

Funding opportunity

EPSRC equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) sharing hub

Opportunity status:	Closed
Funders:	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
Funding type:	Grant
Total fund:	£2,500,000
Maximum award:	£2,500,000
Publication date:	4 September 2023
Opening date:	4 September 2023 9:00am UK time
Closing date:	5 December 2023 4:00pm UK time

EPSRC plans to fund one network plus grant – the EPSRC EDI sharing hub. The hub will provide leadership and coordination to support sharing of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) good practices and 'what works' across the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research community.

To lead the sharing hub, you must be based at a UK research organisation eligible for EPSRC funding.

The full economic cost (FEC) of your project can be up to £2,500,000. We will fund 80% FEC.

Funding is available for up to four years.

Before applying for funding, check the **Eligibility of your organisation**.

EPSRC standard eligibility rules apply. For full details, visit **EPSRC's eligibility page**.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) has introduced new role types for funding opportunities being run on the new UKRI Funding Service.

For full details, visit **Eligibility as an individual**.

In addition to the EPSRC standard eligibility rules, we will accept wider eligibility for the roles of project leads and project co-lead applicants for this funding opportunity to support different career paths within the research and innovation community.

To be a project lead or project co-lead the following applies:

- you must have the skills, knowledge and experience required for the sharing hub. This means that you do not need to be an academic employee or have a specific qualification such as a PhD. You may have taken alternative career paths which provides the required knowledge and skills to lead or co-lead the sharing hub.
- we welcome people in professional enabling staff roles, grant managers and specialists as project leads and project co-leads where appropriate to provide the skills and knowledge needed to deliver the sharing hub

To make this funding opportunity more inclusive, we are piloting a flexible leadership model that allows for one or more project leads to lead the grant. This enables people to bring different knowledge, skills and experience to the leadership team.

Allowing more than one project lead also enables the leadership of the funding opportunity to be performed as a job share.

You do not need to be in an existing job share arrangement to apply on this basis.

For teams where there is more than one project lead, the team should choose one of the project lead's organisations to be responsible for submitting the grant application and administering the grant should the application be successful.

There will be additional terms and conditions stipulated for this funding opportunity at the full application stage.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants. We encourage applications from a diverse range of researchers.

We support people to work in a way that suits their personal circumstances. This includes:

- supporting people returning from career breaks
- support for people with caring responsibilities
- flexible working
- alternative working patterns

Find out more about equality, diversity and inclusion at UKRI.

What we're looking for

Scope

The sharing hub will be a focal point of activity, providing leadership, connection, visibility, knowledge exchange and guidance to the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences community.

We plan to fund one network plus grant – the EPSRC EDI sharing hub. The hub will provide leadership and coordination to support sharing of EDI good practices and what works across the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research community.

The aims of the EPSRC EDI sharing hub are to:

- provide inspirational EDI leadership and coordination of community led EDI activities across the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research community
- model exemplary EDI practice in the formation of the team and operation of the sharing hub, including adapting and providing reasonable adjustments to enable wider participation and inclusive practices
- reach widely and bring together and share EDI knowledge from across the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences community, also drawing on work in non-Engineering and Physical Sciences research disciplines and from professional and enabling roles
- engage with underrepresented and marginalised groups to fully understand the challenges encountered and to support co designed action
- engage with businesses and other research and innovation partners such as the learned societies and special interest groups
- enable sharing and knowledge exchange of EDI expertise, good practices and 'what works'
- disseminate and consider how EDI interventions might be scaled up,
 embedded and broadened across the community to facilitate and empower

action resulting in better inclusive practices and positive culture change. Including making the information readily available to the wider community

- support the wider development, implementation and evaluation of successful EDI initiatives and practice
- provide flexible funding to empower the community to initiate activities in gaps that are identified, that contribute to our ambitions to embed EDI good practice across our research and innovation community
- understand and measure the impact, added value and reach of the hub while it is active
- maximise the sustainability of hub activities.

