

Quick Reference

Please note that there are process changes to this call, and you must read this full Call document for guidance before submitting your proposal

Prosperity Partnerships: EPSRC, Business and Universities – Fourth Call

Call type: Invitation for proposals

Closing date: 16:00 10 December 2020

Funding Available: Up to £20 million is available to fund partnerships invited through to this final stage. Further cross-council funding is being sought where relevant.

How to apply: This is the final stage of this funding opportunity. The full proposal submission stage is only open to successful applicants invited following Outline and Interview stages.

Bids should be submitted by the lead university partner via the Je-S system with the lead business and other businesses as project partners

Assessment Process: Invited full proposals will undergo postal peer review. The interview panel chairs will convene to determine if the results of the peer review are satisfactory and provide a funding recommendation to EPSRC.

Key Dates:

Activity	Date*
Deadline for Outline submissions	20 February 2020
Outline interview panels	3-17 June 2020
Invitation to submit full proposal	24 September 2020
Deadline for Full Proposals	10 December 2020
Checks and Peer Review process	11 December 2020 – February 2020
Invite PI response	February 2020/1
Full proposal panel and decision	March 2021

*EPSRC aims to adhere to the key dates as published, however there may be exceptions where dates have to change due reviewer / panellist availability

Contacts:

- Steve Webb, Portfolio Manager, (Stephen.Webb@epsrc.ukri.org)
- Josh Gill, Senior Partnerships Manager (Joshua.Gill@epsrc.ukri.org)
- Daniel Smith, Joint Head of Business Relationships
(Daniel.Smith@epsrc.ukri.org)



Engineering and
Physical Sciences
Research Council

Prosperity Partnerships: EPSRC, Business and Universities – Fourth Call

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Related themes: All themes

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Summary

In the previous stage of this call, 29 proposals were invited to interview where they were scored and ranked, and the top band of proposals invited through to this full proposal stage. A further eight were put on 'hold' as EPSRC sought to secure further funding. This has been achieved and those held proposals have now been invited to submit full proposals.

Prosperity Partnerships are business-led research partnerships between leading UK based businesses and their long term strategic academic partners. EPSRC are seeking to fund world class business-led research partnerships in low technology

readiness programmes that will deliver economic, social and cultural prosperity for the UK.

The core criteria from the outline stage remain – proposals should be clearly business led, but co-created and co-delivered between the industrial and academic partners.

The full proposal and peer review process will focus on the scientific quality of the proposed work, the justification of resources, and the routes to benefit realisation. While context regarding the vision and ambition, the partnership, and the management and governance of the proposal will still be required, the reviewers will be made aware that these elements have already been assessed and are simply included for context. You should build on your outline material and any supplementary information provided at the interview.

Background

Review to date information: The lead business for each Prosperity Partnership first submitted a 6-page outline created in collaboration with the university partner(s). An internal EPSRC panel was held to ensure fit-to-call and provide feedback to applicants. Suitable proposals were invited to an outline interview panel which assessed the vision and ambition, added value and plans to deliver the partnership (management and leadership). This panel was comprised of non-technical experts who were well versed in managing, facilitating or leading business-academe partnerships, including those who already run prosperity partnerships. This panel provided a recommendation to EPSRC on suitable projects to invite through to the final postal peer review stage. This final stage will predominately focus on the scientific and technical merit of the work packages.

Funding available

Up to £20 million is available with additional co-funding being sourced.

As set out in the [outline call document](#) a requirement in this call, the Business Lead must commit substantial cash contributions to the programme, matching the financial investment made by EPSRC. See the sections '[Matching Contribution](#)' and '[Definitive list of eligible cash contributions](#)' for more details.

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/calls/prosperity-partnerships-fourth-round/>

The Justification of Resources should build upon the financial overview from the outline proposal, and provide significantly more detail along with a confirmatory signed letter from all business partners (see: Project Partner Letters of Support under 2.4 Attachments)

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.

Eligibility

Only invited bids from the Interview stage may submit to this call.

At the full proposal stage, bids will be submitted by the lead university partner via the Je-S system. The business partners will be included as Project Partners at this stage.

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/>

As this call is a targeted funding opportunity provided by EPSRC, higher education institutions, and some research council institutes, and independent research organisations are eligible to apply. A list of eligible organisations to apply to EPSRC is provided at: <https://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/>

UKRI and EPSRC standard eligibility requirements are applicable for students for this call.

Matching contribution

The matching contribution expectations are the same as the outline stage and must be met as a condition of this call. Further space is provided in the full call to detail these contributions and the guidance is repeated below.

