Round 1 EPSRC Responsive Mode and Fellowship Opportunities on the UKRI Funding Service

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Aims

- Provide community information on how to apply to Responsive Mode and Fellowship opportunities in the Funding Service
- Provide the community the opportunity to ask questions to members of the SBF programme and EPSRC staff

After the webinar:

- Recording will be made available on the website, with the slides
- Collated Q and As from the webinar will be published
- UKRI training videos will be available – first published soon

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Webinar Overview

1. **Welcome and introductions:** Katie Daniel

2. **Overview Presentation:** Louise Tillman
EPSRC Responsive Mode and Fellowship Opportunities on TFS

3. **Demo:** Renee van de Locht
Demo of how to apply on TFS

4. **Q & A Session:** EPSRC and SBF Panel

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Q and A Session

- Please use the Q&A function to submit your questions
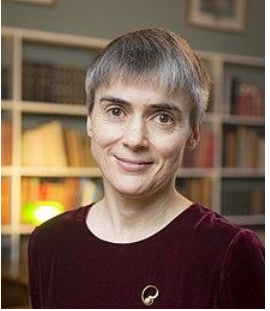- You can upvote questions during the session

Q and A panel:

- Katie Daniel - Deputy Director Partnerships (Chair)
- Sinead Balgobin - Head of Regional Engagement, West Midlands
- Edward Clarke - Joint Head of EDI and People
- Joe Shearring - Head of Regional Engagement, East Midlands
- Louise Tillman – Head of Business Improvement
- Renee van de Locht - EPSRC and NERC SBF Business Partner

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Content

1. **What is the Funding Service and why are we transitioning?**

2. **What does the transition journey for EPSRC's Responsive Mode and Fellowship look like?**

3. **What do applications to our EPSRC Responsive Mode and Fellowship opportunities look like in TFS**

4. **Where can I find more information?**

Our Vision

UKRI's Simpler and Better Funding (SBF) programme is creating a funding service that is easy to use and supports everyone involved in research funding.

The goal is that UKRI operates a single, consistent user-centred service that reduces the burden of finding, applying for and managing research funding, gives UKRI evidence to support funding the best ideas, can respond and adapt easily to change.

The SBF programme will be delivering a funding service based on a new digital platform, underpinned by improved policies, processes and support. These changes will make it easier for researchers and innovators to collaborate, obtain guidance, and submit applications in a joined-up way.

EPSRC's Responsive Mode and Fellowship transition

EPSRC's Transition to The Funding Service

- EPSRC is launching our previously always open Opportunities on the Funding Service as rounds with closing dates.

- During the first year of the Funding Service, the system will continue to develop in response to internal and external user needs. By opening as rounds, we will be able to accommodate system developments in a way that means applications can be assessed in a batch submitted under the same conditions.

- By taking a round-based approach EPSRC will be able to better manage the transition internally, ensuring we continue to deliver a high-quality service.

- We will evaluate the round-based application system after the first year.

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The Transition of Responsive Mode Opportunities

- EPSRC's Standard Research Grant, New Investigator Award, Overseas Travel Grant, Network Grant, Discipline-Hopping in ICT, and Working with Overseas Scientists, make up 'Responsive Mode'.

- Plan to run 4 consecutive rounds before reviewing viability of returning to open application process.

- Round 1 for these Opportunities reopened on the Funding Service on 23rd May 2023 and will close on 28th September 2023.

Timeline for the Transition of Responsive Mode

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The Funding Service
Group 1 Opportunities

Opens on 23 May 2023 and closes on 28 September 2023

Will follow directly after Round One until early 2024

Will follow directly after Round Two until Spring 2024

We will review the round-based application system after one year.

Applications for Group 1 Opportunities will close on Je-S

Applications close 30 March 2023

Round 1

Round 2

Round 3

Review rounds

2023

2024

Pre-announcements

EPSRC will publish pre-announcements on the Funding Finder.

Review

Reviewers can expect to start receiving invitations to review for Round 1 via the funding service late in 2023

Fellowships

- EPSRC Fellowships include: Open and Open Plus Fellowships, Postdoctoral Fellowships (including Stephen Hawking Postdoctoral Fellowships).

- Round 1 for these opportunities re-opened on 23rd May 2023 and closes on 28th September 2023.

- The second round will open on 2 October 2023 and close in April 2024, and the third round will open in April 2024 and close in July 2024. EPSRC Fellowships will therefore be open to applications throughout the year.

- Plan to run these rounds before reviewing viability of returning to open application process.

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What do I need to do before applying?

- **Check Eligibility:**
  - Existing EPSRC eligibility rules will apply for this round: Check if you're eligible for funding – EPSRC – UKRI
  - Please check Funding Finder opportunities for any opportunity specific eligibility requirements

- **Remit queries:**
  - If you have a query about whether a proposal you are working on is within EPSRC's remit please submit early in the submission window.
  - Use our remit query service: EPSRC remit – EPSRC – UKRI

What do I need to do before applying?

