UK Research and Innovation

Welcome

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UKRI Research Commercialisation

Proof-of-Concept (PoC)

Turn ideas into reality

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Aims, objectives and scope

- Aims to support the commercialisation of research to enable spinouts or social ventures, licencing or other commercialisation pathways.
- Applications from any disciplines are in scope. No link to pre-existing UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funding is required.
- The programme will not support discovery-driven research.
- It is focussed on pre-commercial activities supporting both the technical **and** commercialisation development of research.

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Aims, objectives and scope

Discipline agnostic support for the commercialisation of research and the development of projects that increase the readiness of technology, products, processes or services towards market.

- Funding type: Grant
- Total fund: £9,000,000
- Award range: £100,000 - £250,000 @ 80% fEC
- Award length: 6-12 months duration

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How to apply

1. You need to have completed an intention to submit by the 3rd March. This was mandatory to make a full application.

2. If eligible you were informed via email and your research office was invited to make a full application using The Funding Service.

3. Applications are triaged by your Research Office (or equivalent)

4. The PoC opportunity is open for applications 12th March - 29th May

    - You will need your organisation support to submit a full application

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Demand management

- The UKRI Proof of Concept (PoC) funding opportunity has received high demand with more than 2800 ‘Intention to Submit’ submissions made.
- To ensure applications are assessed in a timely manner and to maintain a reasonable success rate, to minimise unnecessary work by potential applicants and their research organisations, we are implementing demand management measures as highlighted in the UKRI pre-announcement for this opportunity.
- Research organisations have been allocated a cap for the maximum number of full applications allowed to be submitted as Project Lead. Please see the additional information on the funding opportunity: Application caps for research organisations

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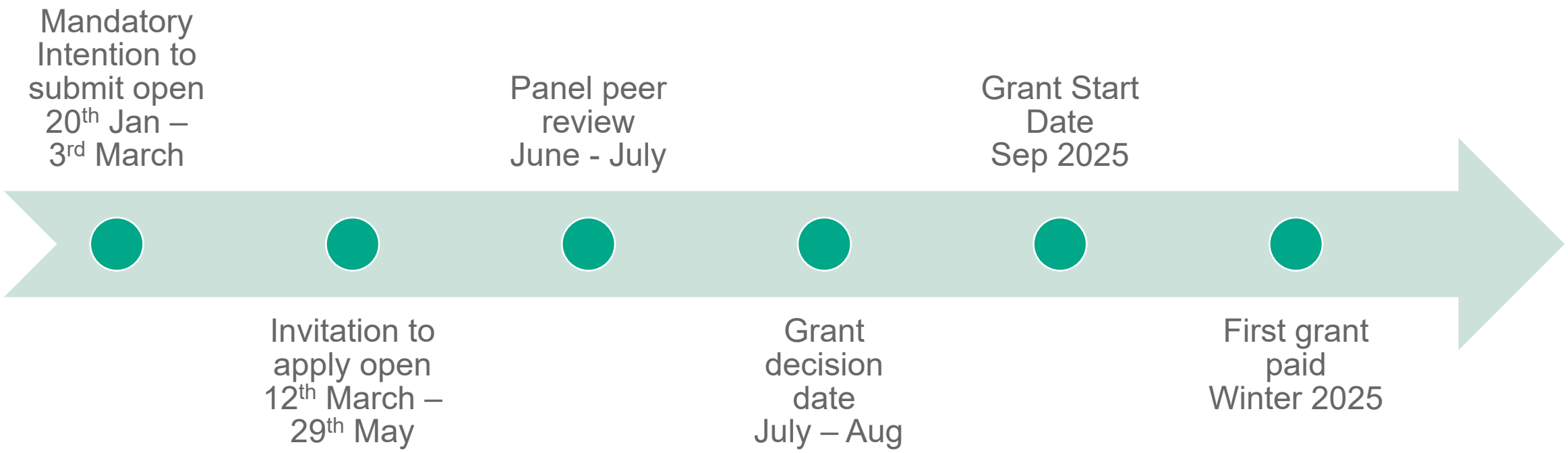
Key dates and deadlines



