



**Science and  
Technology  
Facilities Council**

**STFC PARTICLE PHYSICS REVIEW OF EXPERIMENTS AND EXPERIMENTAL  
CONSOLIDATED GRANTS 2024**

**Guidelines for applicants  
7 December 2023**

**CLOSING DATES:**

**Experiment submissions – 7 February 2024 at 4pm  
Grant proposals and Form X –21 February 2024 at 4pm  
(To include Capital Equipment requests)**

*Please read these guidelines carefully as both the proposal format and method of submission have changed.*

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# 1 Overview

## 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document sets out the guidelines for the 2024 Particle Physics Experiment Consolidated Grants (CG) round. The grant submissions for 2024 will be a hybrid approach using the UKRI's new Funding Service.
- 1.1.2 The Funding Service (TFS) is part of a simpler and better funding initiative at UKRI, which is replacing the Je-S funding system. TFS is based on a new digital platform, underpinned by improved and more consistent policies, processes and support. These changes will make it easier for researchers and innovators to collaborate, obtain guidance, and submit applications in a joined-up way.
- 1.1.3 While this document provides specific guidance concerning the grants round, it should be read in conjunction with the [Guidance for Applicants](#). Part A of this document provides guidance on the consolidated grant round, including the assessment criteria and how applications should be structured – **please read this carefully**. Part B gives guidance on the experiments review, with information on the experiments detailed in the review and the information that should be included in experiment submissions. Part C provides guidance on a new opportunity to support bids for the coordination of large-scale research and development (R&D) activities
- 1.1.4 The budget for this funding opportunity is currently around £24.5M per year, including uplift to the CG secured at the last round. In addition, funds of £500k per year is also available for capital equipment items. Please note that the grant period covers future Comprehensive Spending Review periods so future budgets cannot be guaranteed. Applicants are asked to submit realistic bids, for example, using the current award as a point of departure.
- 1.1.5 This funding opportunity and these guidelines have been developed to ensure that the process:
- Is transparent and accountable, particularly with respect to the means of prioritisation
  - is efficient, both in terms of the requirement for applicants and the reviewers – both panels and referees, and the use of office resources
  - provides a timely outcome.
- 1.1.6 UKRI recognises that the COVID-19 pandemic caused major interruptions and disruptions across our communities and are committed to ensuring that individual applicants and their wider team, including partners and networks, are not penalised for any disruption to their career(s) such as breaks and delays, disruptive working patterns and conditions, the loss of on-going work, and role changes that may have been caused by the pandemic.

1.1.7 Reviewers and panel members will be advised to consider the unequal impacts that COVID-19 related disruption might have had on the track record and career development of those individuals included in the proposal and will be asked to consider the capability of the applicant and their wider team to deliver the research they are proposing. Where disruptions have occurred applicants can highlight this within their application, if they wish, but there is no requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption.

## 1.2 **Timetable**

1.2.1 The timetable for the review will be as follows:

<b>Closing date for experiment submissions</b>	<b>07 February 2024, 4pm</b>
<b>Closing date for consolidated grant proposals and Form X</b>	<b>21 February 2024, 4pm</b>
Reviewing process	Mid-March - April 2024
Grant clarification meetings	April – mid-May 2024
Applicants to receive and respond to reviewer comments	Early May 2024
Experiment Review meeting	May 2024
Notification of changes since submission	1 June 2024
Peer Review meeting	18, 19, 20 June 2024
Science Board	November 2024 (TBC)
Outcome announced	December 2024
Grants commence	1 October 2025

## 1.3 **Particle Physics Grants Panel (PPGP) remit**

1.3.1 Grant proposals are reviewed by the PPGP. The panel’s role is to:

- Assess and make recommendations to the STFC Executive on research grant applications in particle physics.
- Take account, as appropriate, of any strategic advice provided by STFC.
- Provide clear, concise feedback to applicants.
- Take account of the recommendations of international reviewers and the conclusions of specialist peer review panels (as appropriate). The latter may be convened by the Executive to advise on consolidated grants, contiguous groups of research requests, or research requests which are judged (based on cost or propriety) to warrant such separate, in-depth assessment.
- Advise the STFC’s Science Board and the Executive as required on all issues relating to research grants, including monitoring the level of funding allocated to grants; and
- Carry out such other tasks associated with peer review as the Executive might require.

1.3.2 The membership of the PPGP taking part in the 2024 review of experiments and experimental consolidated grants can be found on the [STFC website](#)

#### 1.4 **Strategic guidance**

1.4.1 In assessing proposals, the PPGP will take account of the strategic priorities identified by Science Board.

1.4.2 The grants panel will ensure that:

- The programme supported is scientifically excellent.
- The programme is clearly in line with STFC's strategic science objectives and priorities; that it addresses the impact agenda (e.g., in terms of technology development and knowledge transfer) and is responsive to changes and future opportunities within the community.
- There is an appropriate balance between the programmatic themes within particle physics (identified in the Particle Physics Advisory Panel roadmap) and the development of novel technologies consistent with the overall STFC science strategy.

1.4.3 In the case of activities not currently supported by STFC:

- Research proposals for exploitation will be considered and may be funded if the quality of science proposed merits it.
- The grants panel will also consider funding for new activities where a strong case is made.

For these activities, it is expected that only a few, excellent proposals will be funded, and that funding will not create any further, ongoing financial or legal commitments beyond the period of the award.

#### 1.5 **Enquiries**

1.5.1 Enquiries can be directed to the following staff at STFC.

- David Brown: [david.brown@stfc.ukri.org](mailto:david.brown@stfc.ukri.org)
- Lindsay Clark: [lindsay.clark@stfc.ukri.org](mailto:lindsay.clark@stfc.ukri.org)
- Jane Long: [jane.long@stfc.ukri.org](mailto:jane.long@stfc.ukri.org)

1.5.2 Any questions regarding TFS, and the Opportunities being run on it can be sent to the UKRI Funding Service Helpdesk.

- E-mail: [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org)
- Tel: 01793 547490

## PART A: 2024 Review of Experimental Particle Physics Consolidated Grants

### 2 Consolidated grants

#### 2.1 2024 consolidated grant

- 2.1.1 STFC provides support for the particle physics community through consolidated grants (CG) for a period of four years. Note that this is a change from the previous three-year period.
- 2.1.2 Each institution (or equivalent sub-unit within the university) may submit one consolidated grant proposal per subject area every four years. Particle physics theory and particle physics experiment are separate subject areas. This grants round will consider consolidated grant requests in the particle physics experiment subject area. Where more than one department/group at a university is involved in the same subject area a single consolidated grant proposal should be submitted.

