI response return **30 Oct**

Portfolio balancing **30 Nov** EPSRC decisions **By 8 Dec**

Full Call Close 12 Sept 2023

Reviewing week **3 – 9 Oct** All reviews submitted by **COP 9 Oct**

Evolume + extranet **30 Oct**

Papers to Interview panel **2 Nov**

Interview panels 21-22 Nov 23 Tensioning meeting 23 Nov 23

Applicants informed **13 Dec**

Funding Opportunity closing to interviews
9 weeks to cover examine checks, pre-interview stage, paperwork to interview panel and panel reading time

Scope - expectations

- At outline stage we assessed applications for

    - Remit – **centred** within EPSRC's research and training remit, addressing EPSRC's strategic delivery plan 2022-2025. (Multi and interdisciplinary proposals extending more widely across the breadth of UKRI were welcomed)

    - Supporting 5 cohorts of minimum 10 students per year

    - Providing non-UKRI cash contribution at equivalent of 20% of studentships costs

- Full proposal are also required to meet these conditions.

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Scope - expectations

- Applications must demonstrate the specific need for doctoral training through the CDT mechanism which include the following

    - clear requirement for doctoral level education in their area

    - need for cohort based training approach

    - the provision of both depth and breath in the research training proposed is necessary to address an identified skills need

- No restrictions on research doctoral qualification (for example, PhD, EngD)

- Formal assessable taught programme – no set requirements on content or qualifications

- Opportunities to work both within and across cohorts, and for business/user engagement

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Scope – focus areas

- All applicants **must** select one. We expect this will be the same focus area as selected at the outline stage. Full definitions are on the funding opportunity page

  - Meeting a user-need or supporting civic priorities

  - Delivering an EPSRC research priority

  - Supporting an innovative approach to CDT delivery

- All applications, irrespective of focus area selected must address at least one of the seven EPSRC delivery plan strategic priorities

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Eligibility

- Applications must be led by eligible institutions with research degree awarding powers

- Applications are welcomed from both single and multi-institutional teams

- Applications may include elements of international engagement where these add value to the proposed centre.

- The PI must be from the lead organisation and satisfy standard EPSRC eligibility criteria

- Generally expect no more than 10 named investigators

- We welcome as Co-Is research technical professionals and professional research and investment strategy managers who are integral to developing and delivering the CDT

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Eligible costs

- Studentship costs (fees, stipends and appropriate research training support for the equivalent of 40 students over 5 cohorts)
    - Expectation that EPSRC students have minimum 50% EPSRC support
    - Enhanced stipends may be offered but justification must be included
- Centre delivery, coordination and management staff costs (**not** supervision)
- Start-up costs for new centres only
- All costs must be based on **current prices** (including stipends)
- UKRI contribution paid at 100% for all eligible costs.

Partnerships and leverage

- Appropriate user co-creation, contributions and engagement expected

- A minimum 20% cash contribution towards the total studentship costs (stipends, fees, RTSG) is required from **any** non-UKRI source

- Additional cash/appropriate in-kind leverage is expected in many cases (especially in user/civic need focus area)

- Level of cash and in-kind contributions and model of engagement is expected to be appropriate to, for example, R&D intensity of the sector, size of the companies or other partners involved, balance of business vs public vs third sector

Partnerships and leverage

- Project partner letters of support must be provided at this stage and include breakdowns of total contributions (cash and in-kind)

- Funding requested from EPSRC and project partner contributions should match the values submitted in the supplementary information form

How to apply - full

- One proposal per CDT application
- Deadline: **12 September 2023, 16.00**
- Je-S form –
  - prefix name of centre with **EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training in ….**
  - include the grant reference of your successful outline proposal in 'related grants' section
- Cover letter – optional
- Case for Support – mandatory
  - No template. Start with a brief summary of the vision for the CDT drawn from outline submission
  - Address the scope for a CDT and all assessment criteria
- Supplementary Information Form - mandatory
  - Please use the form provided on funding opportunity page
  - Please email a copy of the excel spreadsheet to students@epsrc.ukri.org on **13 September**. Please ensure you include the **grant reference number of your submitted full proposal in the Subject** field of the email.
- Justification of Resources - mandatory

