

Gravitational Waves Consolidated Grants 2024

Webinar Question and Answer Session

24 April 2024

Additional questions should be emailed to: particle.astro@stfc.ukri.org

Q&A

1. Can you confirm that no external publication list is required, and publications should be added on a per theme basis (max 10 per theme)?

Yes, this is correct.

2. In the Vision & Approach template, is STFC looking for the themes to be structured as 'Past Work' and 'Future Work' (similar to previous Consolidated Grant rounds)?

The structure is different this round (in order to align with the requirements of UKRI's new Funding Service) and no longer has a clear distinction between past and future work. However, there is scope to incorporate this within the 'vision' and 'approach' structure of the new format. There is a specific question in the 'Approach' section asking for 'an overview report summarising the scientific progress of the group since the last review'.

3. Can you confirm that 'Advanced LIGO operations' should be 10-pages max (e.g. not 2-pages per FTE like the other themes)?

Yes, an additional 10 pages (max) can be used to cover advanced LIGO operations.

4. Is STFC is looking for a harmonised Advanced LIGO operations theme across all UK institutions?

Yes. As per previous rounds, applicants should confer in advance in to provide a unified advanced LIGO operations narrative that can be used by all applicants who require advanced LIGO support.

5. In terms of consortium grants is STFC looking for a single application from the lead institution, and all funds to the lead institution to be distributed to the other partners? What is the rationale behind this decision as it could make some of the themes look much higher costing (e.g. multiple universities with RA's / travel & subsistence / consumables included in the lead application). In previous CG rounds this was done in a different way.

UKRI's new Funding Service grants platform does not allow payments to be channelled directly to individual partners within a consortium award. Instead, the total awarded amount is paid to the lead organisation, who is then responsible for distributing funds to partners. We do, though, still expect to see costs allocated to individual research organisations, who will be provided with funds from the

lead (grant holding) organisation. As such, themes should still be costed in the same way as before, so this should not distort the cost of individual themes.

Please note that this policy is currently under review with UKRI, so may potentially change prior to the start of the awards in 2025.

6. Will STFC share membership details of the panel that will review the applications?

Yes, we will publish membership of the GW Advisory Panel once all panellists have been confirmed.

7. Do you have a timescale for defining the panel?

We are in the process of building the panel at the moment, and anticipate confirming its membership by the end of May 2024.

8. At the recent STFC town meeting at HEPP/APP/NP there was discussion of a prioritisation activity happening over the summer (including PAAP). Can you confirm that this exercise will have no impact on the CG grant round currently open, as the guidance has been issued?

It is not anticipated that the current prioritisation exercise will have any significant impact on the assessment nor the size and scope of this round of consolidated grants.

9. Could you clarify which parts of GW source modelling are within the remit of the GW grant and which are inside Astronomy? I have seen that GW modelling inside the LSC is part of the GW grant, but it's not clear to me what exactly this means.

STFC are not currently able to provide precise granular definitions of which specific areas of source modelling fall with the GW remit and which come under astronomy. Applicants who believe that their research may span both programmes are therefore advised to consult the [gravitational waves remit clarification](#), and make a considered decision as to where they believe the majority of their research fits.

With regards to this round of the GW consolidated grants, reviewers and panellists will be asked to take a pragmatic and flexible approach to remit. Provided the majority of the activity falls within the revised GW remit, and the applicants have made a good justification for including any activities that may be considered to straddle remit boundaries, we will strive to take an inclusive approach wherever possible.

10. Will there be increased support for computing personnel in the operations theme? The LVK management has highlighted a severe need for substantially more computing support from international partners.

No specific additional support has been allocated for computing personnel within the operations activities of this consolidated grant round. Applicants are encouraged to cost and justify any level of

support that is believed to be required by the collaboration. This will be assessed and considered by the panel and STFC.

11. Will reviewers be made aware of LIGO priorities as outlined in the LSC Program (<https://dcc.ligo.org/LIGO-M2300188/public>)? That should help avoid misunderstandings on what is needed within LIGO vs what is to be done on open data only.

The Funding Service provides a standardised set of criteria and guidance to peer-reviewers and there are limited opportunities to provide additional contextual information of this sort. Where possible, STFC will draw reviewers' attention to the LIGO priorities and other relevant contextual information.

12. Will the total funding/support for UK GW science be increased in the future, considering that the UK GW community has considerably expanded since a few years ago and played more significant roles in the field?

At this point it is impossible to say if UK funding for GW science will be increased in the future. Any decisions relating to this will be subject to the outcome of the prioritisation review that is currently underway, and the forthcoming UK Government spending review.

13. Can we include public engagement activities (as aligned with LIGO goals)? If so, what fraction?

Yes, impact and engagement activities are a key part of UKRI awards. There is no predefined proportion of the overall funding that can be assigned to this work, it is up to each applicant to make the case for whatever resource they feel is appropriate and proportional. This request will be subject to the usual application review and assessment processes.

14. A large portion of this consolidated grant period will form the gap between O4 and O5. Is there concern about retaining expertise if themes are not funded if 'they do not seem timely'?

With the clarification to the [Gravitational Waves remit](#), our expectation is that exploitation of publicly available data will be supported moving forwards through the Astronomy Grants Panel and as such some parts of exploitation of O5 is anticipated to be supported elsewhere outside of the CG programme.

For the 2024 Gravitational Waves Consolidated Grants opportunity, it is anticipated that robust themes of work are proposed, that either deliver R&D, operations or direct exploitation of ALIGO data during the period October 2025 to September 2028, and that all proposed work should be timely for this period. Reviewers and panellists are instructed to consider the remit, excellence and timeliness of all activities and, as with all funding opportunities, there is always a chance that staff, resource and expertise will not be supported subject to the quality of the case.

15. Exploitation with existing, publicly available data is out of remit and the pause between runs means no new data. Does that mean that exploitation work is basically out of remit?

Exploitation using publicly available data is now primarily covered by Astronomy grants remit. However, where suitable justification can be made that such work is vital to successful delivery of a particular theme or work package, applicants may consider including this type of exploitation work.

16. Given the move to UKRI's Funding Service, will applications still be assessed/funded and on a 'theme' level?

Yes, as in previous rounds, applications will be assessed on a theme-by-themes basis. The Vision and Approach template document has been designed to help ensure each theme is fully explained and costed.

17. Is LIGO membership a criterion for panel membership?

No. We are looking to build a panel with broad experience and knowledge, that will include LIGO representation, but which will also have wider gravitational wave expertise.

18. On export controls: Do we all need to write something about sharing data within the LSC, or can we assume that is understood?

It is best not to assume any prior knowledge and to ensure relevant information is included in the Data Management section of the application, and (if appropriate) the relevant theme section of the Vision and Approach document.

19. Is there a mailing list to update interested/potential applicants about info such as this webinar?

Whilst we do not have a dedicated mailing list for the Gravitational Waves consolidated grants, we will ensure that any significant updates are emailed to those who registered for the webinar. In addition, these updates will also be posted to the [Particle Astrophysics Advisory Panel \(PAAP\) mailing list](#), and (where appropriate) added to the [GW Funding Finder](#) page.

20. When will the webinar recording be uploaded? It would be useful to share this with other colleagues who couldn't attend today.

The recording is now available:

Webinar Link: <https://ukri.zoom.us/rec/share/UvW8VDE-kS73q-1Sxuf447RIWziUuE2GHli6o25hgYMZo353GGqJn7QHgPoe4Wp1.MQcG53Kz94s3T5uS>

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