PETRAS 2\textsuperscript{nd} SRF Call for Intent to Bid (Stage 1) – Frequently Asked Questions:

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\section*{General Enquiries}

\subsection*{Where can I find the call’s terms and conditions?}
Please refer to section on “Grant Conditions” in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} SRF Call Guidance document.

\subsection*{What format should my application be in?}
All applications to be completed electronically via the following submission system by the call deadline: \url{https://submit.link/ygWeg}.

\subsection*{When is the deadline for applications?}
The deadline for Intent to Bid applications is 09.00 BST on 9\textsuperscript{th} September 2020.

\subsection*{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 “2\textsuperscript{nd} SRF Call”. The deadline to submit your 2\textsuperscript{nd} SRF Call Stage 1 questions and queries is 3\textsuperscript{rd} September 2020.

\section*{Questions from Previous Calls}
The following questions have been adapted from previous PETRAS call for proposals’ enquiries as well as queries that are being submitted by enquirers to this call.

\subsection*{1. Collaborators}

\subsubsection*{Multiple Bids}

\subsection*{Is it possible to apply as a PI on one application to 2\textsuperscript{nd} SRF call and a Col on another?}
For the current stage of the call, the applicants are not being asked to provide Col details. However, it must be noted that, as part of a suite of demand management measures, to help alleviate pressure on all involved with our review process, eligible applicants may only apply once to this call, either as a PI or Col.

\subsection*{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?}
At the current stage of the call, the applicants are only required to provide details of a UK-based PI who is eligible to hold an EPSRC grant. For collaborative projects, whereCols (details are not required for this stage of the call) are also intending to request PETRAS funding through this call, both PI and Cols need to be UK-based and eligible to hold EPSRC grants. For further information on the eligibility of individuals and institutions to receive EPSRC funding, see the following EPSRC Guides:
- Individuals: \url{https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/fundingguide/eligibility/investigators/}.
- Institutions: \url{https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/fundingguide/eligibility/organisations/}.

\subsection*{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. A PDF of the Intent to Bid questions can be found here https://petras-iot.org/funding-call/petras-2nd-srf-call/, this may be helpful for potential project collaborators who are not the registered users.

**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?

Projects must be led by a UK-based PI eligible to hold an EPSRC grant. For collaborative projects, where to be proposed Cols (details are not required for this stage of the call) are also intending to request PETRAS funding through this call, both PI and Cols need to be UK-based and eligible to hold EPSRC grants. 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.

For the current stage of the call, the applicants are not being asked to provide Col/PDRA details. However, for future reference, existing PETRAS researchers are allowed to apply for funding provided they are able to meet the eligibility criteria. In particular, all applicants and (to be) named research staff must be able to meet the time commitment to the project as stated in the proposal. Time commitments of the PDRAs cannot exceed 1 FTE across. Under normal circumstances PETRAS will cover up to 0.1 FTE equivalent combined staff time for PIs and Cols as part of a project with mainly technical or social focus. The applicants will be allowed to apply up to 0.3 FTE equivalent combined staff time for PIs and Cols, for projects with collaborative socio-technical focus to enable joint inputs from suitable PI/Cols as necessary. In either case, if successful, the applicants’ institutions will be expected to provide complimentary FTE of investigator time (PI & Col time) to match the FTE PETRAS is providing.

When applying to this call, is it be beneficial to be an existing PETRAS member?

Existing involvement in PETRAS is neither beneficial nor an impediment to the success of applications. It is not considered during the review process of this call for proposals.

Is there a preference for named researchers to be targeted for hiring in the proposal?

At this stage of the call, this information is not required. However, as reference for future stages, there is no preference on this.

What are the User Partners being referred to in the 2nd SRF call guidance document?

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

User Partners cannot receive funding directly from the PETRAS 2nd SRF grant; the only exception to this is where a User Partner is providing services or equipment that will go through a formal procurement process audited by the host research organisation. The User Partner cannot receive any other funds from the grant, such as travel and subsistence.

