

DISTINCTIVE

First Call for Proposals – Active Research Support Fund

The EPSRC DISTINCTIVE University Consortium is seeking proposals from Postdoctoral Research Associates (PDRAs) to facilitate active research, international secondments and small equipment purchases.

DISTINCTIVE will receive funding over four years from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) to support research across the UK academic community. The programme has been awarded a project support fund of £240k (plus VAT) to allocate against bids from individual projects taking into account the strategic aims of the consortium:

- To carry out internationally leading science and engineering research in the area of decommissioning and nuclear waste management.
- To support research that provides routes to innovate technology developments that can be applied to decommissioning and nuclear waste management.
- To foster and develop new multi-disciplinary research partnerships between academic and industry researchers.
- To train the next generation of UK researchers, equipping them with skills and experiences relevant to nuclear waste management and decommissioning issues.
- To provide a focal point for government, industry and academics through which current and future R&D issues associated with nuclear waste and decommissioning can be discussed.
- To provide a route for public understanding of the underlying research and development needs opportunities and solutions to nuclear waste and decommissioning.

The total funding available in this call is £240k (plus VAT). As such, all project support funds may be allocated in the first round. There is no restriction on the maximum funding that can be requested by each PDRA.

If funding is outstanding after the first round, a second call for proposals will be issued in six months' time (July 2015).

1. Scope of this call

At the time of submitting a proposal to the EPSRC, a number of PDRA projects indicated a potential need for active research facilities; however, a detailed understanding of facility needs and the duration of work was unable to be defined.

The aim of this call is to provide funding to these projects where the need for additional focused support for active research and/or access to other specialised facilities has now been identified.

This includes funding to support mobility, and the purchase of minor equipment needed to undertake some active tests, which will need to remain in the active facility.

The project support fund should be used to help facilitate secondments/industrial placements where possible.

2. Eligibility

This call is open to all PDRA who are directly incurred posts on the EPSRC grant EP/L014041/1. The call is not open to PhD researchers who are associated with the programme.

Please note that PDRA supervisors/Pis at eligible institutions can submit a proposal for funding on behalf of the researcher. This is advised at institutions where a PDRA has yet to be appointed.

3. How to apply

All PDRA must use the proposal template attached to this call. The proposal should comprise of the following:

- A project title
- A brief project description
- Detailed costings
- A justification for funding statement
- Timescales

Any proposals not in the template will not be considered. No changes to the template should be made. Supporting documents may be sent as additional attachments.

3.1 Proposal costing

The same rigorous procedures as used for applications direct to EPSRC should also be followed for costing proposals.

Full economic costs and the value requested from the support fund (80% fEC) must be clearly stated.

Funding cannot be requested for staff or student costs, nor can it be requested for estates or IDCs.

It is advised that matched funding is sought from industry to support research secondments. This will stretch the budget between the projects and increase the likelihood of the application being successful.

Equipment: Requests for small items of equipment (individual items less than £10k including VAT) should be included under "Other directly incurred costs". The consortium will not provide funding for items of equipment costing in excess of £10k including VAT.



Access to Facilities: Requests for access to research facilities should be included under “Other directly allocated costs”.

The application form should be signed by the PDRA, the PI, their Head of Department and an approved signatory from their Research Support Office (or equivalent), confirming the correct costing procedures have been followed in preparing the bid.

3.2 Submission instructions

Proposals must be submitted via email by Tuesday 31st March 2015 to Abby Ward (Consortium Manager): A.M.E.Ward@leeds.ac.uk

Confirmation of safe receipt of proposals will be sent by email.

4. The Selection Process

Access to this funding will be managed through a transparent bidding process open to all PDRAs.

All proposals will be reviewed by each member of the DISTINCTIVE Management Board between Wednesday 1st and Monday 13th April 2015.

The final allocation of funding will be determined at a Management Board meeting that will be held on Tuesday 14th April 2015.

Where there is a conflict of interest, the member will be asked to overlook that particular proposal.

5. Announcements

Successful proposals shall be notified via email by Monday 27th April 2015.

A collaboration agreement between the University of Leeds and the eligible institution will be required.

A Statement of Expenditure should be submitted to claim the agreed costs over the timescales outlined in the proposal. The template and process details will be sent to the successful applicant.

Each successful applicant will be required to complete an End of Project report.