EPSRC has built on experience from the last three rounds of Prosperity Partnerships to strengthen the expectations and guidance to business with respect to matched funding.

EPSRC funding is at 80% full economic costs (fEC), with exceptions for equipment (50% fEC) and studentship costs (100% fEC). In this call, the funding provided by EPSRC must be matched by the Business Lead and project partner's contributions with eligible cash contributions as a minimum.

A definitive list of cash contributions can be found in the 'Definitive list of eligible cash contributions' section below. Any contribution from business or other project partners not included in the cash contribution list will count as an 'in kind' contribution.

Single business bid - the total of the matching contributions should be provided by the Business Lead as a minimum.

Multi-partners bid - the combined contributions from the business partners must match the EPSRC funding.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Academic partner's cash contribution (including the Academic Lead) do not contribute to the matching figure requirements, but are recognised as an important and valuable contribution.
- No UKRI or other Government money, as part of baseline funding or otherwise, may be used as part of the matching contribution.
- EPSRC does not mandate a specific audit format for the business contributions to a project, however, a record must be produced and provided if requested. This must be able to demonstrate a continuous

auditable cash transfer, or staff time-record or otherwise, by the business partner per year in each year of the programme.

- As an exception, student fees, stipends and some support costs related directly to the training of the student are not funded under the same fEC arrangements as for research staff on research grants. Student fees and stipends are covered 100% fEC, so these need to be costed appropriately and taken into account for total matching of grant funding by the business partner.
- EPSRC requires student fees and stipends, and the items of student support training costs, such as Travel & Subsistence, Conference costs and Consumables to be costed appropriately for the Outline application. Indirect and Estate costs are not applicable to studentships.

Definitive list of eligible cash contributions

The following is the definitive list of eligible cash contributions, these are in addition to providing an auditable cash transfer to the academic organisation(s).

- **Researchers' Salaries:**
All or part of the pro-rata, gross salary cost associated with researchers employed by universities (including Co-Is). The gross salaries of researchers employed by the business may also be claimed as long as they are working at least 50% of their time on the project*.
- **Postdoctoral Research Associates' Salary:**
All or part of the gross salary cost associated with research associates employed by universities to work exclusively on the prosperity partnership. Research Associates can also be employed directly by the businesses in the partnership and claim the gross salary as a cash contribution as long as they are exclusively committed to working on the prosperity partnership*.
- **Professional Project Managers' Salary**
Pro-rata gross salary cost of a professional project manager is an eligible cash contribution if they work at least 50% of their time on the prosperity partnership*.
- **Technicians' Salary:**
Pro-rata gross salary cost of technicians are an eligible cash contribution provided that they work at least 50% of their time on the prosperity partnership*.
- **New software licences needed for the project and their maintenance cost for the duration of the grant.** Software licences or intellectual property (IP) owned by the business which are already accessible by the partners will apply at marginal cost, not at market rate.
- **Genuine new equipment purchases, please see section 'Equipment'.** The equipment should be dedicated to the objectives of the prosperity

partnership and their utilisation should be critical to deliver the activity. The access doesn't have to be restricted to the project members but EPSRC expect at least 50% of the time to be dedicated to the prosperity partnership project. All equipment should be appropriately justified.

- Equipment produced by the business but only at the cost of manufacture, not market rate.
- Access to specific equipment/facilities critical to achieve the outcomes of the project. If the facility is based at the University or Business Lead, the contribution will be at the internal rate, not market rate.
- Facilities refurbishment can be an eligible university cash contribution if the upgrade will increase the capability of the facilities. This contribution must be justified in addition to any estate costs already factored in.
- Business cash donation which will be provided to the partner universities, for the universities to manage in line with the project objectives.
- Top-up of stipends EPSRC funded doctoral students.
- Extra training for EPSRC funded doctoral students to align with a business cohort of students.
- Fully funded doctoral students (fees, stipends and top ups) with up to a maximum of 20% of the matching contribution.

* EPSRC expects all their time to be on projects within prosperity partnership. Exceptions where lower time is devoted to the project will need justification in terms of multidisciplinary and responsibilities distribution. The appropriateness of the time devoted to the project will be assessed in the Panel Interview and Peer Review (at the Full Proposal Stage). Gross salary can be claimed as matched funding (that is including indirect costs such as Pension, National Insurance, taxes etc.), but not business overheads or profits. The salary of a single member of staff (researcher, PDRA, doctoral student or project manager) can be covered in partnership by the Business Lead and EPSRC funds in a ratio that best suits the project.

Equipment

Where possible, researchers are asked to make use of existing facilities and equipment, including those hosted at other universities.

