

EPSRC Critical Mass Programmes to Drive a Sustainable Future Funding Opportunity Informational Webinar

Webinar Date/Time: January 23, 2025, 14:00 UK Time

Webinar Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctYn1DEzatc>

Funding Opportunity Webpage: <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/critical-mass-programmes-to-drive-a-sustainable-future/>

[Applicant Eligibility and Involvement](#)

[Project Partners](#)

[Assessment Process](#)

[Technology Readiness Levels \(TRL\)](#)

[Scope of Projects \(including interdisciplinarity\)](#)

[Existing EPSRC Investments](#)

[Critical Mass Definitions](#)

[Application Design and Project Funding Allocations](#)

This Funding Opportunity is intended as a pilot for EPSRC.

We will conduct review and evaluation activities as we deliver and conclude this funding opportunity to inform potential future funding rounds, which we hope to facilitate.

Please contact the Energy and Decarbonisation Team (energyanddecarbonisation@epsrc.ukri.org) and/or the Manufacturing and the Circular Economy Team (manufacturingandce@epsrc.ukri.org) if you would like a clarification on any of the answers provided in this document.

QUESTIONS		ANSWERS
Applicant Eligibility and Involvement		
1	Do the Co-I's have to be fixed at Expression of Interest stage? / Can a PL add a new CoL following Expression of Interest stage?	<p>Project Leads: There can only be one project lead listed in an application. Any individual may only submit one application overall as project lead, but an individual is permissible to appear as a project co-lead on other applications in this funding opportunity. There are no limits on the number of applications per organisation.</p> <p>Project Co-Leads: There is no limit on the number of project co-leads you are allowed. Guidance on eligible co-leads is available here: https://www.ukri.org/publications/roles-in-funding-applications/roles-in-funding-applications-eligibility-responsibilities-and-costings-guidance/ .</p> <p>Project co-leads can also be indicative. There is flexibility to change them; the list can expand and adjust, and individuals can be removed between the Expression of Interest and Full Stage. The same Project Lead should be present on both Expression of Interest</p>
2	Is it just one lead and one co-lead, or can it be multiple co-leads?	
3	When you say that only one Project-Lead is allowed, do you refer to the researcher/academic or to the Institution?	

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
		<p>and Full Stage submission unless exceptional circumstances justify a change in the project lead.</p> <p>Businesses: Businesses are not eligible applicant organisations as part of this funding opportunity. They must be listed as project partners.</p>
4	What distinguishes project co-leads and researcher co-leads?	<p>Role definitions are listed here: https://www.ukri.org/publications/roles-in-funding-applications/roles-in-funding-applications-eligibility-responsibilities-and-costings-guidance/</p>
5	I understand that PhD students cannot be directly funded through the funding. What is the reason for this, and what would be the route to include PhD students in a project?	<p>PhD studentships can be funded through any acquired external funding, for example, contributions from Project Partners.</p> <p>Our business rules do not permit studentship funding outside of Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) and Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs).</p>
6	How many co leads are possible and is it ok to include co leads from all levels i.e. advanced to early career researchers	<p>EPSRC have not set any specific career stage thresholds to be a project lead. Our standard policy detailed in Roles in Funding Applications applies. There is no limit on the number of project co-leads who can be involved in a project, and they can be from any career level.</p> <p>Please involve individuals in your project who will be able to allow you to deliver your project successfully. If you are invited to Full Stage, the "Applicant and team capability to deliver" section of the application will assess this to ensure that the project team has the necessary skills, experience, and track record to successfully complete the proposed research.</p>

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
7	<p>What are the are expectations for PI role in this funding opportunity? Specifically, what level of experience and support structures are considered essential or desirable for PIs?</p>	<p>For a Principal Investigator (PI), expectations may include:</p> <p>Relevant experience: The PI should have a strong track record in the research area relevant to the proposed project. This may include publications, previous grants, and experience in leading research teams.</p> <p>Leadership and management skills: The PI should be able to demonstrate their ability to lead and manage the project team, including experience in supervising and mentoring researchers.</p> <p>Research environment: The PI's research environment, including the institution and available resources, will be assessed to ensure that it is conducive to the success of the project.</p> <p>The specific experience and track record expected for a PI will vary. However, in general, the PI should be able to demonstrate a strong track record of research excellence and the ability to lead and manage a successful research project.</p> <p>The Host organisation statement should also identify additional support that the research organisation can provide that will ensure successful project delivery and provide enhanced career development opportunities.</p> <p>We would advise you to contact your research office as they will understand more. Please also note that Principal Investigator has been renamed to Project Lead.</p>
8	<p>Can co-leads be from professional staff as per the recent EPSRC CDT call or do they need to be included under other categories?</p>	<p>In the 2023 CDT call, EPSRC encouraged professional staff to be listed as Project Co-Leads if they were key for programme delivery, and directly involved in the management. A specific role for professional enabling staff is now listed on The Funding Service (TFS). The Full Stage of this funding opportunity will run on TFS.</p> <p>Identifying a suitable TFS Role for your professional enabling staff should depend on how they have contributed to the development of the proposal. If they have contributed significantly, please list them as Project Co-Leads.</p>

