

Quick Reference

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

EPSRC Capital Award for Core Equipment

Call type: Invitation for proposals

Closing date: 24 September 2019

How to apply: Full Proposals (Invitation only)

Assessment Process: Invited proposals will be reviewed for their fit to the call by peer review panel

Key Dates:

Activity	Date
Invitation to apply issued	w/c July 1st
Applicants' teleconference	9 July (14.30-16.00)
Applicants' teleconference	16 July (14.00-15.30)
Call Opens in Je-S	25 July 2019
Deadline for Proposals	24 September 2019
Expert Panel	06 November 2019 (estimate)
Grant start date (fixed)	29 November 2019
Grant end date	17 March 2021

Additional information: This call is only available to invited institutions, based on previous funding and applications to EPSRC. Invited institutions will have been informed in advance of this call being published. Applications from uninvited organisations will be rejected. Only one application per institution will be accepted. Joint applications are not eligible for this call.

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Related themes: Research infrastructure

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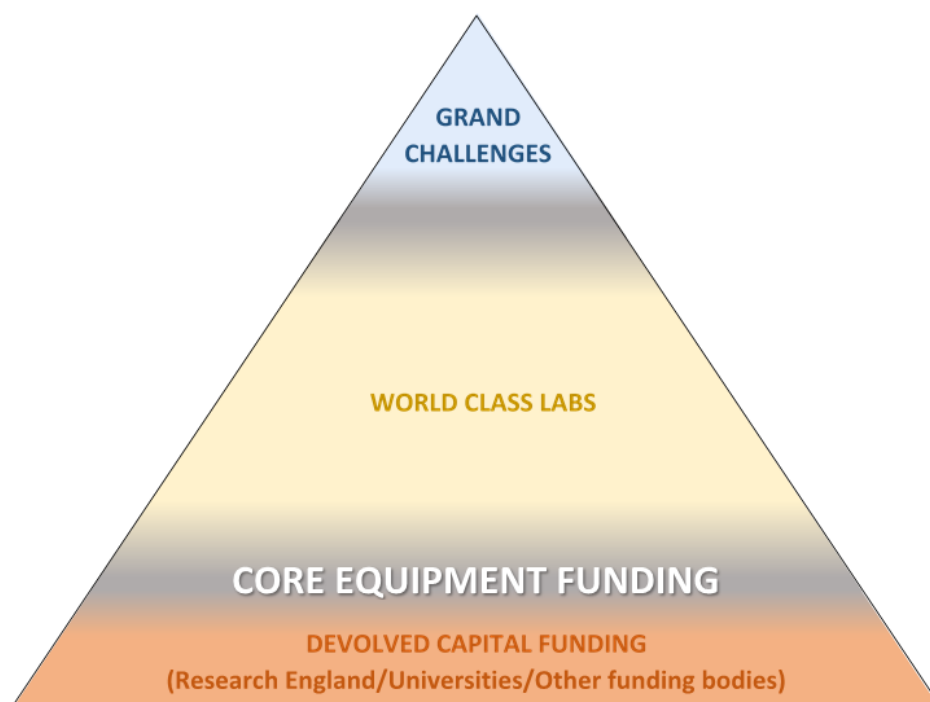
Summary

Invited institutions are to be awarded a block grant of capital funding based on their historical performance in securing capital funding through EPSRC's World Class Labs budget. This award is to be used to procure, upgrade and enhance the productivity of core equipment with the explicit aim of providing support to researchers within the remit of EPSRC¹.

Background

EPSRC defines World Class Labs (WCL) as the combination of excellent people working in the right places to undertake cutting-edge research, using state-of-the-art fit-for-purpose equipment underpinned with well qualified, well-resourced technical support. The vast majority of EPSRC's capital budget is invested in WCL via Strategic Equipment, National Research Facilities, capital investment in E-infrastructure (e.g. Tier 2 computing) and equipment on research grants. EPSRC also recognises the value of smaller scale, core equipment that supports the WCL investment at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the country. This base of the investment pyramid (Figure 1) has been supported in the past by EPSRC investments (e.g. the Underpinning multi-user investment and Experimental equipment calls) as well as support from devolved capital funding and other sources.

Figure 1 – Core Equipment funding in relation to other funding streams



As a demonstration of our commitment to supporting investment in core equipment to assist the long-term competitiveness of its research portfolio, EPSRC is providing institutional block-grant funding from its capital budget to

¹ In the context of this call schemes included are Strategic Equipment, standard research grants, Fellowships, First Grants and New Investigator Awards over the period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2019 as well as specific funding competitions supported through the EPSRC World Class Labs budget (Tier 2 HPC, Underpinning multi-user equipment and Experimental equipment).

procure, upgrade and enhance the productivity of core equipment in invited universities.

Investments must be made in line with at least one of the following objectives:

Underpinning multi-user equipment: Recipients may invest in new core equipment that will benefit multiple users in one or more departments. The majority of research undertaken using the equipment should be directly relevant to the EPSRC research portfolio.

Invest to save: Recipients may choose to invest in: Upgrading and improving existing equipment to extend its lifespan, expand its capability to be of value to a wider range of EPSRC researchers, improve efficiency of the equipment or to make more productive use of staff time. Purchase of components (not consumables) in excess of £10k is permissible.