#### 2.2 Consortium grants

- 2.2.1 Groups from different institutions working collaboratively in the same well-defined research area may apply for a consolidated research grant as a consortium. This is intended to allow members of such consortia the opportunity to bid for shared resources, particularly core expertise, that they might not otherwise be able to secure on their own, perhaps due to the size and/or scope of their activity. For this opportunity, this will require the submission of a single proposal in TFS on behalf of the consortium. The implication at present would be that any grant awarded would be to the parent institute that submitted the proposal, and they would be required to administer the consortium and distribute funds to the child grant.
- 2.2.2 An individual may only be supported on a maximum of one consolidated grant per subject area. Therefore, individuals in groups that apply as a consortium would be excluded from also applying as part of their individual institution's application in that subject area.
- 2.2.3 If you are considering submitting a new consortium grant, please notify STFC prior to submission using the contact details in 1.5.1.

### 3 Applying for a Consolidated Grant (CG)

This section should be read in conjunction with guidance in the [Guidance for Applicants](#)

#### 3.1 Submitting applications through The Funding Service (TFS)

- 3.1.1 All proposals should be submitted online using TFS: [Opportunities – UKRI](#). The following: [How applicants use the UKRI Funding Service – UKRI](#), includes how to create your Funding Service account, user briefings and training tutorials and system help. In the event of any queries please contact the Funding Service helpdesk by e-mail at: [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org) or by phone on 01793 547490.

- 3.1.2 The CG opportunity will be called: Particle Physics Experiment Consolidated Grants 2024. The round will have a start date of 1 October 2025 and an end date of 30 September 2029.
- 3.1.3 For this first opportunity we are using a hybrid approach. You will be required to complete TFS with financial information for all the staff requested and provide high level information for the non-staff costs. You will also be required to provide the Data Management details as a response within TFS along with details about Trusted Research. The Case for Support should be provided as an attachment.
- 3.1.4 The deadline for the submission of consolidated grant proposals and Form X is 4pm on **21 February 2024**.
- 3.1.5 It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure that their institution's administration department submits the proposal before the submission deadline, and that they therefore submit the proposal to the administration department sufficiently far in advance of the deadline to allow for their internal approvals. Proposals cannot be submitted after the closing date.
- 3.1.6 Further information on how to apply for a grant can be found here: [Apply for funding – UKRI](#)

### 3.2 **Additional documents required**

In addition to the information provided through TFS, the following documents are required to be e-mailed to: [pp@stfc.ac.uk](mailto:pp@stfc.ac.uk)

- Form X spreadsheet: staff details and programme/project participation.
- New Financial Spreadsheet

3.2.1 **All documentation** (including any references provided) should be written in one of the following fonts:

- Standard Arial 11pt (please note that this is the preferred font for STFC)
- Helvetica Regular 11pt or
- an equivalent regular 11pt sans serif universal font e.g., Free Sans with a minimum of 2 cm margins around each page.

### 3.3 **Costings**

3.3.1 Details relating to grant costs can be found in the: [Guidance for applicants](#)

### 3.4 **Justification of resources**

3.4.1 In addition to the financial information provided on TFS, we have provided a spreadsheet for you to complete in-order-to provide a detailed breakdown of the costs as you would have done through the Je-S system. TFS is currently only configured to collect detailed staff information and high-level finance costs.



3.4.2 All costs associated with the research proposal must be justified, with the exception of estates, indirects, and infrastructure technician costs, and the unit cost of TRAC-determined elements such as investigator salary costs or research facility charge-out costs, although the amount of resource required does need to be justified.

3.4.3 An explanation for all costs requested must be given in the case for support. Each directly incurred non-responsive post must be given a name, or, for anonymised responsive posts, a unique identifier, not including a number (e.g., Oxf\_ATLAS\_RA etc.). The same name must be used on the TFS proposal, in the case for support, on the Form X for both the past and future work, and (if applicable) in an experiment submission. Where these details do not match the documents will be returned for correction.

### 3.5 **Classification of posts**

3.5.1 As part of the grant harmonisation across UKRI, it has introduced and renamed the posts that can be requested, and some of the costing methods used to request funding for the posts. The costing method can be found in the [Roles in funding applications: eligibility, responsibilities and costings guidance – UKRI](#). The normalised TFS post names and how those reflect those from Je-S are shown in the table below.

3.5.2 Whilst most roles are now eligible to attract estates and indirect costs (overheads), it remains the Research Organisations (RO's) decision as to whether or not they wish to charge overhead costs for these posts, it is not mandatory. This is not a change to the current policy where RO's decide whether they want to charge overheads for eligible roles. Please note, the higher the overhead costs, the less that can be awarded for the staff and non-staff costs on the grant. STFC also continues to monitor the funding requested for indirect and estates to inform future planning.

Role name	Responsibility	Previous Role Name
Project Lead (PL)	Responsible for the intellectual leadership and overall management of the project (affiliated with the lead organisation)	Principal Investigator
Project co-Lead UK (PcL)	Member of the project leadership and management team and may take over the leadership of the project if required (affiliated with a submitting research organisation)	Co-Investigator
Researcher co-Lead	A Research and innovation associate who is not eligible to be a project lead or project co-lead, but has made a substantial contribution to the formulation and development of the application and will be closely involved with the project	Researcher Co-Investigator
Grant Manager	Leads the administration and delivery of a project (employed by the lead or one of the collaborating organisations).	Training Grant Holder/Programme Manager
Research and Innovation Associate	Carries out research and/or innovation work on a project (employed by the lead or one of the collaborating organisations)	Researcher/PDRA
Visiting Researcher	Carries our research and/or innovation work on the project for a limited period of time (not employed by the lead or any of the collaborating organisations)	Visiting Researcher
Specialist	Individuals who bring specialist skills to a project, for example data scientist, graphic designer, technicians,	Technicians/data/software

	librarian etc. who provide intellectual input to the project, (employed by the lead or one of the collaborating organisations).	
Technician	Provides general technical support as required (but not the infrastructure technician tasks as these costs are recovered separately) Individuals could be employed on a project as both a Specialist and a technician, with the relevant % requested to a maximum of 100 % according to the project requirements. (Employed by the lead or one of the collaborating organisations)	Technician
Doctoral student	A student studying for their doctorate who is funded by UKRI, usually through a UKRI training grant.	Students
Professional enabling Staff	Makes significant professional contributions to enable the project in areas such as finance, accounting, marketing etc. (employed by the lead or one of the collaborating organisations). This role would be supplying resource above what would be normally expected to be supplied as the general enabling activity that is usually funded from the estates and indirect costs awarded to the project.	Other Staff

### 3.6 Categories of staff

3.6.1 Consolidated grants have three categories of staff: academics, core staff and non-core staff.

3.6.2 New posts may be requested in each of the categories. For existing posts, a change in categorisation may be requested, so a post assigned as non-core in the 2021 round may now be requested as part of the core group and vice versa. Please highlight these changes clearly.