We aim to bring together a diverse range of people with different expertise, experiences, perspectives, approaches and ways of thinking, who are working to establish a better inclusive research culture for everyone. We envisage this may include grant holders and participants from:

- discipline specific network pluses
- programme grants, research centres and hubs that are active in promoting and embedding EDI good practices
- EPSRC Inclusion Matters portfolio
- EPSRC EDI fellowship holders
- EDI champions and special interest groups across engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research areas

The funding opportunity includes flexible funding to enable agile responses to new approaches, scale up and embedding activities. This could also include secondments into organisations to help with knowledge transfer.

The sharing hub will provide us with an additional route for continuous learning on 'what works' across disciplines in our portfolio.

Throughout the lifetime of the hub, we expect to engage and work together with the leadership team to continue to learn and adapt our processes and increase diversity and inclusion in the engineering, mathematical and physical sciences research and innovation community.

Within the application, we would expect the inclusion of examples, supported by evidence on their likely effectiveness, for the types of activities the sharing hub would undertake, we expect these will evolve during the lifetime of the sharing hub and should be co-created and collaborative in nature.

This grant is expected to develop the network, with a view to providing a legacy after the funding period has ended, maximising its impact and demonstrating the added value to the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences community.

Duration

The duration of this award is four years.

Funding available

The FEC of your project can be up to £2,500,000. We will fund 80% FEC.

What we will fund

Staff roles can be costed under the relevant directly allocated or directly incurred headings. Full guidance can be found in **roles in funding applications**.

Directly allocated

Funding requested under the directly allocated cost heading may include project leads and project co-leads salaries. The project leads and project co-leads can request funds to cover their salary costs for the time spent on setting up and leading the sharing hub.

Sharing hub members

We envisage the sharing hub members to be people that will engage and work with the sharing hub and its activities but will not be part of the leadership team.

The salary costs of sharing hub network members should not be included in the application, and we would not expect these individuals to be project co-leads.

Directly incurred costs

Funding requested under the directly incurred cost heading may include the following elements:

- administrative support: a sufficient level of administrative / management support should be requested to ensure the coordination, management and smooth running of the sharing hub. Reasonable costs for monitoring, evaluating and dissemination of the network's output can also be included
- travel and subsistence: enabling members of the sharing hub to meet to exchange ideas and expertise. This might include venue hire for events held by the sharing hub as well as for meetings with key stakeholders. It could also include visits by or to experts overseas. This may include travel and subsistence costs to support secondments. Where possible, collaborators should meet their own travel costs
- organisation of activities: funding can be requested for costs involved in running activities, such as:
 - networking events
 - expert working groups
 - debates
 - online discussion forums
 - lectures

- seminars
- roundtables
- problem-solving workshops.

You are encouraged to think creatively about the range of activities that could support the delivery of the sharing hub's aims.

Other costs

Other directly incurred costs include justified:

- project specific consumables
- consultancy fees
- equipment costing less than £10,000
- recruitment
- advertising costs.

Funding can also be requested for:

- activities to facilitate impact and advance policy, such as reports and briefings
- activities to support career development of staff employed on the hub
- activities to connect researchers, business and other stakeholders within the research base
- equipment and resources to support networking, events and communication including the cost of any external communication, including website development
- social survey costs that are being sub-contracted should be included under this section

For stage two, the full application stage, you will be allowed to add project partners.

Project partners can only receive funding directly from the grant when:

- a project partner is providing services or equipment that will go through a formal procurement process audited by the host research organisation
- the project partner can receive small amounts of funding from the grant, such as for travel and subsistence to attend project meetings.

These will need to be requested by the project leads and will need to be fully justified at the full application stage.

Flexible fund allocation

The sum awarded under the heading of 'flexible funds' can include both directly incurred and directly allocated expenditure. This funding is to enable agile responses to new approaches, knowledge exchange, scale up and embedding

activities across the community. This could also include secondments into organisations to help with knowledge transfer.

