

PETRAS Opportunities Fund Call for Proposals – Frequently Asked Questions:

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General Enquiries

NOTE: This call is internal to PETRAS and only open to applications from the Centre's existing academic partners.

Where can I find the call's terms and conditions?

Please refer to section on "Grant Conditions" in the Opportunities Fund Call for Proposals Guidance document.

What format should my application be in?

All applications to be completed electronically via the submit.com submission system by the call deadline. Please refer to section on "How to Apply" in the Opportunities Fund Call for Proposals Guidance document for further details.

When is the deadline for applications?

This is a rolling call and the deadline for last applications is 1st August 2022 11.50 pm.

I have a question that is not covered here, who do I ask?

Please submit your queries via email to Petras-proposals@ucl.ac.uk, and clearly state that your query is in relation to the "Opportunities Fund Call for Proposals".

Questions from Previous Calls

The following questions have been adapted from previous PETRAS call for proposals' enquiries.

1. Collaborators

Multiple Bids

Is it possible to apply as a PI on one application to Opportunities Fund call and a Col on another?

As part of a suite of demand management measures, to help alleviate pressure on all involved with our review process and to provide opportunity for the whole of PETRAS community to consider bidding, other than in exceptional circumstances applicants may only apply once, either as a PI or Col for **each round of this call** (please refer to the Opportunities Fund Call for Proposals guidance document for further details).

Are we able to name more than one PI and Col in our application? If yes, can one PI or Col be based abroad if the others are in the UK?

The applicants can name only one UK-based PI, and one or more Cols: either UK-based and/or overseas (providing PETRAS is not funding an overseas Col in any way).

Can more than one user edit an application, i.e. can a user give 'editor access' to a colleague who is also working on the proposal?

Unfortunately, this is not possible at the moment as each application is tied to the registered account. Therefore, it will be the responsibility of the main applicant (PI) to register on the system, complete the application form and submit the application.

Collaborator Eligibility

We have a couple of collaborators for our proposal idea in mind but not all of them (including ourselves) are based at UK universities. Is it a requirement to have a UK institution involved?

This is an internal call for proposals only open to existing PETRAS academic partner universities/organisations (please see <https://petras-iot.org/about-us/>, for list of our academic partners). Applications must be led by a UK-based PI eligible to hold an EPSRC grant and supported by UK-based and/or overseas Col(s) (providing PETRAS is not funding an overseas Col in any way). Hence, if you are not eligible to receive funding through this call, you should consider partnering with existing PETRAS academic partner universities/organisations to join their bid as an unfunded partner.

For further information on the eligibility of individuals and institutions to receive EPSRC funding, see the following EPSRC Guides:

Individuals:

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/fundingguide/eligibility/investigators/>.

Institutions:

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/fundingguide/eligibility/organisations/>.

Related to the previous question: Are existing PETRAS members allowed to co-apply for funding calls as PI or Cols? How about PDRAs? Some of our collaborators would fall under that category.

Existing PETRAS researchers are allowed to apply for funding providing they are able to meet the eligibility criteria. In particular, all applicants and named research staff must be able to meet the time commitment to the proposed work as stated in the proposal (i.e., for PI and Col roles, the applicants' joint PETRAS-funded contribution cannot exceed 0.1 FTE per application, and for PRDAs, it cannot exceed 1 FTE across).

What are the User Partners being referred to in the Opportunities Fund call guidance document?

A User Partner (aka project partner) is a collaborating organisation who will have an integral role in the proposed work. This may include in-kind or cash contributions such as expertise, staff time, use of facilities, etc.

User Partners cannot receive funding from the PETRAS Opportunities Fund grant.

If there are User Partners collaborating on a proposed project/activity, EPSRC requires a Letter of Support, which is also required for the Opportunities Fund call. Well-written letters can significantly strengthen the proposals by demonstrating the benefits of the collaboration, and the potential impacts of the activities to be funded. It also allows partners to highlight why they support the proposal, and what they hope to get out of it.

Please refer to EPSRC's project partners description for further details:

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

Can we apply collaboratively with other institutions?

Yes, you can submit individually or in conjunction as part of a team (with proposed contributions from a single institution or a consortium). In addition, all applicants will be expected to work with user partner(s) in the development and if successful in the delivery of the proposed work.

This is an internal call for proposals only open to existing PETRAS academic partner universities/organisations (please see <https://petras-iot.org/about-us/>, for list of our academic partners). Applications must be led by a UK-based PI eligible to hold an EPSRC grant and

supported by UK-based and/or overseas Col(s) (providing PETRAS is not funding an overseas Col in any way). Hence, if you are not eligible to receive funding through this call, you should consider partnering with existing PETRAS academic partner universities/organisations to join their bid as an unfunded partner.