### 3.7 Definition of core posts

3.7.1 'Core posts' are those key staff identified by the grants panel as being crucial for the long-term support of research activities and are defined as underpinning research capability. Ultimately, the grants panel will make judgements on a case-by-case basis, but the following may be used as a guide:

- expertise in the areas of experimental development and construction
- expertise in the development, maintenance and operation of experimental computing infrastructure, including software skills
- expertise in the maintenance and operation of experiments
- engineering and technical expertise, e.g., electronic engineers and mechanical designers

3.7.2 The categories used on TFS should be the same ones used on Form X.

### 3.8 Case for the Core Posts

3.8.1 Each group must make a case as part of their proposal for the overall size and composition of their proposed core group. This should stress the areas of expertise of the group and build on the work of individual post-holders over the current

consolidated grant. The case should also give a plan of work for the next award period and explain how this maps on to the proposed core group.

3.8.2 For CERN-based experiments the case for the core group should state where core posts are critical to the UK's Category A or Category B Maintenance and Operations (M&O) commitments. These are defined as follows:

- M&O A - activities that the experiment collaboration has agreed to bear as a common expense, and
- M&O B - sub-detectors/systems that are the responsibility of individual institutes or groups of Institutes.

A similar case should be made for UK M&O commitments for other experiments where core staff fulfil commitments similar to Categories A and B.

3.8.3 Please note that posts requested as part of the core group may be awarded as non-core posts by the panel. Following the consideration of all the posts, the panel may decide that a core post should not be classified as a core post. It may be deemed that the post is not fundable, however, the post may be reconsidered as a non-core post and ranked again in line with other non-core posts.

### 3.9 **Non-core posts**

3.9.1 Posts outside the core group are referred to as non-core. These posts will largely be associated with experimental physics exploitation, most likely physics analysis but might also include a small amount of maintenance and operation. Posts may also be associated with some early work on R&D projects and novel, generic R&D. Non-core posts will be allocated in response to strong physics cases and are referred to here as 'responsive' consolidated grant posts. A competitive allocation procedure will be used for them, comparing cases for the continuation of existing posts with any new posts.

3.9.2 Experiment support responsibilities in responsive post cases (e.g., for M&O) should be identified with numerical reference to the experiment submission, which should contain a numbered list of M&O activities.

### 3.10 **Ring-fenced posts**

3.10.1 Consolidated grant core support approved as part of construction projects is contained within a project ring-fence. This applies only to core posts in STFC supported construction projects. Maintaining the level of support for projects in previous rounds has proved difficult because of the cumulative effects of flat cash funding, and because small fractions of individual posts were highlighted as ring-fenced. It may therefore not be possible for the PPGP to recommend the level of effort requested due to the impact on the wider experimental programme, or award full support for a post for whom only a small fraction is ring-fenced. Construction projects are now asked to recognise this risk and to include a suitable level of working allowance in their project to mitigate this risk.

- 3.10.2 It is anticipated that the group must make the ring-fenced effort available to the project over the consolidated grant period; however, the profile can change between years, with the agreement of the UK spokesperson, within the overall financial envelope.
- 3.10.3 Funds for the ring-fenced staff effort will be awarded to the group through their consolidated grant using the same inflation index as for non-ring-fenced staff. The actual funds awarded for these staff may therefore be less than the notified ring-fenced envelope.
- 3.10.4 The case for support should include a description of posts, or parts of posts, which are ring-fenced, for the period when they are ring-fenced, so that the panel has all relevant information.
- 3.10.5 The current ring-fenced projects are:
- ATLAS Upgrade (to March 2026)
  - CMS Upgrade (to March 2025)
  - DUNE projects
  - Hyper-K
- 3.10.6 The ATLAS Upgrade is due to complete construction during the next CG and move into integration and commissioning. The ring-fence will end on completion of the construction phase (currently March 2026).
- 3.10.7 The CMS Upgrade is due to complete construction in March 2025 and move into integration and commissioning thereafter. A project proposal for the CMS Upgrade will be reviewed in parallel to the 2024 CG. Should construction complete later than March 2025, this will be taken into account in the peer review process.
- 3.10.8 The DUNE project has been split into three individual projects DUNE RS&DC, DUNE APA and DUNE DAQ. These project proposals are currently in peer review or are due to be in peer reviewed in parallel to the 2024 CG. The CG effort requested will be taken into account during the peer review process.
- 3.10.9 Hyper-K is currently being constructed and is due to complete within this CG, at which point the ring-fence will no longer apply.
- 3.10.10 The LHCb Upgrade will move into construction during this CG, but the CG will be announced ahead of their next proposal, so ring fencing will apply in the next CG (2028).
- 3.10.11 Projects may be reviewed by the PPRP during the consolidated grant review period. In these cases, the PPGP will liaise with the PPRP to ensure that the two panels are consistent in their handling of requested resources.
- 3.11 **Project studentships**
- 3.11.1 It is possible to apply for a doctoral student as part of grant proposals. For guidance please see the [STFC Guidance for Applicants](#).

3.11.2 The PPGP will assess the scientific quality of the project, consider whether the project offers suitable training in research methods and techniques, and consider if the studentship adds value overall to the research proposal. All potential costs should be included in the proposal.

