Agenda

1. Welcome and overview – Andrea Sharpe, NERC

2. UKRI DRI background – Richard Gunn, UKRI

3. Outcomes from the UKRI DRI scoping study –
   Tom Griffin, STFC

4. Specific requirements of the funding opportunity –
   Sarah Campbell, NERC

5. Q&A

6. Close – Andrea Sharpe, NERC

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Overview of the net zero digital research infrastructure coordinator and network funding opportunity

Andrea Sharpe
Head of Digital Infrastructure & Data, NERC

Net zero digital research infrastructure coordinator and network

The aim of this funding opportunity is to support a net zero digital research infrastructure (NZ DRI) coordinator to develop and lead an NZ DRI network, to build connectivity across different disciplines and ultimately accelerate the path towards NZ DRI in the UK (£3.5 million, July 2024 – March 2028).

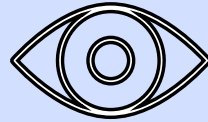The long-term goals of the coordinator are to:

- develop and lead an **established, coherent and connected NZ DRI network** across different disciplines and stakeholders

- contribute towards the **development and implementation of new innovative approaches** for net zero DRI

- enhance **utilisation and engagement with net zero approaches for DRI** across the UK

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UKRI DRI Background

Richard Gunn
Programme Director for Digital Research Infrastructure, UKRI

UKRI's vision for Digital Research Infrastructure

Our Vision

A coherent state-of-the-art national Digital Research Infrastructure (DRI) that will seamlessly connect researchers and innovators to the computers, data, tools, techniques and skills that underpin the most ambitious and creative research

Our Approach

DRI is a system that includes large-scale computing (LSC), data storage, facilities, software, networks, skilled DRI professionals, and other components.
Working with Councils, we will achieve our vision by evolving existing infrastructures to support new communities of practice and, subject to funding, by investing in new capabilities.

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Digital Research Infrastructure

- **Long-term planning**

- **Driven by community requirements**

- **Environmental sustainability**

- **Partnership with government and industry**

- **Five cross-cutting themes**

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UKRI's vision for a national Digital Research Infrastructure

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Turning data into knowledge
Catalysing breakthroughs and accelerating innovation and productivity

A foundation to enable UK researchers and innovators to harness the full power of modern digital platforms, tools, techniques and skills:

- A breadth and depth of capabilities and skills
- Seamless connection of communities to data, tools and techniques
- Accelerating productivity by enabling secure and easy access
- A step change in computational power
- Fostering collaboration across disciplines
- New capabilities and new communities of practice
- Environmentally sustainable

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION TEAMS

UKRI National Digital Research Infrastructure

Data infrastructure
- Storage and archives
- Data stewardship
- Interfaces
- Shared tools and pipelines

Large-scale computing
- HTC
- HPC
- Cloud computing
- Heterogenous computing
- Next generation software

Secure services and tools for sensitive data
- Trusted research environments
- Privacy-enhancing technology
- Securing trust

