



**Economic
and Social
Research Council**

Productivity Institute Outline Call Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated 8 November 2019

Who is eligible to apply for the Productivity Institute?

The Institute will be funded by the UKRI Strategic Priorities Fund and will be open to eligible individuals in organisations that are normally eligible to apply for research grants from UKRI's research councils.

Public Sector Research Establishments (PSREs) are now also eligible to apply to SPF programmes. If PSREs wishing to apply have not previously applied for UKRI funding and are not currently designated IRO status, they will be required to complete an eligibility form to ensure they have the required research capacity, systems and controls in place to manage the research and grant funding. Please see <https://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/> for further information.

What is the timeline for commissioning?

The deadline for outline proposals is 16:00 on 13 November 2019. Shortlisting decisions will be communicated in early January 2020.

A specification for invited full proposals is being developed and will be made available in January 2020 when the call opens.

The closing date for full proposals will be in March 2020. The proposals will be subject to an expert peer review process in the Spring 2020, followed by shortlisting recommendations from the Productivity Research Advisory Group. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview in the summer 2020.

The successful Institute is expected to commence on 1 September 2020.

How will the outline proposals be assessed?

The outline proposals will be considered by the Productivity Research Advisory Group who will provide shortlisting recommendations to the ESRC along with advice and feedback to the applicants to consider when preparing full proposals.

Supplementary expert reviewers will also be selected to provide assessment and feedback on the outline proposals.

Will all outline applications be invited to submit a full proposal?

All proposals will be assessed appropriately and there will be a judgement about quality of proposals.

How detailed does the Resource Summary in the outline proposal need to be?

As with the entire outline proposal, the details provided should be as specific and concise as possible. This will help as part of the feedback provided back to applicants.

Please be clear as to whether partners have been confirmed or if they are indicative at this stage.

Note that costings and resources may need to be revised for full proposals to take account of feedback provided.

Can you confirm the total funding available?

The total funding available for the Institute is £32.4m at 100 per cent of the full economic cost, of which a maximum of 30 per cent may be allocated as Exceptions (which is normally funded at 100 per cent of the full economic cost).

Once the Institute is in place, a complementary research programme will be commissioned using supplementary funds earmarked for this programme.

Will ring fenced items be funded as exceptions?

There are two ring fenced items to be used for i) Business Innovation and ii) Fellowship Programmes and either of these do not necessarily need to be costed as Exceptions.

You will need to consider carefully what you are proposing to do and therefore what budget suits that. For example, if you are considering running competitions for some of the funds to be disbursed outside the institute then you may wish to cost that at 100 per cent. However, do bear in mind that would reduce the overall amount available for the rest of the activities. It is important to note that you cannot cost more than 30 per cent of the total budget as Exceptions.

Should you be invited to submit a full proposal, there will be a more detailed specification, feedback on the outline bid and more time to consider the most appropriate budget to suit what you propose to do.

Will the Advisory Group be advising the Institute?

The role of the Advisory Group is to provide advice to the ESRC and its key partners on the delivery of strategic programmes of productivity research. Specifically, the Advisory Group is currently providing advice and recommendations to the ESRC and UKRI at key points during the establishment of the Institute in 2019 and 2020.

The governance arrangements for the Institute itself are yet to be established and it will be for the Institute team to propose what governance will be put in place for the lifetime of the Institute.

Have conflicts of interest with the Advisory Group been addressed?

Yes. Members are required to declare any conflicts of interest in advance of the commissioning process and they will abide by the ESRC's Code of Practice for Members of Committees and Groups.

What are the plans for monitoring and evaluation?

There is a separate budget for an external evaluation and the details and scope are yet to be agreed.

We will expect to have a close relationship with the Institute around KPIs and milestones and this process should be collaborative as part of setting up the Institute.

It will be important for you to ensure there is capacity to engage with the ESRC and an external evaluator. Note that costings and resources may need to be revised for full proposals to take account of feedback provided.