### 3.12 **Academics with dual theory/experiment roles**

3.12.1 Academics spending up to one third of their time in another discipline (e.g., a theorist working as a full member of an experimental collaboration or an experimenter with specific duties/obligations to a theoretical collaboration) should apply for all of their time to the panel relevant to the majority of their work. However, theory academics who meet these criteria may be named, as appropriate, and request travel support and/or posts for experimental exploitation activities from the PPGP(E).

### 3.13 **Academics named on grants**

3.13.1 Following peer-review, academics not in receipt of any funding for academic time are not usually listed on the grant. However, genuine participants in the research who do not require any funding for academic time such as emeritus researchers or fellows fully or partially funded from other sources are eligible to be named, as appropriate. It is recognised that such individuals may sometimes be difficult to identify so the Project Lead should alert STFC to ensure that any such instances can be dealt with. Cases should be made for such posts as the grants panel will assess these along with all others to decide whether they will add value. In certain cases, posts may be removed from the grant.

### 3.14 **Long Term Attachment (LTA)**

3.14.1 LTA costs should be calculated in the usual way in accordance with the STFC policy on LTA. The latest guidelines can be found [here](#).

3.14.2 Reductions should not be made on the proposal to estates and infrastructure technician costs to take account of individuals who will be on LTA during the grant period; this will be calculated by STFC on award of the grant based on the panel recommendations. Applicants should provide a list in the case for support of individuals who are expected to be on LTA during the grant, stating for each individual the period when they will be on LTA and the experiment they will be working on. For STFC-supported projects this list should match the list submitted in the experiment workbook.

### 3.15 **Case for Support**

3.15.1 The Case for Support should contain the report on research in the previous three years and plans for the future programme. [The page limit for the total length of the Case for Support is 12 pages + 1.25 pages per investigator \(including fellows and emeritus staff\) + 0.5 pages per \(academic, core, responsive\) case.](#)

## **Page Limit Summary**

Paragraph Number	Number of Pages	Post/Item	Details
<b>Summary of the Group's Activities and Strategy</b>			
3.15.3– 3.15.7	0.25	per investigator	
	0.5	per academic & core case	
<b>Project Reports</b>			
3.15.8 – 3.15.13	12	baseline	
	+ 1	per investigator	
	+0.5	per responsive	
<b>Support Posts</b>			
3.16.7	1	in total	The case for professional enabling staff is part of the overall Project Reports total page limit.
<b>Non-staff costs</b>			
3.16.8	2	in total	The case for non-staff costs (excluding capital equipment items) is part of the overall Project Reports total page limit.
<b>Equipment</b>			
3.16.10	0.5	per item	This is in addition to the page limits
<b>Additional Information</b>			
3.16.12			This section does not count towards the page limit

3.15.2 The Case for Support should contain the following sections:

- Summary of the group's activities and strategy
- Project reports on each area of the group's research

3.15.3 Summary of the group's activities and strategy: this part of the proposal should provide the highlights of the past contributions from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023 and the strategy for the future of the group for the four years of the new grant proposal. It is also important to demonstrate how the group's strategy is supporting the impact agenda for growth through investment in science and innovation (e.g., through knowledge transfer and technology development). Reference should be made to any plans to submit project proposals to the PPRP, indicating likely timescales and any implications for funding through the consolidated programme, e.g., additional staff posts. Note that responsive cases should be anonymised throughout the proposal for both the past and future work.

3.15.4 This part of the proposal should include a justification for the overall size and composition of the group, including the cases for academic and core posts. It may be helpful to use a table to indicate group composition, to aid international reviewers who do not have access to Form X.

3.15.5 To be counted as a group member, an academic must contribute at least 10% FTE to the consolidated grant for at least one year of the proposal; this can include academics where no salary is requested.

- 3.15.6 Core post cases should indicate if this is a new or continuing post, and the level of ring-fence if applicable.
- 3.15.7 The maximum page limit for the Summary of the group's activities and strategy section is: 0.25 pages per investigator, plus 0.5 page per (academic, core) case.
- 3.15.8 Project reports: For each project (i.e., experiment, R&D project or Small Research Facility (SRF – see below)) this part of the proposal should provide the information requested below by Theme, then sub-divided by experiment. To aid in comparative peer review, please split the project themes corresponding to the following science areas:
- Energy Frontier Physics (e.g., projects ATLAS and CMS): this should include both exploitation and upgrade, and phenomenology if support is requested.
    - We encourage groups to sub-divide efforts within energy frontier experiments as appropriate, to aid external peer review
  - Flavour Physics (e.g., LHCb, g-2, LFV): this should include both exploitation and upgrade, and phenomenology if support is requested.
  - Neutrino Physics (e.g., T2K, neutrino-less double beta decay): as above
  - Dark sector (e.g., dark matter, EDMs): as above
  - Accelerator Physics (to include Future Colliders): as above.
  - Generic Detector R&D: see 3.15.9 and Part C, section 8.
  - Computing (e.g., GridPP)
  - Special Facilities: see 3.15.10

If a project report does not fit these categories, please contact STFC. FASER is an example. The Panel would suggest that this is energy frontier rather than dark sector.

- 3.15.9 As in the past, support at a low level for underpinning research and development activity for new opportunities and the development of novel technologies may be sought through the PPGP. This may include generic detector R&D (i.e., not project-specific) and feasibility or conceptual design studies not related to a currently funded or identified project. Such research typically would be of relevance to a range of applications and could lead to the development of new project-specific instrumentation in the future and/or GCRF/ISCF-related activity. Applications for larger scale research and development relevant to projects already within the Council's Science Roadmap or in relation to a specific experiment should follow the PPRP route. Please also see Part C, section 8 of the guidance.
- 3.15.10 Very large, specialised mechanical or electronics workshops, technology centres or computing facilities, can be treated as separate projects in the proposal if desired.
- 3.15.11 For each project, please provide the information below. Please note that responsive posts should be anonymised throughout.

- A report on the work by group members since the last review. Highlight the most important publications on the project in the current consolidated grant period to which members of the group have directly contributed.
- A proposed plan describing the group's future programme and participation in specific projects/experiments for the period of the new CG.
- Cases for responsive posts on the project.

3.15.12 For clarity, it is requested that the structure of each project report have all the responsive cases for that project follow the text for that project. References to responsive posts in the group's reports should be highlighted in bold face.

3.15.13 **The maximum page limit for the entire Project reports section; baseline 12 pages + 1 page per investigator + 0.5 pages per (responsive) case.**

3.15.14 It is recognised that investigators may be active in more than one area and may therefore be included in more than one project report, with the constraint of respecting the total Case for Support page limit.

