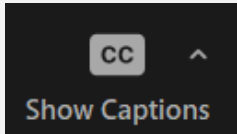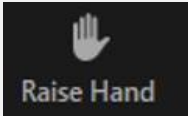# Format of today's webinar

- Introductions to the EPSRC International Team (~2 minutes)

- Webinar Housekeeping (~2 minutes)

- Presentation on the International Centre to Centre Research Collaborations: Outlines Funding Opportunity (~25 minutes)

- Moderated Question and Answer Session (~30 minutes)

Introduction to the team

- Rehemat Bhatia, Senior Portfolio Manager (International)*
- Somayyeh Mottaghi, Portfolio Manager (International)*
- Joanne Humphries, Senior Portfolio Manager (International)*
- Josh Moulding, Head of International

UKRI Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

*Presenting today

Housekeeping

- This event is being recorded for asynchronous participation.

- This event is fully closed captioned.

- Attendees are muted and your video is turned off.

- We have addressed all accessibility requests that we received.

- **Tech issues and Chat Protocol:**
  Please only use the chat for raising technical issues during the webinar (your name will be shown).

- The raise hand function is not being monitored.

Questions

- Submit your questions as the webinar progresses using the Q&A function.

- Have questions about the UKRI Funding Service? Email support@funding-service.ukri.org

- Questions can also be submitted to international@epsrc.ukri.org after the webinar.

- **Eligibility questions which refer to a specific individual or team should be emailed directly to us**.
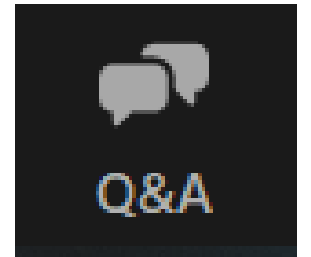
Purpose of the webinar

- Introduce and provide an overview of the International Centre to Centre Research Collaborations Funding Opportunity

- Ensure applicants understand key aims of the scheme

- Outline Application Process

- Assessment Process

- Full Proposal Stage

- Opportunity for Questions

Please make sure that you read the funding opportunity document

https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/international-centre-to-centre-research-collaborations-outlines/

Background and Overview to the Scheme

Core Aim of the Scheme: To enable world-leading partnerships by providing opportunities for leading UK research groups to work in partnership with the best international researchers for their research.

- Research is an international endeavour and many challenges that we face are global.
- EPSRC international strategy
- EPSRC strategic delivery plan 2022-25
- This is the fourth round of the EPSRC International Centre to Centre scheme.

Objectives of the Funding Opportunity

- Enable high-profile, best-with-best international collaborations focused on excellent research with impact

- Contribute to EPSRC strategy by supporting high-quality research collaborations which align with our research area strategies and address priorities related to our strategic delivery plan

- Further the UK's strategic needs in international science and innovation partnerships.

How many projects will be supported?

- 9-12 research consortia

- 3 – 5 year duration

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Definition of a Centre

- "Group of researchers who have a track record of working together with a view to achieving a particular aim collectively and for that to be the basis of the proposed research project"

- We understand some applications will also be submitted by formal centres.

Changes for 2024

Budget (EPSRC will fund 80% Full Economic Cost of a Project)
- **Total available:** £15 million (please note – this is the same as Round 3)

Maximum award per project – Increased for Round 4:
- **100% Full Economic Cost:** £1,800,000
- **80% Full Economic Cost:** £1,440,000

Both Outline and Full Application Stages will be run on The UKRI Funding Service.

Key Application Dates

Outline Application Opening Date	• 11 June 2024
⭐ **Webinar**	• 25 June 2024 (1100 UK Time)
Outline Application Closing Date	• 12 September 2024 (1600 UK Time)
Invited Full Application Opening Date	• Early-Mid December 2025 *
Invited Full Application Closing Date	• Early-Mid February 2025 *

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* anticipated

What we're looking for

Partnerships

- Academic partners can be based in any country outside the UK.
- Partnerships may be proposed to work with one or more overseas research organisations (including universities, public sector research organisations and publicly funded research institutes) in one or more countries.
- New international collaborations or build on existing relationships.
- Industry engagement is strongly encouraged (where appropriate).

Scope of Research

- Topic of research is open, subject to being majority in EPSRC remit.

