

Accelerating the Green Economy Centres Webinar Q&A

Question	Answer
Funding Questions	
Can the funding percentage/criteria be clarified	The maximum funding that UKRI will pay is up to £5 million. UKRI usually awards on the basis of 80% FEC.
Can research (staff and non-staff) costs be funded within this call? This is not explicit in the 'what we will fund' section	Yes, research staff and non-staff costs can be funded within this funding opportunity.
If there are business consortium partners as part of the project, would they be eligible to funding as well, is the grant 100% of costs?	Businesses are expected to be project partners on the Centre awards, and we won't fund them directly as part of this funding opportunity.
clearly, to be successful, partnerships need to involve non-academic partners (e.g. business, NGO, council's). can any of this funding be used to support their participation and if so, how? e.g. can business be funded, as they would be through innovate UK, or is this along the lines of research council rules. i.e. funding available from UKRI to support non-academic partners is minimal?	It is possible to request costs for non-academic partners to participate. Businesses cannot be funded as part of this funding opportunity, they are expected to be project partners. For Project partners who are third sector organisations (for example, NGOs, charities, and other non-profit civil society organisations), we will fund a modest contribution towards their costs on the project at 100% of direct costs. Any non-staff costs must be reasonable: indirect costs and overheads are not allowed. All staff costs must be based on basic salaries (that is, not day rates). Project partners outside third sector organisations fund their own involvement. We will only fund minor incidental expenses, such as some travel costs, if needed for project partners.
Assuming a typical innovate UK intervention rate, the funding won't cover our overheads - can this funding gap be used as match?	The two separate funding calls should be highlighted here. Firstly, the Centres funding opportunity that is looking for match funding from partners and funded using the 80% FEC model. Separately, the R&I grants that come along later will be matched separately, and the match for those grants can't be used as match funding for the Centres. Full details will be provided on the second funding opportunity in about 2025.
Will further guidance on eligible costs be given? I am not clear if technical/research staff costs are eligible. The call also indicates that some % of the budget can be spent on capital expenditure and equipment for centres. Can some guidance on an acceptable % be given?	Standard UKRI eligible costs are permitted. This includes technical and research staff costs. It is not expected that there will be significant capital costs as part of the award. More details on the costings will be confirmed following the outline stage and in the full stage guidance. Guidance on standard costs can be found in the NERC research grants handbook:

	https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/NERC-050423-GrantsFellowshipsHandbook-April2023.pdf
The Kent & Medway centre offered R&D grants to SMEs, would this call support that use of funding?	The Centres are not offering R&D grants to SMEs, however the further funding opportunity will support this. Once the accelerating the green economy centres are established Innovate UK will launch an open funding opportunity of up to £10 million for targeted research and innovation grants to collaborate with the funded accelerating the green economy centres.
Within the £5mill funding what level can be spent on infrastructure? And if it is new infrastructure how soon after July 2024 does it need to be up and running?	It is not expected that there will be significant capital costs as part of the award. More details on the costings for will be confirmed following the outline stage and in the full stage guidance. The costings guidance can be found in the NERC research grants handbook: https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/NERC-050423-GrantsFellowshipsHandbook-April2023.pdf
Are new research labs & equipment eligible costs?	It is not expected that there will be significant capital costs as part of the award. More details on the costings will be confirmed following the outline stage and in the full stage guidance. The costings guidance can be found in the NERC research grants handbook: https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/NERC-050423-GrantsFellowshipsHandbook-April2023.pdf
Requesting clarity on the total funding requested question you just answered: can we submit a proposal for 100% FeC costs of £6m, so 80% of which is £4.8m?	The maximum funding UKRI will pay is £5m. You can submit an application for 100% FeC costs of £6m, so 80% of which is £4.8m.
Does the funding cover development/capital costs of new research facilities/labs?	It is not expected that there will be significant capital costs as part of the award, the funding from this programme is for R&D. More details on the costings will be confirmed following the outline stage and in the full stage guidance. The costings guidance can be found in the NERC research grants handbook: https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/NERC-050423-GrantsFellowshipsHandbook-April2023.pdf
Will there be separate flexible funds, e.g. for small grants to companies to conduct aligned R&D projects?	There will not be separate flexible funds as part of the Centres funding opportunity. The future call administered by Innovate UK will offer small grants to companies to conduct aligned R&D projects.

