

CEOI 2024 Small Projects Call - Bidders Briefing

13th August 2024

Nicolas Lévêque, Director CEOI
Kevin Smith, Technology Director CEOI
Nicola Oldham, CEOI Administrator





CEOI 2024 Small Projects Bidders Briefing

House Keeping

Microphones on Mute Please

- Expected duration: 10:00 – 11:30 (with the possibility to go on until 12:00)
- Participants join the telecon via Microsoft Teams and can choose to remain anonymous
- No list of participants will be circulated
- The Announcement of Opportunity (AOO) and any clarification notices take precedence over anything stated during the bidders conference.
- **Please read the AOO** and other information contained on the Call website carefully; this Bidders Conference will not present all the information available.

QUESTIONS:

- Questions can be asked in the teams chat or verbally if you do not mind being identified
- To ask anonymous questions please email these at any time to Nicola Oldham CEOIadmin@le.ac.uk who will ask them on your behalf
 - Please clearly indicate which proposal section/topic they are related to
 - Nicola will ask them on your behalf either during or after the presentation
- CEOI will decide if any of the issues raised warrant the publication of a formal clarification notice, which will be issued on the CEOI 2024 Small Projects Call website



Content of the presentation

- Summary of the Call
- Intention to bid
- Preparing your application
- Lessons learnt from the previous calls



CEOI 2024 Small Projects Call – Summary

- The Call is for a wide range of relatively small proposals:
 - Pathfinder studies (up to £100k) – highly innovative with strong enabling potential for future space activities.
 - Facility Enhancement Projects – for UK testing, calibration and validation facilities
 - SRL and TRL raising activities – e.g. instrument modules in end-to-end simulators, field trials, testing in a representative environment.
- Proposals should be aligned to the National Space Strategy and EO Technology Strategy
- Schedule is key: **all projects must be completed well before 31st March 2025**
 - **A Grant will only be given if the proposal demonstrates that the deadline will be met**
- **Full proposals are due for submission by Friday 13th September 2024 at noon.**
- The Call is open to industry, HEIs and other research organisations based in the UK.
- Collaborative proposals involving industrial and other partners of all types are strongly encouraged.

- The subsidy control regulations changed before our 16th Call. They are now defined by the Subsidy Control Act 2022.
 - A new CEOI Grant Funding Agreements has been drafted through iterations during the 16th Call.
- We must use the **Streamlined Subsidy Scheme for Research, Development and Innovation** (see references)
 - While intervention rates are similar to the past rates (but not the same), there are also restrictions on the amount of subsidy that can be given within a 3-year window. This only affects industrial and commercial bidders.
- We encourage bids under Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) regulations in appropriate cases. (See [RD3], Chapter 7).
- **ESSENTIAL: A contract manager within your organisation must sign off your proposal**
 - The terms and conditions of the GFA must be approved, OR
 - Clarifications or suggested modifications must be made as part of the proposal
 - The terms of the GFA will not be negotiated after the proposal

- Applicants were required to notify CEOI of their Intention to Bid (ItoB) by **19th August 2024 at noon**.
- The purpose of this is to allow CEOI to gauge the size of the response and to inform the selection of reviewers.
- The notification and information therein will be held in confidence (see AOO Section 9).
- Submitting an ItoB form does **not commit the organisation to submit** a bid
- CEOI appreciate the details in the ItoB form may change during bid evolution
- CEOI appreciate the designate Lead Organisation may change during bid evolution

Delivery of proposals

- The electronic submission should be sent by email to the CEOI administrator (based at the University of Leicester)
ceoiadmin@leicester.ac.uk
- We will confirm by email we have received your proposal
 - Please get in touch if you do not receive this confirmation within 48 hours.

Recommendations on Project Types

- Definitions of project types (Feasibility Study / Industrial Research / Experimental Development) are provided in [RD5] page 28.
- As they attract significantly different intervention rates, please read the documents carefully. They are not specifically designed for space and will thus be somewhat ill-defined.
 - As such, the CEOI is unable to provide a comprehensive definition, and each proposal will be assessed individually.
- If you are unsure about whether your proposal is encroaching on Experimental Development or Industrial Research, we recommend that you **err on the side of caution**, and declare it as ED.
- For this Call we will accept proposals that mix project categories as defined by the Subsidy Control Act 2022. However, you must clearly define the split such that **work packages reside in one category only**, and do not straddle categories.
- In all cases, **provide the justifications** for your decision.