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Not sure if your research is in EPSRC remit or have a multidisciplinary grant idea?
Email: epsrc_remit_queries@epsrc.ukri.org

Eligibility:
Who Can Apply for this
Funding Opportunity?

Who can apply

- **Individual UK investigators and Research Organisations:** Standard EPSRC eligibility requirements apply

- UK applicants may only be named as Investigator (either Project Lead* or Co-Lead**) on **one** proposal to this call.

- There is no demand management and there are no limits on the number of applications per organisation.

- **Applicant Teams (Consortia) must hold specific grant portfolios** Additional eligibility restrictions apply…

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Please note: Principal Investigator* and Co-Principal Investigator** have been renamed Project Lead and Project Co-Lead respectively

Consortia Eligibility

Applicant teams (consortia) must fulfil certain criteria. They must hold:

Criteria A

- One strategic research grant from EPSRC

AND/OR

Criteria B

A portfolio of EPSRC grants of at least £3 million

There are exceptions for some of the fundamental areas of research within EPSRC's remit.

Applicants must also satisfy the **EPSRC standard eligibility requirements.**

Grants must have end dates after 9 June 2024

Eligible: A grant with an end date on or after 10 June 2024.

Ineligible: A grant with an end date up to or on 9 June 2024.

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Consortia Eligibility

> **Criterion A:** The applicant consortium must hold at least one current EPSRC strategic research grant.

- List of EPSRC strategic research grants is available on the funding page
- The project lead of the centre to centre proposal can be the project lead **or** the project co-lead on the existing grant
- We expect at least 50% of the applicant team to be core team members on the existing strategic research grant(s), but not necessarily all
- In cases where an investment on the list consists of more than one large-scale grant (>£2 million) with different project leads and distinct objectives, the group of researchers on each separate grant may submit a proposal
- Smaller component grants (less than £2M) of a larger centre or similar investment do not qualify under this criterion but may be included in the qualifying portfolio under criterion B.

Consortia Eligibility

Criterion B: Applicant consortia must collectively hold a research portfolio of at least £3 million of current EPSRC research grants.

- Not every proposed core team member is required to hold a current EPSRC grant, but we expect the majority of the applicant team to be project leads or project co-leads on one or more of the existing grants cited.
- Any individual grant may only be cited against one proposal through this funding opportunity.
- Linked grants (parent and child grants) which make up a single research project count as one grant.

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Exceptions to Eligibility Rules

- In some fundamental areas of research within EPSRC's remit grant values are typically significantly lower and grants are comprised of smaller teams.
- EPSRC will consider exceptions where consortia have a significant EPSRC grants portfolio for their area
- Evidence of prior collaboration (e.g. through joint publications) will be required.
  - Consortia working in these areas must confirm eligibility with the EPSRC prior to outline submission by emailing the EPSRC International Team.

Consortia Eligibility – general requirements

- A track record of the core applicant team working together is required and will be assessed at both outline and full proposal stages.

- There are a number of grant types that will not qualify to satisfy either criteria, see the call document for details.

- Applicant teams may be based in a single discipline or multi-disciplinary, as long as they satisfy one of the criteria (A or B).

- We welcome applications from academics who job share, have a part-time contract, or need flexible working arrangements.

- We are committed to a policy of equal opportunities for our applicants for funding and encourage applications from those from under-represented groups.

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Can Current International Centre to Centre Grant Holders Apply?

Yes!

Current Grant Holders are eligible as long as the following guidance is followed:

- Research challenges to be addressed should be significantly different to their current grant
- It is expected that they will satisfy the eligibility criteria based on a different grant or set of grants and be working with different international partners.

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Who is not eligible to apply for this Funding Opportunity?

- Postdoctoral level fellowship holders are not eligible to apply for this funding opportunity.

- If you are not sure about your eligibility, please email us via international@epsrc.ukri.org

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Funding Available – What Can Be Funded in a Project?

Budget (EPSRC will fund 80% Full Economic Cost of a Project)
- **Total available:** £15 million (please note – this is the same as Round 3)

Maximum award per project – Increased for Round 4:
- **100% Full Economic Cost:** £1,800,000   **80% Full Economic Cost:** £1,440,000

Proposals may consist of a single research project or a suite of related research activities in a defined research topic.

We expect to see contributions from overseas partners to the project.

- The nature of the project will determine whether those are cash or in-kind contributions.