This devolved funding is to be awarded to sharing hub members for small projects, typically less than £100,000.

It is expected that these projects will be scoped in collaboration with people in the community and agreed with the funders.

This flexible commissioning fund should be included in the application costings, you should specify the total size of the fund according to the balance of activity that the leadership team propose to undertake directly versus devolve to network members via the fund

These funds must be reported on the final expenditure statement (FES) as awarded on the offer letter and a breakdown of the expenditure must be submitted along with the FES.

What we will not fund

Equipment over £10,000 in value (incl. VAT) is not available through this funding opportunity. Smaller items of equipment, individually under £10,000, should be in the Directly incurred – Other costs heading. We will not be funding laboratory or research equipment within this funding opportunity. We will only support equipment to facilitate communication, networking and events that has been fully justified and proportionate to the activities to be undertaken.

Supporting skills and talent

We encourage you to follow the principles of the <u>Concordat to Support the</u> <u>Career Development of Researchers</u> and the <u>Technician Commitment</u>.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) expects research organisations to adhere to the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff to any elements of the job that may place them at a substantial disadvantage to non-disabled people.

International collaboration

If your application includes international applicants, project partners or collaborators, visit <u>UKRI's trusted research and innovation</u> for more information on effective international collaboration.

Find out about **getting funding for international collaboration**.

How to apply

We are running this funding opportunity on the new UKRI Funding Service. You cannot apply on the Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system.

For teams where there is more than one project lead, the team should choose one of the project lead's organisations to be responsible for submitting the grant application and administering the grant should the application be successful. The project lead is responsible for completing the application process on the Funding Service, but we expect all team members and project partners to contribute to the application.

Only the lead administrative research organisation can submit an application to UKRI.

To apply:

Select 'Start application' near the beginning of this Funding finder page.

- 1. Confirm you are the project lead.
- 2. Sign in or create a Funding Service account. To create an account, select your organisation, verify your email address, and set a password. If your organisation is not listed, email support@funding-service.ukri.org
- 3. Answer questions directly in the text boxes. You can save your answers and come back to complete them or work offline and return to copy and paste your answers. If we need you to upload a document, follow the upload instructions in the Funding Service. All questions and assessment criteria are listed in the How to apply section on this Funding finder page.
- 4. Send the completed application to your research office for checking. They will return it to you if it needs editing.
- 5. Your research office will submit the completed and checked application to UKRI.

Watch our research office webinars about the new Funding Service

Personal data

Processing personal data

EPSRC, as part of UKRI, will need to collect some personal information to manage your funding service account and the registration of your funding applications.

We will handle personal data in line with UK data protection legislation and manage it securely. For more information, including how to exercise your rights, read our <u>privacy notice</u>.

Publication of outcomes

Following the panel assessment of outline applications submitted to the funding opportunity, the named project leads, organisations, and summary information

of the successful outline applications that are invited to proceed to the next stage and will be eligible to submit a full application will be published. Other application content and assessment material will remain confidential.

For unsuccessful outline applications, the only information that will be shared is the grant reference number as part of our panel outcome information.

Changes allowed

The details of successful applicants at stage one will be published to facilitate engagement with potential additional partners. Your teams might choose to combine or add partners or find new partners, this could be based on panel feedback. It will be at your discretion whether to include additional partners to your application.

If your full application is successful, we will publish some personal information on the **UKRI Gateway to Research**.

Summary

Word count: maximum 550

In plain English, provide a summary we can use to identify the most suitable experts to assess your application. If your outline application is successful, then the summary you provide will be published on our website to facilitate engagement with additional partners.

