



Engineering and  
Physical Sciences  
Research Council

## EPSRC New Horizons Call

**Call type: Invitation for proposals**

**Related themes: Mathematical Sciences; Physical Sciences**

**Closing date: 16:00 on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

### Aim

The New Horizons call will help grow the portfolio of new transformative research ideas in EPSRC Mathematical Sciences and Physical Sciences research areas, feeding the future research landscape. The aim is to ensure the continued flow and support of novel, adventurous research ideas into the EPSRC portfolio and broader UKRI funding streams.

**Funding Available:** Up to £10M is available in this call for projects costing up to a maximum of £200K each and up to 24 months in duration.

**How to apply:** Applicants must submit a completed proposal by **16:00 on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020**.

**Assessment Process:** Applications will be assessed via a two stage process. Proposals (case for support only) will first be reviewed anonymously using a batch postal review stage (the postal reviewer will not know who has submitted the proposal and will review a number of proposals), and will then be assessed (case for support and ability to deliver) at a panel meeting. Successful applicants will then be asked to submit full costings and additional supporting information before any grant award is issued.

**Additional information:** This call will follow a non-standard format for submissions and assessment, therefore please read this guidance documentation carefully. The call will be limited to **one submission per applicant as either Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator** and is exempt from EPSRC's Repeatedly Unsuccessful Applicants' policy.

### Contacts:

**New Horizons Inbox** ([NewHorizons@epsrc.ukri.org](mailto:NewHorizons@epsrc.ukri.org))

### Background

**EPSRC's 2019 Delivery Plan** highlighted the desire to continue **promoting excellence in research** by investing in ways that are optimised to the specific researcher base and research outputs desired. As part of this strategy, EPSRC propose investing in new approaches to delivery, such as this New Horizons call.

New Horizons is a £10M pilot scheme which will comprise funding for researcher-led, high-risk discovery research focused on advancing knowledge and securing

the pipeline of next-generation innovations. It will enable funding for completely new ideas, which are essential to future-proof our research base.

The aim of the call is to challenge the Mathematical and Physical Sciences community to formulate adventurous, high-risk, discovery research proposals that envisage 'New Horizons' in the EPSRC landscape.

For more information about EPSRC's 2019 Delivery Plan, see our website: <https://epsrc.ukri.org/about/plans/dp2019/>

## Scope

The scope of this call is to encourage and support innovative and high-risk, adventurous research within the mathematical and physical sciences.

- Proposals are welcome from the following **EPSRC** areas:
  - Novel physical sciences research aimed at new approaches for understanding **fundamental Physics, Chemistry and Materials Science**; the creation of new experimental approaches and the discovery of new molecules and materials.
  - Novel advances in **Mathematical Sciences** research across the breadth of pure and applied mathematics as well as in statistics and operational research.

EPSRC reserves the right to reject proposals that do not fall sufficiently within the scope of the call.

New Horizons should stimulate breakthroughs in knowledge and spawn new ideas and research methods while promoting ground-breaking discovery with potential to lead to longer term innovation. Proposals to this call should also contribute towards research outcomes that, because of their risky and speculative nature, might otherwise struggle to attract funding.

## Assessment

### Overview

This initiative will aim to deliver a simpler application process for applicants with a shortened timeline between application and funding decision.

The peer review process will involve a first stage where both reviewers and applicants remain anonymous. Proposals will focus on the novelty and excitement of the research idea, without the need for a detailed workplan. Due to the nature and timescales of the call there will not be a right to reply stage.

Follow on funding for projects which show promise from this initiative can be sought afterwards through the usual routes (e.g. standard mode proposals; fellowships; etc).

### Process and criteria

Applications will be assessed via a two stage process, although EPSRC reserve the right to hold an additional sift stage if required to manage high demand.

## Stage 1: Postal peer review

**IMPORTANT:** The peer review for this initiative is being performed anonymously and therefore your proposal will be considered without the reviewers having knowledge of the applicants or their affiliations. **For that reason, please note your academic publication or research track record should NOT be included in your 4 page case for support, neither should any references that may reveal your identity or the identify of your institution. EPSRC reserves the right to reject proposals where the identity of the applicant(s) and/or institution(s) is revealed or can be inferred.**

Proposals will be sent out for external peer review in batches. Applicants are not required to provide applicant reviewer nominations for this call.

Reviewers will be asked to assess only one key criterion:

- **How exciting, high quality and potentially transformative is the research proposed?**

Due to the nature and timescales of the call, there will not be a right to reply stage.

## Stage 2: The Panel

There may be a number of parallel panels, depending on demand, covering broad research areas.

The panels will:

- Prioritise proposals based on the single criterion above, focussing on proposals with divergent reviewer comments from Stage 1
- Confirm that the Ability to Deliver is appropriate for the proposed research
- Produce a priority list of proposals for funding

A funding decision will be made by EPSRC by **the end of September 2020**.