<p>Apologies if this has been shown in slides, I had to leave temporarily. The call document makes clear PhD cannot be funded but can the funding cover costs for post-docs time to conduct research?</p>	<p>Post docs time to conduct research can be included within the application.</p>
<p>Leveraged funding</p>	
<p>With regard to leveraged funding, whilst UKRI public money is not eligible, is other public funding eligible? And can you use existing funding for work in the sector as leveraged funding at application stage?</p>	<p>Other UKRI funding sources are not eligible as part of the leveraged funding. Other public sector funding is eligible as part of the leveraged funding costs.</p>
<p>Are you anticipating that the matched funding brought into the funded Green Economy Centres from the start will be 100% cash, or can this be 100% in-kind? If neither, what ratio do you anticipate would be ideal?</p>	<p>At point of application this is expected to be at least 25% of the total amount that UKRI is paying, so for example if UKRI is paying £5 million then the leveraged amount should be £1,250,000 and can be a mix of cash and in kind, which is determined by the partners and the Centre. UKRI is not stipulating a ratio.</p>
<p>Would external funding of PhD studentships contributing to research in the Centre be counted as match funding?</p>	<p>External funding of PhDs can be counted towards the leveraged/matched funding.</p>
<p>Regarding the co-investment, must this be 'new money' or funds already committed?</p>	<p>Regarding the co-investment the expectation that this could include a mix of cash and in-kind contributions. This would be a mix of new money and could be funds already committed. Other UKRI awards will not be considered as leveraged investment. Centres will be expected to clearly demonstrate auditable co-investments during the lifetime of the grant.</p>
<p>Explain the practicalities of leveraging point bearing in mind now that 20% is match</p>	<p>UKRI funds on a basis of 80% FEC currently so this is standard funding practice. For this funding opportunity at point of application this is expected to be at least 25% of the total amount that UKRI is paying, so for example if UKRI is paying £5 million then the leveraged amount should be £1,250,000 and can be a mix of cash and in kind, which is determined by the partners and the Centre. The leveraged funding evidences the commitment from the partners to the Centre.</p>

<p>If the grant funding is 80% FEC that suggests there is a 20% match requirement. Is the leveraged funding at 25% something different?</p>	<p>The leveraged funding is something different. The maximum funding that UKRI will pay is up to £5 million. UKRI usually awards on the basis of 80% FEC. The expectation is that the minimum of 25% leveraged funding is on top of the UKRI investment to demonstrate the added value of the project partners and stakeholder engagement in the Centre. At point of application this is expected to be at least 25% of the total amount that UKRI is paying, so for example if UKRI is paying £5 million then the leveraged amount should be £1,250,000 and can be a mix of cash and in kind, which is determined by the partners and the Centre. UKRI is not stipulating a ratio.</p>
<p>Does the matched funding have to be guaranteed at the outline stage? Or can this be guaranteed by the final application stage i.e. later Thanks</p>	<p>It is anticipated that leveraged funding (including in-kind) of at least 25% to every £1 of UKRI funding at application stage will be required.</p>
<p>The case studies illustrated the benefits of having R&D infrastructure in place. How important is such infrastructure in your thinking and can (non-UKRI) investment in such infrastructure count towards the leveraged requirement?</p>	<p>Non-UKRI funded infrastructure can count towards the leveraged investment requirement.</p>
<p>Scope</p>	
<p>Do you have a definition for what classes as a new/emerging market? Or is that for the applicant to justify?</p>	<p>This is up to the applicants to decide. They should describe the area of the market they are working in and fully justify why that's something that that we should consider.</p>
<p>When you say 'investment' do you mean business/venture capital investment or could it be private individuals/communities coordinating smaller investors?</p>	<p>This could be both and for the Centre to determine. There is possibly two ways to think about the funding: one is the funding towards the activities of the centre and then there's the investment funding to help grow the sector, which is an addition to that. We want ideas, products and services, business models to be that come out of these centres to be investable, to help us grow and develop a thriving area of the green economy.</p>
<p>The guidance indicates that there are options for either physical or virtual Centres - is there a preference between these?</p>	<p>There is not a preference, and is up to the applicants to decide based on the challenge, partnership and place.</p>
<p>The GKM and Finance Institute examples seem to marry tech/data and people/network issues across multiple workstreams. Is it necessary to combine both tech and people initiatives in our bids?</p>	<p>This is up to the applicants to decide based on the challenge, partnership and place.</p>