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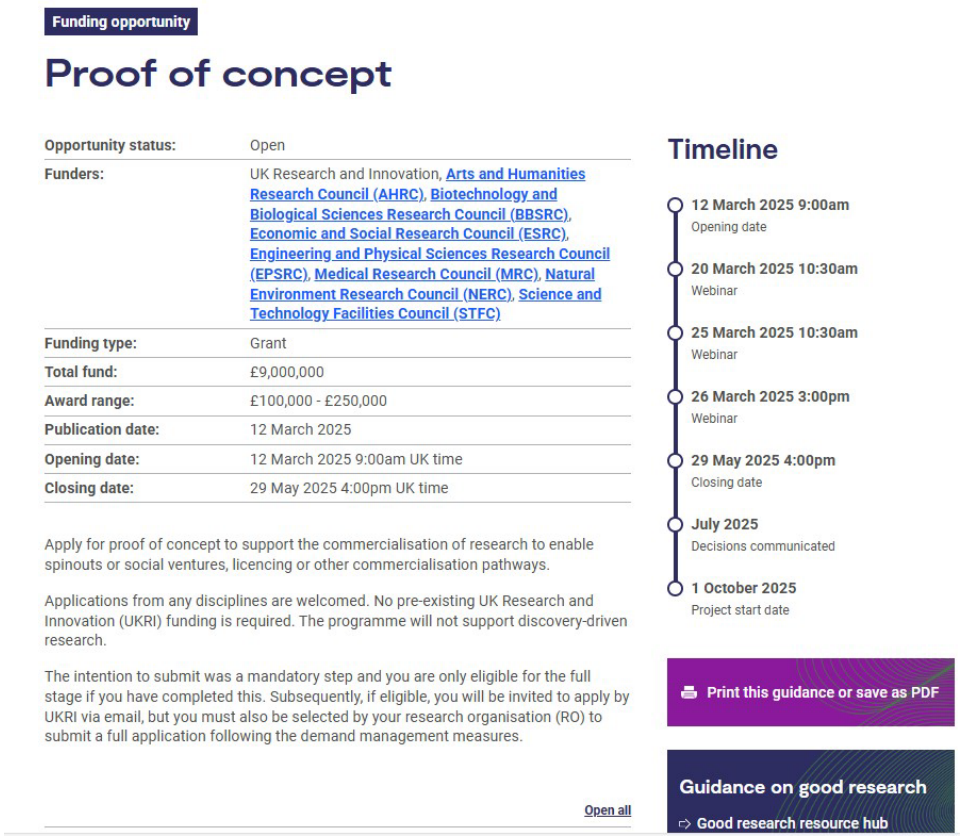
Funding application stage

- The full funding opportunity is opened since 12 March 2025 on UKRI Funding Service.
- Only those who completed an intention to submitted will be eligible to apply.
- UKRI are implementing demand management measures therefore research organisations have application caps and applicants will need organisational support.



Funding opportunity

Proof of concept

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	UK Research and Innovation, Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), Medical Research Council (MRC), Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC)
Funding type:	Grant
Total fund:	£9,000,000
Award range:	£100,000 - £250,000
Publication date:	12 March 2025
Opening date:	12 March 2025 9:00am UK time
Closing date:	29 May 2025 4:00pm UK time

Apply for proof of concept to support the commercialisation of research to enable spinouts or social ventures, licencing or other commercialisation pathways.

Applications from any disciplines are welcomed. No pre-existing UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funding is required. The programme will not support discovery-driven research.

The intention to submit was a mandatory step and you are only eligible for the full stage if you have completed this. Subsequently, if eligible, you will be invited to apply by UKRI via email, but you must also be selected by your research organisation (RO) to submit a full application following the demand management measures.

