



Engineering and  
Physical Sciences  
Research Council

## Quick Reference

Please note that you must read the full Call document for guidance before submitting your proposal

### Innovation and Knowledge Centres: Follow-on Funding

Call type: Invitation for proposals

Closing date: 16:00 on 16 April 2020

#### Funding Available:

Proposals up to **£500K** (80% fEC) over **a maximum of two years** are invited. Substantial additional leverage from University and project partners is required.

#### How to apply:

Applications will be submitted through Smart Survey via <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/RB2ET/>

#### Assessment Process:

This is a single stage process with proposals reviewed by a non-technical expert panel. The panel will make a recommendation of *Fundable*, *Fundable with Amendments* or *Not Fundable* for each proposal. Proposals assessed as *Fundable with Amendments* or *Not Fundable* will be provided with clear guidance from the panel, and the applicant will have the opportunity to address the concerns of the panel in a written response. Following the response, the panel will make a final recommendation of *Fundable* or *Not Fundable*. The panel's recommendations will subsequently inform funding decisions as per standard EPSRC process.

#### Key Dates:

Activity	Date
Invitation to submit	31 January 2020
Deadline for submission	16:00 on 16 April 2020
Non-technical expert panel assessment	Mid-May 2020 (provisionally the week commencing 11 May 2020)
Response to panel recommendation of <i>Fundable with Amendments</i> or <i>Not Fundable</i>	Late-May 2020 (provisionally 29 May 2020)
Funding decision	Early June 2020 (provisionally the week commencing 1 June 2020)

**Additional information:**

This call is only open to existing Innovation and Knowledge Centres that are coming to the end of their core funding (CSIC, CSIT, MTKC, SPECIFIC). A Host Organisation Statement is required, which includes details of support from businesses and other partners.

**Contacts:**

Neil Robinson, [neil.robinson@epsrc.ukri.org](mailto:neil.robinson@epsrc.ukri.org) – Tel: 07784 002678,  
Glenn Goodall, [glenn.goodall@epsrc.ukri.org](mailto:glenn.goodall@epsrc.ukri.org) – Tel: 01793 444475.  
Please cc all enquiries to: [acceleratingimpact@epsrc.ukri.org](mailto:acceleratingimpact@epsrc.ukri.org).



Engineering and  
Physical Sciences  
Research Council

## Innovation and Knowledge Centres: Follow-on Funding

Call type: Invitation for proposals

Closing date: 16:00 on 16 April 2020

### Contents of this call document

- [Summary](#)
- [Background](#)
- [Funding available](#)
- [Equality, diversity and inclusion](#)
- [Responsible innovation](#)
- [Guidance on journal-based metrics](#)
- [Equipment](#)
- [Nature of resources](#)
- [Eligibility](#)
- [How to apply](#)
- [Submitting an application](#)
- [Guidance on writing an application](#)
- [Assessment process](#)
- [Assessment criteria](#)
- [Grant additional conditions](#)
- [Moving forward](#)
- [Key dates](#)
- [Contacts](#)
- [Change log](#)
- [Appendix 1: Smart Survey questions](#)

### Summary

This call is for a final tranche of EPSRC follow-on funding for existing Innovation and Knowledge Centres, with proposals up to **£500K** (80% fEC) over a **maximum of two years** being invited. This is designed to ensure that existing IKCs continue to thrive and generate third-party income as their block funding comes to an end. Successful applications will be funded as an additional funding stream to an existing IKC grant.

This call will be a single stage process with proposals assessed and discussed by a non-technical expert panel in **mid-May 2020** (provisionally the week commencing 11 May 2020).

## Background

An Innovation and Knowledge Centre (IKC) is a key component of the UK's approach to the commercialisation of emerging technologies. The Centre's purpose is to create early stage critical mass in an area of disruptive technology. It possesses international quality research capability in its technology domain, and access to the companion technologies needed to make commercially viable products, processes or service systems work. Based in a University, an IKC is led by an expert team with a truly entrepreneurial spirit. It continues to advance the research agenda to the benefit of the UK, whilst also furthering the commercialisation agenda by exploiting the network of businesses that it builds up over its lifetime.