If there are User Partners collaborating on a research project, EPSRC requires a Letter of Support, which is not required for the 1st stage of the 2nd SRF call. However, this will be
required from those applicants that will be invited to the future stages of the call. Well-written letters can significantly strengthen research proposals by demonstrating the benefits of the collaboration, and the potential impacts of the research. 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 partners in the development, and if successful, in the delivery of the proposed work.

In future stages of the call, for collaborative projects, where proposed CoIs are also requesting PETRAS funding through this call, both PI and CoIs need to be UK-based and eligible to hold EPSRC grants.

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 cash contributions, provision of software, participation in-kind etc.

Can a 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 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? Or is there an option to get match funding from a user partner that is not in PETRAS?
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 application is completed and submitted on time 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. New User Partner applicants are welcomed from any sector, including commercial businesses, charities, trade and advocacy groups, local and central government, law enforcement, and other government agencies.

Could you tell me if User Partners must come from the list of Petras partners here: https://petras-iot.org/collaborate/? 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 PETRAS project proposal for this call 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 to be able to submit an application. If your institution allows your post to be a budget holder, then you can apply as an investigator in your 2nd SRF project 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?

Any applicant with relevant background should be eligible to be an investigator on a PETRAS project 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 to be able to submit an application. If your institution allows your post to be a budget holder, then you can apply as an investigator in your 2nd SRF project 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 2nd SRF call?

Yes, 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 project as stated in the proposal. Time commitments of the PDRAs cannot exceed 1 FTE across. Under normal circumstances PETRAS will cover up to 0.1 FTE equivalent combined staff time for PIs and Cols as part of a project with mainly technical or social focus. The applicants will be allowed to apply up to 0.3 FTE equivalent combined staff time for PIs and Cols, for projects with collaborative socio-technical focus to enable joint inputs from suitable PI/Col as necessary. In either case, if successful, the applicants’ institutions will be expected to provide complimentary FTE of investigator time (PI & Col time) to match the FTE PETRAS is providing.

2. Dissemination

I am applying for an 18-month project. I want to include in that dissemination which will take place a few months after the end of the project. Is that okay or does all the work including the dissemination have to be carried out within the 18-month period if it’s an 18-month proposal?

The proposed project work and associated expenditure will need to take place between the project’s start and end dates, which cannot exceed 18 months.

3. Eligibility

We are interested in putting in a proposal to PETRAS 2nd SRF call, however we need to establish whether, being a public body, we would be eligible for funding? If it is the case that we are not eligible, and we partner with a University, would our proposal then be acceptable?

At the current stage of the call, the applicants are only required to provide details of a UK-based PI who is eligible to hold an EPSRC grant. For collaborative projects, where Cols (details are not required for this stage of the call) are also intending to request PETRAS funding through this call, both PI and Cols need to be UK-based and eligible to hold EPSRC grants. 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/.

https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/fundingguide/eligibility/investigators/.
If you are not eligible to receive EPSRC funding, you should consider partnering with established research institutes. We encourage proposals involve collaborations between researchers and user partners.

**After reviewing the relevant documents, we are not sure that as a private, non-profit institution of higher education we are eligible to apply?**
At the current stage of the call, the applicants are only required to provide details of a UK-based PI who is eligible to hold an EPSRC grant. For collaborative projects, where CoIs (details are not required for this stage of the call) are also intending to request PETRAS funding through this call, both PI and CoIs need to be UK-based and eligible to hold EPSRC grants. 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/](https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/fundingguide/eligibility/investigators/)
*Institutions*: [https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/fundingguide/eligibility/organisations/](https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/fundingguide/eligibility/organisations/)

If you are not eligible to receive EPSRC funding, you should consider partnering with established research institutes. We encourage proposals involve collaborations between researchers and user partners.