## Key dates

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date*</b>
Call Open	02 March 2020
Deadline for Proposals	04 June 2020
Panel (Stage 2)	September 2020
Funding Decision	End September 2020
Deadline for Costings	01 Novmber 2020
Target Award Start Date	January 2021

\*EPSRC aims to adhere to the key dates as published, however there may be exceptions where dates have to change due to demand or panel member availability.

## Funding available

Each project can be **up to 24 months** in duration and applicants can apply for **up to £200K (80% value of the full costing)** in total.

EPSRC will not require full costings at the application stage, they will be required until after an offer has been made to successful applicants. Successful proposals must be costed on fEC (full Economic Costing) basis and funds can be requested for staff, equipment, consumables and travel. Please ensure you account for adequate resources to enable the delivery of your proposed plans.

Equipment over £10,000 in value (inc. vat) can be included through this call within the £200k maximum. There will be no expectation of joint funding from HEI partners: equipment will be supported at 100%. 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/>

## Eligibility

The call will be limited to one submission per applicant as PI or Co-I.

Applications are driven by ideas, and as such may involve either single or multiple applicants. Interdisciplinary and/or multidisciplinary collaborative research is permissible.

Standard EPSRC eligibility rules apply. For information on the eligibility of organisations and individuals to receive EPSRC funding, see the EPSRC Funding Guide: <https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/fundingguide/>

A list of eligible organisations is provided at: <https://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/>

Please ensure sufficient time to create [Je-S accounts](https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index.htm) for Investigators who do not currently have one: <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index.htm>

Applications to this call will not preclude applicants from schemes that include holding previous awards as an eligibility factor (eg. New Investigator Awards).

Submissions to this call will not count towards the Repeatedly Unsuccessful Applicants Policy. Further information about the policy can be found at: <https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/howtoapply/basics/resubpol/rua/>

## How to apply

You should prepare and submit your proposal using the Research Councils' Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) System (<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/>).

When adding a new proposal, you should select:

- Council 'EPSRC'
- Document type 'Outline Proposal'

- Scheme 'EPSRC Outline'
- On the Project Details page you should select the 'New Horizons 2020' call.

Note that clicking 'submit document' on your proposal form in Je-S initially submits the proposal to your host organisation's administration, not to EPSRC. Please allow sufficient time for your organisation's submission process between submitting your proposal to them and the call closing date. EPSRC must receive your application by **16:00 on 04 June 2020**.

Guidance on the types of support that may be sought and advice on the completion of the research proposal forms are given on the EPSRC website (<https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/>) which should be consulted when preparing all proposals.

## Guidance on writing an application

**Applications will follow a non-standard format as detailed within this call document.**

**The case for support must be anonymised. Applicants must therefore be extremely careful not to give away their identity or institution(s) in the Case for Support.**

**EPSRC reserves the right to reject proposals where the identity of the applicant(s) and/or institution(s) is revealed or can be inferred. The reviewers will not see the Je-S form.**

The following information and documentation will need to be submitted in the proposal:

Attachment Type	Maximum Page length	Mandatory/ Optional	Extra Guidance
Je-S Application Form		M	<p>A streamlined Je-S application form is being used for this call. Applicants will need to complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Details (Mandatory)</li> <li>• Disciplines (Mandatory)</li> <li>• Investigator Details (Mandatory)</li> </ul> <p>Reviewers will not see the Je-S form.</p>
Case for Support	Four pages	M	<p>This should address the scientific idea and highlight the novelty and adventure of the research area centred within either the Mathematical Sciences or Physical Sciences remit or across these two</p>

			areas. No track record should be included in this document; it should be anonymous of individual and institution.
Ability to Deliver (as an additional attachment)	Two pages	M	This is not a standard track record but should contain evidence of an ability to deliver the proposed research. Reviewers will not see the Ability to Deliver so this document does not need to be anonymous.

If the proposal exceeds the page limit, or does not conform to the above format, your application will be rejected.

Details including ethical confirmations, costings and Justification for Resources will be requested only for successful proposals.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

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. 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

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.

## Ethical considerations

Before an award will be made, applicants must demonstrate that they have fully considered any ethical issues concerning the material they intend to use, the

nature and choice, current public perceptions and attitudes towards the subject matter or research area. EPSRC will not fund a project if it believes that there are ethical concerns that have been overlooked or not appropriately accounted for.

## Contacts

Any enquiries related to this Call should be directed to:

**New Horizons Inbox** ([NewHorizons@epsrc.ukri.org](mailto:NewHorizons@epsrc.ukri.org))

Any queries regarding the submission of proposals through Je-S should be directed to:

- The Je-S helpdesk ([JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk](mailto:JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk) - 01793 444164)

## Change log

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Change</b>
Tracey Dale/ Ruvimbo Gamanya	12/2/2020	1	Initial version
Jane Nichoson	21/02/2020	2	Signed off version
Alex Broomsgrrove	04/03/2020	3	Amended contacts