We may make this summary publicly available on external-facing websites, so make it suitable for a variety of readers, for example:

- opinion-formers
- policymakers
- the public
- the wider research community

Guidance for writing a summary

Clearly describe your proposed work in terms of:

- context
- aims and objectives

Core team

List the key members of your team and assign them roles from the following:

- project lead/s (PL)
- project co-lead (UK) (PcL)
- researcher co-lead (RcL)

- specialist
- grant manager
- professional enabling staff
- research and innovation associate
- technician
- visiting researcher

With this funding opportunity we are piloting a flexible leadership model. Please see the 'Who can apply' section for more information. You may list up to four individuals as project leads.

Find out more about **UKRI's new grant roles**.

Fit to opportunity

Word count: 1,500

How does your proposal fit the aims of this funding opportunity?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

- describe your vision for this sharing hub and what you consider to be the added value to the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research community
- demonstrate how you consider your application fits with the aims of the funding opportunity and how it aligns to the EPSRC EDI action plan
- demonstrate your understanding of the key stakeholders, the EDI challenges encountered and the opportunities in the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research and innovation system placing the sharing hub within this context.
- demonstrate how the leadership team will ensure an inclusive approach to engaging with a diversity of stakeholders across the community, particularly underrepresented and /or marginalised groups
- describe how you will provide coordination of the community and bring together collective knowledge to share EDI good practices and 'what works' across the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research community

If successful, you will be asked to expand on the information you provide in this section at the full application stage.

Applicant and team capability to deliver

Word count: 2,500

Why are you the right individual or team to successfully deliver the proposed work?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Evidence of how you, and if relevant your team (including collaborators), have:

- the relevant skills and experience, appropriate to career stage, to design, lead and build geographically distributed networks, as well as coordinate community led EDI activities that support knowledge exchange on good practices across the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research and innovation community
- the proven ability to work respectfully and collaboratively across disciplines and diverse stakeholder groups, demonstrating wide and inclusive reach
- the appropriate leadership, management skills and exemplary EDI practice to deliver the work and to develop the career of others
- the ability to bring about positive culture change in the wider community

The word count for this section is 2,500 words, 1,500 words to be used for R4RI modules and, if necessary, a further 1,000 words for Additions.

Use the Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI) format to showcase the range of relevant skills you and, if relevant, your team (project and project coleads, researchers, technicians, specialists, partners and so on) have and how this will help deliver the proposed work. You can include individuals' specific achievements but only choose past contributions that best evidence their ability to deliver this work.

Complete this section using the R4RI module headings listed. Use each heading once and include a response for the whole team, see the <u>UKRI</u> <u>guidance on R4RI</u>. You should consider how to balance your answer, and emphasise where appropriate the key skills each team member brings:

- contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge
- the development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships
- contributions to the wider research and innovation community
- contributions to broader research or innovation users and audiences and towards wider societal benefit

Additions

Provide any further details relevant to your application. This section is optional and can be up to 1,000 words. You should not use it to describe additional skills, experiences, or outputs, but you can use it to describe any factors that provide context for the rest of your R4RI (for example, details of career breaks if you wish to disclose them).

Complete this as a narrative. Do not format it like a CV.

UKRI has introduced new role types for funding opportunities being run on the new Funding Service.

For full details, see **Eligibility as an individual**.

If successful, you will be asked to expand on the information you provide in this section at the full application stage.

Costs

Word count: 500

What the assessors are looking for in your response

- demonstrate briefly in the outline that the proposed sharing hub fits within the indicated funding bracket (£2.5 million, of which we will fund 80%). Please stipulate the amount requested from us and provide an indication of what funds you will devote to:
- flexible fund
- leadership and other management costs

If successful, you will be asked to expand on the information you provide in this section at the full application stage.

How we will assess your application

Assessment process

We will assess your application using the following process.

Stage one - outline stage

An expert panel will convene to score and rank applications according to the assessment criteria. The panel will consist of members with expertise in and an understanding of the equality, diversity and inclusion challenges encountered in the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research and innovation system.