Open all

Timeline

- 12 March 2025 9:00am — Opening date
- 20 March 2025 10:30am — Webinar
- 25 March 2025 10:30am — Webinar
- 26 March 2025 3:00pm — Webinar
- 29 May 2025 4:00pm — Closing date
- July 2025 — Decisions communicated
- 1 October 2025 — Project start date

Print this guidance or save as PDF

Guidance on good research

Good research resource hub

Proof of concept – UKRI

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Application via The Funding Service

- UKRI Proof of Concept Funding Opportunity application is via The UKRI Funding Service (TFS)
- For the PoC Funding Opportunity, the invitation to apply is managed by your Research Office (or equivalent)
- You can access TFS from UKRI website > Funding Finder or directly Sign in - UKRI Funding Service
- Check guidance on UKRI website on how to use TFS: How applicants use the UKRI Funding Service – UKRI

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How applicants use the UKRI Funding Service – UKRI

How applicants use the UKRI Funding Service

This guidance is for applicants using the UKRI Funding Service. It gives an overview of:

- how to create your Funding Service account
- what you do when applying to a funding opportunity using the service
- the core sections, questions and assessment criteria for 'responsive mode' opportunities
- new functionality in development
- where to get help and support using the service

You can also watch videos demonstrating the service.

For information on how we are developing the service, start with **our pathway for change** and **check status updates on the UKRI Funding Service**.

Related content

- Council transition to the new Funding Service
- About the Simpler and Better Funding programme

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Application assessment areas

Application assessment areas include:

- Opportunity and Market Analysis
- Route to market
- Intellectual property (IP) management and communication
- Applicant and team capability to deliver
- Resources and cost justification
- Ethics and Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)
- Your organisation's support
- Project partners
- Facilities
- Trusted Research and Innovation (TR&I)

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The UKRI commercialisation question set

These questions have been drafted with input from across the research commercialisation community in response to the 2021 Government's Innovation Strategy to help maximise the potential benefits from research that reach the economy and society.

While you might not have all the answers to all the questions to the full extend, your answers need to demonstrate how you intend to prove the concept of your idea, throughout the length and cost of your project.

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'Technical' and commercial

- Both 'technical/practical' and commercial aspects of your project should be considered as part of the development of your application
- The 'applicant and team capability to deliver' section needs to reflect both the technical and commercial work (i.e. the team needs all the skills, experience or expertise required for success)

Note: not all PoC projects will be based on STEM, technologies or be technical in nature – social, economic, art and humanities (often refer as SHAPE) are also included

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Opportunity and Market Analysis

- What is the opportunity you are looking to exploit or what challenge will your project address?

Check the guidance and what assessors are looking for

Tip: use evidence including numbers and analysis e.g. market research data to illustrate your points

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Route to market

- How would your proposed project progress the innovation towards its intended users or markets?

Check the guidance and what assessors are looking for

Tip: although you might not take your project all the way to the market yourself, demonstrate that you have an understanding the steps and partnerships required

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Intellectual property (IP) management and communication

- What is your IP exploitation plan?

Check the guidance and what assessors are looking for

Tip: if you have a project partner, use this section to describe the agreed arrangements with regards to background and foreground IP, publication etc… Check UKRI T&Cs!

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Applicant and team capability to deliver

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

Check the guidance and what assessors are looking for

Tip: the team needs all the skills, experience or expertise required for success. Also include in this section why your specific project partner is important to your project.

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Resources and cost justification

- What will you need to deliver your proposed work and how much will it cost?

Check the guidance and what assessors are looking for

Tip: this should be tailored to your project requirements. Expertise such as consultancy/ sub-contractors are eligible but note this will be assessed for appropriateness and value for money.

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Ethics and Responsible Research and Innovation

- What are the ethical or RRI implications and issues relating to the proposed work?

Check the guidance and what assessors are looking for

Tip: use the good research hub for guidance and highlight any risks and the mitigation you plan on taking.

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Securing support from your research organisation

- Organisational support for your proposed application will be a key aspect considered as part of the assessment
- This should include a statement from your technology transfer office if your organisation has one. We recognise that in some instances, this support may be provided by the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) or equivalent, the Research Office, or a combination of both.
- Assessors will be looking for a strong statement of support from your research organisation. Including a significant person's name, their position and office or department, and office address or web link.