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
9	My organisation (Aerospace Technology Institute) currently isn't eligible to receive EPSRC funding, but I believe may meet the criteria for eligibility. Who is the best person contact point to discuss funding eligibility? Thank you	Eligible organisations for UKRI funding are listed on: https://www.ukri.org/publications/organisation-eligibility/research-organisations-eligible-for-ukri-funding/ Please note: there is a formal process to assess organisational eligibility. This could likely to take some time and might not complete in time during our application period.
10	While the language so far has been about Project Leads and Co-Leads, are multi-university partnerships acceptable?	Yes, multi university partnerships are eligible. Your proposed group size should be suitable for the project you propose.
11	Is there a preference for single academic institution bids, or do you prefer multi-academic institution bids?	
12	Is there a preference for a small or large consortia?	
Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)		
13	Is the assumption a TRL3 is achieved by project end after 5 years is around 2031, and then TRL3 =>TRL9 "translatable" within the next few years i.e. before 2040?	EPSRC funding is primarily focused on supporting research typically at Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 1-3, with some flexibility for addressing research questions at higher levels of TRL due to the circular and revisory nature of Engineering Sciences. This means the centrality of a proposal must be geared towards those levels. However, EPSRC is unable to fund development. Moreover, using EPSRC funds to subsidise the R&D work of a company or spin-out purposes is not an appropriate use of public funds. This is a standard constraint on EPSRC calls which are not co-delivered with Innovate UK funding.
14	You wrote "advanced renewable energy technologies" - do you expect fairly high TRL or translation/commercialisation within a fairly short period of time?	EPSRC typically funds projects which fall within TRL 1-3. On occasion this can be TRL4. This funding opportunity will also follow this trend. If invited to Full Stage, proponent groups should address how they will enable translation to the 2030s / 2040s domains to meet the UK's mid-long-term targets.
15	Can you please give some indication of what level of TRL you're looking for	Proposals can include: - Pioneering new technologies (with aim of proof-of-concept level ~TRL3, some flexibility here) -The rapid scaling and evolution of current technologies

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
Critical Mass (Programme) Definitions		
16	What is implied by Critical Mass?	<p>We define Critical Mass as:</p> <p>“A consortium of researchers with a view to achieving a particular aim collectively and for that to be the basis of the proposed research project.”</p> <p>We recognise that delivering a sustainable, prosperous and resilient future is complex and high-risk, requiring the integration of multiple stakeholders and broad interdisciplinary teams across and beyond the remit of EPSRC. A successful programme will exhibit a set of features which we believe to be vital to delivering impact towards ENZ aims. It is our intention that these investments will provide the scale, flexibility and length of award necessary to support this.</p>
17	Can critical mass also include capital? As in the right people, and the right equipment?	<p>Yes – please view the relevant section on the funding opportunity page.</p> <p>It is essential to demonstrate how the team proposed provides the capability to deliver the research programme i.e. delivering a sustainable, prosperous and resilient future is complex and high-risk, requiring the integration of multiple stakeholders and broad interdisciplinary teams across and beyond the remit of EPSRC.</p> <p>Please note: you are not expected to include this level of detail at the Expression of Interest stage.</p>
18	How important is achieving 'critical mass' for the evaluation? Should proposals describe specifically how 'critical mass' has been reached, or is much like other proposals to show that the proposed team can deliver the project?	<p>The focus for achieving Critical Mass is on Applicant and Team Capability to Deliver. The details for this assessment criteria will be listed on the Full Opportunity once published.</p> <p>This detail is not required at the Expression of Interest stage.</p>
19	What distinguishes a Critical Mass Programme from a standard Programme Grant?	<p>We encourage you to refer to the specific "Programmes must" and "Programmes should" within the 'What we are looking for' section of this Funding Opportunity.</p> <p>A key requirement for this specific funding opportunity is for projects to develop clear pathways for impact and translation to the UK's mid-to-long term future (translatable to the domain of the 2030s and 2040s).</p> <p>Demonstrable impact from the programme should be the medium and longer term. Programme Grant proposals are not usually structured in this way.</p>

