

Driving Urban Transitions (DUT) Partnership 2024 FAQ

This document includes frequently asked questions (FAQ) to the UKRI DUT team and questions from the UK DUT webinar on 3 October 2024.

Q: Are partners from EU member states compulsory/integral to the bid development? Can they be involved in a light touch way i.e., as EU experts?

A: It is mandatory for there to be at least 3 partners from 3 different countries involved in a project. At least two of these partners either need to be from EU member states or countries that are associated to Horizon Europe. Each partner should be integral to the project.

Q: How should UK non-academic partners, such as private companies or NGOs, be budgeted? Do their costs need to come out of the UKRI limit of £400k? In the previous call (2022) IUK paid for these partners.

A: IUK are not involved in funding UK applicants for the call this year. All UK partners need to be funded out of the £400k available per project for UK applicants. This includes any UK non-academic partners who may be involved in your project.

Q: Within a project is the expectation that the PI addresses one topic and that other partners involved contribute from other topic areas/perspectives?

A: There is no restriction on the distribution of partners over topics or work packages. It is entirely possible for all partners to address one topic or to work across several, this is really down to the consortium as a whole to decide who is best placed to work on particular elements of the project.

Q: Each project involves partners from across different nations/countries, does each partner seek funding from their own national agency or self-fund?

A: Yes, the expectation is that each international partner would apply for funding from their own National Agency.

Q: Can an individual or organisation lead a consortium on one project and be a partner on another?

A: Individuals can only be involved as the lead for their organisation in two applications and only lead individual once where their organisation is the main applicant. Organisations can therefore appear in more than two applications, but the individuals associated with the organisation must follow the rule specified above.

Q: Is there a geographical restriction by UKRI/ESRC on implementing a research project and funding local partners through sub-contracting under the UK budget?

A: There is no geographical restriction on where research is implemented imposed by UKRI. In regard to sub-contracting, subcontracted work funded under the UK budget will be subject to the procurement rules of the research organisation. All costs supporting delivery of the subcontract are eligible. These will be paid at 80% FEC under the 'directly incurred: other' heading.

Q: What are the expectations and requirements for partners in regard to the application process?

A: Main applicants for projects are required to fill out all the information on behalf of the consortium and submit it on the UDIManager submission system. This includes general info, financial info, and any documents that need uploading. All partners involved in a project need to confirm their participation which is done via an email sent from the system. There may be national level requirements that partners need to adhere to, such as forms to be uploaded or national level submissions. This information will be available in the national funding agency annex (Annex Ain DUT 2024 Call Text) and the Main Applicant should ensure all these requirements are met for their partners ahead of submission.

Q: Do we need to apply to ESRC with separate documentation?

A: UK applicants do not need to submit to the UKRI funding system at pre-proposal or full proposal stage. However, UK applicants must submit the 'UK expenditure and additional information form' alongside the other documents required for the preproposal submission process. This form is available on the associated UKRI opportunities webpage under 'Additional info'.

Q: What sorts of research are we able to propose?

A: UK applicants can only apply for strategic research and applied research, not research falling exclusively under 'urban innovation and implementation'. Please see section 2.2 of the Call text for further details on this, particularly the information of page 12.

Q: Can you please confirm that UK applicants are eligible to apply for the Innovation oriented track?

A: UKRI funding is only available for applied or strategic research. However, this does not preclude UK applicants from joining an innovation-orientated project or consortium as a co-lead, provided the UK work packages and research are focused on strategic or applied research.

Q: What stage of career do I need to be at to apply?

A: UK applicants can be at any academic career stage, but the project team must have the level of skills, knowledge and experience that is appropriate to the proposed project. We would suggest attending to the following criteria, under 'Evaluation criteria' in the call text:

- excellence, intellectual merit
- impact and user engagement (societal and broader impacts of project results)
- quality and efficiency of project implementation

More information on this is available in the call text (page 37 onwards).

Q: UK funding is only available for 15mC. How can I get involved with the other transition pathways as a UK applicant?

A: There may be opportunities to be involved in these other pathways as collaboration partners in an unfunded capacity. More information on what collaboration partner roles include are found on section 3.1 of the call text, under 'Consortium: who can participate and apply'.

Q: Can you explain a bit more on the difference between UK terms and the EU's regarding 15mC topic 3?

A: We would encourage you to visit the 2024 Call Text and DUT webpages for the best outline of the 15mC transition pathway. There are three themes in the 15mC pathway: sustainable urban mobility, people-centred urban planning, and smart logistics. The three topics within this pathway are:

1. advancing urban mobility: innovations for inclusive and youth-centric mobility systems
2. reconsidering urban mobility systems: towards system innovation and proximity policies for sustainable city regions
3. evidence for the urban mobility transition, data and indicators for effective decision-making

Q: We have four team members in our project lead UK. With a total budget of £400k, how would you suggest we cost against these four different organisations?