### 3.16 **Cases for posts**

3.16.1 The order and format of names should be consistent across the documentation.

#### **Academic, core and responsive posts**

3.16.2 A scientific or technical case relating to the proposed programme and Form X must be made for the continuation of each current staff post, or fraction of a post, including a ring-fence, and for initiation of new posts, including postdoctoral studentships. In line with the principles of FEC, cases must also be included for academic staff posts where no funding is sought. The case for investigator time should be justified in terms of the future programme, not past productivity. For all cases, please include the following information:

- The key contributions of the post for the proposed CG period.
- The key contributions of the post in the past.
- Positions of responsibility held in the past and specify which will be held during the proposed CG period.
- Fraction of post funding requested. If less than 100% FTE specify the funding source for the remainder.
- If applicable, what fraction of the post is M&O, with reference to the M&O task by number in the experiment case.
- If applicable, what fraction of the post is ringfenced, and for what tasks.

3.16.3 If appropriate, the case should indicate why the post should be considered "core". It is acceptable that in year four, non-ring-fenced effort can be attributed up to 50% FTE on non-specific projects.



- 3.16.4 Within each section of the proposal, post cases should be listed alphabetically by surname, or post title for unnamed posts. The posts on Form X must be listed in the same order. The naming format used must be consistent in the case for support, TFS and Form X. All posts should have the same name/number as given on TFS so that it is clear how each case for support relates to a TFS post.
- 3.16.5 Academics should apply for the amount of their time they expect to spend on research, taking into account other commitments (e.g., teaching, other funded research activity). The typical amount of time is 0.6 FTE per year. If a proposal is only requesting a particular investigator's time for part of the grant duration (e.g., if an academic has fellowship funding for the first two years of the grant and so only seeks funding for the last two years), this needs to be made clear in the text as TFS does not have the facility to enter this information. Similarly, if an academic is requesting variable levels of FTE support during the grant this also needs to be made clear, with the different amounts of FTE and exact start and end dates of the changes specified. If no salary costs are requested for a particular investigator but estates and indirect costs are requested for that investigator, please make this clear in the Case for Support.
- 3.16.6 Bids for continuation of existing posts, and for additional staff support, will be assessed on their merits by the PPGP. The overall group size and the number of academics in the group are among the factors that the PPGP may take into account in their deliberations.

### Support posts

- 3.16.7 A case should be made for the administrative and computer support requested. This case should be a maximum of one page long, included within the total case for support page limit. Where professional enabling staff (such as administrative and computer support) is requested under the 'Other Directly Allocated' heading or the 'Directly Incurred' heading, the following information should be provided for each post: type (e.g., administrative support or computing support), FTE, duration, and total cost. The cases for support posts should be in alphabetical order by surname, or post title for unnamed posts. Support posts should be included on Form X below the scientific and technical posts.

### Non-staff costs

- 3.16.8 A case, no longer than two pages in total should be made for travel and subsistence, public engagement resources and consumables (including computing equipment and tier 3). This should be included within the total case for support page limit. For information purposes, we have provided figures that the Grants Panel used during the last grants round to arrive at the non-staff cost awards. Please note that these are only indicative and will not necessarily be the figures used in this round. The total amount awarded for three years per FTE was:

- Travel and subsistence      £ 1,100 per year
- Tier 3 computing              £ 1,500

- Computing £ 1,000
- Consumables (ODI) £ 4,875
- Computing support 1 FTE per 30 persons per year
- Administrative support 1 FTE per 60 persons per year

### 3.16.9 Travel and subsistence

Applicants should request the full estimated cost of group travel, in line with the rules of their institution, including a justification of the request. Support for journeys within the UK and overseas should be sought only where these are not directly connected with supported experiments which are funded through the experiments funding line. Funds may be requested to make visits to discuss new projects if these cannot be combined with other journeys. The PPGP also expects that groups should seek travel funds from sources other than their institutions.

### 3.16.10 Equipment and Other Directly Incurred (ODI) costs

When applying for ODI (consumable) costs, please ensure that the funds requested are clearly listed under the separate headings given below in your Case for Support. The cost of the items listed should agree with those provided in the Finance spreadsheet. Please refer to the [Guidance for applicants](#) when putting together these lists and ensure that these items are individually less than £10k.

- Consumables
- Computing
- Tier 3 (under £10k – note that Tier 3 over £10k should be included under the equipment heading)
- Equipment: Funds are available in this grant round to apply for large capital equipment items. This is to help underpin the university infrastructure needed to sustain UK leadership and enhance technology capability, and not to fund hardware components which are integral to a new detector or running experiment. Please refer to the [guidance for applicants](#) when requesting equipment items (above £10k). Given the financial envelope, groups are asked to be realistic when making their bids and should aim to keep the scale of request <£250k (cost to STFC) in capital equipment. Research organisations (ROs) will be expected to contribute towards the total cost of the equipment of up to 50%, but in certain circumstances requests may be funded by STFC in full (i.e., at 100%). It is possible for a Group to apply for one large exceptional item, amongst their request, which you are reminded will be tensioned against other similar requests. You are required to verify the cost estimates by providing quotes or an indication from a recognised source such as an online catalogue. This information should be added to the end of your case for support. Where requesting a number of items (maximum half a page per item), groups are asked to provide a prioritised list. Please explain whether the item is intended for sole or joint use.

- **Impact Funding:** Applicants may request funds for public outreach activities on consolidated grants, subject to a well justified case. A description of the proposed activities and a justification of the resources requested should be included as a separate section within the Summary of the Group's Activities and Strategy of the proposal document. This section should be a maximum of one page. Please see the [STFC Website](#) for guidance concerning impact.
- **Small research facilities (SRF):** for guidance on SRF costs that are to be included in the ODI, please see the ODA section below.

#### 3.16.11 Other Directly Allocated (ODA) costs

- You are required to provide details of all posts (excluding infrastructure technicians). Please list the names, cost and effort requested for all pool staff and non-infrastructure technicians (other than those listed on TFS).
- SRF costs should be detailed by giving the number of staff days requested for each individual project within each financial period, along with the unit cost. If support for SRF usage has already been obtained (or requested) for a project through another source (e.g., a PPRP proposal), this should be stated in the text and the relationship between the two requests clarified.