<p>The standards that Seb describes seem to be voluntary, industry-led. What about regulated minimum standards, e.g. Building Regulations? Is the expectation that bids go beyond the regulated minimum? Are we talking about standards for technology, governance, occupations?</p>	<p>This is up to the applicants to decide based on the challenge, partnership and place.</p>
<p>can you expand on what is meant by 'market-informed solutions', please?</p>	<p>We want the Centres to attract private investment to be deployed effectively in clean, green solutions as emerging markets mature. Therefore, 'market informed solutions' in this context means a challenge that is determined by an emerging green economy in order to achieve ideas, products and services and business models and make the solution investable, to help us grow and develop a thriving, thriving area of the green economy. This is to achieve the impacts and outcomes as set out in the Funding Opportunity.</p>
<p>you stated that national priorities were very relevant - could you outline the top 5 you have in mind? e.g., cost of living, GHG reduction, housing provision ??</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieve the UK's transition to a secure and prosperous green economy by 2050. - Address the near-term costs of transition to a low-carbon economy, by unlocking solutions and focusing private sector investment. - measurable growth in the UK green economy - prosperity gains, such as jobs and economic benefit, are distributed across the UK - solutions are ready to deploy for the last 20% to meet carbon budgets beyond 2030
<p>Partnerships</p>	
<p>To what extent are networks or partnerships that involve partners/stakeholders from other parts of Europe seen as an advantage (or not)?</p>	<p>We will not be funding the participation of international partners in this call, however, that they are very welcome to bring their own funding and partner on the applications using the project partner mechanism that we have. It is not an advantage or a disadvantage per se. It's about bringing the right expertise and right group of people together to address the challenge area that you're looking to. And if that means engaging some key partners across Europe, perhaps, where expertise isn't available in the UK then by all means do that and provide justification in your application.</p>

<p>Michelle mentioned unsuccessful applicants joining successful bids. Please can you say a bit more about how that would work? Presumably the final decision is the Lead person's?</p>	<p>We encourage the addition of further collaborators and project partners between outline and full application stage. Upon completion of the outline stage details of those invited to full application stage will be published on the UKRI website. The intention is that potential interested collaborators can get in touch with the projects to develop potential partnerships. It will be the final decision of the Project Lead if they accept the request to collaborate as part of the Centre, this will not be determined by UKRI.</p>
<p>What kind of businesses are you looking for collaborating with the centres?</p>	<p>We are not prescriptive on the kind of businesses, this can be multinational to SMEs - it will be driven by the Centre.</p>
<p>Will you attempt to do any “matchmaking” between different proposals at the outline stage that are addressing similar challenges?</p>	<p>We will not be doing matchmaking of proposals. We have set up a Teams networking site for interested individuals to matchmake amongst themselves. Please contact the greenecentres@ukri.org email address should you wish to be added to this site.</p>
<p>Place</p>	
<p>Can you speak a bit more about the potential international dimension. The markets for new emerging solutions (tech and services) are likely to be international and need international business partners. Is this regional to international dimension encouraged?</p>	<p>We will not be funding the participation of international partners in this call, however, that they are very welcome to bring their own funding and partner on the applications using the project partner mechanism that we have. It is about bringing the right expertise and right group of people together to address the challenge area that you're looking to. And if that means engaging some key international partners then by all means provide that justification in your application.</p>
<p>Would a cluster focussed on two complimentary yet geographically different regions be out of scope? E.g. maritime focus in the north and south?</p>	<p>We very much welcome place based focus as we have had stronger outcomes in the past. We probably imaged when developing the funding opportunity it would be in one particular area. However, if you can make a strong case. For example, in the maritime sector, if in two different parts that are clearly part of a strong supply chain and that is articulated in the application then that would be in scope. This will depend on the partnership and challenge and you should clearly demonstrate this within your application.</p>