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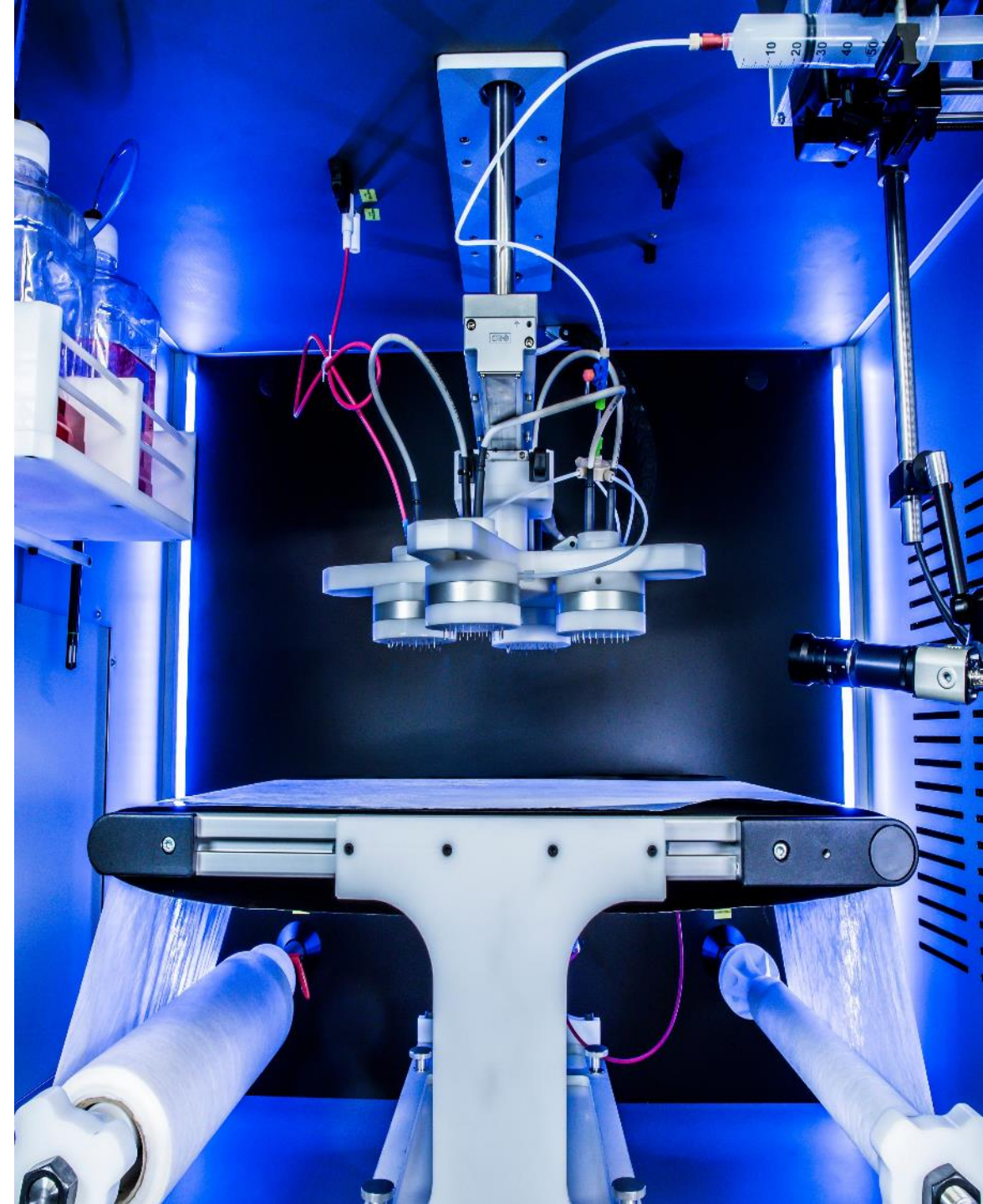
How to apply - full

- Statement of support from institution(s)
- Statement of Support from all project partners
  - Guidance for project partners is included on the funding finder web page.
  - Only letters of support from partners **contributing** to the centre in some way should be included
  - Letters of general support for the CDT are not allowed.
- Facilities technical assessment - optional

