

STFC Research in Industry Funding General Guidance Notes

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Scope

Research In Industry funding aims to engage industry in STFC's programme technology development activities. Applications for funding should be made in response to specific announcements of opportunity.

The aim of Programme Technology Development is to develop the technology capabilities needed to underpin UK technology leadership in future STFC science projects. It applies to the pre-construction phase of projects and seeks to pave the way for more:

- UK intellectual leadership in key work packages in international projects;
- UK industrial return on construction phase contracts;
- knowledge transfer through collaborative developments, spin-out formation, skills transfer and intellectual property licensing.

Although funds will primarily be provided for programme technology development, proposals should also show evidence of commitment to knowledge transfer. Plans for knowledge transfer will form part of the assessment criteria.

Eligibility

Applications for Research in Industry funding may be made by any industrial organisation (including research or training organisations and not-for-profit operations) that can demonstrate, through a competitive selection process, that it possesses the relevant technical capabilities and capacity to meet the scheme's objectives. Normally, prospective applicants will be required to complete a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) before submitting a full proposal. STFC will assess them and advise prospective applicants whether they meet the minimum qualifying criteria for Research in Industry funding.

Higher education institutes, recognised academic analogues and other organisations eligible to apply for STFC research grants should continue to use the Je-S research grant proposal form, not the Research in Industry form.

Applications may be made by individual companies, or by collaborations between a company and one or more partner organisations, either industrial or academic.

How to apply

Applications for Research in Industry funding are made by submitting to STFC a completed and signed Research in Industry proposal form accompanied by a document, known as Case for Support, setting out the proposed programme of research. The proposal form is available [here](#).

In most cases, prospective applicants will first be required to complete a [Pre-qualification questionnaire](#) (PQQ). STFC will assess these and advise prospective applicants whether they meet the minimum qualifying criteria for Research in Industry funding.

Before completing a PQQ or a full Research in Industry proposal, applicants should read the [general guidance notes on Research in Industry](#), the [guidance notes on completing the Research in Industry form](#) and the guidance associated with the particular [funding scheme or announcement of opportunity](#) to which they are responding.

Collaborations between two or more partner organisations

Where the project is a collaboration between partners each of whom seeks funding from STFC, each partner must submit a separate proposal form requesting the resources they need, together with a **common** Case for Support. Industrial partners should submit the Research in Industry proposal form, academic partners should submit a Je-S proposal form for their research grant in the normal way. For administrative purposes, one of the participating organisations must be identified as the Lead Partner. The proposals will be assessed as a package.

Proposals for collaborative projects must include, in the case of support, collaboration agreements, including details of the management of confidentiality/disclosure and intellectual property agreements.

Costings

Research in Industry funding will be awarded through an *Agreement* between STFC and the supplier company. Through these agreements, STFC will provide up to 100% of the full economic costs of the proposed research. The Research in Industry proposal form should display the full economic costs of the proposed project together with the amount requested from STFC – which could be less than 100% if, for example, the applicants plan to offer a discount or to contribute to the costs themselves.

VAT

HM Revenue and Customs has ruled that funds made available under the Research in Industry scheme are not consideration for any supply and are outside the scope of

VAT. As such, it is STFC's understanding that there is no liability to account for output tax on the awards and that VAT incurred would not generally be deductible as input tax. HMRC has, however, indicated that there may be circumstances in which VAT incurred could be treated as input tax. Research in Industry fundholders should, therefore, take such advice as they consider necessary to determine the status of a project.

Overheads

The full cost should include full overheads – covering costs that cannot be directly charged to specific projects plus any profit margins – shown *either* as:

- part of a charge-out rate for staff time; *or*
- a separate cost item (to be called *Indirect Costs*). If staff *charge-out rates*, rather than *staff costs*, are used, zero should be entered under Indirect Costs.

On any one Research in Industry proposal form, overheads should be shown in one or other of these two ways, not as a mixture of both. If the second method is used, then, if the amount of staff effort funded in the agreement is less than that in the original proposal, STFC would expect there to be a corresponding reduction in indirect costs.

Direct costs

Direct costs – costs that will be specific to the proposed project, will be charged as the cash values actually spent and can be supported by an audit record – should be split into the following subheadings:

- staff costs or staff charge-out rates (depending on how overheads are charged)
- travel and subsistence;
- equipment;
- other costs.