If equipment is needed as part of the research proposal, applicants must follow EPSRC's rules for requesting equipment over £10,000 in value.

Individual items of equipment between £10,000 and £400,000 can be included on proposals for this call if the equipment is essential to the proposed research and if no appropriate alternative provision can be accessed but research organisations will be expected to make a contribution to the cost. Given that capital provision has been reduced by about 50%, contributions of this order of 50% of the full cost of the equipment will be expected.

Additional justification of the requirement for individual items of equipment between £10,000 and £400,000, and details of the proposed contribution to the

cost of the equipment must be provided in the justification of resources. For any items or combined assets with a value above £138,000 (including VAT) a two-page Equipment Business Case must also be included in the full proposal documentation.

Items of equipment for instrument development will not need to be co-funded by another partner or go through the strategic equipment process. Equipment for instrument development should be integral to a research proposal. Items of equipment for instrument development will be funded at 100% full economic costing (fEC), although EPSRC reserves the right to request institutional contributions in exceptional circumstances. A proposal will be classed as instrument development where it is wholly or mainly focussed on creating a novel instrument that will either enable research capability not available using any existing instrument, or will substantially improve research capability beyond what currently exists, in a way that opens up significant new scientific opportunities.

Please note that equipment that is donated and academic discounts on equipment will be classed as in-kind contributions and will not count towards the total cash contribution in this call. High performance computing equipment is excluded from this call.

For more information on equipment funding and guidance on how to prepare an Equipment Business Case, please see:

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/research/ourportfolio/themes/researchinfrastructure/subthemes/equipment/>

Doctoral Students

Funds for doctoral studentships may be applied for as part of the resources requested from EPSRC for this call for proposals, however they must not be on the critical pathways of success for the body of work. Inclusion of doctoral students presents an exciting opportunity to place students in industrially relevant environments, draw together vibrant and balanced teams which combine doctoral and post-doctoral research and build leadership for the future in key areas of the economy.

Doctoral studentships must add value to the proposed research outlined in bids to this call, whilst providing a clear opportunity for a distinct and independent course of enquiry for the student. Therefore, the research grant should still be viable without the studentship and should have distinctive objectives that are not reliant upon the studentship(s)

Doctoral students supported through Prosperity Partnerships must be embedded within a high-quality research team, and be provided with the opportunity to develop their substantive research skills as well as with broader professional development opportunities.

EPSRC would also have the expectation that other doctoral students aligned with a Prosperity Partnership, but funded from other sources, for example directly by the business partner; would have the training conditions and opportunities as those students funded by EPSRC.

EPSRC would expect studentships for this call to be four years in length and the length of the studentship(s) must not exceed the length of the grant they are associated with.

Where doctoral studentships are requested, EPSRC would also expect to see requests for post-doctoral research associates; the studentship(s) should not be the only research staffing resource on the application. Careful consideration should be given to the overall staff resource on the Prosperity Partnership and the balance between the different types of staff resource available.

Studentship costings

EPSRC would expect the UKRI minimum stipend and indicative fees to be met; enhanced stipends are permitted where this has been justified in the application.

<https://www.ukri.org/skills/funding-for-research-training/> Student fees and stipends on research grants and some support costs related directly to the training of the student are funded by EPSRC. These support costs include such items Travel & Subsistence, Conference costs and Consumables. (Indirect and Estate costs are not applicable to studentships).

See [Appendix](#) for detailed guidance on student costings

How to apply to the full proposal stage

Submitting an application

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 'Standard Proposal'
- Scheme 'Standard'
- On the Project Details page you should select the 'Prosperity Partnerships 4' call.

Full proposals invited following a successful outline stage must have the 'Related Grant' field completed in Je-S. Please use the option 'Follow up to outline proposal'

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 10 December 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

The full proposal must include the documents outlined below. Further details of these are provided below in the follow section.

While the expectations from the outline stage remain, and these elements may be expanded on this the full proposal, the primary purpose of the postal peer review is to assess the technical and scientific merit of the proposal in light of the vision and ambition described at the Outline stage. Applicants should not deviate substantially from what was assessed in their initial application and at interview. However, adaptation of work packages to accommodate scientific advances, or small changes based on interview panel feedback are acceptable. Core elements of the proposals such as the vision and ambition or leadership team should not change.

- **Case for Support** (a maximum of 12 **(as one document)**) comprised of:
 - A vision, ambition and partnership summary at the start of this section including details of the partnership. Up to one page.
 - Up to one A4 side for a track record.

