

## **New Approaches to Data Science Frequently Asked Questions**

These questions include those raised at the Information Day held on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Q: What size of proposals are permitted?**

A: There is no strict minimum or maximum, it is up to applicants to justify their request. As a guide, we have up to £10m to support three to four grants.

### **Q: How long should the proposed project be?**

A: There is no strict minimum or maximum, it is up to applicants to justify their request but we are looking for substantial programmes of work.

### **Q: Can I submit more than one proposal?**

A: Any single investigator is only permitted to appear on one proposal, either as investigator or co-investigator

### **Q: Will everyone who applies be invited to interview?**

A: We expect this call to be oversubscribed, so almost certainly not. The number invited through to interview depends on the volume and quality of the proposals submitted.

### **Q: Do we have to work with users who have expressed an interest in the call?**

A: No. Some users have contacted us and asked us to provide contact details so we have done so. It is completely up to applicants to assemble the best team to work together.

### **Q: You mention a restriction of one application per institutional investigator. Does that apply to external organisations as well?**

A: No, just the investigators but you will need to explain and justify how your work is a close collaboration as part of the proposal and that will be assessed at the outline panel. Therefore we would not expect to see the same partner appear in a large number of proposals.

### **Q: You say that we need to complement and not overlap with the Turing and Farr Institutes. Are we expected to approach them beforehand to ensure this?**

A: No. The Turing Institute is enthusiastic to work with the successful proposals but you should talk to them afterwards, once you know if you are successful or not. The complementary aspect is for applicants who are already involved with the Turing or Farr Institutes and have funding from them already. As for any

large investment, you should justify why you need funding from EPSRC, and as part of that justification you should explanation of how you fit in the landscape as it currently stands.

**Q: The remit of the Turing Institute is quite wide. Am I going to be turned down because, in theory, the Turing Institute could support what I'm planning?**

A: No. It's more about the concrete pieces of work that are being done by them. We cannot foresee the future and all sorts of things could be done by all sorts of people - we're not asking you to guess that! But please get in touch with Donna Brown from the Turing Institute if you think there could be substantial overlap.

**Q: Does the single entry rule apply to institutions?**

A: There is no limit on institutional entry, only on PIs. However, please consider that we expect substantial institutional support on these proposals and this forms part of the assessment criteria.

**Q: What sort of commitment from the partner institutions will be sufficient?**

A: You are only required to have one institutional letter of support but if the project does have substantial interaction with other institutions you will have to explain how those other institutions will support it. You can add a letter from them or explain it in the proposal as appropriate.

**Q: Proposals must include novel maths or ICT. Are those your primary target areas? Any preference over which?**

A: The call is about fundamental areas within the space of data science. Fundamental science should be a part of this. We would like to see some novel maths and/or ICT but the balance of this is up to the applicants.

**Q: You said that the PI should have a strong track record in data science. Is that an EPSRC track record?**

A: Not necessarily. The remit of the proposal needs to be mainly within EPSRC scope so the PI of the programme needs to reflect that. They can have experience beyond that, of course. What matters is the track record, experience, expertise and achievements of the applicants, not who funded them.

**Q: Is there an expectation of a financial contribution from industry partners?**

A: Not necessarily. We would expect significant collaboration but the contribution might be in kind, such as access to data or people or facilities, rather than necessarily financial. We would want to know how the industry partner is involved and how the partnership will work.

**Q: What is meant by “cannot be supported by any other means?”**

A: In terms of funding. So, for example, if you’ve got a fellowship you need to explain why you cannot do this as part of your fellowship.

**Q: I’m unclear on whether any assessment will be made about the quality of the research where it touches on other domains? Will the assessment be made only by EPSRC people or will you have eg a health expert on the panel if a proposal involves healthcare?**

A: The panel will be put together based on the applications we receive. The proposals will be within the EPSRC remit so we will have people across that domain. We will also have users of data science on the panel and we will try to have members representing the main application areas present in the proposals. However, it will not be possible to have every sub-discipline represented, and so we would urge applicants to write their proposals in language that is accessible to a general audience of data scientists and data science users.

**Q: Are the five Turing partner universities in the same playing field as the others?**

A: If you’re a Turing Institute partner institution you will need to explain how the proposed project differs from work going on at the Turing Institute and how it cannot be funded by the Turing Institute.

There are many people who already have grants from EPSRC for data science, in some cases quite large grants, and so applicants should explain how proposals to this call will be different and should be funded at this time as part of this call.

**Q: Co-creation – what’s the difference with collaboration?**

A: The difference is the degree to which people genuinely enter a partnership with others and engage with that process to get mutual understanding about what they can do together and enter into it in a spirit of openness. It’s more than straightforward collaboration. You’re co-creating a solution. The timescales for this call are relatively generous as it takes time to find a partner and understand their perspective.

**Q: Would an acceptable user be an academic department that’s not currently using data science eg fine art?**

A: Yes, they are a user.

**Q: Are we allowed to request equipment?**

A: Rules for standard mode apply. Items of equipment above £10,000 are not permitted, but you may request discrete items that cost less than £10,000. More information is available on the EPSRC website:

<https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/research/facilities/equipment/process/equipment10000/>