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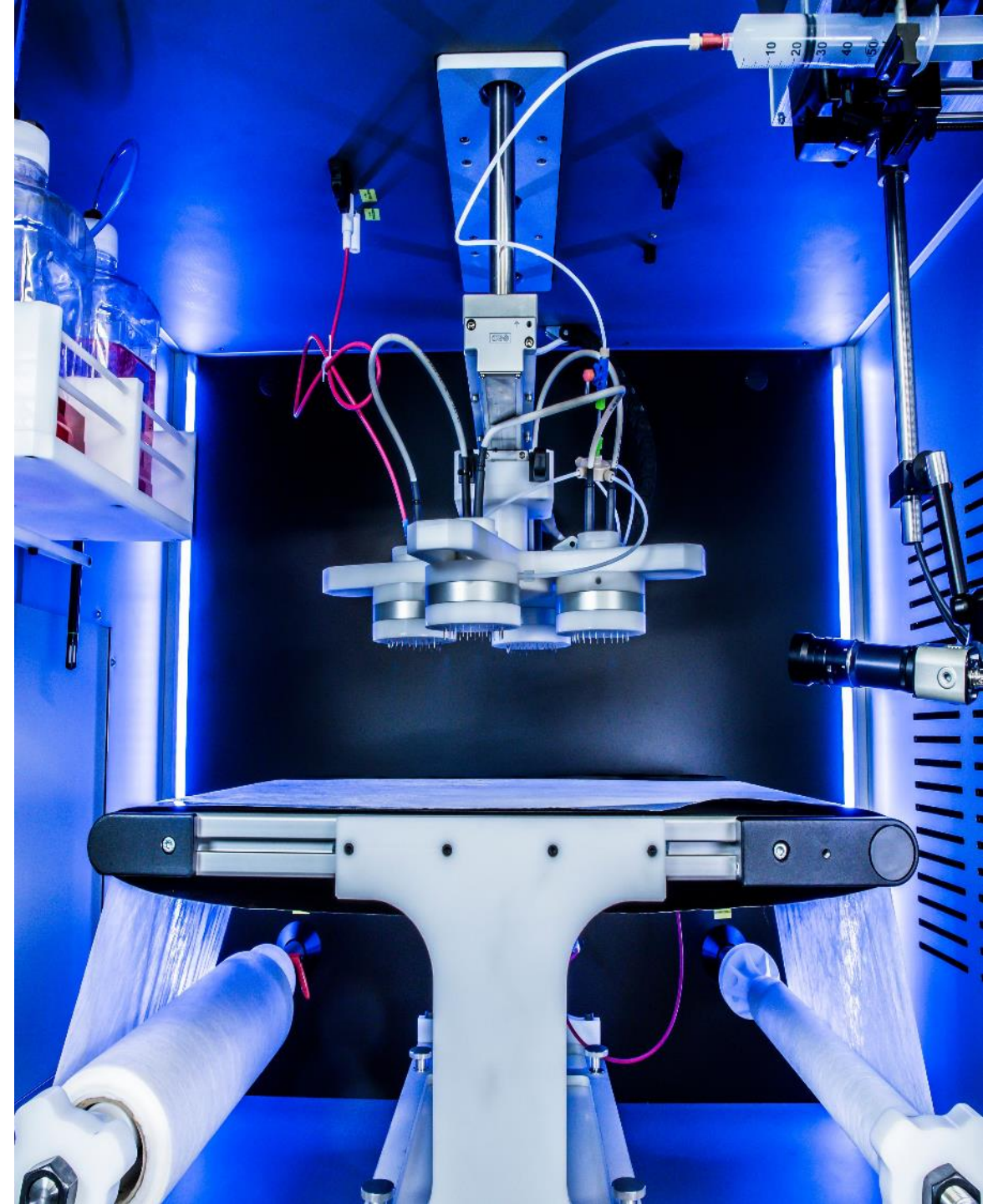
Supplementary Information Form

Centre Information

Centre Information	
CDT Title: EPSRC CDT in…	
Lead RO:	
PI Name:	
Outline proposal reference:	
Cross-cutting Priority:	
Focus Area:	

		H	I Minimums	J	K	L	M
	Average total costs per student (over 4 years)						
4	Average stipend (inc. any enhancement)		£74,488.00				
5	Average fee		£18,848.00				
6	Research training support (RTSG)						
7	**Average total cost per student**	£0.00					

Grand Totals of direct contributions	
UKRI	£0.00
Other Funder	£0.00
Total Centre cost	£0.00