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
		<p>Other differences between this funding opportunity and a programme grant are award size, duration, impact targeted in medium to long term (2030s-2040s+), focus on sustainability, and applying systems approaches.</p>
20	<p>What is the expected number of collaborative institutions for a successful project in this call?</p>	<p>Your project should involve institutions necessary for your project to be successful. It may be useful to collaborate with multiple institutions where needed to harness upon expertise to fulfil the transdisciplinary nature of such investigations - or you may find you have the resource within your own institution. We expect applicants to demonstrate the size, partnerships, disciplines and resources that they require to achieve the aims of envisaged by your proposal – this will be unique to each project.</p> <p>Upper limits on funding and duration of projects are stipulated which allow for scale, flexibility and length also support the asks of the Funding Opportunity in the 'Programmes Must' section.</p> <p>We encourage you to work with the disciplines and stakeholders you see most suitable for considering the wider context in which the proposed research and research outcomes will be targeted towards, and embed clear, realistic and proportionate impact and translation pathways.</p>
21	<p>Can you say more about what you want to see in terms of the systems approach. For instance, whether the systems approach should be continually reassessed throughout the 5 years and beyond?</p>	<p>Yes – we encourage and expect systems approaches to be incorporated, especially if the research portfolio area your proposed research falls within is a rapidly advancing field.</p> <p>We have indicated that “Programmes should anticipate the need for freedom to respond quickly to new arising challenges, bring in new collaborators, attract more funding, and cross-fertilise ideas“ where appropriate and so this may apply to the systems approach.</p> <p>In terms of Sustainability: EPSRC (on behalf of UKRI) expects programmes to embed careful consideration of environmental sustainability at all stages of the research and innovation process and throughout the lifetime of the grant.</p>
Project Partners		
22	<p>Would you welcome contributions (in cash or kind) from non-HEIs partners? Or would that be beyond scope of this call?</p>	<p>A project partner is a collaborating organisation who will have an integral role in the proposed research. They may contribute cash or in-kind contributions such as expertise, staff time or use of facilities. Project partners should be considered as part of your research team.</p>

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
23	Is it expecting in-kind or cash contribution from industrial partners?	<p>More information on project partner contributions are available here: https://www.ukri.org/councils/epsrc/guidance-for-applicants/what-to-include-in-your-proposal/project-partners-letter-of-support/ .</p> <p>During the assessment process, the impact of Project Partner contributions will be acknowledged, but the level of Project Partner contributions will not be a contributing factor for a funding decision. It is also understood by peer reviewers and panel members that Project Partner contributions are only intended as estimates.</p>
24	Can public sector e.g. health and charities be partners?	All industry and public sector bodies that are not on the list eligible to receive UKRI funding must be added as Project Partners. You do not have to indicate Project Partners at the Expression of Interest stage – they should only be listed at Full Stage.
25	While I understand that Businesses are not eligible applicant organisations as part of this funding opportunity, and that they are expected to be listed as project partners, as a Battery Research Business could we apply for funding via the 'Research Category' with 'The Faraday Institute' as a Lead and us as project partners?	<p>You can outline who your project partners will be at Expression of Interest stage if they are key to articulating your research aims. Please include more information within the Vision section.</p> <p>Project partners cannot normally receive funding directly from the grant. The two exceptions to this are:</p>
26	How can industrial partners, e.g. SMEs access funding	
27	Although SMEs can't receive funding from this call, can we have SME partners that can contribute and advise?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where a project partner is providing services or equipment that will go through a formal procurement process audited by the host research organisation • the project partner can receive small amounts of funding from the grant, such as for travel and subsistence to attend project meetings. These will need to be requested by the PI and will need to be fully justified.
28	Do industry/public sector partners need to be named as co-leads?	<p>This funding opportunity is not suitable to award funding to businesses such as SMEs. More information is available here: https://www.ukri.org/councils/epsrc/guidance-for-applicants/what-to-include-in-your-proposal/project-partners-letter-of-support/</p>
29	Can a UK Catapult Centre be a project partner with a University?	Yes, this is possible. Eligible catapults are listed on https://www.ukri.org/publications/organisation-eligibility/research-organisations-eligible-for-ukri-funding/#section-catapult-centres .

