



CEOI Technology Programme Call for Small Projects 2024

Bidders Briefing Question and Answer Session

Q1: Is the hourly human working cost available in a table from CEOI? Here in the Ltd company, I work in, we do not have a real standard, we are a relatively new business.

A1: There are rates than can be used for new companies. CEOI will look into that in more detail and post the answer on the website.

Clarification: You can refer, for instance, to the UKRI's Costs guidance for non-academic organisations below.

<https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/costs-we-fund/costs-guidance-for-non-academic-organisations/>

Q2: I would like to know if intention to bid should enclose the details of the University (we have some issues in getting the approval for the Uni participation).

A2: If the university is a partner – yes, we need the details. If you have issues validating this partnership, you may be able to sub contract them but they need to demonstrate commitment.

Clarification: for the purpose of the intention to bid, please include the University's details with TBC in bracket.

Q3: I would like to know if the young age of the company (SE, <2 years) could be an issue.

A3: CEOI will need to see the records and financial details from an audit for the last 2 years since inception. Those details will be passed to UKSA which will make the necessary enquiries and checks.

See Chapter 7 of the AoO.

Q4: Does reducing the cost of a Pathfinder study have a positive impact on the project assessment.

A4: Difficult to answer this question. It depends if the value for money is estimated by the assessment panel. Potentially yes – more flexibility, but the project needs to be convincing and has to be value for money.

Q5: When do the projects start?

A5: If all Terms and Conditions are agreed we can run assessment rapidly and obtain approval from UKSA. Therefore, potentially looking at a start date of 1st November.

Q6: What would you like to see on a business plan and how will it be evaluated?

A6: We are planning a workshop on business plan writing! What we would like to see is the bigger picture and how this one project fits within that bigger picture. The so what Question, why does it matter? A clear diagram explains much better than text (this is a valuable exercise) to show how the technology fits within the development.

Q7: How can I ascertain whether my project falls within the CEOI acceptable projects?

A7: We have tried to provide a list so refer to that. If you still have doubts – please ask the question and it will be reviewed. We cannot tell you yes or no, often it is subtle and it is up to the assessors. We would be able to give you a definite no, after that it will be maybe and have to go for review

Q8: Given the hard deadline of 31st March 2025, what happens if the project does not start on 1st November 2024?

A8: Build contingency into your schedule. CEOI will work hard to get your project underway as soon as possible. As long as the Terms and Conditions are signed off at the proposal stage, the process will be quicker. Once we have UKSA approval, we can consider working at risk until the paperwork is signed.

Q9: I am sorry to point out that 6 weeks of evaluation and administrative task for a project lasting 5 months (including margin), which gave 5 weeks to get a signed GFA, does not really look like a good management. No pun intended

A9: We do not know the grant value at present. We may be able to fund more projects than we first anticipated. If we can we will try to contact you and kick off as soon as possible

Clarification: The 6 weeks between proposal submission and (indicative) project start includes contingency margin. From experience, the biggest schedule risk to the start of the project is negotiating the T&Cs of the GFA. This is the reason why we request that you agree to the T&Cs OR identify in advance the points that you would like to discuss. Of course, if you agree to the T&Cs, then the project will be able to start earlier.

Q10: Can you clarify how 'no procurement of equipment' reconciles with facility enhancement please

A10: facility enhancement is an exception. Procurement of equipment is necessary, so we will consider that but a justification needs to be provided

Q11: Does the small equipment need to come from the UK?

A11: Small equipment can be purchased internationally but you need to provide a justification. We do not expect all equipment to be purchased in the UK. The comment was more for the big investments and therefore considerable grant money going abroad.

Q12: What about the consumables?

A12: Checks needed. Answer will be posted on website

Clarification: Consumables are an eligible cost. Where consumables are shared by multiple projects, only the proportion used towards the CEOI project will be paid for. This is similar to other direct costs associated with running facilities.

Q13: I would also like to know if the general conditions for the purchase of equipment (in this case consumables by the university) will follow the conventional rule of 80%. I would also like to know if the hourly cost of the University will be covered 100%.

A13: For a university the 80% FEC rule applies for staff time and consumables, i.e. the institute needs to provide 20% of the costs.