

## Summary of Questions and Answer Session Following the TERC Network Plus Webinar

### Is the Network Plus just the beginning? Will there be other funding opportunities coming out as part of the action plan?

- We plan to launch other calls on a smaller scale and will explore other opportunities as we go through the programme and will think about continuing the more promising directions coming out of the call. There will be other opportunities through EPSRC as well as always being open to general grant ideas in our standard panels.

### Would an ECR Researcher Co-Lead count towards the maximum 5 Co-Leads?

- Yes, we have added an extra co-lead above the standard to help encourage the diversity we feel a network management team should have. The info below may help:

#### **Project co-lead ('co-investigator' in Je-S)**

One of the project leadership and management team. They may take over the leadership of the project, if required. Your team can have as many project co-leads as needed.

You must be affiliated with one of the research organisations involved in submitting the application to be a project co-lead.

#### **Researcher co-lead ('researcher co-investigator' in Je-S)**

A research and innovation associate who is not eligible to be a project lead or project co-lead, but has made a substantial contribution to the formulation and development of the application and will be closely involved with the project.

[Roles in funding applications: eligibility, responsibilities and costings guidance – UKRI](#)

### Do you envisage involvement from other disciplines being restricted to network membership or can they be involved as project co-leads?

- Other disciplines can be involved as co-leads and we would encourage this. This includes areas not usually funded by EPSRC.

### Previous Network calls have permitted more Co-Leads, in order to show adequate coverage of areas of expertise. How is this coverage expected to be addressed with a smaller number of Co-Leads? Will it be expected that this is evidenced through letters of endorsement? It is hard to see how some partners, who might previously have been allowed to be Co-Leads, will be motivated without direct access to co-lead funding and consequently having their time released to commit to the network by their respective institutions.

- We have intentionally set a limit of five co-leads (one higher than usual) to enable focus and direction of the network. Also a suite of networks will be funded and this will contribute to diversity of the whole programme, we also didn't want most of the network funds to go towards salaries. We do not require letters of endorsement.

### Is there a limit on the number of applications each institution can submit?

- No

**When will the presentation slides be uploaded to the website?**

- As soon as possible, but Easter holidays may delay the upload.

**Can co-leads be from universities in other countries and is international working encouraged, or should this be UK focused?**

- We allow international co-leads as long as involvement is justified

**Are there interview dates already? Will there be flexibility to allow for e.g. applicant vacations or unavailability due to conferences?**

- We are looking to hold these in the 2 weeks from the 16<sup>th</sup> September, actual dates should be confirmed before call deadline.

**There are already 9 AI Hubs recently funded, so, will AI-focused Network+ be discouraged?**

- We aware that networks should be complimentary to existing investments, so would expect any overlap to be justified.

**Are there examples of flexible funding from existing/previous network+ grants?**

- Our online database of funded grants may be found here: [Grants on the Web \(ukri.org\)](https://www.ukri.org/grants-on-the-web/)  
However we are encouraging innovative use of flexible funding, so please do not feel constrained by previous ideas.

**Are supported letters from participating organisations (not represented by the PI and CoI) needed or expected?**

- No

**How many networks are you expecting to fund?**

- £7M, so about 4

**Are letters of support from partners required (including University partners)?**

- We encourage industrial participation and wish to see meaningful letters of support in those cases, remember some project partners will not be eligible for project costs, all will need to demonstrate their role in the project/project creation.

**Will all applications be invited for interview?**

- Ideally we are hoping to interview all applicants, however a large number of applications may change the assessment process to include some sort of sift process based on the expert panel's views on the proposal.

**Can the PI and Co-Is be from the same institute?**

- Yes, but like any peer review process you will need to justify why this is the best route.

**In the user engagement, there is a mention to user engagement in conception, does this mean that you will expect co-creation events to develop the proposal?**

- No, we don't expect actual events but to be able to show that, where applicable, some co-creation of the proposal is evident.

**Is the 'Network' element considered as a tool (to develop solutions) or a goal itself, being the TERC network the nucleus for a wider network to develop and establish beyond the temporal boundaries of this project?**

- We will explore the potential for this as the networks progress and future funds become apparent

**How is this call different to other Network+ calls / centres?**

- Not in many ways, it has many of the features of a Network +, but we are encouraging different ways of working and more diverse teams, as well as a focus around a community led strategic document.

**How can an industrial organisation engage with research organisations to support this call and feed industry engineering challenges that could be addressed? Is there a forum through which partners/co-leads could be identified?**

- Prior to the network being submitted, there is no matchmaking exercise planned by EPSRC, but there will be networking opportunities once funded via the networks, as well as a press release to advertise the successful projects

**Can professional services members e.g. research managers be named as a co-lead?**

- Yes, they may, though you can also include them without being a co-lead.  
[Roles in funding applications: eligibility, responsibilities and costings guidance – UKRI](#)

**Is it expected that PI and PCL are all from different Universities (so 6 Universities network) , or it could be core team to establishing the network from the same Uni - may be different disciplines.**

- We are leaving this entirely to the applicants, as ever, justify each choice in the proposal.

**Can the partners e.g industries be international or just British? For example, in space sustainability is the European Space agency eligible as partner?**

- Yes.

**Can funds be used to run training events or training activities for network members?**

- Yes

**Is there an expectation of getting industry support letters?**

- Only where relevant from your proposal. Remember that peer review may expect this in some areas.

**What kind of costs can be covered for the international partners from the project fund?**

- EPSRC will fund the following as standard: [Funding for international collaboration – UKRI](#) other costs from the flexible fund must be justified as important to the project.

**Do you expect the feasibility study (up to TRL 4) to support the Network activities or be the focus of their activities for enhanced impact?**

- This is entirely up to the applicants to decide, make the case for and justify through peer review.

**Is there any requirement of academic level for the project lead applicant meaning could assistant professors/associate professors be project lead applicants?**

- Any eligible academic may be lead, so assistant professor can be project lead or early career – the whole team should be appropriate for the task each has.

**How will the expert panels be selected?**

- EPSRC will choose the expert panels based on coverage of expertise

**Currently I am based in an institute which is not qualified for EPSRC funding, but I am collaborating with some faculty members who are based in Institutions which are qualified for EPSRC funding. So if I apply for and EPSRC grant and if successful I can move to one of those institutions. Is that possible for this scheme? I need to be based in an institution qualified for this already?**

**Can non-HEI organisations (e.g. industry) be project co-leads?**

- EPSRC eligibility applies, so you will need to be part of an eligible institution or one which will be by the time of grant submission. You may be a member of the network regardless of institution/organisation.