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
30	If an Industry Partner isn't funded, why would they take part in this?	Industry partners will be able to gain insights into the development of activities and pose problems to those within academia – as well as gain solutions to their problems and have access to academic expertise. Researchers could also undertake a secondment at an industry partner. Therefore, this will create a positive symbiosis between industry and academia.
31	Can I include into the partners institutions from Chile and Denmark? As I understood, I can as soon as I only cover cost of overseas researchers while in the UK, as well as overseas visits from UK based staffs ... is there any restrictions with the costs for overseas researchers?	Yes, you can include international collaborators. They must be listed as project partners or visiting researchers. We included a table of eligible overseas costs in the webinar – you can view this table in the slides here: https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/EPSRC-030225-Funding-Opp-CriticalMassProgrammesDriveSustainableFuture-WebinarSlides.pdf
32	How do you envisage programmes could engage policy / policy makers?	<p>There are no expectations or set strategies for the method of engaging with policy and/or policymakers, as every project is unique. We would suggest considering:</p> <p>Before applying, identify and engage relevant policymakers, understand their needs, and ideally involve them in early research design.</p> <p>Whilst devising your proposal, identify a clear impact pathway, request necessary resources to support policy engagement, and justify policymaker involvement in your proposal and demonstrate a commitment to engagement from the outset.</p> <p>We would advise you to also identify and read relevant government strategies as they may be helpful for you as you formulate your proposal.</p>
Scope of Projects (including Interdisciplinarity)		
33	Should the project be focused on the delivery of a technological solution, or can it be about resolving fundamental challenges that will enable multiple solutions?	Both of these aspects are applicable to enabling a sustainable future in the 2030s/2040s. Please ensure you demonstrate the need and potential pathways for impact in the mid-long-term future.
34	Do you expect we develop system at grid-scale by the end of the project?	No. There are many routes to impact for research and developing an entire system is not necessary.
35	The "sustainability" that this call looks at refers to as environmental sustainability, rather than economic sustainability or social sustainability?	We encourage you to consider all three of these types of sustainability.

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
	Or would you prefer applications that cover all the three pillars of sustainability?	
36	Can bids from IES and Critical Mass Programmes be combined?	No. An IES Programme and a Critical Mass Programme should be treated separately. You can submit a proposal in the IES research area and an unrelated proposal in the Critical Mass Programmes part of this funding opportunity, but they must be independent and standalone from each other. Any individual may only submit one application overall as project lead, but an individual is permissible to appear as a project co-lead on other applications in this funding opportunity. If you have a proposal which is successfully funded, it is up to you who you grow your engagements / collaborations with, as with any research programme.
37	Would sustainable textile manufacturing fall under the remit for this call?	Yes, it does fall under the remit of this funding opportunity. Please remember to describe how your project is unique and where differences to already funded project(s) exist.
38	Can bio renewable/biofuel crops and products be considered within this call?	Potentially, but it must be complementary to other UKRI funded activities (e.g. Supergen Bioenergy Hub).
39	Is the funding targeted at hardware solutions or digital solutions such as holistic systems tools to improve understanding of these areas also eligible?	The core focus of the programme should not be in EPSRCs ICT / Software remits e.g. Computer architecture, algorithms of lower energy demand. For specific queries, please email energyanddecarbonisation@epsrc.ukri.org
40	Is the topic "data-driven sustainable energy system solutions, such as supporting operation and maintenance" eligible?	
41	Can "technologies" include software technologies?	No. The core focus of the programme should not be in EPSRCs ICT / software remits, for example, computer architecture or algorithms of lower energy demand. There may be some flexibility if it is around digitalisation of energy grids / grid management on the applied side.
42	Is ammonia an area of funding interest within the call? With reference to the exclusion of H ₂ : is ammonia within scope?	Ammonia is allowed as a research area, however, please contact us to discuss the details of your project so we can advise further.