For this follow-on funding, it is expected that the IKC has already helped nucleate a new industry but can articulate the need for further funding. There should be clear demonstration of the barriers that remain to commercialisation of emerging technologies and the requirement for IKC expertise and capabilities to overcome these.

For more information about EPSRC's portfolio and strategies, see our website: <https://epsrc.ukri.org/research/ourportfolio/>

## Funding available

Proposals up to **£500K** over **a maximum of two years** are invited for this call. Substantial support and leverage from the University and project partners is required, to ensure the IKC can achieve its objectives. Activities within the IKC should continue to be supplemented over the duration of the follow-on by other competitive funding.

## Equality, diversity and inclusion

The long term strength of the UK research base depends on harnessing all the available talent. EPSRC expects that equality and diversity is embedded at all levels and in all aspects of research practice and funding policy. We are committed to supporting the research community, offering a range of flexible options which allow applicants to design a package that fits their research goals, career and personal circumstances. This includes career breaks, support for people with caring responsibilities, flexible working and alternative working patterns. With this in mind, we welcome applications from academics who job share, have a part-time contract, or need flexible working arrangements.

Peer review is central to EPSRC funding decisions, we require expert advice and robust decision making processes for all EPSRC funding initiatives. We are committed to ensuring that fairness is fully reflected in all our funding processes by advancing policy which supports equality, diversity and inclusion. Please see our Equality and Diversity webpages <https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/equalitydiversity/> for further information.

## Responsible innovation

EPSRC is fully committed to develop and promote responsible innovation.

Research has the ability to not only produce understanding, knowledge and value, but also unintended consequences, questions, ethical dilemmas and, at times, unexpected social transformations. We recognise that we have a duty of care to promote approaches to responsible innovation that will initiate ongoing reflection about the potential ethical and societal implications of the research that we sponsor and to encourage our research community to do likewise.

Responsible innovation creates spaces and processes to explore innovation and its consequences in an open, inclusive and timely way, going beyond consideration of ethics, public engagement, risk and regulation. Innovation is a collective responsibility, where funders, researchers, interested and affected parties, including the public, all have an important role to play. Applicants are expected to work within the EPSRC Framework for Responsible Innovation given on the EPSRC website (<https://epsrc.ukri.org/research/framework/>).

## **Guidance on journal-based metrics**

As part of our commitment to support the recommendations and principles set out by the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA; <https://sfdora.org/read/>), UKRI reviewers and panel members are advised not to use journal-based metrics, such as journal impact factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an investigator's contributions, or to make funding decisions.

The content of a paper is more important than publication metrics, or the identity of the journal, in which it was published, especially for early-stage researchers. Reviewers and panel members are encouraged to consider the value and impact of all research outputs (including datasets, software, inventions, patents, preprints, other commercial activities, etc.) in addition to research publications. We advise our peer reviewers and panel members to consider a broad range of impact measures including qualitative indicators of research impact, such as influence on policy and practice.

## **Equipment**

Equipment over £10,000 in value (inc. VAT) is not available through this call. Smaller items of equipment (individually under £10,000) should be in the Directly Incurred - Other Costs heading. For more information on equipment funding, please see: <https://epsrc.ukri.org/research/facilities/equipment/>.

## **Nature of resources**

Except equipment, all other eligible resources may be requested in accordance with standard EPSRC funding criteria. The following are suggested as particularly relevant to this call:

- Support for key non-academic staff who are essential to the IKC achieving its full potential, but who are not usually supported via other funding aligned to the IKC. This may include roles such as: business development officers, project managers, administrators, technology transfer officers, and technicians. (Please note this is not an exhaustive list)

- Postdoctoral researchers' time, which may be allocated flexibly through the duration of the funding
- Modest proof of concept funding, which prove the feasibility of certain aspects of work emerging from the IKC and enable a wider pool of collaborators to engage
- Continuation of support for the core team
- Necessary travel and subsistence, and other consumables (under the "Directly Incurred Other" cost heading) directly relating to the core function of the IKCs, which cannot be supported via other funding

## Eligibility

This call is only open to existing Innovation and Knowledge Centres that are coming to the end of their core funding (CSIC, CSIT, MTIKC, SPECIFIC).