**Could you let me know if research proposals that are currently under review with other funding bodies are eligible for submission to this call?**
Yes, though of course the proposal will need adapting to fit our submission formatting requirements. Also, you will need to state this on your application form for future stages of this call. Should you be successful, we will require confirmation that you are not taking up funding for the same project from other funding bodies.

**I had an invitation to potentially be involved in someone else’s project. Can I be involved in more than one project? I did see that a PI can not submit more than one proposal, but can a researcher commit to more than one project as long as it does not exceed 1 FTE?**
For the current stage of the call, the applicants are not being asked to provide researcher details. However, as reference for future stages, a PDRA researcher can commit to more than one project proposal. In particular, all applicants and named research staff must be able to meet the time commitment to the project as stated in the proposal. Time commitments of the PDRA cannot exceed 1 FTE across. Under normal circumstances PETRAS will cover up to 0.1 FTE equivalent combined staff time for PIs and CoIs as part of a project with mainly technical or social focus. The applicants will be allowed to apply up to 0.3 FTE equivalent combined staff time for PIs and CoIs, for projects with collaborative socio-technical focus to enable joint inputs from suitable PI/CoIs as necessary. In either case, if successful, the applicants’ institutions will be expected to provide complimentary FTE of investigator time (PI & CoI time) to match the FTE PETRAS is providing.

**4. Finance**

**What are the costs allowed for our project budget? Can we add staff time to our budget for the PI and each CoI named in our proposal for their time? How about the research fellows?**
Costs under a new project may include UK-based staff time for PIs and Co-Investigators (ColS) (see below for further details) and postdoctoral research associates (PDRA), associated
indirect and estates costs, travel and subsistence, and consumables and equipment for the project, all subject to EPSRC rules and requirements. Smaller items of equipment (up to 10% of the value of the grant, or under £10,000 (incl. VAT), whichever is the lesser), are allowable. Resources to fund User Partners are not allowable (this includes sub-contracting to a User Partner).

Time commitments of the PDRAs cannot exceed 1 FTE across. Under normal circumstances PETRAS will cover up to 0.1 FTE equivalent combined staff time for PIs and CoIs as part of a project with mainly technical or social focus. The applicants will be allowed to apply up to 0.3 FTE equivalent combined staff time for PIs and CoIs, for projects with collaborative socio-technical focus to enable joint inputs from suitable PI/CoIs as necessary. In either case, if successful, the applicants’ institutions will be expected to provide complimentary FTE of investigator time (PI & CoI time) to match the FTE PETRAS is providing.

Is there a set allocation of funding/budget for an 18-month project under this call?
No, there is not a set allocation per project. The total PETRAS funding available for the 2nd SRF call is £4.5 M Full Economic Cost (fEC), or £3.6 M @ 80% fEC. We expect to fund approximately 15-20 projects. For future stages of the call, the applicants will be asked to state the funding required for their proposed research projects.

We have started preparing a draft budget for our application. Can we use the project budget to buy out our time and also to hire a research associate, if it is within the available budget?
For the current stage of the call, the applicants are not being asked to provide any budgetary information. For future stages of the call, 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:

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 2nd SRF call deadline in September 2020. I wanted to double check that eligibility of costs that could be requested would be the same as EPSRC proposals (i.e. publication costs are not eligible)?
For the Intent to Bid stage of the call, the applicants are not being asked to provide a budget for their projects. For future reference, all applicants should cost their projects using the same process as they would cost an EPSRC grant.

Costs under a new project may include UK-based staff time for PIs and Co-Investigators (CoIs) (see below for further details) and postdoctoral research associates (PDRA), associated indirect and estates costs, travel and subsistence, and consumables and equipment for the project, all subject to EPSRC rules and requirements. Smaller items of equipment (up to 10% of the value of the grant, or under £10,000 (incl. VAT), whichever is the lesser), are allowable. Resources to fund User Partners are not allowable (this includes sub-contracting to a User Partner).

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technical focus to enable joint inputs from suitable PI/ColIs as necessary. In either case, if successful, the applicants’ institutions will be expected to provide complimentary FTE of investigator time (PI & Col time) to match the FTE PETRAS is providing.