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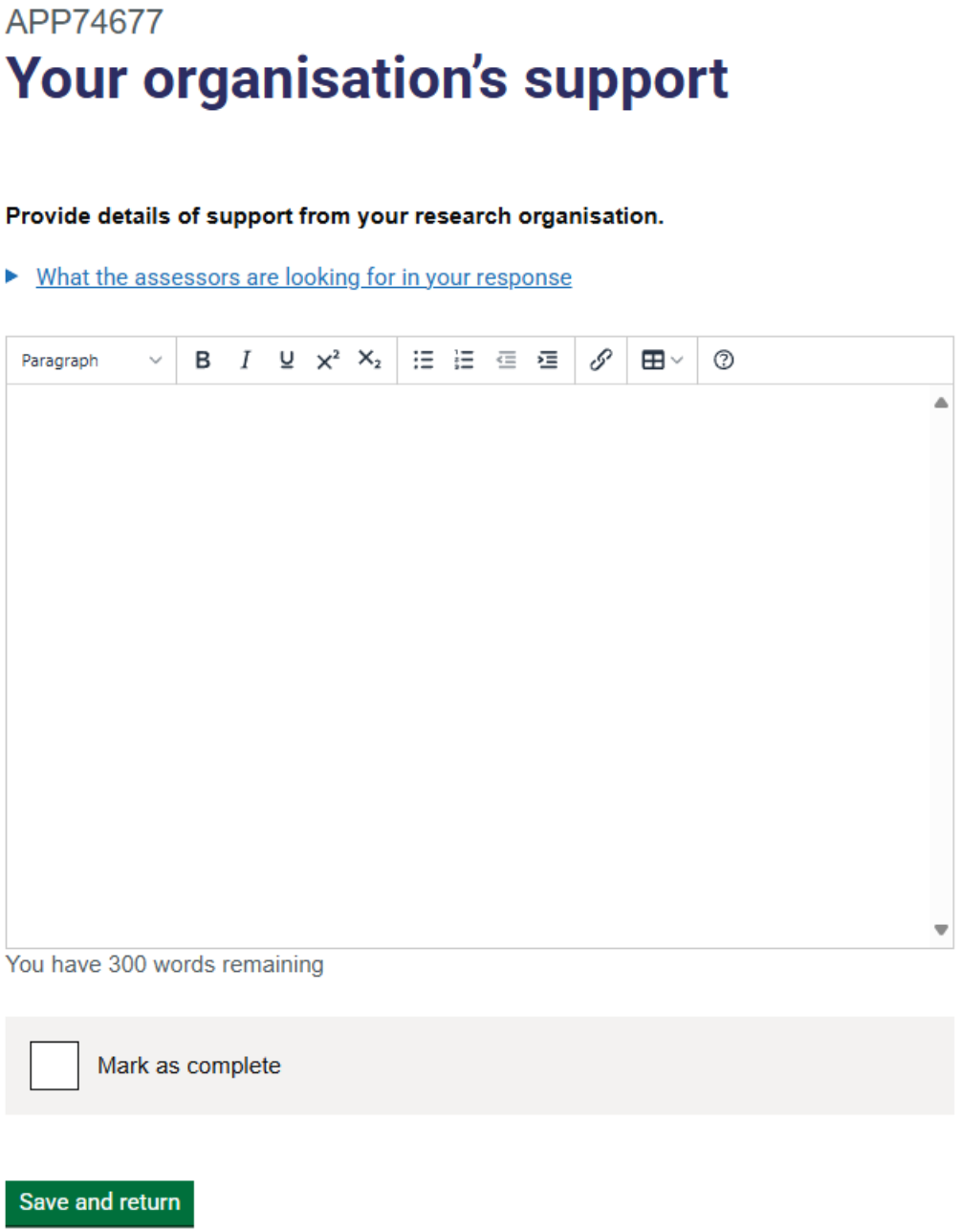
TFS Screen Shot