<p>Does being based in successful places, mean that's its hard to invest in left behind areas for inclusive growth. How are these different attributes weighted ?</p>	<p>This is up to the applicants to decide based on the challenge, partnership and place and for the applicants to make the case for why this is the area and the best opportunity. It could also include aspects of how to bring everyone in the region up as well so that nobody is left behind.</p>
<p>Please could you say more about the local/place based angle - is this about the grand challenge, research expertise of the academic institutions, economic strengths - or something else/a combination of all the above?</p>	<p>The place is up to the applicants to decide based on the challenge, partnership and place and for the applicants to make the case for why this is the area and the best opportunity to address the aims of the programme.</p>
<p>With the focus on place-based, to what extent will generic learning be valued in any bids?</p>	<p>There could be value from generic learning included in applications, as well as the place based approach. This is up to the applicants to make a strong case for the generic learnings.</p>
<p>Does the multi - organisation structure in principle means that there can be multiple locations for the centre?</p>	<p>There could be multiple locations for the centre but it is up to the applicants to structure the centre according to the partnership, challenge and the location(s) that provides the best chance of success to facilitate the growth of a new market opportunity.</p>
<p>Will a location with strong academic expertise and potential for manufacturing/production but less for market of the products will be considered. The location would serve as new industry to export products out of the region.</p>	<p>We expect activities to be anchored in geographies across the UK, both in the short term and to embed private investment for long term growth. You should choose a location to anchor activities that provides the best chance of success to facilitate the growth of a new market opportunity. These regional activities may include but are not restricted to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - local and regional skills development, job creation or retention - critical mass activities leading to increased private investment, including foreign direct investment, in specific geographies - contributions to cluster development, for example through knowledge diffusion, supply chain development, SME growth, generation, or growth of spin outs - You will be assessed on your potential to contribute to local and national development; balancing the capabilities, needs and opportunities the location presents.
<p>Remit</p>	