All costings should be at current prices in pounds sterling, inclusive of VAT and other taxes the host organisation anticipates having to pay for materials/services acquired.

The costings should make no allowance for inflation. If the proposal is successful, STFC will include an allowance for inflation, based on standard government indices, in the ensuing Agreement.

Intellectual Property

The research undertaken will need to further the particular field of science for the good of the UK as a whole and not benefit the applicant or STFC in isolation. There will therefore be no defined service provided to STFC. One of the conditions attached to the funding will be to provide STFC with a final report to show what has been achieved with the funds provided and how the results have been disseminated.

STFC does not normally make a claim to the intellectual property arising from the research it supports and, unless there is insufficient assurance at the outset that it would be exploited for the greater good, the intellectual property arising from

Research in Industry projects will be vested initially in the supplier company. A company may choose to retain these rights or assign them to a third party under an exploitation agreement.

Case for Support

The completed proposal form should be accompanied by a self-contained Case for Support, covering the following:

- The objectives of the project, its relevance to programme objectives and anticipated achievements and benefits;
- The underlying rationale and scientific/technological issues being addressed;
- The programme and plan of research, showing what alternatives have been considered and why the proposed method is preferred;
- The proposed management of both the project and resources;
- The relationship to any earlier or current work of the applicants and any collaborating organisations and any relevant work elsewhere;
- The research experience of the investigators and any collaborators;
- A fully justified case for the staff effort, equipment, travel and subsistence and other costs requested;
- An estimate of the annual profile of expenditure;
- Proposals for the wider dissemination of the results;
- In the case of collaborative projects, a copy of the collaboration agreement, including details of the management of confidentiality/disclosure and of intellectual property arising from the research.

A proposal without a case for support will not be accepted.

For more guidance, including rules about page lengths, allowable font sizes etc, refer to the specific notes associated with the particular scheme or call for proposals to which you are responding.

Assessment

Proposals will be assessed on the basis of their technical excellence and alignment with programme objectives by suitably qualified expert peer reviewers from academia, government and industry. Overseas peer reviewers may be used, as well as those based in the UK. Proposals may be assessed by both individual referees, who will provide a confidential report, and by peer review panels. They will be assessed against specific scheme selection criteria, which are likely to include:

- Scientific and technical excellence
- relevance to programme objectives
- novelty, timeliness, promise and feasibility
- management and planning

- cost effectiveness

Papers to referees and panel members are marked *In Confidence*, with the intention of ensuring that the contents of the proposal are not made more widely known than is necessary for proper assessment.

Referees and panel members are required to disclose conflicts of interest, personal or institutional, which relate to a proposal they have been asked to assess.

Applicants are invited, in the proposal form, to nominate one referee. If there are particular individuals you think should not be approached as referees, you should indicate this, with the reasons, in a covering letter.

Peer reviewers will make recommendations to STFC. The final decision on whether the proposed project will be funded rests with STFC.

Data Protection Act 1998/Freedom of Information Act 2000

STFC will use information provided on the Research in Industry proposal form in processing the proposal and any agreements subsequently entered into, including payments, maintenance and review processes. This includes:

- Registration of proposals.
- Operation of STFC processing and management information systems.
- The acquisition of UK and possibly international referee comments on the proposal or preparation of material for use by peer review panels.
- Statistical analysis to inform the evaluation of the quality of the research undertaken and to study demographic trends.
- Policy and strategy studies.

To meet STFC's public accountability and information dissemination obligations, details of funded projects may also be made publicly available on STFC's external Web site and other publicly available databases, and in reports and/or paper documents.

The following information contained in funded research proposals may routinely be made publicly available.

- Name of the host organisation
- Details of applicants (title, forenames, initials, surname, organisations and department)
- Name(s) of project partner organisations
- Project title
- Summaries of the proposal
- Value and duration of proposal (and any subsequent agreement)
- Details of peer review bodies involved in the awarding decision.

Applicants should ensure that, where necessary, the title, summary and objectives of the proposed research are worded in a way that protects commercially confidential or

sensitive information. Applicants should obtain the necessary agreements from any collaborators with a commercial interest in the proposal for the inclusion of their material. Where information is “commercial-in-confidence”, it should be clearly identified as such and submitted as a separate attachment to the proposal form and the Case for Support.

Contact STFC's Data Protection/FOI Officer for further information:
Tel: 01793 442129