You need to describe in this free text box the support from your organisation

- 300 words limit
- Include name, position of person(s) supporting your project
- Describe the level of support and its purpose in relation to your project
- Describe, if appropriate, any leverage support secured from your research organisation



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Project Partners

When making an application, project leads will be asked to:

- Describe who each project partner is
- Indicate whether each partner is making a direct or indirect contribution
- Give the contribution a monetary value

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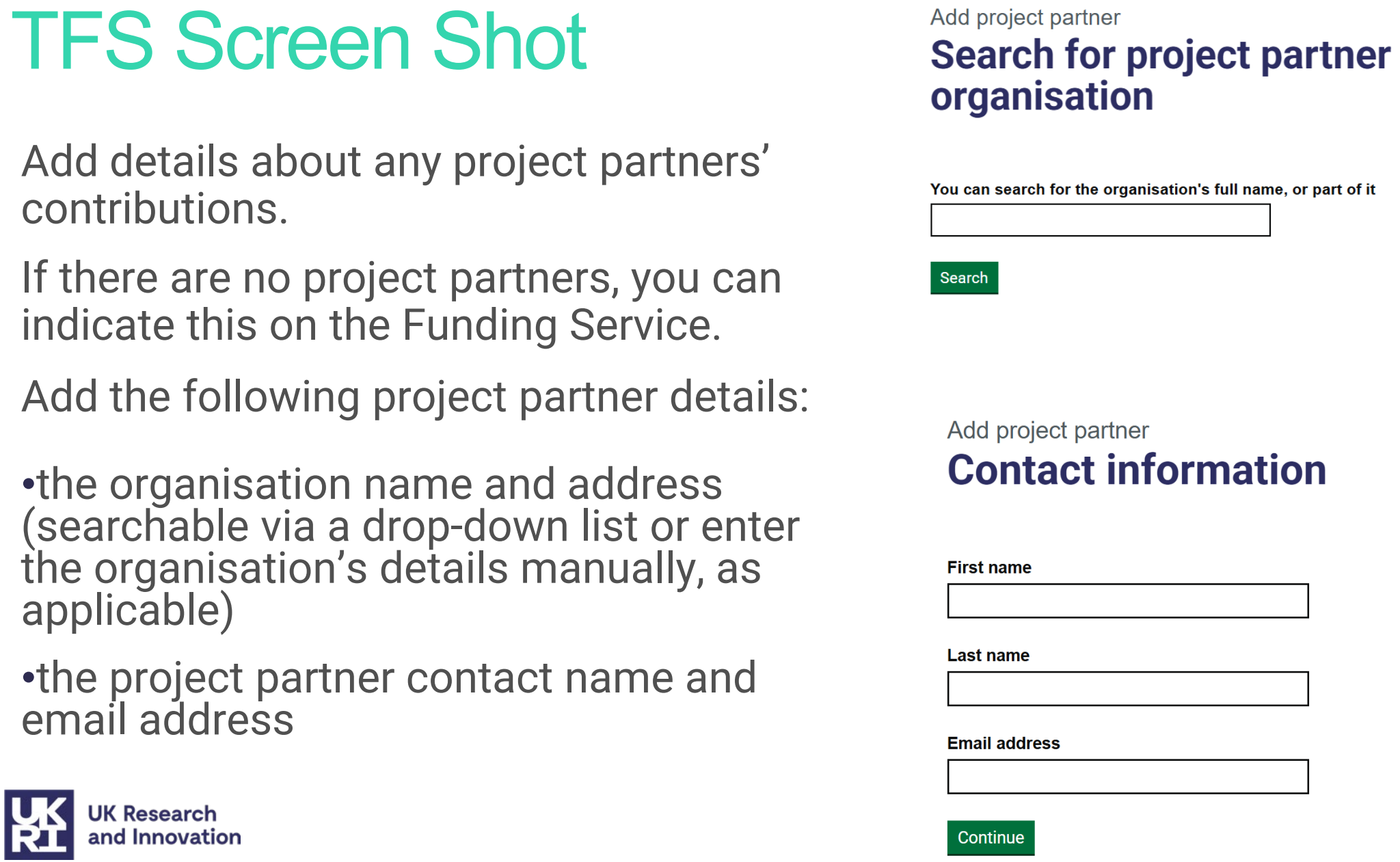
TFS Screen Shot

Add details about any project partners' contributions.