- Aspects of the 'Fit to opportunity' assessment criterion will assess the contribution of the overseas partner.

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Funding Available – What Can Be Funded in a Project?

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Maximum award per project – Increased for Round 4:
- **100% Full Economic Cost:** £1,800,000   **80% Full Economic Cost:** £1,440,000

- Travel, subsistence and consumables for UK project leads, project co-leads and research staff to visit or have extended work placements at a partner's laboratory overseas.
- Requests can be made for resources to enable different approaches to building and sustaining collaborations, which reduce the need to travel.
- We would expect the budget requested for the travel or alternative resources to be sufficient to support the collaboration between the centres.
- **Recognising the international nature of this opportunity, we welcome applications including additional care costs. Requests can also be made for resources to enable different approaches to building and sustaining collaborations, which reduce the need to travel.**

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Funding Available – Who Can Be Funded through a Project?

Budget (EPSRC will fund 80% Full Economic Cost of a Project)
- **Total available:** £15 million (please note – this is the same as Round 3)

Maximum award per project – Increased for Round 4:
- **100% Full Economic Cost:** £1,800,000   **80% Full Economic Cost:** £1,440,000

- Two full-time equivalent postdoctoral research staff should be requested on each proposal. Named postdoctoral researchers are allowed in a Centre to Centre application.

- If appropriate for the proposed project's direction and objectives, you can request postdoctoral researcher positions that do not necessarily span the full length of the project or include part-time positions.

- We do not expect applicants to include **short-term** postdoctoral researcher positions.

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Funding Available – Who Can Be Funded through a Project?

Overseas partner organisations and International Collaborators

Organisations are defined as universities, public sector research organisations or publicly funded research institutes.

International collaborators should be listed as project partners or visiting researchers.

Project partners: Can receive small amounts of funding from the grant, such as for travel and subsistence to attend project meetings. Extended visits should be listed as visiting researchers.

Visiting researchers: Support may be requested for visits by overseas collaborators to the UK for up to 12 months per individual. The application may include estates and indirect costs for any visiting researcher, regardless of whether the support being requested includes a salary contribution or is only travel and subsistence.

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Eligible Overseas Costs

Cost	Eligible?
Travel for UK researchers to partner labs	Yes
Extended overseas visits of UK based research staff	Yes
Hosting costs for overseas visitors in UK	Yes
Consumables of UK researchers while working overseas	Yes
Cost of transporting equipment used in joint experiments	Yes
Use of DTP funds to support EPSRC funded students in visits	Yes
Costs of overseas researchers while at UK institutions	Yes
Costs of overseas researchers at overseas institutions, including consumables and international PDRAs	No
Costs incurred by research undertaken by collaborators	No
Research projects led by non-UK institutions	No

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Funding Available:
What Cannot Be Funded in a Project?

- PhD studentships and funding associated with PhD studentships may not be included in the costs sought from EPSRC.
- Equipment over £10,000 in value (including VAT) is not available through this funding opportunity.

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Additional considerations

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

EPSRC aims to support a diverse and inclusive research environment where there is equality of opportunities.

At Full Proposal Stage, an EDI plan will be requested for this funding opportunity. Resources allocated to address EDI challenges are an eligible cost for this opportunity. In your plan, we expect you to:

- **Describe** the approaches and activities you will employ to enable and facilitate greater EDI in your project
- **Outline** actions to promote inclusive participation in international collaboration activities
- **Identify** EDI outcomes and methods required to require to reach them