- Up to eight A4 sides describing proposed research and its context
- Two A4 sides detailing the Management and Strategic Governance, and Monitoring and Evaluation arrangements.
- The case for support components must be attached, **all as a single document**, using the 'Case for Support' attachment type in Je-S.
- **Technical Annex** (up to one page per major research area)
- **Justification of resources** (maximum four pages including template provided in annex 2)
- **Work plan** (maximum two pages)
- **Attachments**
 - CVs for named PDRA or Research associates staff – maximum two pages each
 - Project partner letters of support - for all named project partners - no page limit
 - Institutional letters of support – no page limit.
 - Equipment Quotes - where applicable with no page limit
 - Technical assessment for the use of a major facility - where applicable and no page limit.
 - Cover Letter – optional attachment, no page limit, not seen by Peer Review or Panel Members

For advice on writing proposals see:

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

Case for Support

The case for support must be a single document uploaded to the Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) system which includes the following sections in this order

i. Vision, Ambition and Partnership (up to one page)

Overall vision for the Prosperity Partnership research programme, and the relationship between the academic and industrial partners. This is to provide content for the peer reviewers, not for additional assessment. Adaptation of your outline will be suitable.

ii. Track record (up to one page)

To provide the reviewers with additional context of the team in relation to the work packages, and why they represent the right team to take this prosperity partnership forward.

The track record of the academic and business lead PIs has already been assessed and will not be assessed again. Rather, this section will outline the wider team and their technical capability

Funding history of existing grants and contracts can be used to support this (not restricted to EPSRC funded activity). Researchers should demonstrate their research track record in the appropriate field and should include reference to international standing in the context of the programme

iii. The proposed research, its context, and the benefits to the UK (up to eight pages)

Given the nature of the Prosperity Partnership programme context should be given that details the business, academic, UK economic and societal benefits that will be derived. However, the reviewers will be asked to focus on the research programme, methodology, feasibility and associated technical detail. They will not assess criteria already assessed at the interview stage

The following headings should be used:

The following headings should be used:

- Background
- National Importance
- Academic and Industrial outcomes and benefits
- Research Hypothesis and Objectives
- Research programme and Methodology
- Studentship training

iv. Management and Governance arrangements (up to two pages)

This must outline the operational and strategic aspects of the programme's management and governance arrangements and can expand on the detail provided in the outline stage. It can be up to two pages and should cover the following:

- Alignment to any existing governance arrangements for the partnership and the specific governance arrangements for this programme.
- Day-to-day management strategy, including project, risk and financial management, and approach to monitoring and evaluation.
- Plans for advisory and steering boards, including indicative membership.
- Plans for how Responsible Research and Innovation strategy will be implemented
- Plans for how the Equality, Inclusion and Diversity strategy will be implemented

Successful applicants will be expected to hold annual independent steering board meetings with external expert advice, which must include EPSRC representation

Technical Annex

The technical support annex provides additional information on the research specifically for the expert reviewers. The annex is made of up to one page per major research challenge identified in the main proposal i.e. one page per work package. The format of the technical annex within this page limit is up to the applicants to decide.

Justification of Resources

The Justification of Resources section should be a maximum of four pages, including the template in Annex 2. The subsequent free text must be under the headings listed below.

You will be aware of the requirement that applicants will match the funded value of the grant (80% of the full economic cost) with a cash contribution. This matching contribution must be in the form of an auditable transfer of funds from the business partners to the academic partners and/or salary costs of business partner employees working full time (for a reasonable period of the project) and making contributions to the research effort or project management and/or new activities funded by a partner University.

A definitive list of eligible cash contributions can be found [earlier in this document](#).

Please see Appendix for indicative costings for studentships funded by EPSRC, and how to apply for them via Je-S

New equipment purchased for use on the programme; equipment provided by a business partner at a reduced cost is not eligible.

The table should provide a clear list of the contributions broken down by the headings provided. The subsequent free text should provide context to the contributions outlined in the table. Suggested headings for the free text are:

Justification of resources should clearly outline the following:

- i. Business Lead cash and in-kind contribution:** An explanation of the direct 'cash' and in-kind contributions made by the lead business, this must articulate how the provided resources will be used to add benefit. These should be confirmed by a detailed project partner letter of support. This section should include detailed information of the time the Business investigators (including the Business Principal Investigator) will spend on the programme including costings. Allocation of EPSRC funds received through other sources (for example ICASE studentships) to the proposed programme does not count towards the Business Offer.
- ii. Academic Lead cash and in-kind contribution:** An explanation of the direct 'cash' and in-kind contributions made to the proposed programme by the universities involved in the programme, this must articulate how the provided resources will be used to add benefit. These should be confirmed by a detailed letter of support from each institution. Note that the contribution of 20% of FEC was taken into account in designing this funding mechanism, the offer detailed must be in addition to the 20%. Academic university researcher and investigator time, unless wholly covered by the university, should not be detailed here. Similarly, allocation of EPSRC funds received through

other sources (for example DTP studentships) to the proposed programme does not count towards the University Offer.