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
43	Would ammonia production and utilisation beyond hydrogen-based systems be eligible?	<p>Hydrogen can be used as a feedstock, but we would not allow an application that is researching the production of hydrogen as a feedstock, nor the storage or transport of that hydrogen.</p> <p>Please send an email to energyanddecarbonisation@epsrc.ukri.org with a short overview of what you intend to include in your programme, and we can advise on remit. Please note that eligibility will depend on if the Expression of Interest or full application is aligned to the remit of the funding opportunity.</p> <p>You would have to ensure avoid any duplication of existing research being undertaken</p>
44	Which one would you prefer -- providing additionality to the current or foreseeable UKRI portfolio? Do you have any guideline for the foreseeable portfolio, how do we make sure our proposed foreseeable programme will be what UKRI will be looking at?	<p>We encourage you to avoid overlap with areas covered by currently active funding opportunities or pre-announcements on the EPSRC/UKRI Funding Finder in Managed Areas - for example https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/3d-nanoscale-metamaterials-hub-for-a-sustainable-future/.</p> <p>Please ensure your programme does not duplicate efforts already being undertaken by existing investments. Details of how to identify those investments are listed on Page 12 of this document.</p>
45	Can hydrogen be included within whole systems analysis under the IES highlight area - i.e. as a counterfactual to other forms of IES? And can it be included as a part of hybrid interseasonal energy storage systems?	No, this is not possible.
46	Is the Topic "Liquid Hydrogen storage solutions (i.e., composite vessels) on aircraft enabling	Yes, so long as a proposal sits distinct from the work being carried out by the EPSRC-funded hydrogen hubs, Hi-Act and HyRes, and does not concern production of hydrogen,

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
	the transition from fossil fuels to low/zero emission fuels" eligible?	or integration of hydrogen into the energy system, then it will be within remit of this call. An example of Hydrogen remits included in this call might be investigations into material degradation by hydrogen in systems being powered by the fuel, or investigations in hydrogen for sustainable transport, including land, air, sea and cross modal.
47	Hydrogen as an energy storage media is out of the scope. However, is using hydrogen (hydrogen is not a storage media) in the technology system also excluded?	Hydrogen Interseasonal Energy Storage is out of scope. All hydrogen areas are out of scope for the IES highlight area so you also cannot apply as hydrogen in the whole energy system for IES.
48	In the call document it says that EPSRC will fund projects looking at decarbonisation of transport but not those looking at industrial decarbonisation. Can you please clarify?	Decarbonisation of transport, including land, air, sea and cross modal is eligible. Industrial Decarbonisation is out of scope due to previous recent UKRI investment activity. Please see EPSRC's Definition of Industrial Decarbonisation and note the investment activity of the Industrial Decarbonisation Challenge .
49	Are cross-council research proposals supported?	Cross council research proposals are supported, and involvement of researchers from other disciplines is welcome and encouraged where necessary for the programme.
50	Are you equally open to alternative decarbonisation mechanisms such as behavioural changes in production and consumption?	The majority of your proposed research must fall within EPSRC remit i.e. over 51% EPSRC remit.
51	As this is a Transdisciplinary call - is there an EPSRC expectation on the % that should be within the EPS remit - normally this is 50% - is this correct or should it be higher?	We understand that sustainability research is often inter- or transdisciplinary by necessity. Therefore, if you are taking an inter- or transdisciplinary approach, applicants are expected to co-create solutions between different disciplines, within and beyond EPSRC's remit, as appropriate. Co-creation is a key pillar in ensuring a successful inter- or transdisciplinary research programme.
52	Much of the focus seems on technological development of sustainability solutions, but to what degree of importance will you place upon Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences providing a key role in ensuring that sustainability solutions are justly done, during technological development?	It is not stipulated for this funding opportunity that you must involve researchers from other disciplines – but – a trans- or interdisciplinary approach may elevate and/or drive your project in a positive direction and be highly impactful. Net zero is a priority across all parts of UKRI in addition.
53	Are you prioritising projects that address multiple themes?	Projects which address multiple themes are not being prioritised.