In the call guidance document, you state that a project should last no longer than 18 months. Can I confirm that this is for conduct of the research itself? Is it acceptable that preparation, analysis and writing up would be either side of the 18-month period (completing the research in 24 months)?
The proposed project work and associated expenditure will need to take place between the project’s start and end dates, which cannot exceed 18 months.

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 budget.

5. Format of submissions

For a proposal that involves more than one academic partner institution, how should the applicants complete the Intent to Bid application form?
The lead applicant must complete the online form on behalf of their consortium (electronically via the submission system: https://submit.link/ygWeg ). A PDF of the Intent to Bid application questions can be found here https://petras-iot.org/funding-call/petras-2nd-srf-call/ (not editable), 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 stage 1 Intent to Bid applications and what is the maximum length?
The call guidance document provides a PDF copy of the Intent to Bid application form, which shows the info/sections needed with relevant word/page limits (see further info section). You can also find the same information on the following site once you register: https://submit.link/ygWeg .

I note in the first instance the PETRAS 2nd SRF call has an Intent to Bid stage due 9th September, with submission through an online form. Please could you clarify as to what information needs to be provided as part of the Intent to Bid application?
The call guidance document provides a PDF copy of the Intent to Bid application form, which shows the info/sections needed with relevant word/page limits (see further info section). You can also find the same information on the petras.submit.com site once you register.

6. Suitability

Can you comment on the suitability of my project/research for funding?
Unfortunately, we are unable to comment on individual projects and their suitability. However, we would draw your attention to section on “Themes for the 2nd SRF Call”: Proposals are encouraged which include themes that address IoT systems research challenges at the intersection of any two (or more) PETRAS Centre ‘Lens’ and ‘Sector’ descriptors, and which include emerging technologies (e.g., AI and ML) that support IoT deployed at the ‘edge’ of the internet. PETRAS embodies a socio-technical approach to cross-cutting challenges, so (without exclusivity), proposals are welcomed that take a cross-disciplinary viewpoint.
However, those that address purely technical or social dimensions are also strongly encouraged. Without losing sight of strong technical requirements that underpin IoT and Edge security, PETRAS would like to capitalise on the range of social science contributions that clearly need to be made in this space. In all cases, proposals should embody a cybersecurity perspective. Hopefully this will assist you in the assessment of your project’s suitability.

We have recently been turned down for a 3-year EPSRC grant application – can we apply to PETRAS for a pilot of the same study?
Yes, however, applicants must ensure their proposed programme of work meets the 2nd SRF eligibility criteria stated in the call guidance document.

At the concept level the project will be somewhat related to several of the call themes but do not necessarily fall squarely under one theme. Can feedback be provided on whether proposals should strictly be aligned with a theme focus or if there is a certain flexibility.
Unfortunately, we are unable to comment on individual projects and their suitability. However, we would draw your attention to section on “Themes for the 2nd SRF Call”: Proposals are encouraged which include themes that address IoT systems research challenges at the intersection of any two (or more) PETRAS Centre ‘Lens’ and ‘Sector’ descriptors, and which include emerging technologies (e.g., AI and ML) that support IoT deployed at the ‘edge’ of the internet. PETRAS embodies a socio-technical approach to cross-cutting challenges, so (without exclusivity), proposals are welcomed that take a cross-disciplinary viewpoint. However, those that address purely technical or social dimensions are also strongly encouraged. Without losing sight of strong technical requirements that underpin IoT and Edge security, PETRAS would like to capitalise on the range of social science contributions that clearly need to be made in this space. In all cases, proposals should embody a cybersecurity perspective.

The themes listed in the call guidance document are indicative, and not exclusive. The Centre will consider other themes relating to proposers’ research interests or those of user partners, where these pertain to themes not covered in the existing suite of PETRAS Centre and Hub projects (https://petras-iot.org/projects/).

7. 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.