Skills and career pathways
- Career paths progression
- Training
- Community building
- Knowledge exchange
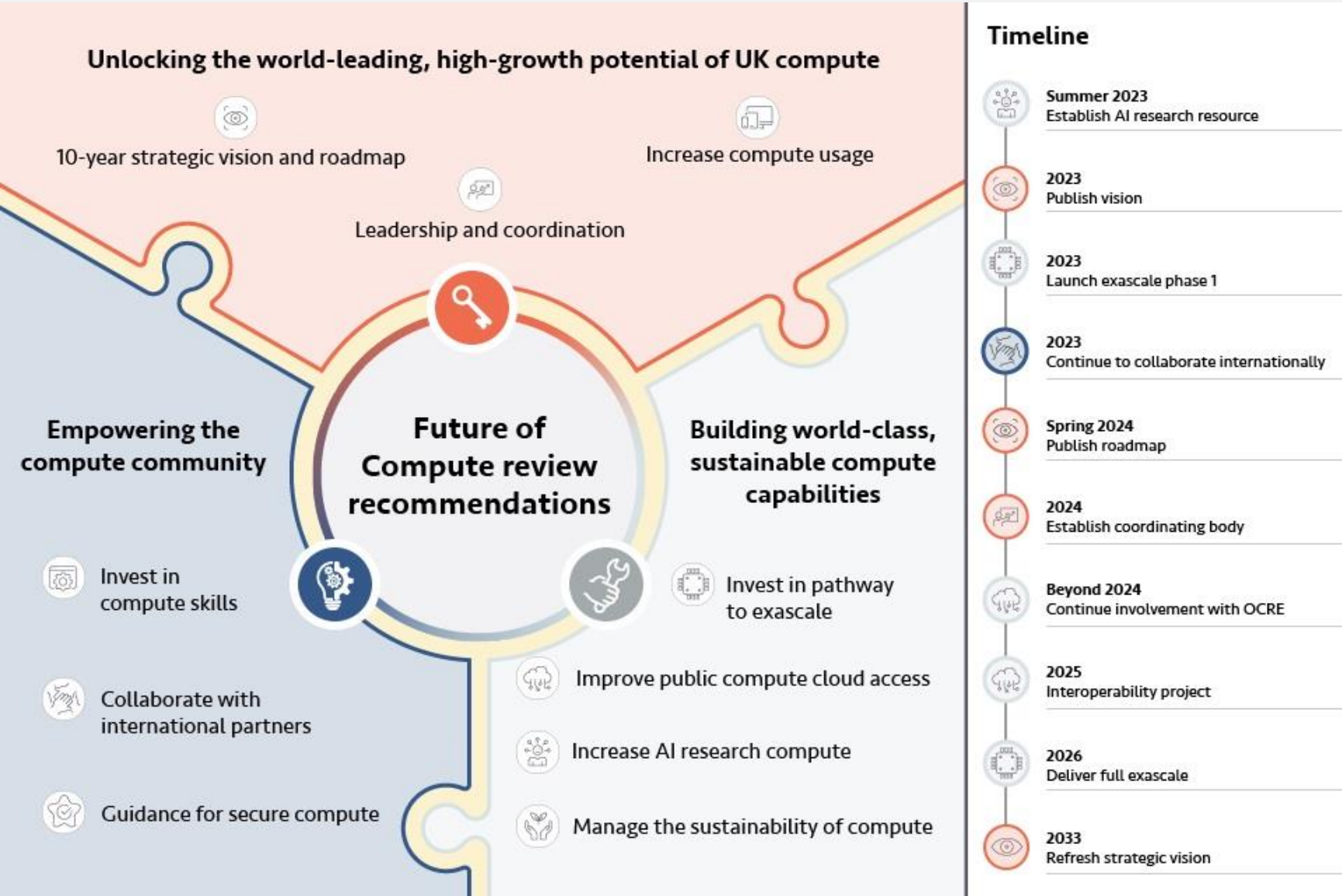- Skills access
- Public engagement

Foundational tools, techniques and practices
- Networks
- AAAI
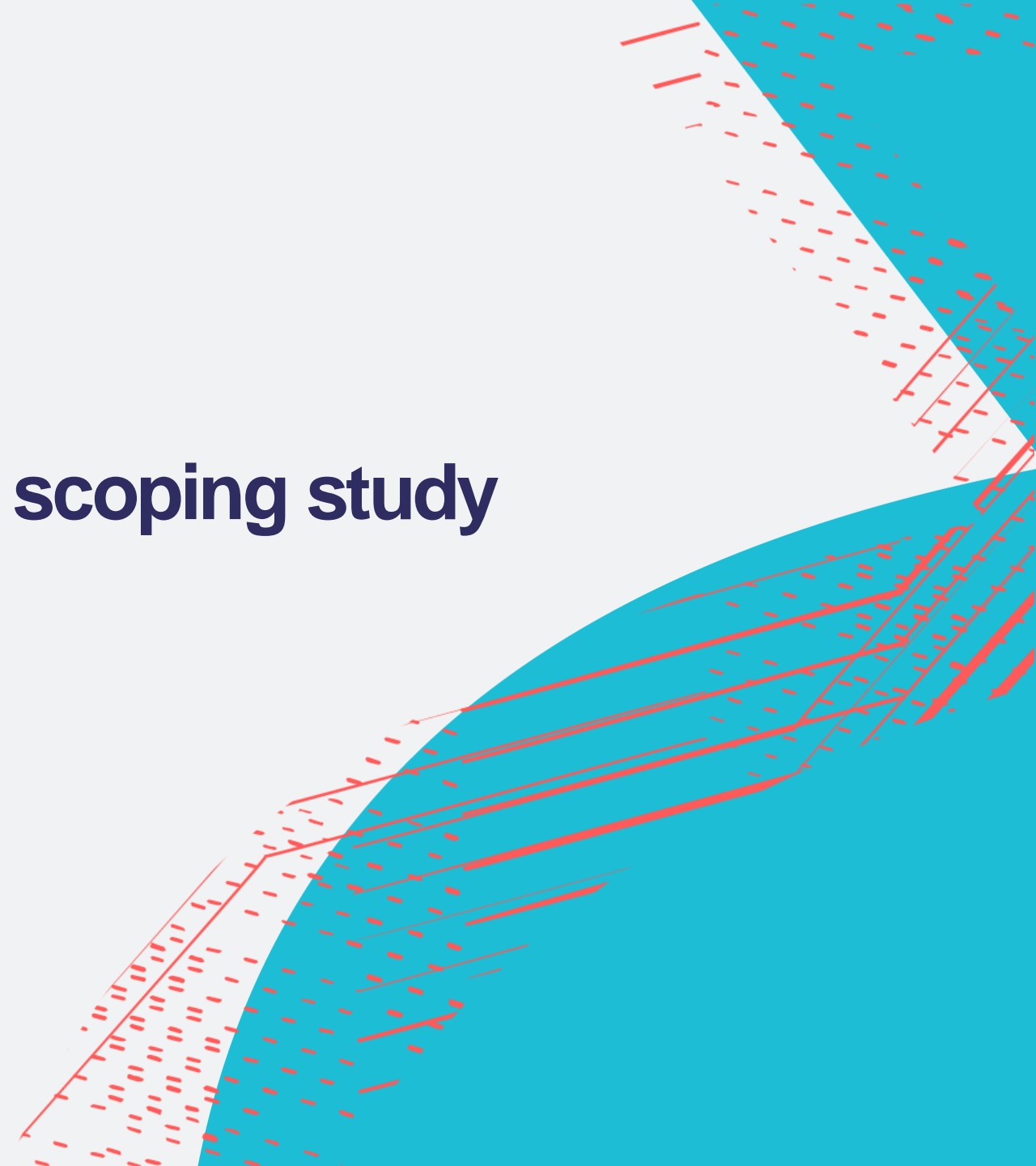- Administrative processes
- Security
- Software