For collaborative activities, where proposed Cols are also requesting PETRAS funding through this call, both PI and Cols need to be from one of the existing PETRAS academic partner universities/organisations, who are eligible to hold an EPSRC grant.

Is there a minimum/mandated level of commitment to be secured from the proposed User partners for our project?

There is no mandated level of commitment required to be secured from user partners, however the aspiration should be to get as close to “matched funding” as possible. This includes everything including provision of software, participation in-kind etc.

Can a new proposed User Partner be from outside the UK?

Providing PETRAS is not funding an overseas collaborator in any way, they are welcome to join the PETRAS activity as a User Partner.

Do you have a list of PETRAS Centre user partners and contact details of the corresponding person at each organisation? And, is there a preference for a user partner to be participating in PETRAS Centre? Or is there an option to get match funding from a user partner that is not in PETRAS Centre?

Yes, there are existing PETRAS Centre User Partners. Please see the following web page for further details: <https://petras-iot.org/collaborate/>. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide you individual contact details of the User Partners due to GDPR. However, if you have a specific institution in mind from this list that you would like to be put in touch with, please let us know and we will let them know of your interest. Please note PETRAS cannot guarantee that you will receive a response from user partners. Therefore, you are strongly advised to have alternative plans in place to ensure your Opportunities Fund application is completed and submitted timely as per the call guidance document specifications.

When applying to this call, you can choose to collaborate with existing or new user partners. There is no preference on this.

Could you tell me if User Partners must come from the list of PETRAS partners here: <https://www.petrashub.org/partners/> ? We have several organisations interested in a potential proposal, but some are not on that list.

When applying to this call, you can choose to collaborate with existing or new user partners. There is no preference on this.

Principal Investigators

Are there specific requirements for the eligibility of PIs? Would they need to be current PIs or could it be someone at the post-doctoral level?

Any applicant with relevant background should be eligible to be an investigator on a proposal for this call if they are employed by one of the PETRAS academic partner universities/organisations (please see <https://petras-iot.org/about-us/> for list of our academic partners) and are eligible to be an investigator/co-investigator on an EPSRC grant. There is no requirement for an applicant to have been involved in the PETRAS Centre/Hub activities previously to be able to put an application. If your institution allows your post to be a budget holder, then you can apply as an investigator in your Opportunities Fund proposal. Please contact your institution’s research grants office for further advice.

Can any academic from a UK-based institute submit a proposal to the call? Do they need to be on a permanent contract?

This is an internal call for proposals only for existing PETRAS academic partner universities/organisations (please see <https://petras-iot.org/about-us/> for list of our academic partners). Hence, you should only apply if you are employed by one of the PETRAS academic partner universities. With this in mind, any such applicant with relevant background should be eligible to be an investigator on an Opportunities Fund proposal if they are eligible to be an investigator/co-investigator on an EPSRC grant. There is no requirement for an applicant to have been involved in the PETRAS Centre/Hub activities previously to be able to put an application. If your institution allows your post to be a budget holder, then you can apply as an investigator in your Opportunities Fund proposal. Please contact your institution's research grants office for further advice.

I am member of a core PETRAS Centre project. Am I eligible to be PI on an application to the PETRAS Opportunities Fund call?

Yes, existing PETRAS researchers who are working on other Centre funded activities are allowed to apply for funding providing they are able to meet the eligibility criteria. In particular, all applicants and named research staff must be able to meet the time commitment to the project/activity as stated in the proposal (i.e., for PI and Col roles the applicants' joint PETRAS-funded contribution cannot exceed 0.1 FTE per application, and for PRDAs, it cannot exceed 1 FTE across).

2. Eligibility

I am employed by one of the existing partner universities. But, I have not worked with PETRAS before. Can I apply?

Applicants do not need to have previously received PETRAS funding to be eligible to apply. Please see the call guidance document for detailed information on the call's eligibility criteria.

We are interested in submitting a proposal to the PETRAS Opportunities Fund call, however we need to establish whether, being a public body/company, we would be eligible for funding? If it is the case that we are not eligible, and we partner with a University, would our bid then be acceptable?

Please note this is an internal call for proposals only open to existing PETRAS academic partner universities/organisations (please see <https://petras-iot.org/about-us/> for list of our academic partners). Applications must be led by a UK-based PI eligible to hold an EPSRC grant and supported by UK-based and/or overseas Col(s) (providing PETRAS is not funding an overseas Col in any way). Hence, if you are not eligible to receive funding through this call, you should consider partnering with existing PETRAS academic partner universities/organisations to join their bid as an unfunded partner.