The peer review panel will score applications according to the assessment criteria. We will decide, based on the advice of the peer review panel, which applications to invite to the full application stage.

The named project leads, organisations, and summary information of the successful outline applications that are invited to proceed to the next stage and submit a full application will be published. Other application content and assessment material will remain confidential.

For unsuccessful outline applications, the only information that will be shared is the grant reference number as part of our panel outcome information.

Application changes allowed

The details of successful applicants at stage one will be published to facilitate engagement with potential additional partners. Your teams might choose to combine or add partners or find new partners, this could be based on panel feedback. It will be at your discretion whether to include additional partners in your application.

Stage two - full application stage

If successful at stage one, you will be asked to notify us of any changes to project leads, co-leads and project partners in your application prior to submission of a full application, via email, to

inclusionmatters@epsrc.ukri.org

If successful at stage one, you will be asked to submit a full application and be invited to an interview with an expert interview panel. The interview panel will consist of members with expertise in and an understanding of the equality, diversity and inclusion challenges encountered in the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research and innovation system. The panel will score then rank the applications against the full assessment criteria, using the information contained in the applications. Up to four applicants will be permitted to attend the interview.

We will decide, based on the advice of the interview panel, which application to fund. Based on guidance from the interview panel, we reserve the right to fully or partially award the successful application to ensure that an appropriate balance of activities is supported.

We expect interviews to be held on week commencing 17 June 2024.

Feedback

We will give feedback with the outcome of your application at both the outline and full application stage. This will be based on specific feedback from the panel.

Principles of assessment

We support the San Francisco <u>declaration on research assessment (DORA)</u> and recognise the relationship between research assessment and research integrity.

Find out about the **UKRI Principles of Assessment and Decision Making**.

Stage one- outline stage

Assessment criteria

What we are looking for at the outline stage:

Fit to opportunity

Including:

- the vision for this sharing hub and the added value to the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research community
- how the application fits with the aims of the funding opportunity and how it aligns to the <u>EPSRC EDI action plan</u>
- a strong understanding of the key stakeholders, the EDI challenges encountered and the opportunities in the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research and innovation system placing the sharing hub within this context.
- how the leadership team will ensure an inclusive approach to engaging with a diversity of stakeholders across the community, particularly underrepresented and /or marginalised groups
- how you will provide coordination of the community and bring together collective knowledge to share EDI good practices and 'what works' across the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research community

Applicant and team capability to deliver

Including:

- the relevant skills and experience, appropriate to career stage, to design, lead and build geographically distributed networks, as well as coordinate community led EDI activities that support knowledge exchange on good practices across the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research and innovation community
- the proven ability to work respectfully and collaboratively across disciplines and diverse stakeholder groups, demonstrating wide and inclusive reach
- the appropriate leadership, management skills and exemplary EDI practice to deliver the work and to develop the career of others
- the ability to bring about positive culture change in the wider community

Have you briefly demonstrated:

- the proposed sharing hub fits within the indicated funding bracket (£2.5 million, of which we will fund 80%) and stipulated the amount requested from us
- an indication of what funds they will devote to:
 - flexible fund
 - leadership and other management costs

Stage two – full application stage

Vision and Approach

Resources and cost justification

EDI Plan – a detailed EDI Plan that will underpin how the hub will operate and demonstrate good practice in equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the lifetime of the funding award

Community Engagement Plan – for engaging with a wide range of people with different expertise and experiences from across the research and innovation community

Governance and advisory

Contact details

Get help with your application

For help on costings and writing your application, contact your research office. Allow enough time for your organisation's submission process.