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
54	Is there guidance on division of budget within EPSRC and other council remits?	The funding for the proposals will be provided by EPSRC, hence the majority of a proposal must fall within EPSRC remit (over 51%).
55	Does interseasonal storage also consider long-duration energy storage with >10 hours discharge beyond batteries?	Yes, so long as it is delivering at the larger scale e.g. to a grid/system level i.e. not a small battery for a car or computer. We define interseason as storing energy 3 or more months.
56	Would off-grid seasonal energy storage be eligible?	Yes, but it must be inter-seasonal (3 or more months of storage).
57	For the IES area, will you be prioritising novel technologies, or would novel combinations of extant and emerging technologies adapted for a UK context be acceptable?	Both of these types of topics are acceptable, and there will be no prioritisation of either topic.
58	Would sustainable software engineering fall under the remit for this call?	No. This is because the novelty of work would be within the EPSRC remits of ICT than Energy & Decarbonisation or Manufacturing and the Circular Economy.
59	Given the Sustainable Industrial Futures programme has not yet been awarded, how can we avoid duplicating it?	Industrial decarbonisation is not in the remit of the Critical Mass Funding Opportunity. Any areas can be roughly referred to in the funding opportunity text or via the publication of the Expression of Interests: https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/EPSRC-NERC-210824-Funding-Opp-SustainableIndustrialFutures-ExpressionsOfInterest.pdf
60	Thank you. Decarbonisation of transport only? Or decarbonisation of other areas i.e., space, built environment?	Decarbonisation of built environments is within EPSRC remit and is in scope of this funding opportunity. Decarbonisation in Space / Space technology is not within EPSRC remit.
61	Can water and water-related research be considered within this call?	Water is a broad research area. We would encourage to ensure your proposal addresses a net zero challenge, and to email us directly.
Existing EPSRC Investments		
62	Considering that the objectives of the recently funded manufacturing hubs have not yet been fully made public or are not entirely visible, how can we identify the research gaps to ensure our proposal under this call is complementary and addresses unmet needs?	We understand that you will not be able to comment on unannounced outcomes, including Round Three of the Full Stage of the Manufacturing Research Hubs. The Outline Stage proposals for the third round of the Manufacturing Research Hubs are accessible to view on the EPSRC outcomes website.

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
63	<p>On eligibility, the guidance says: "we will not fund...areas already supported by the programmes successfully funded through:...Manufacturing research hubs for a sustainable future (rounds one, two and three)" but then it says: "Programmes addressing areas covered by investments made in manufacturing research hubs for a sustainable future are not excluded from this funding opportunity." This appears to be contradictory. Will you or will you not fund areas covered by the manufacturing hubs?</p>	<p>Each Hub has its own remit which may be wide or specifically focused on a certain topic. We encourage you to explain how your proposed research addresses a gap that a Hub does not cover.</p>
64	<p>What is the best resource/link to look at EPSRC investment and strategic priorities?</p>	<p>We would recommend applicants to view:</p> <p>EPSRC Strategic Delivery Plan: https://www.ukri.org/publications/epsrc-strategic-delivery-plan/epsrc-strategic-delivery-plan-2022-to-2025/</p>
65	<p>In terms of the old grants on the web it was useful to see the portfolio in terms of those funded, what was funded etc. Do we have something like that now with panels, dates, awards etc. Probably me just unable to find the information that is presented in this way?</p>	<p>https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/EPSRC-170622-BuildingNetZeroFuture.pdf</p>

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
		<p>EPSRC Manufacturing and the Circular Economy Theme Overview Page: https://www.ukri.org/what-we-do/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/manufacturing-and-the-circular-economy-theme/</p> <p>EPSRC Energy and Decarbonisation Theme Overview Page: https://www.ukri.org/what-we-do/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/energy-theme/</p> <p>EPSRC funded projects https://www.ukri.org/what-we-do/what-we-have-funded/epsrc/ https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/epsrccdatateam/viz/EPSCRFundingApplicationOutcomes/MeetingList</p> <p>Gateway to Research: Gateway to Research</p> <p>UKERC Energy Data Centre Projects Webpage: https://ukerc.rl.ac.uk/cgi-bin/ercri4.pl?GChoose=gsource&GCatSum=1&GSumCat=244&HTC=D3E42139&SHTC=293B4AF&SSHTC=</p>
Application Design and Project Funding Allocations		
66	<p>I understand that for the IES call 5 years is the max. Is this the preferred/expected length. For a multi-institution project 3 years may be more suitable based on the £3M available and the nature of the challenge - particularly in the systems area. Can you comment on preference for length?</p>	<p>The duration and funding requested should be tailored to your proposed research. These aspects should be tuned to enable impact to be achieved whilst balancing risk. Smaller awards or shorter durations can be requested – this includes the IES area. The maximum amount of funding you can apply for is £3m.</p> <p>Critical mass programmes might need to make use of the scale, flexibility and length that a five-year award provides to support their inherent complexity and impact timelines. There is more complexity and scale to deliver the Critical Mass Programmes than the IES programmes and this is reflected in the difference in maximum award sizes allowed.</p>