If there are no project partners, you can indicate this on the Funding Service.

Add the following project partner details:

- the organisation name and address (searchable via a drop-down list or enter the organisation's details manually, as applicable)
- the project partner contact name and email address



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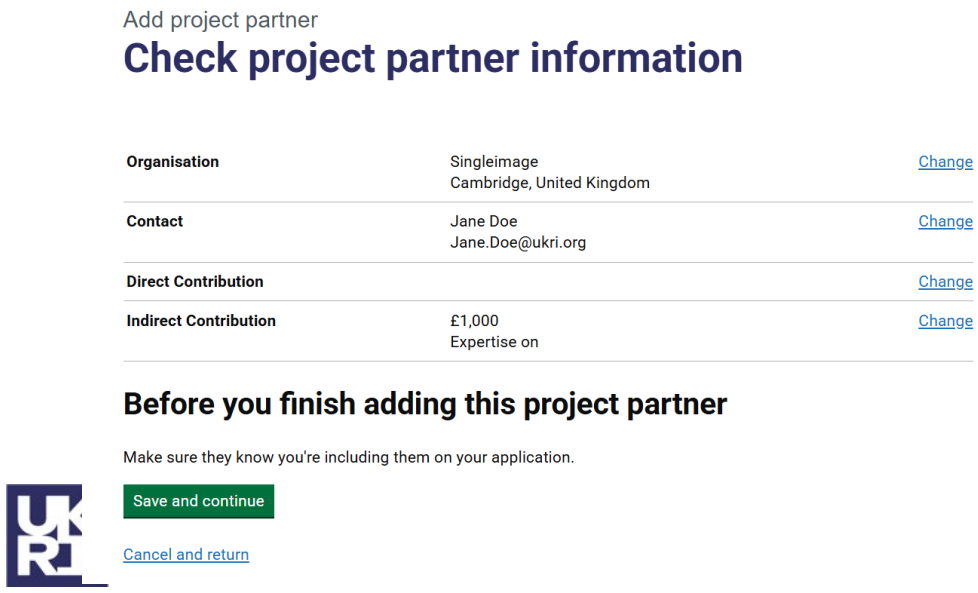
You need to indicate the type of contribution (direct or indirect) and associate a monetary value to it.

You should label the contribution in 10 words or fewer to indicate what this contribution is

UKRI requires formal collaboration agreements to be put in place if an award is made.