- iii. **Other project partners cash and in-kind contribution [if applicable]:** As above for all other business and academic project partners.
- iv. **Resources Requested from EPSRC.** This section should account for and justify the resources requested from EPSRC including the percentage of academic time dedicated to managing the project and the time the academic principal and co-investigators will dedicate to the project. Describe the role of each of the co-investigators.

Work Plan

There is no expectation that a Gantt chart for the whole duration of the programme will be provided. Rather, EPSRC expects a comprehensive plan for the first two years of the programme to be included along with reference to the management and governance strategy.

Appropriate milestones for when important decisions on the direction of the research will be taken, KPI, and the identified monitoring and evaluation framework should be references where relevant.

Attachments

Only documents under the headings below are permitted; any other attachments submitted will not be shown to the panel unless by prior agreement with EPSRC.

- i. **Project Partner Letters of support.** Business and academic letters of support are required from all named partners unless they are only providing steering board members. These will be checked against the Justification of Resources document – no page limit.
- ii. **Institutional letters of support.** These should be provided by the lead and partner universities. These should outline the University commitment to the programme and the long term strategy of working with the strategic partner - no page limit.
- iii. **CVs.** Should be provided for named PDRAs - maximum of two pages each. (PI CVs have already been assessed at the outline stage)
- iv. **Equipment.** Quotations should be attached for items as appropriate. Three verbal quotes are required for equipment £25k to OJEU limit, to be detailed in the justification of resources. University contributions to equipment do count as part of a university contribution and should be detailed in the appropriate section of the justification of resources document and the institution's letter of support – no page limit.

Please refer to EPSRC's equipment webpages for information on what can and can't be applied for.

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/research/facilities/equipment/>

- v. **Technical assessment.** Technical assessment for the use of a major facility, such as ARCHER. <https://epsrc.ukri.org/research/facilities/> - no page limit.

Facility access

To apply for facility access, such as ARCHER, please see <https://epsrc.ukri.org/research/facilities/hpc/access/apply/>

Applicants should use the Ethical Information section on the Je-S form to demonstrate to peer reviewers 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. All relevant parts of the Ethical Information section must be completed. If the research will involve human participation or the use of animals covered by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 it is recommended that applicants pay particular attention to the guidance highlighted below. EPSRC reserves the right to reject applications prior to peer review if the Ethical Information sections are not completed correctly.

Further guidance on completing the Je-S form can be found at <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/pages/GuidanceonCompletingaStandardG/EthicalInformation.htm>. Other relevant guidance includes: EPSRC's policy on animal use in research (<https://www.epsrc.ukri.org/about/standards/animalresearchpolicy/>) and the Responsible Innovation Framework (<https://epsrc.ukri.org/research/framework/>).

Please note that on submission to EPSRC **all** non-PDF documents uploaded onto Je-S are converted to PDF, the use of non-standard fonts may result in errors or font conversion, which could affect the overall length of the document.

Assessment

Assessment process

Full proposals will be sent to expert peer reviewers, including at least one nominated by the applicants. The Academic and Business PI's will have the opportunity to submit a joint 2-page response to these reviews.

A panel of experts from across industry and academia will convene to assess the comments of the reviewers and the joint PI response. This panel will score and rank the proposals accordingly and provide a recommendation to EPSRC.

Assessment criteria

The reviewers will be asked to focus on the research quality and resources considering what has already been assessed, and not to assess proposal based on the six criteria from the outline stage:

- i. Vision and Ambition
- ii. Additionality and Added Value
- iii. Applicants' leadership and appropriateness of the team
- iv. Impact
- v. Management and governance
- vi. Studentship training

However, while the above criteria can be commented it, particularly considering the additional technical detail provided in the full proposal, they will not be the focus of this stage of peer review. See [Guidance for Reviewers](#) (in this documentation) for more information on this.

The criteria to be assessed at the full proposal stage are:

Quality of proposed research. (Primary assessment criterion)

In order to provide context to the reviewers, the overall vision for the Prosperity Partnership research programme should be articulated, including the business vision, and ambitions for accelerating impact from the research.