- **Deadlines:**
  - Please do not leave submitting your application until the closing date.
  - Ensure that you know about any institutional deadlines and processes that need to be completed prior to the submission deadline.

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What do applications to our Responsive Mode and Fellowship opportunities look like in TFS?

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Applicant grant roles

- UKRI are introducing a new set of common grant roles which offer greater consistency across UKRI opportunities

- Information on which roles are available is given in the funding opportunity's guidance on the Funding Finder and TFS

- Only single project lead on applications at the moment.

[Roles in funding applications: eligibility, responsibilities and costings guidance – UKRI](#)

project lead

project co-lead UK

project co-lead (international)

researcher co-lead

fellow

grant manager

research and innovation associate

visiting researcher

specialist

technician

doctoral student

professional enabling staff

Approach to the application questions

- Streamlining the application process across councils by simplifying and standardising the questions we ask researchers to explain their ideas. Only information required for expert review will be requested at application

- Moving towards question and answer format, making it easier for applicants to explain their idea, and easier for assessors to review it.

- **Central to this is the 'core question set' for responsive mode and research grants.** The question set reflects the basic criteria against which the applications will be assessed.

- These questions and areas of assessment have been developed from question sets and assessment criteria previously used in funding Opportunities across UKRI.

Core application questions and areas of assessment

Vision	Approach	Applicant and Team Capability to Deliver
Resources and Cost Justification	Ethics and Responsible Research and Innovation	Opportunity Specific Questions and Criteria

Vision and Approach

EPSRC Responsive mode now published on the Funding Finder with the core question set

For EPSRC the Vision & Approach Section will be combined and asked for as a 6 page PDF upload (with 1 additional page for workplan)

Section: **Vision**

Question**: What are you hoping to achieve with your proposed work?**

What the assessors are looking for in your response
- is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
- has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
- is timely given current trends, context and needs
- impacts world-leading research, society, the economy or the environment

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Vision and Approach

For EPSRC the Vision & Approach Section will be combined and asked for as a 6 page PDF upload (with 1 additional page for workplan)

Section: **Approach**

Question: **How will you deliver your proposed work?**

What the assessors are looking for in your response
- is effective and appropriate to achieve your objectives
- is feasible, and comprehensively identifies any risks to delivery and how they will be managed
- if applicable, uses a clear and transparent methodology
- if applicable, summarises the previous work and describes how this will be built upon and progressed
- will maximise translation of outputs into outcomes and impacts
- describes how your, and if applicable your team's, research environment (in terms of the place, its location, and relevance to the project) will contribute to the success of the work

Applicant and Team Capability to Deliver

Section: **Applicant and team capability to deliver**
1500 words in digital form (1,000 words to be used for R4RI modules and, if necessary, a further 500 words for Additions)
Fellowships: 2500 in digital form (2,000 words to be used for R4RI modules and, if necessary, a further 500 words for Additions)

Question: **Why are you the right individual or team to successfully deliver the proposed work?**

What the assessors are looking for in your response
Evidence of how you, and if relevant your team, have:
- the relevant experience (appropriate to career stage) to deliver the proposed work
- the right balance of skills and expertise to cover the proposed work
- the appropriate leadership and management skills to deliver the work and your approach to develop others
- contributed to developing a positive research environment and wider community

Resume 4 Research and Innovation approach to capturing track record of the applicants and project team

Resources and Costs

Section: **Resource and cost justification**

Fill in structured costs section on application form **<u>AND</u>**

Question**: What will you need to deliver your proposed work and how much will it cost?**
1000 words in digital form

What the assessors are looking for in your response
Demonstrate how the resources you anticipate needing for your proposed work:
- are comprehensive, appropriate, and justified
- represent the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes
- maximise potential outcomes and impacts

Ethics and RRI

Section: **Ethics and Responsible Research and Innovation**

500 words in digital form

Question: **What are the ethical or RRI implications and issues relating to the proposed work? If you do not think that the proposed work raises any ethical or RRI issues, explain why.**

What the assessors are looking for in your response

- Using the text box, demonstrate that you have identified and evaluated the relevant ethical or responsible research and innovation considerations, and how you will manage them.