Preparing Your Application



CEOI 2024 Small Projects Call – Preparing an Application

- See **Section 5 Guidelines For Preparing An Application**
- All Proposal Sections defined in the table and/or section 5 of the AofO must be supplied in the proposal, unless indicated otherwise.
- Proposals which do not include all of the Sections (unless explicitly indicated in the Content Table as optional) may be rejected.
- Should any part of the application overrun the specified page limit, the Assessment Panel will **only consider material up to the designated page limit** (including CV) in the correct format.
- **No additional annexes** or appendices will be considered.
- Bidders should note that the Agency, University of Leicester or CEOI will not refund any costs associated with preparing proposals responding to the CEOI Call

Section	Further Information	Proposal Maximum Page Count		Marks
		Up to £50k	Up to £200k	
Cover letter	See 4.1	2 pages		Mandatory
Application Form	See 12	1 page		Mandatory
Project Summary, with picture or diagram	See 4.2	1 page		Mandatory
Technical Case	See 4.3	2 pages	6 pages	30%
Exploitation Plan and Enhancement of National Capability	See 4.4	1 page	2 pages	20%
Project Team	See 4.5	1 page	2 pages	10%
<u>Annex A1</u> : Organisational background and track record		1 page per organisation		
<u>Annex A2</u> :CVs		1 page each		
Project Management	See 4.6	2 pages	3 pages	20%
<u>Annex B1</u> : Gantt Chart (landscape or portrait)	See 4.6	1 page	1 page	
<u>Annex B2</u> : Risk Table	See 13	1 page		
<u>Annex B3</u> : Work Package Descriptions	CEOI template	1 page each		
Project Finances	See 4.7	4 pages		10%
CEOI Cost Schedule	Use CEOI Excel template	Separate Excel file; Summary sheet plus 1 sheet per partner		
Collaboration	See 4.8	0.5 page		5%
Grant Conformance	See 4.9 and 7	0.5 page		5%
Eligibility - supporting information (Proposal Annex C1)	See 7	2 pages		

- The cover letter **includes a statement of acceptance of the standard CEOI Terms and Conditions (T&Cs)**, defined in the Grant Funding Agreement document which is available on the CEOI website.
 - Bidders should note that **these T&Cs will not be open to negotiation** and that in submitting this statement you are accepting the T&Cs on behalf of your organisation
 - Please ensure that authorisation is obtained from your organisation before submitting your bid – a Contract Officer must sign off your proposal

Title of Project		
Lead Organisation and Grant Requested for Lead		£
Project Partners and Grant Requested for each Partner		£ £
Address of Lead Organisation including postcode		
Lead Contact – Contractual (Name and e-mail)		
Lead Contact – Technical (Name and e-mail)		
Subsidy Control Category (see Section 14)		
Total Grant Funding Requested (£ and % of Total Project Cost)	£	%
Academic Contribution (£ and % of Total Project Cost)	£	%
PV Contribution (£ and % of Total Project Cost)	£	%
Total Project Cost (£)	£	100%
Proposed start date and duration		
Project Type	Pathfinder / SRL / TRL / Facilities (delete as applicable)	
Titles and dates of related projects or proposals to CEOI, NSIP, NSTP, ETP or other UKSA programmes	(List on separate sheet if necessary)	
Please confirm acceptance of the standard CEOI Grant Terms and Conditions		

← CEOI contribution to total project cost; for collaborative proposals see requirements in AOO Section 15

} % have to comply with subsidy control rules (see AOO Section 15)

← Total FEC cost of the project = CEOI grant + partner contributions

Section	Subject	Mark
5.3	Technical Case	30%
5.4	Exploitation Plan and Enhancement of National Capability	20%
5.5	Project Team	10%
5.6	Project Management	20%
5.7	Project Finances	10%
5.8	Collaboration	5%
5.9 & 8	Grant Conformance	5%
	TOTAL	100%

See the AOO for a description of the content in each Section

CEOI calls are aimed at the development of **upstream EO technologies**;