Proposals must be at least 50% within EPSRC's remit – proposals deemed to be out of remit will be rejected prior to panel assessment. Proposals should also demonstrate a clear continuation from the previous IKC funding, and this funding is not intended to explore new directions for the IKC.

## How to apply

### Submitting an application

Applications will be submitted through Smart Survey via <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/RB2ET/> (note that the Case for Support and the Statement of Support will be submitted via textbox, rather than as a PDF). The proposal will consist of:

- **A Case for Support** (of up to 3000 words), which addresses:
  - The success of the IKC against delivery of its original and subsequent objectives and the barriers to commercialisation (i.e., route to market/monetisation) encountered.
  - Why addressing these barriers requires the capabilities and expertise of an IKC?
  - How will follow-on funding be used, and why is this important for achieving the objectives of the IKC?
  - How will this create sustained activity beyond the duration of the follow-on funding?
  - The questions detailed below.
- **Statement of Support** (of up to 1000 words), which describes the level of support from institutional partners, business partners, and other sponsors over the duration of the follow-on funding. Clear distinctions should be made between cash and in-kind contributions.

- **Host Organisation Statement:** from the pro-Vice-Chancellor, or equivalent, of the lead institution outlining the institutional support. This letter must clearly state the name and role of the person who authorised the offered support, as proof of the University's support for the proposal. The host organisation statement should also explicitly address the level of support for the IKC from business partners and other sponsors.

## Guidance on writing an application

For advice on writing proposals see:

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/howtoapply/preparing/>

## Assessment process

This is a single stage process with proposals reviewed by a non-technical expert panel in **mid-May 2020** (provisionally the week commencing 11 May 2020). EPSRC will endeavour to convene a diverse panel that includes members representing both academics and users, drawn from a range of disciplines across EPSRC's remit. The panel will have experience of evaluating proposals for similarly sized large grants and centres, and/or an understanding of knowledge exchange. It will consider the quality of the proposed based on the assessment criteria below, and consider whether an adequate case for funding has been made.

The panel will make that recommendation that each proposal is: *Fundable*, *Fundable with Amendments* or *Not Fundable*. Proposals assessed as *Fundable with Amendments* or *Not Fundable* will be provided with clear asks from the panel, which will detail what success looks like. The applicant will have the opportunity to address the concerns of the panel in an additional written response. This response will then be considered by the panel Chair (or the whole panel, as appropriate), who will make a final recommendation of *Fundable* or *Not Fundable* for the proposal. The panel's recommendations will then inform funding decisions as per the standard EPSRC process.

## Assessment criteria

To make recommendations on priority for funding, the panel will assess the proposal against the following requirements:

1. **Quality (Primary):** Success of the IKC via demonstration of delivery against the original IKC objectives. Demonstrated quality of plans, considering the questions given below. Demonstrated quality of partnerships with both business and university partners.
2. **Importance (Primary):** Demonstration of an on-going need for IKC funding. Clear articulation of the remaining barriers to commercialisation of the emerging technologies and the requirement for IKC expertise/capabilities to achieve this outcome.
3. **Sustainability (Secondary):** Evidence of plans to create sustainable activity beyond this period of funding, including both university and business partners.

The panel will consider the overall question:

- Has the proposal articulated an adequate case for follow-on funding of the IKC, and does the requested follow-on funding represent value for money?

In particular, the panel could consider the following non-exhaustive list of questions, as part of the above:

- **Need:** Is there a clear explanation of the barriers that remain for the commercialisation of emerging technologies?
- **Wider Sector Need:** Is the IKC enabling the participation of other parts of the academic community in relevant Innovation and Knowledge sectors? Is the IKC enabling translation and adoption of research into new markets or technologies?
- **Capabilities:** Does overcoming these barriers require the expertise and capabilities of an IKC?
- **Responsible Innovation:** How is the IKC championing Responsible Innovation and engaging the wider community in this pursuit?
- **Partners:** Is there sufficient support for the activities and outcomes of the IKC, from both University and Business Partners, including substantial additional cash (at least matched) leveraging of funding? Are there plans to attract investors?
- **Value for Money:** Are the proposed outcomes of the follow-on funding of a quality and volume expected for an IKC?