#### 3.16.12 Additional Information

This section of the proposal should follow the bibliography and does not count against the page limit:

- An explanation of any expenditure which has resulted in a variation of 20% or more against the funds awarded against each heading in the original announcement and a statement how the posts were used if this was different from what was awarded.
- A summary of non-PPGP and non-STFC support: The panel seeks information on other support outside the consolidated grant over the review period. Examples include PPRP project funding, IPS, Fellowships etc. The panel is only interested in support which has been obtained for equipment, consumables, travel, and staff posts directly involved in the programme; it is not necessary to detail any other items.
- **Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers:** The applicant is required to report on how the concordat is being implemented within the context of the group.

### 3.17 Publications

3.17.1 In 2021 the high-level assessment criteria changed and the term productivity was removed. This is because it is the track record that we need to measure rather than

simple productivity. There is therefore no longer a requirement for a publication table to be provided. Instead, we invite each academic to evidence their leadership, planning, and project management within their personal case.

3.17.2 Publications – A list of the theme areas publications from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023 should be provided. This list should include any PhD theses completed, naming the primary supervisor in the science area. Members of experimental collaborations should only include the collaboration papers they made an explicit contribution to beyond the norm (for example if they have written the paper or contributed a new method at the centre of the work) - a count of the total number of collaboration papers can be noted in the academic case if desired.

3.17.3 Where disruptions have occurred due to Covid 19 or other events, the applicants can highlight this within the personal case, if they wish, but there is not requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption.

### 3.18 **Form X**

3.18.1 Groups should provide the details of staff posts by completing the Form X using the Excel workbook provided and send it to the following email address: [pp@stfc.ac.uk](mailto:pp@stfc.ac.uk) by 4 pm on **21 February 2024**. Separate Guidance is provided for completing Form X.

### 3.19 **Questions to be answered in The Funding Service (not the Case for Support)**

Data Management and Sharing:

How will you manage and share data collected or acquired through the proposed research?

What the assessors are looking for in your plan:

Provide a data management plan that clearly details how you will comply with UKRI's published [data sharing policy](#), which includes detailed guidance notes.

#### 3.19.1 Research Ethics:

What are the ethical or Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) implications and issues relating to the proposed work? If you do not think that the proposed work raises any ethical or RRI issues, explain why?

What the assessors are looking for in your response:

Demonstrate that you have identified and evaluated the relevant ethical or RRI considerations and how you will manage these considerations.

#### 3.19.2 Trusted Research and Innovation:

Trusted Research is a cross government, cross research and innovation sector term for protecting the UK's intellectual property, sensitive research, people and infrastructure from potential theft and exploitation, including as a result of hostile activity by state and other actors.

UKRI has launched a Trusted Research and Innovation (TR&I) work programme aimed at protecting all those working in our thriving and collaborative international research and innovation sector.

Project Leads are asked to answer the following questions associated the experiments that the group participates in:

- a. Does the research in this application relate to any of the 17 sensitive areas of the economy identified in the NS&I Act?
- b. Does the research in this application include international collaboration?
- c. Is this application part of an experiment at an international facility

More details are provided in TFS. Assuming that the answers to these questions are positive, further guidance will be circulated to Project Leads.

## 4 Peer Review Process

### 4.1 Introducers

4.1.1 Two or three members of the PPGP will be allocated as “introducers” for each consolidated grant proposal. As in previous rounds, introducers will act to clarify any issues which are unclear in the grant proposal documentation.

### 4.2 Meetings with University Groups and Experiment Project Leads

4.2.1 Clarification meetings will be arranged with each applicant group to clarify any issues arising from the proposals. These will be held via Zoom meetings, during the period 1 April – 10 May 2024. The meeting will involve STFC, Introducers, the Project Lead and key applicants (with no more than four university members of staff expected to be present). The purpose of these meetings is clarification to help the introducers to fully understand the grant proposal and is not an opportunity to re-make the science case. A list of questions requiring clarification will be sent in advance of the meeting, and the group will be required to provide a brief written response following the meeting.

4.2.2 On occasion, staff changes take place following the proposal submission. The clarification meeting is the ideal opportunity for the additional information to be provided. If changes do occur, please contact the Office as soon as possible. The latest date that STFC will be able to accept revised information will be **1 June 2024**. You are reminded that academics must be named in-order-to be included on your proposal. The person must either be employed by the University or be scheduled to move to the University before the proposed start date of the grant. In this case the affiliation shown should be for the organisation that would hold the grant. Any new academics should provide a 0.5 page case for (only) their future activities. Further cases, or other additions to the case for support will not be considered. Any known decreases to academic effort should also be reported by 1 June 2024. The panel will take a dim view of any such changes that they discover only on asking the PL.

4.2.3 Clarification meetings will also be arranged with the Experiment Project Leads during 1 April - 10 May 2024 period.

### 4.3 Reviewers

- 4.3.1 The reports on projects will be sent to international reviewers for assessment. In view of the number of projects per group, rather than nominate a single reviewer on the proposal form, applicants are invited to send reviewer nominations for each project to [pp@stfc.ac.uk](mailto:pp@stfc.ac.uk). The PPGP will take the nominations into consideration when assigning reviewers, but it is not guaranteed that the nominated reviewers will be used.
- 4.4 **Applicant response to reviewer comments**
- 4.4.1 Following the reviewers process, applicants will be given the opportunity to see and comment on the reports.
- 4.5 **Peer review meeting**
- 4.5.1 A peer review meeting will take place to consider the consolidated grant proposals and make recommendations on the programme to Science Board (PPAN) and the STFC Executive.
- 4.6 **Assessment criteria**
- 4.6.1 The PPGP will assess all proposals in accordance with the assessment procedures set out on the [STFC Website](#).
- 4.7 **Cost revision following review**
- 4.7.1 If, as a result of the PPGP review of the grants, a reduction is recommended in resources on a proposal, in some instances it may be necessary for STFC to contact the University to re-calculate the Estates and Indirect costs, but this will only be applicable where Long Term Attachment is included, and in some instances to clarify support staff details. Please note this will not be the norm.