There will be Q&A drop-in sessions available for this funding opportunity with the EPSRC EDI team. These will be offered as a 1-1 zoom meeting for individual teams. If you are interested in attending one of these sessions, please email the EPSRC EDI team, inclusionmatters@epsrc.ukri.org

Ask about this funding opportunity

EPSRC EDI team

Email: <u>inclusionmatters@epsrc.ukri.org</u>

Ciara McLoone

Email: ciara.mcloone@epsrc.ukri.org

Paula Bailey

Email: paula.bailey@epsrc.ukri.org

For technical assistance and questions referring to the funding service please email the UKRI support team

Email: support@funding-service.ukri.org

Phone: 01793 547490

Our phone lines are open:

Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5:00pm

Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

Sensitive information

If you or a core team member need to tell us something you wish to remain confidential, email the Funding Service helpdesk on support@funding-service.ukri.org

Include in the subject line: [the funding opportunity title; sensitive information; your Funding Service application number].

Typical examples of confidential information include:

- individual is unavailable until a certain date (for example due to parental leave)
- declaration of interest
- additional information about eligibility to apply that would not be appropriately shared in the Applicant and team capability section
- conflict of interest for UKRI to consider in reviewer or panel participant selection
- the application is an invited resubmission

For information about how UKRI handles personal data, read <u>UKRI's privacy</u> notice.

Additional info

Background

There is a significant amount of EDI activity taking place across the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences community. However, this work can become disconnected and siloed across the disciplines and organisations.

A key component of **EPSRC's 3 year EDI action plan** and this sharing hub funding opportunity is to address this through working in partnership with community EDI leaders to share ideas and approaches and learn from each other's experiences.

The sharing hub will complement the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the British Academy **EDI Caucus**, EDICa, by helping to provide high quality evidence on EDI that informs policy and practice in the research and innovation system.

EPSRC EDI activities

EPSRC aims to support a diverse and inclusive research environment. Our objective is to embed equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in all that we

do, ensuring that the activities we support and the research that we fund drives change in our community and supports a system that is inclusive for everyone.

We are working towards achieving an equitable, diverse, and inclusive environment where all individuals can thrive by adapting and monitoring our current processes, trialling new innovative approaches, and supporting and empowering our community to take action in their own environments.

The EPSRC EDI action plan is a three-year plan that builds on knowledge, research, data, and expertise from across the research and innovation sector. We have developed our action plan in the context of the first edition of the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) EDI Strategy and associated UKRI shared EDI actions.

We have reflected on the recommendations, EDI issues and challenges fed back to us in our **gender** and **race** disparity 'have your say' surveys, as well as community and stakeholder engagement activities. Our **EDI team blog** provides an update of the latest activities and initiatives we are putting in place to reduce inequities and create a more inclusive research culture and environment.

We have also built upon our own existing activity and portfolio investigations, deepened our understanding from the research findings of our Inclusion and provided an EDI expectations guide to help our community to identify and address the specific EDI barriers in their own environment. We consider the recent Collection of the outputs and outcomes of the EPSRC Inclusion Matters portfolio report will inform and support the sharing hub activity, providing a framework of Inclusion Matters portfolio resources for dissemination.

Research disruption due to COVID-19

We recognise that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major interruptions and disruptions across our communities. We are committed to ensuring that individual applicants and their wider team, including partners and networks, are not penalised for any disruption to their career, such as:

- breaks and delays
- disruptive working patterns and conditions
- the loss of ongoing work
- role changes that may have been caused by the pandemic

Reviewers and panel members will be advised to consider the unequal impacts that COVID-19 related disruption might have had on the capability to deliver and career development of those individuals included in the application. They 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, you can highlight this within your application if you wish, but there is no requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption.

Supporting documents

Equality impact assessment (PDF, 249KB)

Timeline

O June 2023

Pre-announcement

4 September 2023 9:00am

Outlines opening date

O 5 December 2023 4:00pm

Outlines closing date

Week commencing 15 January 2024

Sift panel

22 January 2024 9:00am

Invite to submit full applications

9 May 2024 4:00pm

Full applications closing date

Week commencing 17 June 2024

Interview panel

O 27 June 2024

Funding decision

Guidance on good research

Good research resource hub

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https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/epsrc-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-edisharing-hub