## Grant additional conditions

Grants will be subject to the standard UK Research and Innovation grant conditions, however, the following additional grant conditions will be added to this call:

1. Consult with EPSRC regarding replacement of the Principal Investigator or Centre Director
2. The grant is not transferrable to another Research Organisation.
3. In addition to reporting requirements consistent with previous rounds of IKC funding, IKCs will also provide (upon request) highlights of impact over the lifetime of the centre.
4. Continue Steering Committee meetings with at least 50% independent membership and attended by a representative of EPSRC.



## Moving forward

### Key dates

Activity	Date*
Invitation to submit	31 January 2020
Deadline for submission	16:00 on 16 April 2020
Non-technical expert panel assessment	Mid-May (provisionally the week commencing 11 May 2020)
For proposals recommended as <i>Fundable with Amendments</i> or <i>Not Fundable</i> : Panel feedback	Mid-May (provisionally the week commencing 11 May 2020)
For proposals recommended as <i>Fundable with Amendments</i> or <i>Not Fundable</i> : deadline for response to panel	Late-May (provisionally 29 May 2020)
Funding decision	Early June (provisionally the week commencing 1 June 2020)
Funding authorisation	To be discussed between IKCs and EPSRC (approximately 1 July 2020)

\*EPSRC aims to adhere to the key dates as published, however there may be exceptions where the panel assessment, feedback, and funding decision dates may have to change due to panel member availability.

### Contacts

Enquiries may be addressed to:

Neil Robinson, Senior Manager, Impact, Business Engagement & Partnerships  
[neil.robinson@epsrc.ukri.org](mailto:neil.robinson@epsrc.ukri.org) – Tel: 07784 002678  
(Process and strategy enquiries)

Glenn Goodall, Joint Head of Business Engagement and Head of Economic Impact  
[glenn.goodall@epsrc.ukri.org](mailto:glenn.goodall@epsrc.ukri.org) – Tel: 01793 444475  
(Strategy enquires)

Please carbon copy all enquiries to: [acceleratingimpact@epsrc.ukri.org](mailto:acceleratingimpact@epsrc.ukri.org)

### Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Neil Robinson	24/01/2020	1	N/A

Name	Date	Version	Change
Neil Robinson	30/01/2020	2	Finalisation of Call Document Text. Addition of Appendix 1.
Neil Robinson	20/03/2020	3	Removal of matched cash contribution criteria. Removal of interview panel; explanation of replacement non-technical expert panel; updates to reflect <i>Fundable with Amendments</i> and <i>Not Fundable</i> process.  Changes enacted in response to COVID-19 situation.

## Appendix 1: Smart Survey questions

Applications will be submitted through Smart Survey via the link <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/RB2ET/>

The Case for Support and the Statement of Support will be submitted via textbox (not attached as a PDF file). The Smart Survey consists of three parts:

1. **A Case for Support** (of up to 3000 words), which addresses:
  - The success of the IKC against delivery of its original and subsequent objectives and the barriers to commercialisation (i.e., route to market/monetisation) encountered.
  - Why addressing these barriers requires the capabilities and expertise of an IKC?
  - How will follow-on funding be used, and why is this important for achieving the objectives of the IKC?
  - How will this create sustained activity beyond the duration of the follow-on funding?
  - The questions detailed in the Call Document.
2. **Statement of Support** (of up to 1000 words), which describes the level of support from institutional partners, business partners, and other sponsors over the duration of the follow-on funding. Clear distinctions should be made between cash and in-kind contributions.
3. **Host Organisation Statement:** from the pro-Vice-Chancellor, or equivalent, of the lead institution outlining the institutional support. This letter must clearly state the name and role of the person who authorised the offered support, as proof of the University's support for the proposal. The host organisation statement should also explicitly address the level of support for the IKC from business partners and other sponsors. (Preferably in PDF format, max file size of 10MB.)