## 5 New Applicant Funding

### 5.1 New Applicants Scheme

- 5.1.1 Newly appointed academic members of staff (lecturer or equivalent fellows) who have joined a department between grant reviews may exceptionally apply separately for support. This will potentially allow them to begin to establish a research programme on appointment. If grant funding is agreed, funding will be awarded as a separate grant to the department's existing consortium or consolidated grant.
- 5.1.2 It should be noted that the number of awards is likely to be limited and funding will be extremely competitive. Where awards are made it is likely to be at the level of Travel, Consumables, Computing and Secretarial Support (3.16.8)
- 5.2 **Eligibility**
- 5.2.1 Applicants may not be funded on more than one grant. For example, if an individual transfers from another university, they cannot hold resource on both a new applicant grant, and a consolidated grant at their previous institution.

5.2.2 Applicants must be employed on a full or part-time basis as academic members of staff at the grant-holding University by the start date of the new applicant grant. Note that the usual eligibility rules apply – please see the [Guidance for applicants](#). Applicants will need to demonstrate that there are insufficient funds within the flexibility of the existing grant to support their research.

### 5.3 **Terms of the scheme**

5.3.1 Applicants must be the sole Project Lead.

5.3.2 Applicants can only apply once at any institution for a new applicant award.

5.3.3 Applicants can apply for funding for a minimum of a year and a maximum of four years up to the start of the department's consortium/consolidated grant. Applicants can apply for limited resources to allow the applicant to begin to establish a research programme.

5.3.4 The relevant grant panel will assess applications against the same criteria as the consolidated grant proposals (and funding will come from the appropriate grants line); however, research potential in addition to track record will be considered.

5.3.5 Grants are not renewable and cannot be extended.

### 5.4 **Proposals**

5.4.1 Applicants should submit a one-page pre-proposal to STFC via e-mail for consideration by the executive in consultation with the relevant grant panel.

5.4.2 Requests will be considered under urgency procedures.

5.4.3 The pre-proposal should briefly set out the circumstances, explaining why a new applicant proposal is appropriate, and how the application matches the eligibility criteria set out above.

5.4.4 The pre-proposal should also briefly sketch the nature and strength of the scientific case that would be described in full if permission for a full proposal is given.

5.4.5 The pre-proposal should provide an indication of the requested resources.

5.4.6 The pre-proposal should be accompanied by a brief letter from the Project Lead of the consolidated grant held by the department concerned, confirming the employment status and timing, and explaining carefully why the new member of staff's research cannot be supported using the spending flexibility allowed within the existing grant.

5.4.7 If the case for funding is considered to be potentially a high priority, applicants will be advised of next steps.

## 6 Other Useful Information

### 6.1 No cost extensions and start dates

6.1.1 During the CG period, there is the potential to request up to a one-year no-cost extension providing flexibility to start posts later in the grant period. Note that this must be done in co-ordination with your STFC programme manager, as recent internal changes at UKRI now mean that no-cost extension requests will likely impact the profile of the grant and thus the affordability of the change.

6.1.2 All consolidated grants must start on the announced start date - there is no flexibility for starting the grant, and when awarded, the latest start date will be the same as the earliest date.

### 6.2 Cross-disciplinary or cross-council proposals

6.2.1 For advice on cross-disciplinary or cross-Council proposals please see: [If your research spans different disciplines – UKRI](#)

### 6.3 Unconscious bias

6.3.1 Unconscious bias information can be found here: <https://www.ukri.org/publications/unconscious-bias-briefing/>

6.3.2 Peer Review framework information can be found here: [UKRI principles of peer review – UKRI](#)

6.3.3 Data Management Review Guidance can be found here: [Data management plan – UKRI](#)

### 6.4 Research Fish

6.4.1 Details related to Research Fish can be found on the [UKRI Website](#)



## PART B: PPGP guidelines for bids for experiment maintenance and operations (M&O), travel and technology department effort requests

### 7 Experiment submissions

#### 7.1 Scope

- 7.1.1 Applications will be accepted from experiments which are either already in or are about to enter the exploitation phase. This funding is used primarily to make M&O/Common Fund payments to an international experiment on behalf of the UK collaboration and for travel to the experiment to perform M&O tasks. Support may also be requested from the STFC Technology Department (TD), though if awarded, these funds will be held centrally by STFC.
- 7.1.2 Proposals are expected from STFC's large investments such as: ATLAS, CMS, LHCb, LZ, Mu3e and T2K (note that this list is not exhaustive).
- 7.1.3 An application may be made to support participation in a new experiment or for an experiment for which M&O funding has not been awarded previously.
- 7.1.4 Submissions for experiments where STFC has not funded the construction phase will be considered by the panel on their merits and may be funded if justified by the quality of science proposed. For these activities, it is expected that only a few, excellent proposals will be funded, and that funding will not create any further, ongoing financial or legal commitments beyond the period of the award.
- 7.1.5 The application must be made to the PPGP by the UK spokesperson for the experiment on behalf of the UK experimental collaboration, and **the collaboration must state whether the awarded funds are to be administered by the collaborating universities, or by STFC through RAL PPD**. If funding is to be held by STFC then please identify an STFC budget holder to administer the funding on behalf of the collaboration.
- 7.1.6 The closing date for all written applications is: 4 pm on Wednesday **07 February 2024**.
- 7.1.7 Provisional allocations for travel and M&O for FY 2025/26 were made by the PPGP in 2021. The new application covers the period April 2025 to March 2030 and is for:
- Confirmation or adjustment of the provisional allocation for FY 2025/26. Note that some experiments that were awarded funding in the 2021 consolidated grant will have received their allocation for 2024/25 and so STFC may make adjustments for that in a future award
  - Firm allocation of funds for the financial years 2026/27, 2027/28, and 2028/29
  - Provisional allocation of funds for FY 2029/30

7.1.8 For costing, experiments should assume exchange rates of 1.06 CHF, 170 JPY, 1.20 USD, and 1.10 EUR.

## 7.2 **Assessment**

7.2.1 The PPGP will review and assess each of the applications, considering STFC's strategic priorities and input from STFC, and will make a recommendation on the level of funding. The panel will consider the posts associated with each experiment in the CG review.

7.2.2 A 'caretaker' will be allocated from the membership of the PPGP to each experiment. Their duty will be to clarify any issues or questions arising from the experimental submission.

7.2.3 A clarification meeting on Zoom will be arranged for the Panel Caretakers to speak to the experiment UK spokesperson (or a nominee) in order to address any queries arising from the Experiment Submission.