Add project partner

Check project partner information

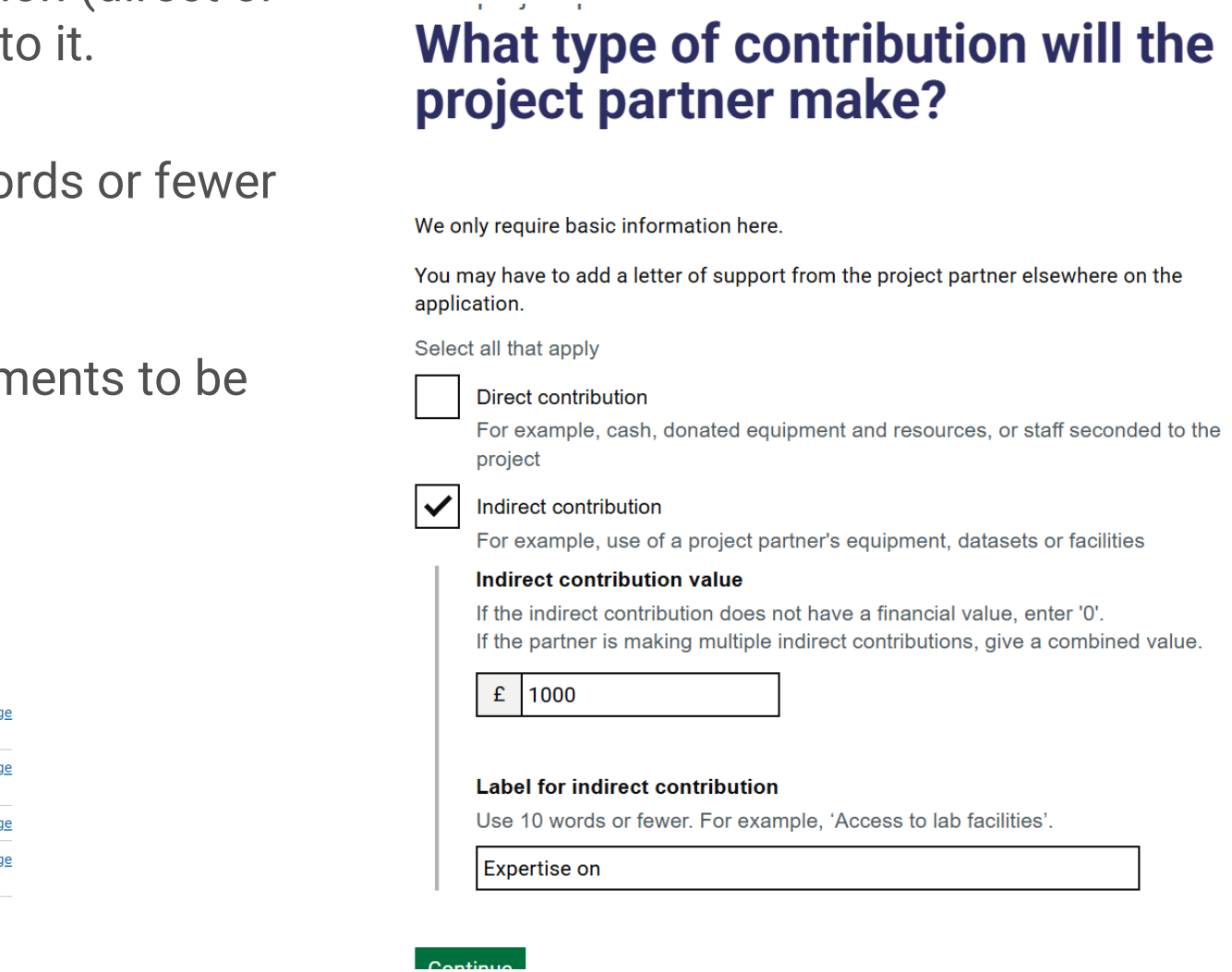
Organisation	Singleimage Cambridge, United Kingdom	Change
Contact	Jane Doe Jane.Doe@ukri.org	Change
Direct Contribution		Change
Indirect Contribution	£1,000 Expertise on	Change

Before you finish adding this project partner

Make sure they know you're including them on your application.

Save and continue

Cancel and return



What type of contribution will the project partner make?

We only require basic information here.

You may have to add a letter of support from the project partner elsewhere on the application.

Select all that apply

☐ Direct contribution

For example, cash, donated equipment and resources, or staff seconded to the project

☑ Indirect contribution

For example, use of a project partner's equipment, datasets or facilities

Indirect contribution value

If the indirect contribution does not have a financial value, enter '0'.
If the partner is making multiple indirect contributions, give a combined value.

£ 1000

Label for indirect contribution

Use 10 words or fewer. For example, 'Access to lab facilities'.

Expertise on

Continue

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Facilities

- Does your proposed research require the support and use of a facility?

Check the guidance and what assessors are looking for

Tip: If you will need to use a facility, ensure you have prior agreement so that if you are offered funding, they will support the use of their facility on your project.

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Trusted Research and Innovation

- Does the proposed work involve international collaboration in a sensitive research or technology area?

Check the guidance and what assessors are looking for

Tip: consider the area of your work and its reach in relation to not only international partners but also its commercialisation e.g. National Security and Investment Act, export control, etc…

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Classification of your proposed project

To help UKRI identify panel assessors we ask which research area, and commercialisation pathway does your proposed work include.