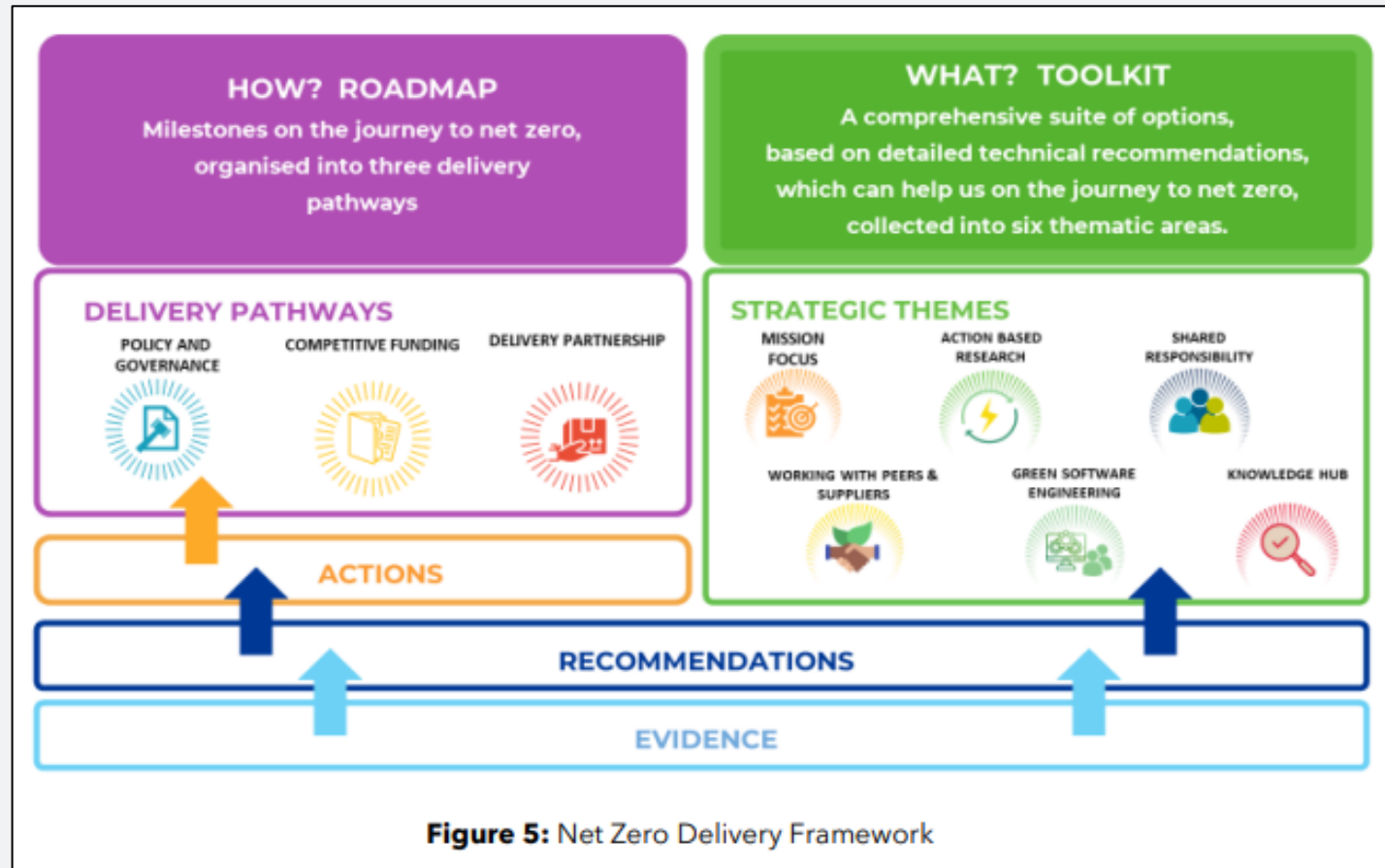The inter-dependent themes of the digital ecosystem