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Am I expected to know about EDI as an applicant?
Project teams are not expected to have specific expertise in EDI, however, the plans should still demonstrate an understanding of any EDI challenges associated with your project.
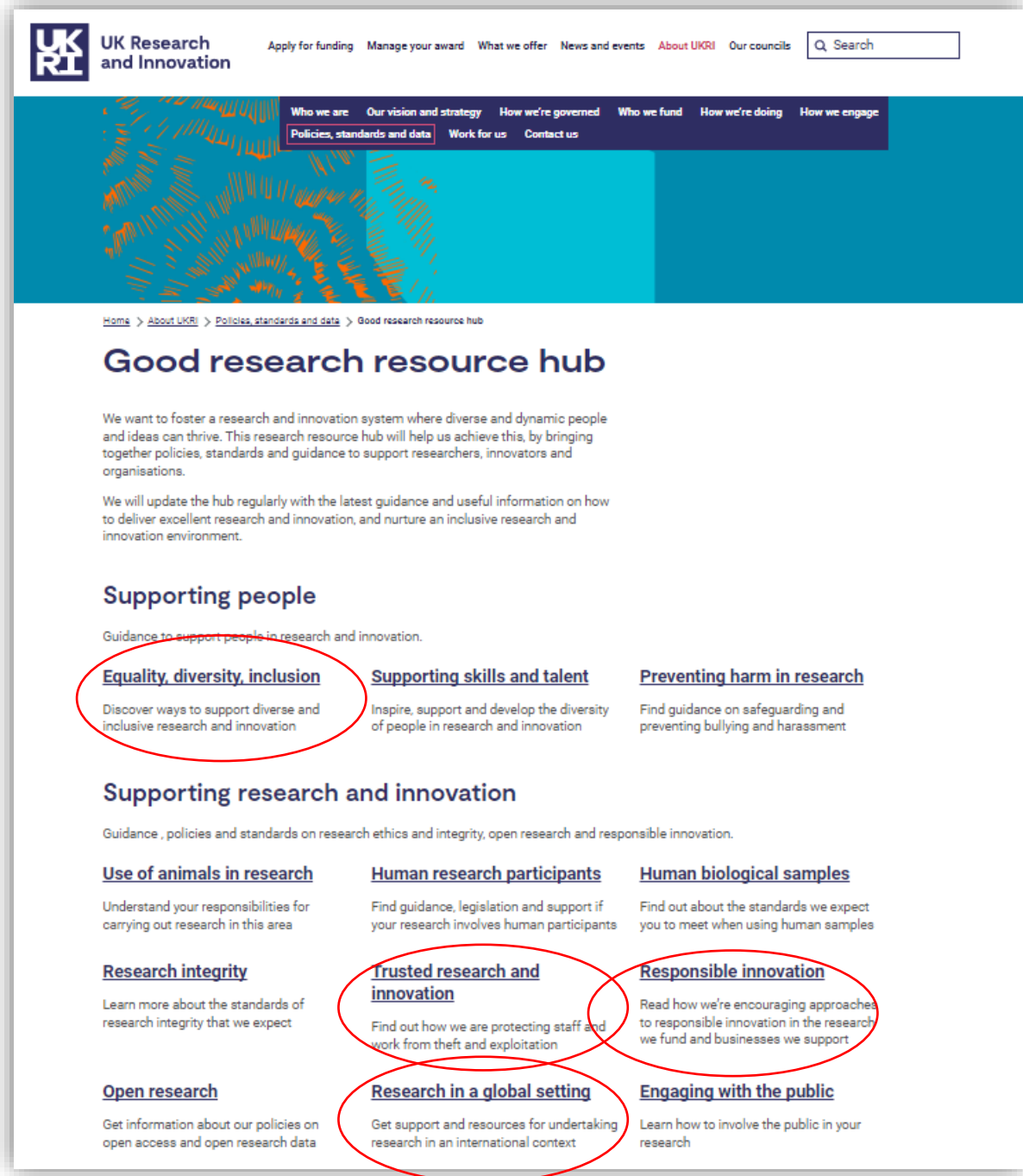
Should the plan be mentioned in my Outline Application?
These plans do **<u>not</u>** need to be referenced at Outline Stage but should be considered as you build your project with your partners.

Other considerations for International Collaborations

- Responsible Innovation

- Trusted research and innovation

- Export control

- Visas

What is Trusted Research and Innovation (TR&I)?

Trusted Research is a sector term for protecting the UK's intellectual property, sensitive research, people and infrastructure from potential theft, manipulation and exploitation, including due to interference by hostile actors.

The National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) website has guidance for academia and industry:

"The UK has a thriving research and innovation sector that attracts investment from across the world.'"

"More than half of UK research is a product of international partnerships."

"Trusted Research aims to secure the integrity of the system of international research collaboration, which is vital to the continued success of the UK's research and innovation sector."

https://www.npsa.gov.uk/trusted-research

Application and Assessment process

Key Application Dates

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Outline Application Opening Date	• 11 June 2024
Webinar	• 25 June 2024 (1100 UK Time)
Outline Application Closing Date	• 12 September 2024 (1600 UK Time)
Invited Full Application Opening Date	• Early-Mid December 2025 *
Invited Full Application Closing Date	• Early-Mid February 2025 *

* anticipated

Submission Process - Outline Applications

- Proposals can be multi-institutional, however only one application form should be submitted for each bid.