I had an invitation to potentially be involved in someone else's submission to this call. Can I be involved in more than one application? I did see that a PI cannot submit more than one proposal, but can a researcher commit to more than one project/activity as long as it does not exceed 1 FTE?

A PDRA researcher can commit to more than one proposal being submitted to this call. In particular, all applicants and named research staff must be able to meet the time commitment to the proposed work as stated in their application (i.e., for PI and Col roles, the applicants' joint PETRAS-funded contribution cannot exceed 0.1 FTE per application, and for PDRAs, it cannot exceed 1 FTE across.)

3. Finance

What are the costs allowed for our full proposal budget? Can we add staff time to our project/activity budget for the PI and each Col named in our proposal for their time? How about the research fellows?

Costs under a new project/activity may include UK-based staff time for PIs and Co-Investigators (Cols) (up to 0.1 FTE equivalent combined) and postdoctoral research associates (PDRA), associated indirect costs and estates, travel and subsistence, plus consumables for the activity, all subject to EPSRC rules and requirements. The activity costs can also include meetings and workshops as required. Equipment funding is not available through this call. Resources to fund User Partners are not allowable (this includes sub-contracting to a User Partner).

Is there a set allocation of funding/budget for a six-month project/activity under this call?

No, there is not a set allocation per project/activity. We expect activities to normally last up to six months and the indicative maximum budget per activity is c. £60k at 80% fEC, allowing 6-month PRDA deployments where necessary.

Can the requested funds be used to buy out our time and also to hire a research associate, if it is within the available budget?

All applicants should cost their projects using the same process as they would cost an EPSRC grant. Please see the following reference material for EPSRC funding guide and UKRI T&Cs for Research Council fEC Grants:

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

<https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/grant-terms-and-conditions/>.

We would anticipate that your research support office will be able to advise on this.

We are working with colleagues to develop a proposal for the PETRAS Opportunities Fund call. Could I please check what are the eligible costs that could be requested? Are these same as the EPSRC proposals (i.e. publication costs are not eligible)?

All applicants should cost their projects using the same process as they would cost an EPSRC grant.

Eligible costs include: costs under a new project/activity may include UK-based staff time for PIs and Co-Investigators (Cols) (up to 0.1 FTE equivalent combined) and postdoctoral research associates (PDRA), associated indirect and estates costs, travel and subsistence, plus consumables for the activity, all subject to EPSRC rules and requirements. The activity costs can also include meetings and workshops as required. Equipment funding is not available through this call. Resources to fund User Partners are not allowable (this includes sub-contracting to a User Partner).

In the call guidance document, you state that an activity should last no longer than six months. We are planning to organise a number of workshops, which may take around six months. We will then need a bit more time for analysis and writing up. Would it be acceptable to complete the work in more than six months?

This call is mainly intended for activities up to 6 months. If you believe your circumstances require a duration of longer than 6 months, this should be clearly stated and justified in your application. It must be noted that the maximum budget per activity cannot exceed c. £60k at 80% fEC.

Could you confirm if admin time is an eligible cost on this call? I can't see anything in the guidance regarding admin time, but we have previously included this in another application to PETRAS.

Normally admin time is not an eligible cost on this call, which is expected to be covered by the indirect costs of your project/activity budget.

4. Format of submissions

For a proposal that involves more than one academic partner institution, how should the applicants complete the application template?

The lead applicant must complete the online form on behalf of their consortium (electronically via the submit.com submission system). Please refer to section on “How to Apply” in the Opportunities Fund Call for Proposals Guidance document for further details.

A web link to download a PDF of the application form questions (not editable) can be found on the Opportunities Fund call for Full Proposals Guidance Document which can be shared with the consortium members to coordinate their inputs. The lead applicant will be responsible to complete and submit the joint application through the online system by the call’s deadline.

Is there a template for the application form and what is the maximum length?

The call guidance document provides a web link to download a PDF copy of the application form (not editable), which shows the info/sections needed with relevant word/page limits (see **further information section** of the Opportunities Full Proposals Guidance Document).

5. Miscellaneous

Are there lists of previously funded projects from PETRAS Centre and the Hub?

Details can be found on our website:

- PETRAS Centre projects: https://petras-iot.org/projects/?_sft_status=current
- PETRAS Hub projects: https://petras-iot.org/projects/?_sft_status=complete.

Do we have to fill in timesheets?

There is no requirement to complete timesheets.