## 7.3 **Guidelines for written submissions**

7.3.1 Each experiment should submit a written case for support. Responsive posts should be anonymised, using the same convention as the group submissions. The body of the report should be divided into two Sections, A and B. Section A should contain a report on work since 01 January 2021. Section B should set out the future programme of the experiment. The report should highlight the UK contributions to the experiment over the period of this consolidated grant round and focus on the cost justification for the requested funds.

7.3.2 The experiment submissions should focus on providing full justification for each of the requests for travel, M&O and TD technical support, rather than an extended description of the science.

7.3.3 The university M&O tasks and FTE required should be numbered, for reference in the group proposals.

7.3.4 The maximum total length of the report (in 12-point type, excluding appendices), is as follows:

- Applications should be no longer than 10 pages where 10 or more UK university groups (including STFC National Laboratories e.g., RAL PPD) are involved; For groups with fewer than 10 university groups (including STFC National Laboratories e.g., RAL PPD) applications should be no longer than five pages.

7.3.5 Section A of the report should contain:

- A brief overview of the status of the experiment, a summary of the data taken, and, where appropriate, the accelerator or facility used.

- Brief highlights of the physics results with major UK involvement, and a description of the UK contributions, including a list of UK personnel in experiment-wide coordinating roles since 1 January 2021.
- The status of the UK-funded items (hardware and software) and how these items are performing.
- A summary of the support awarded to the experiment submission in the previous Consolidated Grant round, and how this was spent.

#### 7.3.6 Section B of the report should contain:

- A brief overview of the future programme of the experiment, highlighting physics goals and future UK exploitation activities.
- The requirement for effort in the universities/STFC laboratories to fulfil detector operation and maintenance obligations, with reference to the numbered list in Appendix (b) (7.3.7). RAL PPD baseline staff effort, which is not funded through the grants round, should be identified separately. The level of all such effort requested should be justified, as it will be used as one input in consideration of the level of experiment support, both for M&O and for bids for posts from the universities/STFC.
- A detailed justification of the bid for UK experiment M&O and travel, and STFC Technology Department effort. This bid should cover the period from April 2025 to March 2030. Bids for Category A costs for the LHC experiments are not required; it is expected that bids for category B costs will be justified.
- Highlight any Statement of Interests (SOI) submissions to either Science Board (PPAN/Facilities) in the next four years for new hardware, upgrades, or computing resources. This is useful information for STFC planning
- The experiments are requested to provide 90% and 80% descoping scenarios for the funding requested here. There will be an opportunity for the experiment Project Lead to interact with the panel introducers for clarification.

#### 7.3.7 In addition to the written report, the following appendices (A, B, and C) are required. These do not count against the page limit.

- (A) a numbered list of UK commitments to maintenance and operation (M&O) of the detector, specifying FTE required, over the period April 2025 to March 2030
- (B) a short justification of the requested long-term-attachments, including a report on the number awarded versus that used in the previous CG round. Note that the PPGP will allocate a total sum for travel, and the declaration of named individuals will not affect the flexibility of the spokesperson to re-assign funds after the final award has been made.

- (C) the fully completed Excel workbook detailing the funds requested from April 2025 to March 2030 and, for non-ring-fenced periods of projects, the outturn over the past two years. The individual workbooks will be supplied by STFC to each UK experimental spokesperson.

7.3.8 The written report and completed Excel workbook should be sent to the STFC Particle Physics group email: [pp@stfc.ac.uk](mailto:pp@stfc.ac.uk) as email attachments.

## Part C: PPGP guidelines for bids to support the coordination of large-scale research and development (R&D) activities

### 8 R&D Submissions

#### 8.1 Scope

- 8.1.1 This is a new opportunity to request funding to support the coordination of large-scale research and development activities. The purpose of this funding is to encourage strategic planning and to foster a sense of community among those involved in the R&D activity, beyond what can be reasonably expected through the CG funding provided to individual institutes.
- 8.1.2 While the CG itself cannot fund R&D proposals, there are a number of schemes across STFC and UKRI that present opportunities for the particle physics and particle astrophysics communities to apply for funding. So, this opportunity also aims to support those communities in applying to those schemes.
- 8.1.3 Funding may be requested to support a number of activities, and might include:
- travel to support networking (that is in addition to what can reasonably be expected to be covered through the usual CG travel allocation)
  - travel to support international leadership positions associated with the R&D activity
  - support for engagement with international collaborators workshops
  - training (that is not already covered through STFC training schemes)
  - support for engagement with industrial partners
- 8.1.4 The leads of this R&D activity might also act as leaders in national bids for funding and may provide expert guidance on future policy reviews relevant to their area.
- 8.1.5 Consideration should also be given to how the R&D activity can support the wider UKRI agenda e.g., environmental sustainability and equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 8.1.6 An R&D application should not request funding for specific posts. Institutes should apply for staff effort through their CG proposal as usual. Note that CG posts are expected to spend a significant proportion of their time supporting the exploitation of the CG programme. Posts that are primarily supporting this R&D activity are likely to be considered project posts and therefore outside the remit of the PPGP.
- 8.1.7 An R&D application should not request funding for capital. Institutes should apply for capital through their CG submission as usual.

#### 8.2 Assessment

- 8.2.1 R&D proposals will be considered by the panel on their merits and tensioned with the rest of the CG programme. It is expected that only a few, excellent proposals will be funded, and that funding will not create any further, ongoing financial or legal commitments beyond the period of the award.

### 8.3 **Guidelines for written submissions**

8.3.1 The application must be made to the PPGP by the UK lead on behalf of the UK collaboration.

8.3.2 **The closing date for all written applications is: 4 pm on Wednesday 21 February 2024.**

8.3.3 The maximum total length of the application (in 12-point type, excluding appendices) is not more than 3 pages.

8.3.4 The application should contain:

- A brief overview of the proposed programme of R&D, highlighting physics goals and international context
- A detailed justification of the funding requested over the period from October 2025 to September 2029

8.3.5 The collaboration must state whether the awarded funds are to be administered by the collaborating universities, or by STFC through RAL PPD. If funding is to be held by STFC then please identify an STFC budget holder to administer the funding on behalf of the collaboration.

8.3.6 The application should be sent to the STFC Particle Physics group email as email attachments: [pp@stfc.ac.uk](mailto:pp@stfc.ac.uk)