Co-location of equipment: Capital costs incurred in co-locating existing or new equipment with the aim of providing enhanced sharing, usage and collaboration benefits to a wider EPSRC research community.

We have scheduled two teleconferences to provide an opportunity for EPSRC to outline plans and provide an opportunity for applicants to ask questions. Questions raised and their answers will be distributed to all applicants.

Dates of the teleconferences are as follows:

09 July (14.30 - 16:00)

16 July (14.00 – 15.30)

Further details will be provided to applicants by email.

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

Funding available

Funding in this call has been awarded based on the historical performance of invited institutions based on their historical performance in securing capital funding from EPSRC's World Class Labs budget ². Each institution has been informed of the value of the block grant award within a separate letter.

Only capital funding (funded at up to 100% FEC) is available from this call. Associated running costs and other resources such as technical staff costs, will need to be met by the institution.

Only one application per university is allowed. The total value of the application must not exceed that stated in the invitation.

² In the context of this call schemes included are standard research grants, Fellowships, First Grants and New Investigator Awards over the period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2019 as well as specific funding competitions supported through the EPSRC World Class Labs budget (Tier 2 HPC, Underpinning multi-user equipment and Experimental equipment).

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The long term strength of the UK research base depends on harnessing all the available talent and the Research Councils have together developed the ambitious UK Research and Innovation Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan <https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/skills/action-plan-edi-2016/>

In line with the UK Research and Innovation Diversity Principles, EPSRC expects that equality and diversity is embedded at all levels and in all aspects of research practice. We are committed to supporting the research community in the diverse ways a research career can be built with our investments. 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, need flexible working arrangements or those currently committed to other longer, large existing grants. Please see our Equality and Diversity webpages <https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/equalitydiversity/> for further information.

Equipment

Funding available through this call is exclusively for the procurement of equipment. Costs for operating and maintaining equipment are not eligible and should be borne by the applicant institution. Further details of the requirements of this call are listed below.

- EPSRC will award costs at up to 100% FEC.
- Any equipment procured must provide clear support primarily to EPSRC researchers within the institution, with benefit to any wider academic community a secondary benefit.
- There must be a clear demonstration that the funds will be used in addition to investments that the institution would normally make towards supporting core equipment.
- Equipment must support research that is very clearly centred in EPSRC's remit. Small amounts of non-EPSRC research may be permissible.
- Only items of equipment over £10k in value (including VAT) can be purchased using the allocated block grant.
- Items of equipment in excess of £400k cannot be purchased using the allocated block grant, including partial contributions.
- Laboratory refurbishment costs are only permitted where they directly address the co-location objective as detailed above.
- Institutions may purchase equipment of a value in excess of the grant awarded (but not exceeding £400K) provided the application demonstrates why this equipment would fulfil the requirements of the call. The balance of the value of the equipment must be provided by the Institution or other sources of support.

For more information, please contact the Research Infrastructure contacts listed in this call document.

For more information on equipment funding, please see:
<https://epsrc.ukri.org/research/facilities/equipment/>

Eligibility

This call is only open to invited institutions. Invited institutions will have been informed in advance of this call being published. Applications from non-eligible organisations will be rejected.

Please ensure sufficient time to create Je-S accounts for Investigators who do not currently have one.

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 to apply to EPSRC is provided at:
<https://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/>

How to apply

Applicants will be informed of the value of their award in the accompanying invitation to apply. All applications must be submitted through the Je-S System.

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 'EPSRC Capital Award for Core Equipment'
- On the Project Details page you should select the 'EPSRC Capital Award for Core Equipment' 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 12 September 2019.

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

Proposals will have a start date of 18th November 2019 and a fixed duration of 18 months. Equipment only grants can be started with the procurement of equipment as opposed to when actual spend will occur. Grant holders must contact EPSRC as soon as possible if the grant cannot be started on 18th November 2019.

The Principal Investigator of the proposal should be the current EPSRC Equipment Account holder or the senior staff member responsible for the institution's equipment strategy.

Case for Support (up to 6 pages)

Description of the investment and the strategy behind the allocation

This grant is intended to be a flexible fund to allow institutions to deliver their strategies in support of EPSRC Researchers, capital infrastructure and the development and maintenance of World Class Labs.

- Please describe your strategy and decision making process for the distribution/allocation of the block grant against the objectives of the call.
- Where equipment is being purchased it is expected that institutions will have decided what items of equipment they intend to purchase ahead of submitting the grant. Please provide for each item/group of items:
 - 1) A brief description of the item(s).
 - 2) Cost of the item(s).
 - 3) How the item fulfils one or more of the objectives of the call.
- How will this investment enable you to maintain and improve your World Class Lab provision and thereby facilitate the undertaking of high quality research by your academic community.

Added Value of Investment

This investment should be in addition to any planned investments in capital equipment at the institutional level and should not be used to replace planned investment. Please explain how you will demonstrate the added value of this investment.

Anticipated benefits of the investment and how they will be realised

What will success look like and how will you know it has been achieved? What steps will be taken to identify and monitor the benefits of this investment?

