

## Funding Call Q&A: Infrastructure for Device Production

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Can the industry partner be from outside of the U.K.?

Broadly the answer is yes, but with caveats. pro<sup>2</sup> is a U.K.-based network but not a U.K.-only network, so we want to encourage international partnerships. The funding that we hold is UKRI funding, so we have to award that funding to U.K. based organisations that are eligible for UKRI awards. However, industry partners will not be receiving funding themselves as they will be expected to contribute to the project, either in cash or in kind. Therefore, industry partners can be international. Please bear in mind that international collaborations can be subject to legislative restrictions, such as export control or the National Security and Investment Act, and so it will be your organisation's responsibility to ensure that your project complies with those regulations.

The deadline is not very far away and I don't currently have an industry partner. Do you have experience connecting applicants with industry partners from the first call and how long did it take?

We do have some experience connecting applicants with industry partners from the first call and we're happy to try and triage an area of interest you have with the industry partners involved in the network. The amount of time it takes really depends on how closely aligned your interests are. If the partner already has some resources committed to exploring that area, then it could be set up quite quickly. Conversely, if you're building a project from scratch and it's not clear how closely your interests align, then it can take significantly longer to work out. We encourage you to build relationships with industry partners outside of funding calls so that they are ready to draw on when calls come up. If you're concerned about finding a partner, please get in touch with us and we will do what we can to connect you with suitable parties.

If we have a consultancy contract with a project partner, would that be considered a conflict of interest?

If you already have a consultancy contract with the partner outside of the project then that would be considered a separate arrangement, and not a conflict of interest. We'd want you to be transparent about your existing arrangement and to evidence how your proposal goes beyond what you're already doing together.

What can we spend the money on? For example, can we use it to buy equipment or spend it on technical support?

Yes, in general that would be fine. Eligible costs are broadly the same as those listed for normal UKRI grants. Costs can be directly incurred or directly allocated. Directly incurred costs would include, for example, postdoctoral staff time, equipment, consumables, travel etc., and directly allocated costs would include staff time for PIs and CoIs who already have permanent contracts. The latter would also include infrastructure technicians where you access a shared facility. The categories of funding are listed in the application form, we would expect you to work with your local research funding team to complete the form in the same way you would for a UKRI funding bid.

Is there an expectation that any equipment purchased would be shared across members of the network?

No, we're not going to place demands on you to share equipment. As the funding will be awarded to your institution, the institution will own the equipment. We would always encourage you to share equipment across institutions where you can as that can create fantastic research opportunities, but there is no obligation for you to do so.



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