<p>Is there a defined remit requirement with any of the Research Councils for this proposal? (i.e. 50% NERC) Or can researchers within a consortium align with any of the research councils?</p>	<p>The Centre is expected to be transdisciplinary in nature so the researchers can span the full breadth of UKRI remit and so cut across all Research Council remits.</p>
<p>How focussed would you like these centres? are you after a broad area focus such as agriculture. Or more specific such as decarbonising agriculture vehicles?</p>	<p>The aim of the funding opportunity is to support five co-created centres that accelerate the translation and commercialisation of market-informed solutions to drive the green economy, it will be up to the applicants to determine and to provide a strong case in the application.</p>
<p>What level of detail is required in the research theme scoping?</p>	<p>The level of detail required should be determined by the applicants. Please read the 'How to Apply' section for requirements at Outline application stage:https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/accelerating-the-green-economy-centres/</p>
<p>Does the centre need to focus on one challenge area identified in the brief or is it better to focus on more than one?</p>	<p>The challenge areas in the funding opportunity are challenges that could be addressed and are intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Therefore, it is up to the applicants to decide based on the challenge, partnership and place.</p>
<p>Although you talk about the proposals being transdisciplinary - does it need to be led by a NERC academic?</p>	<p>It does not need to be led by a NERC academic. NERC is delivering the funding opportunity on behalf of the Building a Green Future theme as NERC hosts the strategic theme.</p>
<p>Does the centre need to have one (and only one) theme from the challenge areas?</p>	<p>The challenge areas in the funding opportunity are challenges that could be addressed and are intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Therefore, it is up to the applicants to decide based on the challenge, partnership and place.</p>
<p>Can you offer greater clarity on the sector-specificity? If the centre focuses on a green technology that is sector agnostic is this still of interest?</p>	<p>The aim of the funding opportunity is to support five co-created centres that accelerate the translation and commercialisation of market-informed solutions to drive the green economy, it will be up to the applicants to determine and to provide a strong case in the application.</p>
<p>Some researchers do research of policy, including policy failures (e.g. stop-start policy undermining investment confidence). Is that kind of research eligible for this funding, for example in relation to risk?</p>	<p>The aim of the funding opportunity is to support five co-created centres that accelerate the translation and commercialisation of market-informed solutions to drive the green economy, if this research is integral to achieving the aim of the Centre then this could be scope. It will be up to the applicants to determine and to provide a strong case in the application.</p>
<p>TRL</p>	

<p>What is the approximate starting TRL level for research that you anticipate to support through the Green Economy Centre call?</p>	<p>Most likely to be in the applied research space and is more in the application and industry use and growing sectors so probably at TRL3.</p>
<p>Could you please comment on the balance new fundamental research vs impact activities taking things through the trl levels?</p>	<p>Accelerating the Green Economy Centres should support companies and small and medium Enterprises (SMEs) developing new products, services and business models based on fundamental research and development activities to enable translation through to higher technology readiness levels (TRLs), including the creation of prototypes and operational demonstrators. The governance structure should reflect the partnership required to drive the translation of fundamental research through to development and deployment of emerging green solutions by attracting private investment. Therefore, whilst the TRL level is likely to be in the applied research space there is likely to be balance across the TRLs based on the challenge being addressed.</p>
<p>Does that mean that the usual UKRI scope of TRL1-3 is not applied here. You would want TRL3+?</p>	<p>Accelerating the Green Economy Centres should support companies and small and medium Enterprises (SMEs) developing new products, services and business models based on fundamental research and development activities to enable translation through to higher technology readiness levels (TRLs), including the creation of prototypes and operational demonstrators. The governance structure should reflect the partnership required to drive the translation of fundamental research through to development and deployment of emerging green solutions by attracting private investment. Therefore, whilst the TRL level is likely to be in the applied research space there is likely to be balance across the TRLs based on the challenge being addressed.</p>
<p>Application and Assessment Processes</p>	
<p>Do your partner businesses need to be in place when you submit the first stage application?</p>	<p>The Centre should be co-designed and co-delivered by businesses and with other stakeholders so there should be some business partners in place when you submit the Outline application. However, it is expected that from Outline to Full application stage the number of businesses involved in the Centre will evolve and increase.</p>
<p>Are the Full Applications going to be peer reviewed?</p>	<p>The full applications will not go to written peer review. There will be an Interview panel who will assess the full applications.</p>

the limit of two applications per RO is at outline stage ?	An organisation can lead on two applications and partner in other applications submitted to the funding opportunity. The lead applicant will not change from outline to full stage so this will apply at full stage too.
you mentioned 100% leveraged funding is expected by the end of the centre duration. Do you need a plan to achieve this in the outline stage of the proposal?	At the outline stage there is not a requirement to show the plan for how the Centre will attain leveraged funding of 100%, this will be expected as part of a full application.
What are the selection criteria for outline stage?	The criteria against which your outline application will be assessed are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- fit to opportunity- applicant and team and capability to deliver- project partners Find details of assessment questions and criteria under the 'Application questions' heading in the 'How to apply section' of the Funding Finder: https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/accelerating-the-green-economy-centres/