These may include research areas, and appropriate commercial proposition.

- Please enter a minimum of two and no more than four keywords from the list provided (List of Standardised keywords for UKRI POC call.docx) separated by semi-colons.
- Please ensure that you use the precise codes and wording of the research areas as provided in the list "List of Standardised keywords for UKRI POC call" (we suggest you use the copy and paste functions).
- You are also permitted one free text keyword or phrase, reserved only for where your proposed commercialisation pathway is not represented by the keywords provided. Please use the code FREE as a pre-fix if you include a free text keyword. Please put this keyword or phrase at the end of your list.

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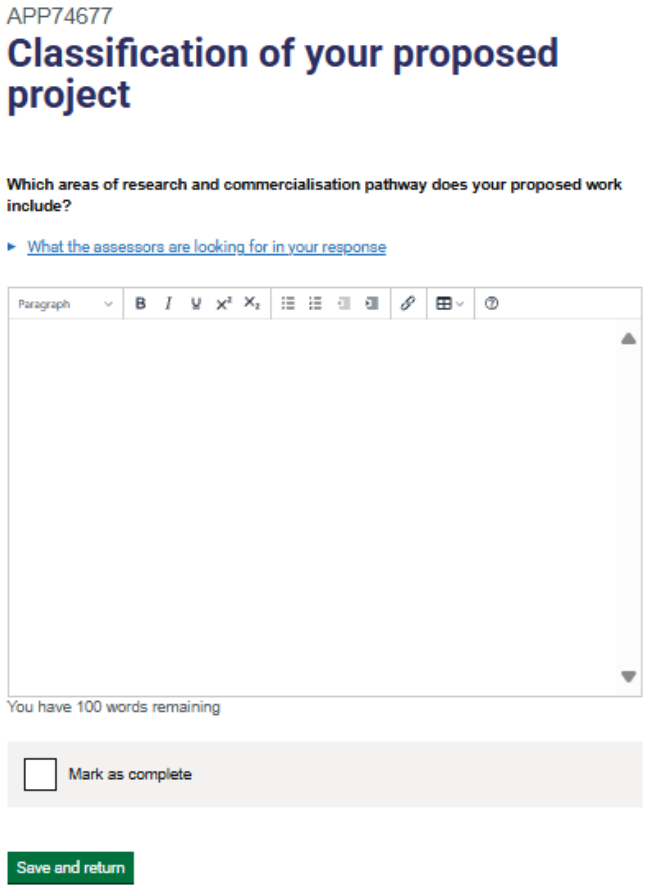
TFS Screen Shot

- There are 34 research related areas and commercialisation pathways.
- Please separate the areas by semi-colon
- We suggest you use the copy and paste functions

commercialisation pathways
C01 Licensing
C02 Social Ventures
C03 Spinouts
C04 Development of new or improved products
C05 Development of new or improved processes
C06 Development of new or improved services
C07 Development of new or improved technology



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Subsidy Control considerations

- As per the PoC Funding Opportunity call descriptive – the POC is awarded as ‘non subsidy’ under the Subsidy Control Act 2022
- A single ‘enterprise’ cannot benefit preferentially from the POC grant
- Check UKRI Terms and Conditions of Grants
- Seek your own research institution advice

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Intellectual Property

As per UKRI Terms and Conditions of grants:

- The foreground IP generated during the PoC Grant belongs to the Research Organisation
- When involving a project partner, a formal collaboration agreement must set out the arrangements for the collaboration including the management of the IP and the rights to exploitation
- PoC grant cannot be used for the filing of IP rights (e.g. patent, trademark, etc…)

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Thank you

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Questions?

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FAQs

UKRI Proof of Concept Funding Opportunity Frequently Asked Questions

Commonly asked questions so far:

- Demand management
- Assessment areas
- Project partner support
- Projects in remit

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Thanks for your interest in the UKRI Research Commercialisation Proof-of-Concept (PoC)

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