- The application should clearly demonstrate the methodology the applicants are intending to use to attain their objectives, and describe this clearly, explaining how appropriate and feasible this is for the programme of work.
- The research vision should be ambitious and the associated work packages should clearly enable a significant step change in knowledge, understanding and technology that will have a major impact on the research base and the business.
- The research programme should be ambitious, creative and innovative; addressing key shared challenge(s). It should be clearly stated why the challenges are ambitious and why academic-business collaboration is essential for success; applicants should set the proposed research in context in terms of the current state of knowledge and other work underway in the field. It should be described how the research will contribute to National and International strategies.

Importance. (Secondary Major assessment criterion)

EPSRC expects all research funded through this Call to explicitly address EPSRC's published Prosperity Outcomes Framework.

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/about/plans/deliveryplan/prosperityoutcomes/>

Expanding on the outline, the proposal should clearly identify how the research proposed:

- Contributes to delivering one or more of the stated Ambitions within each of EPSRC's four key Prosperity Outcomes: Productive, Resilient, Connected and Healthy.
- Contributes to, or helps maintain the health of other research disciplines, contributes to addressing key UK societal challenges, contributes to current or future UK economic success and / or enables future development of key emerging industry(s).
- Meets national strategic needs by establishing or maintaining a unique, world leading research activity (including areas of niche capability).
- Fits with and complements other UK research already funded in the area or related areas, including the relationship to the EPSRC portfolio, and our stated strategy set out in 'Our portfolio'.

Applicant and Partnerships. (Secondary assessment criterion)

Effective leadership is essential to drive the programmes forward and ensure all members of the team are focused on the overall vision. As the leadership has already been assessed at the outline stage, this criterion will focus on the appropriateness of the team in relation to the scientific content in the full proposal.

The proposal should:

- Outline why the team is appropriate to deliver the project's vision and ambition, and how their competencies will help to ensure the proposed benefits are realised
- Demonstrate that the experience, knowledge, skills and/or expertise of the team is appropriate to deliver the scientific programme of work – referencing their track record where appropriate.
- Demonstrate the value the business partner(s) will bring to the team in relation to the delivery of the projects work packages and vision

Resources and Management (Secondary assessment criterion)

Expanding on the outline, the proposal must demonstrate that:

- There is a clear management plan, which will ensure that resources, including human resources, are deployed in the most effective way to deliver high quality research outcomes and impact that have the potential

to induce a step-change in the knowledge and capabilities of the business partners.

- The resources requested are appropriate to meet the needs of the scientific programme
- The resources requested are sufficient to deliver the stated vision and ambition of the programme including any relevant training, the realisation of the outlined benefits, and delivery of impact to the UK

Call Specific Criteria

Monitoring, Evaluation and Benefits Realisation (Secondary Major assessment criterion)

In addition to the above, the proposal will be assessed on the plans put in place for monitoring, evaluation and benefits realisation through the lifetime of the project.

The proposal should:

- Demonstrate that regular monitoring and evaluation has been considered and embedded in the project. This does not need to be shown at individual Key performance indicator level but should demonstrate how KPI's will be monitored.
- Show that deliverables and milestones will be routinely reviewed to ensure that the most exciting and promising lines of research are pursued and that sufficient resources are assigned to ensure the project is professionally managed.
- Identify potential routes to benefit realisation and how these will be exploited throughout the lifetime of the project, including through strategic collaboration between the lead academic and business partners.

Feedback

Written feedback will be provided to all applicants where appropriate.

Collaboration and Intellectual Property Agreements.

Given that strategic partnership arrangements will exist between partners, EPSRC expects that collaboration agreements and arrangements for the management of intellectual property (IP) will be in **place in principle ahead of the submission of a full proposal and signed prior to the project starting**. EPSRC withholds the right to postpone the release of funding until a signed collaboration agreement is in place

EPSRC will not specify terms for collaboration agreements or IP arrangements but expects any agreements to recognise the significant amount of public funding being invested in the programme. Applicants may wish to consult the Lambert Toolkit; <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/university-and-business-collaboration-agreements-lambert-toolkit> for guidance on this topic.

Guidance for reviewers

Thank you for agreeing to review a Prosperity Partnership. Prosperity Partnerships are different in that the initial expression of interest is led by the business, with plans co-created and co-delivered in partnership with a university partner or partners.

In a change to previous years' assessment processes, we have already interviewed the applicant team, focusing on their vision and ambition, the added value of a prosperity partnership and team's plans to successfully co-deliver both in terms of leadership and management. This proposal that you have been asked to review has been invited through to this stage based on the outline panel's assessment of those aspects, which have been deemed suitable in the [context of the call](#).