For underpinning equipment: how will you monitor the number and type of users?

For invest to save elements: how will you quantify this in terms of money saved, staff time saved, increased efficiency or productivity?

For co-location: how will you monitor any enhanced sharing, usage and collaboration from this investment?

Pathways to Impact (up to 2 sides of A4)

- Please provide a short statement on the anticipated impact of your proposed investment and how it will be maximised.
- How will the university monitor and/or evaluate the impact of the investment?

Work Plan (up to 1 side of A4)

This should include:

- Details of the timescales for the procurement process.
- Timescale for delivery, installation and getting the equipment fully operational.
- Expected lifetime of the equipment.

Justification of Resources (up to 2 sides of A4):

This should be in tabular format to include the following headings:

- Equipment item
- Preferred vendor(s)
- Cost (and verbal quotes as required)
- Justification
- Explanation if there is a sole supplier

Business case (up to 2 sides of A4)

For items over £138k a business case is required. Guidance on how to prepare an Equipment Business Case and requirements for quotes can be found on the following webpage:

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

Quotes for equipment (no page limit):

Quotes for equipment are required as per EPSRC standard equipment rules.

For items costing between £25k to £138k, three verbal quotes should be detailed in the Justification of Resources (written quotes are optional). For items over £138k, three written quotes should be uploaded with the grant application. If there is a sole supplier, this must be detailed in the JoR.

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.ac.uk/about/standards/animalresearchpolicy/>) and the Responsible Innovation Framework (<https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/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.

For advice on writing proposals see:

<https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/howtoapply/preparing/>

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Assessment

Assessment process

Applications to this call will be reviewed directly by a specially convened peer review panel drawn from across EPSRC's remit. The panel will be invited to review the applications and:

- identify general or individual concerns and issues
- consider whether any feedback to Research Organisations is appropriate either in general or individually

Proposals will be reviewed according to the assessment criteria below. The outcome from the panel will be one of the following:

1. The proposal will be funded, with no amendments required
2. The proposal is fundable as written but amendments will be required prior to funds being released. Following submission of the requested amendments, release of funds will be at the discretion of the Panel Chair and the EPSRC budget holder.
3. The proposal is not fundable as written and major rewriting will be required prior to fund being released. Following submission of the requested amendments, release of funds will be at the discretion of the Panel Chair and the EPSRC budget holder.

In the event of failure to provide the requested amendments within a specified timescale or provision of amendments that do not satisfy the requirements specified by the panel chair, EPSRC reserve the right not to award the allocated funds to the institution in question. Written feedback will only be given to applicants whose proposals are in categories 2 or 3 as specified by the panel. General feedback on all applications will only be given if requested by the panel.

Assessment criteria

1) Alignment with the objectives of the call (Primary)

How does the investment proposed align with the objectives of the call?

Does the proposed investment fall within at least one of the following three categories?:

- a. the investment is being used to procure underpinning equipment.
- b. the investment is being used to support invest to save activities.
- c. the investment is being used to enable the co-location of existing or new equipment to enhance sharing, usage and collaboration.

2) Added Value of this investment (Secondary)

What evidence is provided that the funding is in addition to existing investment?

How will this equipment enable the university to do things that they otherwise couldn't currently do?

3) Plans for Realising benefits of the investment (Secondary Major)

Plans for identifying and realising the benefits of the investment should be described. To what extent are these plans realistic, measurable and deliverable and over what timescale?

4) Management of capital distribution (Secondary)

Evidence should be provided to demonstrate that an appropriate decision making process has been undertaken to decide the allocation of funding.

Additional grant conditions (AGCs)

Grants will be subject to the standard RCUK grant conditions however the following additional grant conditions will be added to this call:

Applicants will be required to provide a report outlining how the university is delivering the benefits from the investment, based on the reporting information the applicant has provided in the 'Anticipated benefits of the investment and how they will be realised' section of the case for support. EPSRC reserve the right to request additional reporting requirements.

Moving forward

Submissions to this call will **not** 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/>

Key dates

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Contacts

Antony Chapman antony.chapman@ukri.epsrc.org 01793 444365

Claire Higlett claire.higlett@ukri.epsrc.org 01793 444018

For any enquiries related to issues with Je_S please contact the Je-S helpdesk (01793 444164 or JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org).

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change
Antony Chapman	05/06/2019	1	N/A

Je-S attachments Check List

Attachment Type	Maximum Page length	Mandatory/Optional	Extra Guidance
Case for Support	Six pages	M	Comprising up to six A4 sides to include the information requested above
Pathways to Impact	Two pages	M	
Workplan	One page	M	
Justification for Resources	Two pages	M	
Letters of Support	No page limits	As Required by EPSRC	In exceptional circumstances a maximum of three letters can be submitted.
Equipment Quotes	No page limits	As required by EPSRC	
Equipment Business Case	Two pages each	As required by EPSRC	Required for any items or combined assets with a value above the OJEU limit.

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.
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Please ensure you adhere to the above attachment requirements when submitting your proposal. Any missing, over length or unnecessary attachments may result in your proposal being rejected.