ITL Regions	Please provide a breakdown of where students will be studying by nation/region (this must add up to 100%). This is not necessarily the university where they are registered.
East Midlands	0%
East of England	0%
London	0%
North East	0%
North West	0%
Northern Ireland	0%
Scotland	0%
South East	0%
South West	0%
Wales	0%
West Midlands	0%
Yorkshire and the Humber	0%
Total	0%

	Reason for enhanced stipend	Cost of enhancement per student (over 4 years)	% CDT students expected to receive enhancement
10	Cost of living in student location e.g. London weighting		
11	Research area of training or UK skills need		
12	Other		

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

Changes from outline to full proposal

- Full proposal should be based upon your successful outline. There should not be substantive changes from the centre described at the outline stage

- Changes which enhance your proposal whilst maintain the original centre vision are permitted

- EPSRC will not limit changes in costs between outline and full proposals to 10%, however applicants must justify the costs

- Changes to co-investigators and project partners between outline and full proposal are permitted

- If costs change or participants change significantly between outline and full please contact EPSRC

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EPSRC CDT- Core assessment criteria

- **Quality**
  - demonstrates appropriate research experience, expertise and facilities in the applicant team, contributing to an excellent research environment
  - demonstrates a high-quality defined research training programme, delivering the benefits of cohort training, including broader training and experience beyond doctoral research

- **Importance**
  - evidence of the scale of demand for proposed doctoral education from potential students
  - evidence of future employment capacity and opportunities

- **Appropriate partnerships and engagement**
  - demonstrates the importance, role and value of proposed partnerships, as appropriate for the CDT and partners involved, to enhance the quality of research and training experience
  - demonstrates effective cash or in-kind contributions as appropriate for the CDT and partners involved, with plans to maximise these contributions to support student research and training aligned to partners' strategic needs
  - demonstrates the quality and effectiveness of strategy and approach to sustain, maximise, and evolve partnership development over the lifetime of the centre

- **Resources, management and governance to deliver the CDT vision:**
  - evidence of leadership and management expertise to lead a large, complex investment with appropriate resources to run the proposed centre
  - demonstrates effective governance and advisory structures to deliver the CDT vision, quality assurance of research training and student support, delivery of value for money: evidence that the resources sought from UKRI are fully justified and represent value for money in delivering the CDT vision

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EPSRC CDT- Assessment Criteria

- **Fit to applicant selected focus area for this CDT opportunity:**
- Applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria associated with their selected focus area. These are:
  - meeting a user-need or supporting civic priorities:
    - evidence that the CDT has been co-created and will be co-delivered with business, civic or other user organisations, aligned to those stakeholders' strategic needs
    - evidence of convening an appropriate representation of business, civic or other user organisations and appropriate leverage from them, to ensure that research training aligns to stakeholder needs, and can be adaptive to these changing needs throughout the CDT
  - delivering an EPSRC research priority:
    - evidence of exciting research training that delivers against at least one of EPSRC's seven strategic delivery plan priorities
    - demonstrates why a cohort approach would represent an outstanding opportunity for students to work and learn together to progress the chosen research area
  - supporting an innovative approach to CDT delivery:
    - evidence of the need for the new model, and how this clearly differs from current practice in the landscape
    - evidence of the expected outcomes, gaps and barriers addressed by the proposed model, and how these will be delivered

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Assessment – peer review

- Full proposals will undergo expert peer review

- We are pre-approaching reviewers to secure commitment for reviews to be submitted by 9 October 2023

- Proposals will be assessed and scored against the published criteria

- Applicants were asked to **nominate three reviewers** by **16 June**

- Applicants will receive a copy of the reviewer comments and will have the opportunity to provide a written response

- Applicants written response – deadline **30 October**

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Assessment – interview

- Applicants will be invited to attend for interview
- Fourteen interview panels will be held **in person** on **21 and 22 November**
    - The Engineers House, Bristol
- Interviewers will be drawn from the academic and user communities in the UK and internationally
- Up to 3 people from the CDT team may attend
- Interview format will consist of a short pitch (no slides) from the applicants on their CDT vision and strategy, followed by a question and answer session

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Assessment – interview

- The panels will assess and score proposals against the published criteria using the submitted full proposal details, the reviews, your written response to the reviews and the interview

- The panels will also be required to band the proposals into bands representing proposals of similar quality

- The panel outcomes will then be tensioned to ensure that the bandings were of equivalent quality across all the panels