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/calls/prosperity-partnerships-fourth-round/>

This stage of the review process focuses in on the scientific and technical aspects of the proposal that will be brought together to deliver the vision and ambition of the programme. As such, the proposal will predominately focus on these aspects, with additional context- setting information to allow you to make your assessment on the work package details.

Please note that we have sought to reduce the overall paperwork for this call, however, you may find that you still require a suitable period (~5hrs) to focus on your assessment of the proposal.

If you have any questions about the process or your review, please do not hesitate to get in touch with EPSRC via the details at the end of this document.

Reviewer Form (This call uses the standard peer review form)

Reviews are to be based around a series of assessment criteria with the focus of the review to assess research quality of the work package's scientific and technical content. Your assessment of the proposal should therefore focus on the research quality and resources of the proposal.

Additional comments against the other assessment criteria, such as specific comments on the overall vision, or plans for co-delivery, are permissible as suggestions for focus or improvement but should not form part of your overall assessment as these have already been assessed by the outline panel. Please note that the matching contribution from the business will be verified by EPSRC, however, an assessment of the wider resources requested is still appropriate as part of your review.

Reviewers are asked to use the [assessment criteria](#) definitions completing their review, and bear in mind that the vision & ambition, added value, team, management and studentship approach have already been reviewed by the outline interview panel.

The questions on the reviewer form may be used as prompts to guide your comments, but reviewers are asked to focus of the bullet-pointed criteria set out in the [assessment criteria](#) definitions, and to use these when determining your score.

Further information about the EPSRC peer review process and guidance for reviewers can be found at:

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/assessmentprocess/review/>

Background Information on the Prosperity Partnerships (Fourth) Call

A key aim of the Prosperity Partnerships Call is engaging business in the co-creation of longer, larger grants and in so doing, helping business unlock the transformative potential of investing in discovery science and engineering.

This is our fourth Prosperity Partnership call, and through calls 1, 2 and 3 to date we have supported 29 prosperity partnerships from a range of sectors covering a wide array of disciplines, but all with a core focus on delivering collaborative research programmes that build on world leading research. Through building previous experiences, we have focused on the relationship and vision for the partnership, and in this final review stage we are assessing the scientific and technical merit of the programme that has been co-developed between the academic and business teams.

Up to £20 million is available to support up to eight partnerships.

Points to consider

As you are reviewing a proposal(s) submitted in response to a published Call, we ask you to read this [Call Document](#) and make your assessment of the proposal within the context of the aims, objectives and specific assessment criteria for the Call. There are several points we ask you to take into consideration as you make your assessment:

The vision and ambition, added value and plans to deliver in partnership (leadership and management) have already been assessed. This part of the peer review process is focused on the scientific and technical detail of the proposed work packages to deliver against the vision. Your role as an expert peer reviewer is to assess the quality of these work packages and their alignment to enabling the delivery of the vision.

Applicants have already explicitly demonstrated and quantified the benefits of the programme to the business during the outline stage and will outline this in their full proposal. It will be important to focus on the technical detail of the work packages and if these will indeed allow the delivery of the stated benefits.

As a key aim of these programmes is to drive the generation of enhanced impact to the businesses involved and they require considerable business investment, in some cases the work planned may extend into higher Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs 4+). This is appropriate if the bulk of the work remains in the standard EPSRC remit space (TRL 1-3), focusing on discovery science in engineering or physical sciences.

It was specified in the Call Document that applicant businesses should have a UK research base and all proposals have already highlighted the programme will benefit the UK in the outline stage. We accept that some aspects of the research may also result in exploitation and benefits felt beyond the UK.

Whilst all bids must have a lead business and lead academic partner with an established strategic relationship, beyond this we have not stipulated the make-up of partnerships. There is likely to be a range of configurations, from a single

business with several established university partners, to a single established relationship between the lead organisations with a variety of new partners brought in. These aspects have been reviewed at the outline stage; however, it will be beneficial to note any aspects that may be strengthened to fit with the more detailed information that we now have on the research work packages.

Proposals will come from a broad range of disciplines and will reflect the perspective of the business sector(s) they represent. Inherent sector-specific traits, in relation to their appetite for risk, should be considered when considering research described in the programme.