<p>To what extent does the challenge focus, place focus (within a defined region) and partnerships need to be confirmed by the 12th Dec application stage?</p>	<p>The Centre should be co-designed and co-delivered by businesses and other stakeholders so there should be some partners in place when you submit the Outline application. However, it is expected that from Outline to Full application stage the number of partners involved in the Centre will evolve and increase.</p> <p>Please refer to 'How to apply' section for what is required at the Outline stage. In particular, 'Fit to Opportunity', you should explain how your proposed work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fits with the funding opportunity: how the centre will establish and maintain world leading research, translation, and commercialisation activities, to grow and strengthen the flow of private capital investment - has a clear vision of your team: to achieve the aims of the funding opportunity - is of excellent quality, ambition and importance within or beyond the identified challenge - demonstrates clear evidence of genuine and substantive partnerships to identify and co-deliver the emerging industry-led research and innovation priority - has defined the emerging market opportunity and existing challenge in the geography to ensure clear tangible benefits to the target location(s) - will build a critical mass of capacity and capabilities appropriate to the challenge within a target location to enhance success - will have clear leadership and governance to reflect the partnership required to develop and deliver solutions
<p>Can you confirm that up to 12 applications will go to full stage? I think I heard that, thank you.</p>	<p>12 applications will be invited to full stage. However, this could vary dependent on quality of applications and numbers applying.</p>

Effective Collaboration / Subsidy Control

'Effective collaboration' without UK subsidy - what does this mean?

As per UKRI Terms and Conditions https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/UKRI-04042023-UKRI_fEC-Grant-Terms-And-Conditions-April-2023.pdf in section RGC2.
We expect Centres to provide evidence of their Collaboration Agreements with their partners before the Centre is awarded that shows the following:

1. there is a legally binding agreement before the start of a project
2. two independent parties are pursuing a common objective
3. jointly define the scope
4. contribute jointly to the implementation of the project
5. share risks (could include financial, technical, scientific)
6. share the research results, including publishing

More information will be provided to those who are successful at outline application and proceed to full stage application.

Please could you explain the point about Subsidy Controls? I didn't quite catch it the first time. Thanks

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More information will be provided to those who are successful at outline application and proceed to full stage application.

Synergies to other UKRI Investments

<p>It was lovely to see the success of the Kent and Medway SIP project. Could you explain what you see as the key differences between the Strength in Places programme and the Accelerating the Green Economies Programme?</p>	<p>The aim of the Accelerating the Green Economy Centres is to support five co-created centres that accelerate the translation and commercialisation of market-informed solutions to drive the green economy. The Centres are focused on addressing the 'Accelerating the Green Economy' sub-theme of the UKRI Building a Green Future strategic theme: https://www.ukri.org/what-we-do/our-main-funds-and-areas-of-support/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/building-a-green-future/</p>
<p>How do you expect these to fit with recently announced PBIAAs?</p>	<p>The aim of the Accelerating the Green Economy Centres is to support five co-created centres that accelerate the translation and commercialisation of market-informed solutions to drive the green economy. The Centres are focused on addressing the 'Accelerating the Green Economy' sub-theme of the UKRI Building a Green Future strategic theme: https://www.ukri.org/what-we-do/our-main-funds-and-areas-of-support/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/building-a-green-future/</p> <p>The Accelerating the Green Economy programme will be supporting transdisciplinary centres. The Accelerating the Green Economy centres will not have a flexible funding pot like the recently announced PBIAAs.</p>
<p>Questions for British Standards Institute (Seb)</p>	
<p>Seb - how can people contact you or your team regarding standards?</p>	<p>Sebastiaan.vandort@bsigroup.com</p>