A: How you distribute the available budget across partners is entirely up to your own discretion. However, you must ensure your proposed project is financially feasible across all the partners involved and all partners must also demonstrate added value to the project.

Q: Finland is a Member State so why does it have a * on the webinar slide?

A: Finland was marked with a star as under the terms of the DUT 2024 Call it is not an associated country or member state (it is an EU Member State, but the Finnish funder cannot be co-funded).

Q: Regarding selection, what if we passed evaluation but our international partners failed to?

A: The proposal will be assessed as a Consortium, not individual nations. Therefore, the overall project proposal will either be recommended for funding or it will not, following expert assessment.

Q: We have four co-leads from other countries who has their partners from their country. Are these OK or too complicated?

A: UKRI is only funding applicants based in the UK, so we would not fund those partners and they should secure funding from their national funding agency. However, from an overall consortium standpoint within the context of DUT, collaboration across countries is necessary provided it satisfies transnational rules set out in the call text. In terms of complexity, the number of partners a project chooses to have is dependent on the needs of the project. The minimum number of partners is three but there is no maximum number.

Q: Is the DUT call mainly addressed to research organisations? Could UK SMEs or non-profit participate and be funded?

A: The DUT 2024 Call welcomes projects addressing the full research and innovation spectrum. In terms of UKRI rules, UK SMEs and non-profits are able to participate and be funded where they collaborate with a UK research organisation which would lead the UK involvement in a project.

Q: Is it a must for the UK contribution to the project to include more than 50% of the humanities and social aspect even though the overall project has this social aspect included in the project but by other EU partners?

A: Yes, the UK contribution to the project must be predominantly (over 50%) within the social science remit. This is regardless of if your European partners are also conducting social science research within the project.

Q: If we are an SME not directly eligible for UKRI funding, I understand that we are eligible to participate as a co-lead, but we would need to partner with a UKRI funding-eligible organisation from the UK to participate in the project. Is this correct?

A: Yes, you would need to partner with an organisation that is eligible to receive funding from UKRI. They would need to be the UK lead for the project.

Q: How would the over 50% led by social sciences be measured tangibly? Would it be judged via the funding received from the social sciences related partners and working packages or anything else?

A: This will be assessed based on a number of criteria including the research and methodological content of work packages, costs attributed to social science partners and time commitments etc. It is important to highlight the social science content in the Summary of UK Activities section as well as the overall summary of research within your application.

Q: Is there a fixed GBP>EUR conversion rate that needs to be used for the UK expenditure and additional information form?

A: There is no standard exchange rate set for GBP>EUR. We recommend consulting with your Research Office on this and to use the most up-to-date conversion rate at the time of submission.

Q: Can third sector or organisations act as a Co-I and receive funding? Who cannot receive funding and only join as partners but on an in-kind basis?

A: Business, third sector or government body co-applicants based in the UK can also be included on proposals as a project co-lead. Read the including project co-leads from business, third sector or government bodies for details of eligible organisations and costs. Co-applicants from these organisations cannot be the UK National Contact Point (UK project lead) meaning they can only be a co-applicant on a proposal involving another UK organisation that is eligible to be a UK National Contact Point (UK project lead) and are unable to be a main applicant.

Q: Could you clarify the transnational rule about having the required number of countries in a partnership? Does this say we need two applicants from different EU member states or associated countries in addition to the three different countries? Or, that the three should include two from the starred countries?

A: The minimum number of national entities you can apply with for this call is three. This must include a minimum of two EU Member States of associated countries. The full list of these can be found on the DUT 2024 pages.

Q: In the call guidance, it says that there will be mandatory project events for funded projects. Are applicants expected to provide a budget for this in their applications?

A: The 2024 Call Text specifies that applicants should factor in a maximum of EUR 30,000 for their proposals regarding DUT mandatory event attendance.

Q: When budgeting for in person kicking off events, would the location be up to the consortium's decision or there is a requirement to attend events organised by DUT? If so, where would it be?

A: There are three mandatory events that every project is expected to contribute to via preparing short project presentations and/or posters throughout the life of the projects. In addition, funded projects should plan to contribute to at least one additional DUT event per year. Details on the locations of these events are unconfirmed but likely to be in Europe, more information on these requirements is available in the call text. Outside of these mandatory events, projects may wish to run their own events and, in that case, the locations of these would be up to the consortium.