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Opportunity specific questions

- Some additional application questions that pull through to the areas of assessment for specific opportunities:

Opportunity	Additional application question and area of assessment
New investigator award	• Host organisation support
Network	• Added value of the network
Open fellowship	• Host organisation support • Personal aspirations and continued professional development • Team and community leadership
Open plus fellowship	• Host organisation support • Personal aspirations and continued professional development • Team and community leadership • Creating positive change in the research community by championing an identified topic
Post-doctoral fellowship	• Host organisation support • Personal aspirations and continued professional development • Team and community leadership

Additional mandatory questions

✓ **Summary**

✱ **EPSRC thematic area alignment:** For internal EPSRC operational purposes

📄 **Project Partner contributions:** Complete word table and paste into digital form

📧 **Project Partner letters of support:** Compile into single PDF and upload

🖥 **Facility usage:** Complete digital form section, confirm that spoken and agreed access with the facility
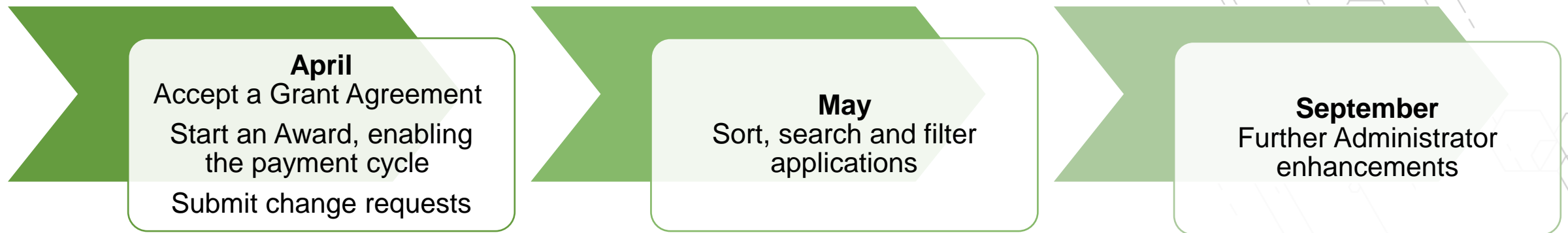
❓ **Detailed ethics questions**: Complete only where relevant

⚠ **Sensitive Information:** Replacement for cover letter – please follow instructions closely

Increased administrator functionality is coming

April
Accept a Grant Agreement
Start an Award, enabling the payment cycle
Submit change requests

May
Sort, search and filter applications

September
Further Administrator enhancements

We continue to research how additional administrator needs are best addressed within TFS, including, for example, co-editing, permissions and structures.

Assessment process

- Reviewer comments based on new areas of assessment
- Response from applicants if reviews are sufficiently supportive
- Considered at one of EPSRC thematic panels
  - Mathematical Sciences
  - Physical Sciences
  - ICT
  - Engineering
- EPSRC approach to panels the same but adapted to incorporate new areas of assessment
- Outcomes to be shared in April 2024

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Assessment process - Fellowships

- Reviewer comments based on new areas of assessment
- Response from applicants if reviews are sufficiently supportive
- Considered at one of EPSRC thematic panels
  - Mathematical Sciences
  - Physical Sciences
  - ICT
  - Engineering
- Fellowships successful at the prioritisation panel stage will be invited to interview in April 2024.
- Outcomes in May 2024.

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What will remain the same?

Type of Funding Opportunities available
Purpose, aim and scope of our Responsive Mode and Fellowship Opportunities
Eligibility
UKRI Principles of Assessment and Decision Making
Approach to assessment process
EPSRC approach to panel

What is changing?

Primarily a digital application form with applicant, RO, reviewer, panel members and UKRI staff all using one system

Temporary move to fixed rounds with closing dates

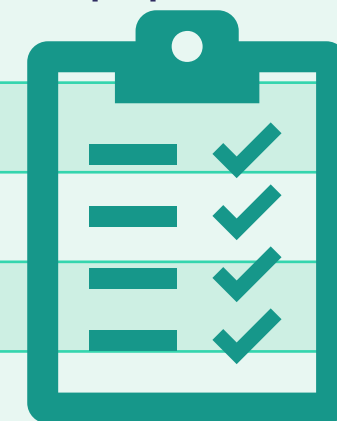New grant role names and definitions

Simplified finances section

Only information required for expert review will be requested at application (no equipment quotes, equipment business cases or technical assessments)

Standardised core question set across Councils

Use of R4RI (no CVs for named researchers / visiting researchers)

Limited ability to return for amendment

No nominated reviewers

Where can I find out more information?

UKRI channels

Updates on UKRI SBF programme including the Funding Service and UKRI policy:

- Look at SBF webpages: [About Simpler and Better Funding – UKRI](#)
- Sign-up for [the SBF newsletter](#)
- Watch / attend existing and future [SBF Webinars](#)
- Contact support@funding-service.ukri.org
- Sign up to participate in user research

EPSRC channels

Updates on EPSRC transition to the Funding Service

- Look at [EPSRC transition web pages](#)

- Detailed information on opportunities and application process on the Funding Finder

- Updates in the [Research Community Update](#)

- Updates to EPSRC guidance for applicants webpages ongoing as transition progresses

Other useful resources

- [Good research resource hub – UKRI](#)

- R4RI Resources: [Joint Funders Group – UKRI](#)

- RRI Framework: [Framework for responsible research and innovation – UKRI](#)

- Fellowships further guidance: [Postdoctoral and open fellowships – UKRI](#)