Future of Compute Review

Outcomes of the UKRI DRI scoping study

Tom Griffin
Director of Scientific Computing, STFC

Outcomes of the UKRI DRI scoping study

Figure 5: Net Zero Delivery Framework

UKRI DRI phase I funding:

- CEDA awarded £1.86 million over 18 months
- Developed a roadmap and recommendations for UKRI to achieve net zero DRI by 2040

Roadmap recommendations:

- A governance and policy framework
- A net zero DRI delivery partnership
- Competitive funding to develop and deploy innovative solutions

Outcomes of the UKRI DRI scoping study

- **The coordinator and network will drive forwards recommendations from the study, particularly within the 'Delivery Partnership' pathway, around sharing best practice and community cohesion. They will do this through:**
  - building and maintaining community engagement, knowledge exchange and connectivity across diverse disciplines and stakeholders
  - disseminating evidence-based best practice with DRI facilities
  - managing a flexible fund to allow the research community to develop and test new innovative approaches to sustainability and net zero

"The potential influence of UKRI science on national and global attitudes to sustainability is immense."

@UKRI_News   @cedanews   net-zero-dri.ceda.ac.uk

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Specific requirements of the funding opportunity

Sarah Campbell
Senior Programme Manager for Digital Infrastructure & Data, NERC

What we will fund

Two-stage process:

- stage one (open for applications now): funding is available for a coordinator to write an application for an NZ DRI network (six months). The full economic cost (FEC) can be up to £150,000

- stage two: funding will be available for the coordinator to develop and lead the NZ DRI network (up to £3.35 million, ending by 31 March 2028)

UKRI will fund 80% of the full economic cost.

For this initial stage of the process, funding can be used for:

- coordinator(s) time
- networking activities
- workshops
- administrative support
- associated estates and indirects

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Who can apply

Discipline:

Applicants from **any** discipline can apply.

Eligibility:

Your application should be led by an eligible project lead based at eligible UK based organisations in accordance with standard UKRI practice. Before applying for funding, check the UKRI eligibility guidance for applicants and eligibility of your organisation documents available on the funding opportunity page.

Co-coordinators:

Applications are welcome for co-coordinators (a maximum of two). In this case, the distinct roles and responsibilities of the two coordinators must be clearly set out.

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How to apply

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

The project lead is responsible for completing the application process on the UKRI Funding Service, but we expect any co-coordinators to be involved and shape the.

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

Closing date for applications: 16 April 2024 at 4.00pm UK time

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How will we assess your application?

Applications will be assessed by a shortlisting panel.

The expert panel will assess applications using the following criteria:

- ➢ vision

- ➢ approach

- ➢ applicant capability to deliver

- ➢ coordinator role

- ➢ ethics and responsible research innovation (RRI)

- ➢ resources and cost justification

Find details of assessment questions and criteria under the 'Application questions' heading in the funding opportunity.

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Timeline

First phase of the process (coordinator):

- Funding opportunity opens: 27 February 2024

- Funding opportunity closes: 16 April 2024

- Short-listing panel: Early May 2024

- Interviews: Weeks commencing 13 and 20 May 2024

- Awards start: by 1 July 2024

Second phase of the process will be a closed call for the successful coordinator to submit a proposal for a NZ DRI network by October 2024.

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Thank you

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Questions?

Contact details:

- Questions around this specific funding opportunity - digitalenvironment@nerc.ukri.org

- Questions around the system/ submitting your application- support@funding-service.ukri.org

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