QUESTIONS		ANSWERS
67	For IES, the programme has £9m for projects up to £3m, so three projects potentially funded. will the IES project not in the top 3 for example join the other list of funding (not IES focused)?	If we have high quality proposals of fund size smaller than the maximum award size, there may potentially be more than three projects funded. However, if there are fewer than three of appropriate quality and complimentary to the landscape then fewer may be funded. The funding you request should be appropriate and tailored to your project.
68	Can we allocate 'flexible' funds to be responsive to meet changes based on findings i.e. not specify the specific work-package(s) as it will be an evolving programme of activities?	It is possible to request flexible funds. Please ensure you outline why these types of funds are necessary.
Assessment Process		
69	Will you be 'match-making' or making introductions to potentially complimentary ideas following the Expression of Interest?	Yes, we will facilitate a “match-making” exercise if one or more Expression of Interest proposals hit the same area but only with prior consent from the project leads.
70	Match making can be challenging and not always appropriate - if you identify three to match will any go to full stage, or will it be you can only progress to full stage if you accept the marriage proposal.	The award limits will remain the same. It is not mandatory to accept a match. You may remain as separate proponent groups within the same assessment process.
71	Imagine you have a whole bunch that are fab, if you do invite a larger volume will you provide the applicants the total number invited to assess likely percentage of success.	A limited number of projects will be invited to Full Stage. EPSRC reserves the right to sift Expression of Interests which perform weaker against the Expression of Interest assessment criteria / fit to call / complimentary to the funded landscape. We will be transparent on the number invited to Full Stage, and publish the Full Stage panel outcomes on the EPSRC Tableau Panel Outcome Tool .
72	Do you have a feel for how many full proposals you will invite (given small number of final funded proposals)?	
73	How many proposals do you expect to be invited to the full proposal stage?	
74	How many applications will be invited to submit full proposal?	
75	How many Expressions of Interests do you expect to go through to the full stage?	

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
76	At Expression of Interest stage, will the list of co-leads be judged in any way (e.g. to show critical mass), or is it based on the vision and additionality statements only?	You should include individuals in your proposal who are the most suitable to deliver desired research outcomes. This will be assessed via the Applicant and Team Capability to Deliver assessment criterion at Full Stage. Your proposal Vision should also demonstrate why this funding opportunity is the most suitable to achieve your proposed research outcomes i.e. why you have applied for this specific managed mode opportunity and not an EPSRC responsive mode grant.
77	What will be the assessment criteria at Expression of Interest stage?	<p>Expression of Interest submissions will be evaluated by EPSRC staff members internally after the closing date. This review will assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That you meet our funding eligibility requirements • The majority of your research is within EPSRC remit • Your application aligns to the scope and objectives of this funding opportunity • A sustainable future is a core focus of the programme and not a mere beneficiary or potential impact pathway • Your programme will provide additionality to the current and foreseeable UKRI portfolio • If any applications with the same area of research focus submitted into the same round of this funding opportunity could be offered the opportunity to strengthen their consortia by forming a single full stage application with other applicants.
78	Can you elaborate on assessment at Expression of Interest stage? Such a wide scope will make it difficult to decide between apples and oranges.	
79	<p>Please can you clarify how the internal shortlisting will work. Specifically, is the intention to invite all Expressions of Interests that are deemed to be eligible and meet the assessment criteria through to full stage? If not, how will EPSRC prioritise which ones to invite?</p> <p>If you are prioritising at Expression of Interest stage, will you be taking a portfolio approach i.e. would you invite just the most compelling cases, even if they only address a few portfolio gaps, or would you be looking to extend invitations to cases that might not be quite so compelling but which allow a fuller coverage of more portfolio gaps?</p>	<p>We will identify how a proposal complements our existing portfolio. If there are multiple proposals which demonstrate a high potential to succeed within the same portfolio area, this would not meet the need for the funding opportunity. Our shortlisting focus will be to invite the most compelling proposals, and which are complementary to the existing portfolio and identify current needs and gaps. We will steer the process in this way.*</p> <p>*Please be aware that EPSRC reserves the right to apply portfolio balance during funding decisions following the panel. A lower, ranking proposal of another area may go forward to funding if there are multiple proposals targeting the same area at the top of the rank ordered list.</p>