Funds for doctoral studentships may be applied for as part of the resources requested from EPSRC. Applicants have already demonstrated how they will ensure that the doctoral students will have a high-quality training and academic research experience and can ensure that they can meet the descriptor for the award of a doctoral degree. However, reviewers may comment on any areas for further improvement if appropriate, particularly if the proposed studentships do not clearly provide an opportunity for a distinct and independent course of enquiry for the student. The doctoral studentship must not be on the critical path for research grant delivery

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/the-revised-uk-quality-code>

Key dates

Activity	Date*
Deadline for Outline submissions	20 February 2020
Outline interview panels	3-17 June 2020
Invitation to submit full proposal	24 September 2020
Deadline for Full Proposals	10 December 2020
Checks and Peer Review process	11 December 2020 – February 2020
Invite PI response	February 2020 ¹
Full proposal panel and decision	March 2021

*EPSRC aims to adhere to the key dates as published, however there may be exceptions where dates have to change due reviewer / panellist availability

Note: Submissions to this call will count towards the Repeatedly Unsuccessful Applicants Policy. Further information about the policy can be found at:

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/howtoapply/basics/resubpol/rua/>

Contacts

- Steve Webb, Portfolio Manager, (Stephen.Webb@epsrc.ukri.org)
- Josh Gill, Senior Partnerships Manager (Joshua.Gill@epsrc.ukri.org)

- Daniel Smith, Joint Head of Business Relationships
(Daniel.Smith@epsrc.ukri.org)
- Je-S Helpdesk: JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk Phone: +44 (0) 1793 44 4164

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 10 December 2020

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Josh Gill	June	1	N/A
Josh Gill	June	2	Weighting added to Monitoring/Benefits Realisation criteria Repeatedly Unsuccessful Applicants policy added
Josh Gill	June	3	Updated for 2 nd tranche of proposals

Appendices

Annex 1

Studentship costs for Prosperity Partnerships

Fees and Stipends

Research Councils publish their national minimum doctoral stipend and indicative fee level on an annual basis. Details can be found on the UKRI website:

<https://www.ukri.org/skills/funding-for-research-training/>

Research Councils UK Doctoral Stipend Levels and Indicative Fees for 2020

- National Minimum Doctoral Stipend for 2020/21 is £15,285
- Research Councils UK Indicative Fee Level for 2020/21 is £4,407

An uplift to this minimum stipend may be requested if there is clear justification for doing so. A top up may be achieved through using business leverage rather than requesting further RC funding.

Research Training Support Grant (RTSG):

This is a contribution towards costs incurred in training research students e.g. the provision of consumables, equipment, travel, etc. The RTSG is not intended to relieve a Research Organisation of any part of its normal expenditure.

A typical value for a student is £5000 per annum. (This follows existing Research Council costings)

How to apply on Je-S

Under "Studentship costs" there are two boxes:

Stipends – enter stipend level as one figure

Fees – enter fees amount AND Research Training Support Grant AND any other required student research support costs as one figure.

Justification of Resources

The justification of resources section of the proposal should clearly outline the costs requested for studentships, with a breakdown and justification of the appropriate costings.

Annex 2

Justification of Resources table template

	Institution name	Key Contribution Summary – (please expand in free text after table)	Contribution form (if available at this stage)
fEC	N/A	A	N/A
EPSRC funding	EPSRC	B (usually 80% A)	Not needed?
Business Lead cash contribution	[Business Lead name]	C 80% B as a minimum	Brief description
Other project partners cash contribution (add as many rows as you need)	[Project partner name]	D No minimum commitment. Will add (maximum 20% B) or top up matching contribution.	Same
Academic Lead cash contribution	[Academic Lead name]	E No minimum commitment. Will not count against matching contribution.	Same
Total project value	A+C+D+E		
Business Lead in kind	[Business Lead name]	F	Same
University Lead in kind contributions	[Academic Lead name]	G	Same
Other project partners (add as many rows as you need) in kind contributions	[Project partner name]	H	Same
Overall project Value	A+C+D+E+F+G+H		

Je-S attachments Check List

Standard:

Attachment Type	Maximum Page length	Mandatory/Optional	Extra Guidance
Case for Support	12 pages	M	
Technical Annex	Five pages	M	One page per major research challenge uploaded as a single document
Workplan	Two pages	M	
Justification for Resources	Four pages	M	
CVs	Two pages each	M	Mandatory for named PDRAs – Optional for PIs and CoIs
Project Partner Letters of Support	No page limits	M	Must be included from all named project partners. Must be on headed paper, and be signed and dated within six months of the proposal submission date.
Equipment Quotes	No page limits	M	Mandatory in line with guidance on EPSRC website
Equipment Business Case	Two pages each	M	See EPSRC website "Equipment on Research Grants" for guidance
Proposal Cover Letter	No page limit	Optional	The cover letter can be used to highlight any important information to EPSRC. This attachment type is not seen by reviewers or panel members.