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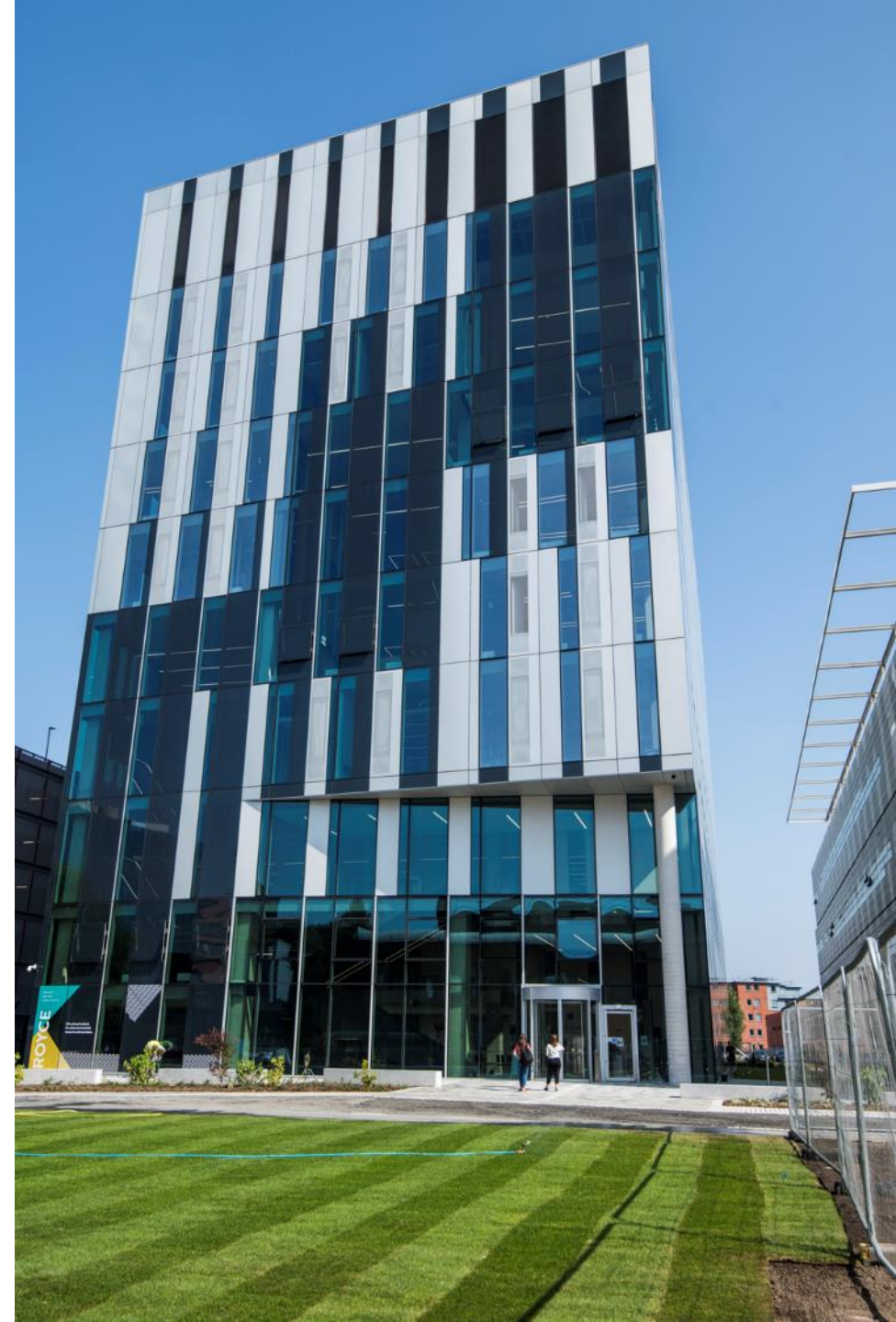Physical Sciences
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Portfolio balancing

- Will take place following the interview panels
- Science, Engineering and Technology Board will review the balance in the following order
    - across the 3 focus areas
    - across EPSRC's 7 science priorities
    - within those 7 priorities
    - geographic distribution of students
    - other landscape diversity such as balance of institutions and sectors
- SETB will provide EPSRC with advice
- Final decisions will be made by EPSRC taking into consideration any co-funding available