- Outline submissions should be made using The Funding Service. Please ensure sufficient time to:

  - **Create accounts** for members of your project team who do not currently have one.

  - Prepare for your **research organisation's submission process**

    - **Leave enough time** between submitting your proposal to your research office and the funding opportunity closing date.

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What do I need to submit?

1. **Summary**
2. **Core Team**
3. **Outline Application Questions**
   - Vision
   - Approach
   - Applicant and Team Capability to Deliver
   - Costs
   - Responsible Research and Innovation Statement
   - Fit to Opportunity

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What do I need to submit?

4. Application Cover Letter
Please detail which eligibility criterion is fulfilled and through which EPSRC grants.

- If the overseas partners are applying for or plan to apply for funding in parallel to enable their participation in the consortium, this should also be specified in the application cover letter.

- Further details are not required at the outline stage but will be required at the full application stage.

What do I need to submit?

Application Cover Letter
- If the required information is not included in the cover letter, the outline application will be rejected without consideration by the shortlisting panel.

Grant reference	Project Lead	Holding Research Organisation	Grant Type	EPSRC Grant Value	Grant end date
EP/000XXX/1					

How will my application be assessed?

Details of each assessment stage are listed in the funding opportunity guidance.

Outline Application

- Expert (Assessment) Panel

Invited Full Application

- Postal peer review
- Prioritisation Panel
  (resulting in a rank-ordered list)

At both stages, applications may be grouped by topic and ranked on separate lists, as required. If there is significant demand, we may group the applications by topic and run two or more expert or prioritisation panels.

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Assessment Criteria – Outline Stage

Vision: What are you hoping to achieve with your proposed work?

Explain how your proposed work:

- is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
- has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
- is timely given current trends, context and needs
- impacts world-leading research, society, the economy, or the environment
- meets the strategic aims of the funding opportunity

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Assessment Criteria – Outline Stage

Vision: What are you hoping to achieve with your proposed work?

Within this section we also expect you to:

- Focus on value and impact of the addition of proposed international partnerships, and what this grant would enable which would not otherwise be feasible with a UK focused consortia group.

- Describe (in brief) the whole planned research project or programme, including the scientific contribution of the listed international partners

- Address all the assessment criteria overall.

Assessment Criteria – Outline Stage

Approach: How are you going to deliver your proposed work?

Explain how you have designed your approach so that it:
- is effective and appropriate to achieve your objectives

Assessment Criteria – Outline Stage

Applicant and team capability to deliver:
How will the application team deliver the proposed research programme?

Evidence of how you, and if relevant your team, have:
- relevant research experience and skills to develop and deliver the proposed transdisciplinary research programme
- planned to identify and embed additional expertise where gaps in the team exist

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Assessment Criteria – Outline Stage

Fit to opportunity: How will you establish and/or maintain a unique, world leading activity?

- How your work will be of added value to the UK research base of the proposed international research partnership
- What the unique features of the joint research team are
- The appropriateness and timeliness of proposed international partnership
- The track record of UK applicant team working together
- How undertaking this work will meet national and international needs

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Outline Stage - Costs

- Provide a brief justification for the UK resources.

- Short description of types of costs that the international partner's planned financial contribution will cover (for example, staff costs, travel, laboratory access).

- Provide the approximate total values in GBP (£) for the expected directly incurred, directly allocated, indirect costs and exceptions

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Full Application Stage

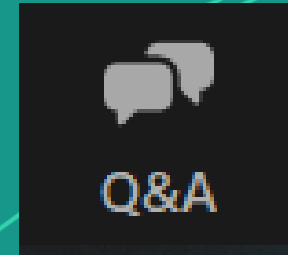The assessment of the full applications will take into account:

- The effectiveness and appropriateness of the approach to deliver the proposed work

- The applicant and teams capability to deliver, including the added value to research outcomes from the international partnership

- Resources and cost justification

Questions?

- Submit your questions using the Q&A function.

- Eligibility questions pertaining to an individual or team should be emailed directly to us.

- Have questions about the UKRI Funding Service? Email support@funding-service.ukri.org