

Access to High Performance Computing facilities: spring 2025 opportunity

UKRI community webinar (Q&A) | 29 April 2025 | 11:00am

Q1: Is the webinar recorded?

A: Unfortunately, the webinar is not being recorded. We will be publishing the slides and response to live questions under the 'additional info' heading of the opportunity page on the UKRI Funding Finder.

Q2: Is there a queue per resource or the ranking is over all resources?

A: Separate rank order lists (RoL) per high performance computing (HPC) service listed in the opportunity will be generated following the expert review panel. The HPC resource will then be allocated following the RoL for each of the HPC service.

Q3: Is Isambard AI not included? Is there another process for that?

A: Isambard AI is a different machine that is being delivered by UKRI on behalf of the Department for Science Innovation and Technology. Expression of Interest (Eoi) for access to Isambard AI can be submitted at: [AIRR Expression of Interest to use UK large scale compute - UK Research and Innovation - Citizen Space](#). Eoi for Isambard AI will be batched and assessed on a regular basis. From summer 2025, users will also be able to access the full capacity of the Isambard-AI machine through the early access call while the system is being tested.

Q4: I wanted to ask about extending current projects on Isambard AI. Do we submit a new form? How to link to a previous project?

A: Yes, a new Eois is currently required for extension of existing projects on the Isambard AI machine.

Q5: If successful, when does the compute get provided?

A: Most of the successful projects are expected to start in July 2025.

Q6: Can one academic be project lead for two projects for two different service like archer2 and Isambard?

A: You can only be a project lead or co-lead on a maximum of one application to each service. Each proposal you are included for as a project lead or co-lead must be a unique and distinct project.

Q7: How do you apply via the NERC-remit?

A: The Isambard3 and Bede machine are open to researchers in all remits in UKRI via this opportunity. The policy on access to ARCHER2 as a NERC researcher can be found at: [NERC policy on access to ARCHER2: non-NERC or international grants – UKRI](#).

Q8: Can there be two project leads for the project?

A: There can only be one listed project lead in the current configuration of the Funding Service (TFS). Project co-lead can be listed on TFS.

Q9: The call page indicates the ARCHER2 service end date is November 2025. Is there currently any indication whether it will be funded/available beyond this date?

A: We hope to extend the ARCHER2 service until November 2026 however, this is still subject to budget confirmation.

Q10: Could you clarify which organisation provides the 'award' letter or contract to the lead applicant - is it the institution that hosts the infrastructure? Or UKRI?

A: UKRI will provide a notice of success to all successful applicants.

Q11: You said that If I am a PhD student, I need to seek for a project lead. What does it mean? Could you cover it again? If I am funded not by EPSRC, I can't get access to Archer2?

A: The project lead oversees the preparation of the application and will be responsible for how any compute time awarded is used. Hence, doctoral student must seek an eligible project lead to apply on their behalf.

Q12: What is the maximum amount of resource available at ARCHER2 please?

A: Up to 3.4 million compute units over 12 months are available on ARCHER2 via this opportunity.

Q13: For Isambard 3, the project must be exactly 6 or 12 months in duration? not 8?

A: Yes, projects can only be for 6 or 12 months on Isambard 3 for this round of the access to HPC opportunity.

Q14: Could you discuss about the differences in the HPC resources available. And how would you advise choosing which one is the best for our application?

A: The technical specifications for the HPC services can be found at: [Access to High Performance Computing – spring 2025 Service Specification](#). It is highly recommended to consider the service specification when choosing the HPC service that best fit your application.

Q15: Which of the HPC services listed provides GPU resources?

A: The Bede HPC service provides GPU resource for this opportunity.

Q16: I would be grateful if you would please tell me if research fellows can apply?

A: Yes, research fellows are eligible to apply as lead applicant for the [Access to high performance computing facilities: spring 2025 – UKRI](#) opportunity in principle, provided that:

- your host institution is prepared to give you all the normal support for a permanent employee
- there is no conflict of interest between your obligation to UKRI and to any other organisation or employer
- the term of your employment extends beyond the duration of your proposed research project.

Q17: Can the application be for the extension of an existing project funded by other funding? You mentioned EPSRC remit so is this EPSRC funded projects or projects funded by other sources as long as the topic falls into EPSRC remit?

A: We welcome applications from research project that falls within the UKRI remits. Please bear in mind that only access to compute is available via this opportunity and no 'funding' in the traditional sense will be provided to successful applicants. Please ensure access to compute is not already costed for within the current funding for your project. Otherwise, the application may be rejected.

Q18: Is this opportunity open to individual researchers who are not affiliated with any organizations, universities, or professional bodies, especially when the project has a global research impact? Also, are there any limitations on using the resources?

A: Unfortunately, you must be based in a UK institution eligible for UKRI funding to apply for this opportunity.

Q19: Can you tell us anything about those services? Are they CPU/GPU machines, what capacity, etc?

A: Please see the service specification at: [Access to High Performance Computing – spring 2025 Service Specification](#)

Q20: Can postdoctoral researchers apply? If so, can they act as lead applicant in the application? Could you specify who we should contact before applying to check eligibility?

A: Yes, postdoctoral researchers are eligible to apply as lead applicant for the [Access to high performance computing facilities: spring 2025 – UKRI](#) opportunity in principle, provided that:

- your host institution is prepared to give you all the normal support for a permanent employee
- there is no conflict of interest between your obligation to UKRI and to any other organisation or employer
- the term of your employment extends beyond the duration of your proposed research project

If in doubt, please contact the EPSRC Research Infrastructure inbox at:

researchinfrastructure@epsrc.ukri.org

Q21: Why does the scheme not provide feedback?

A: Feedback will only be provided as directed by the review panel. All applicants will be notified of the status of their application via TFS.

Q22: If I have already been granted a project, can I apply for a new one in this round? Thanks

A: Yes, we welcome application for extension of existing projects.

Q23: We previously applied but did not receive any feedback. For applicants who wish to reapply and improve their proposal, it's difficult to identify where improvements are needed without understanding what the key weaknesses were. Is there any way to obtain feedback on past submissions to help strengthen future applications?

A: Please contact the EPSRC Research Infrastructure inbox at:

researchinfrastructure@epsrc.ukri.org

Q24: If I am contracted with a university, what is the minimum contract length to apply for the resources?

A: The term of your employment must extend beyond the duration of your proposed research project and your host institution must be prepared to give you all the normal support for a permanent employee.

Q25: Does Isambard 3 have GPUs available through this call or are the GPUs only available through Isambard AI?

A: Isambard 3 does not have GPUs available through this opportunity. Access to GPUs on Isambard AI is available via the [AIRR Expression of Interest to use UK large scale compute - UK Research and Innovation - Citizen Space](#)

Q26: If I become a research fellow from 1 June 2026 and I am now a post doc can I be project lead?

A: Yes, postdoctoral researchers and research fellows are eligible to apply as lead applicant for the [Access to high performance computing facilities: spring 2025 – UKRI](#) opportunity in principle, provided that:

- your host institution is prepared to give you all the normal support for a permanent employee
- there is no conflict of interest between your obligation to UKRI and to any other organisation or employer
- the term of your employment extends beyond the duration of your proposed research project

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Q27: My project lead suggests that I (the research fellow) apply as the lead applicant. Advice?

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Q28: What is relative acceptance rate of an application, or does this vary by compute system and request amount?

A: There has been a decreasing trend of acceptance rate due to the increasing demand for compute time. About 42% of applications were successful across all HPC service available for the [Access to high performance computing facilities – autumn 2024 – UKRI](#)