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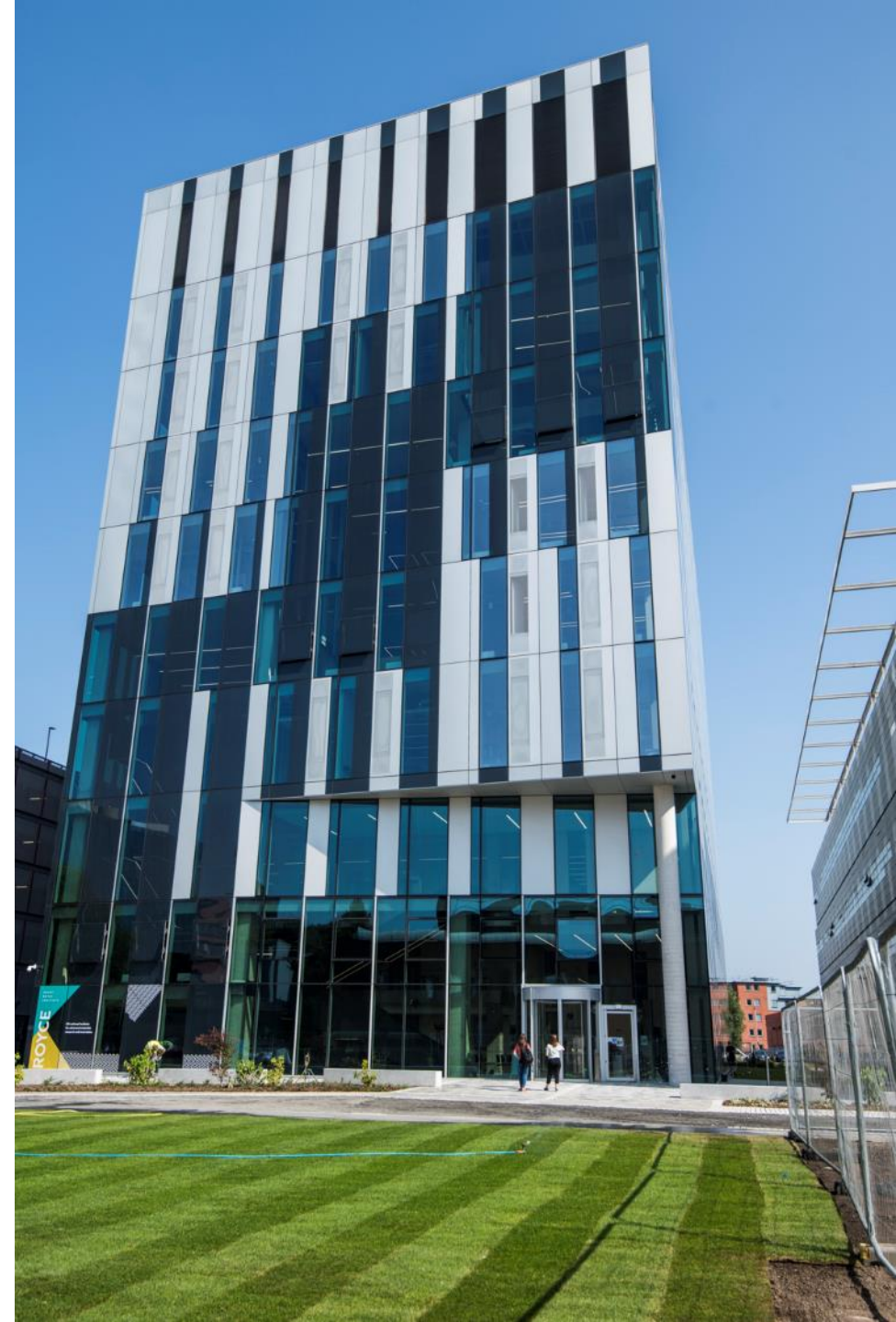
Funding decisions

- Further to EPSRC's funding:
    - AHRC, BBSRC and MRC may support proposals with research in their remits and aligned to their strategic delivery plans
    - MOD intend to fund one CDT and may contribute to others
    - Potential for further co-funding
- **All proposals will be considered together during the assessment process, regardless of funding source and disciplinary focus**

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Questions?

Answers to Questions sent in ahead of the webinar and asked during
the webinar are being collated into a FAQs document which will be uploaded to
the funding opportunity web page