- Proposals that solely focus on downstream algorithm development, or the science to raise Science Readiness Level (SRL), are not appropriate.
- However if you are developing for instance sensor inversion models, then that would be a suitable piece of work as long as it is supporting a broader hardware technology development programme as the main activity in the proposal.
- Similarly, and specifically for this Small Projects Call, development of an EO instrument module as part of an E2ES is suitable.
- Development of on-board processing is applicable, but must have a direct impact on the effectiveness of the EO instrument/sensor. In contrast, the development of **downstream applications will not be supported by the CEOI** – it is something more appropriate to other UK Space Agency and UK Research and Innovation funding routes.

Full Economic Costs

- Academic Partners and Government institutions will be funded at no more than 80% of Full Economic Cost (FEC).
- See AOO reference [RD7] for further information on FEC.

In-kind contributions – a good way to look at this is to ask yourself questions along the lines of:

- Has this a definable monetary value?
- Can I account for this contribution in a way an auditor would recognise?
- Can I show it was required to deliver the project?
- Is its contribution to the project commensurate with the value declared?
- Will it be provided during the project timescale
- For equipment purchases; residual value (or re-sale value) at the end of the project needs to be taken off the purchase price



CEOI 2024 Small Projects Call – Assessment Criteria

Allowable costs - Notes

- Equipment purchases
 - CEOI Grants arising from this call are intended to fund a specific programme of work and should not be used for the procurement of equipment, unless they can be shown to be necessary for a specific project.
 - Note: this excludes facility enhancement projects
 - If equipment is funded then CEOI has an expectation that equipment purchased for instrument development would normally be funded at no more than 50%
 - However if your organisation has limited capability to fund the equipment procurement you could request a higher % funding, but this should be fully explained in your proposal
 - You should also note that this request would be referred to the UKSA, whose policy is to fund at no more than 80%
 - For expenses items brought from abroad, it must be justified that these could not be purchased from within the UK
- Airborne trials
 - Flight trials arranged as an external service, procured through a commercial sub-contract, would be expected to be funded at the intervention rate of the partner procuring the service.



CEOI 2024 Small Projects Call – Assessment Criteria Collaboration - Notes

- For larger projects, **preference will be given to those involving collaboration** between partners
 - Collaboration also attracts **beneficial intervention rates**.
- For this reason it is important to understand what collaboration entails:
 - ‘Partners’** are defined as entities / organisations which share and/or retain the Intellectual Property generated by them in the project.
 - In contrast, ‘Suppliers’ and ‘Consultants’ supply goods and/or services to one of the Partners.

- It is possible that some consortia bidding for projects may need to **involve non-UK entities**. This is allowable in principle subject to the following conditions:
 - The UK must lead the consortium;
 - The UK work must represent a substantial proportion of the whole project;
 - A non-UK based organisation cannot receive national funding – **any monies awarded cannot go outside the UK to a partner body**.
 - The consortium must demonstrate that the proposed non-UK capability is essential and not available in the UK. In such instances, the work can be subcontracted out (the subcontractor cannot be a partner to the project).

Subsidy Category	Allowable Level of Support		
	SE	ME	LE
Feasibility study	70%	60%	50%
Industrial research	70%	60%	50%
Industrial research projects involving collaboration/ dissemination*	85%	75%	65%
Experimental development	45%	35 %	25%
Experimental development projects involving collaboration/dissemination*	60%	50%	40%

Lessons Learnt from Previous CEOI Calls

- **Technical problems**
 - Unforeseen technical difficulties - things are harder than expected
 - Manufacturing delays / accidents / component failure
 - Under-estimation of initial technology maturity
 - Quality of out-sourced work poor and slow
- **Resources**
 - People: Internal reallocation post-award, resignation, slow recruitment processes
 - Facilities: Prioritisation, scheduling conflict, failures
 - Procurement: Took longer than expected, relying on a single specialist UK supplier (impacting time & cost)
- **Project management**
 - Poor control of scope / control of partners / no clear identification of project goals
 - Lack of cohesion of team
 - Poor leadership / poor decision making
 - Limited contingency in baseline plan
 - Contracting; Partner contracting delays, difficulty in flowing down Ts & Cs
- **External factors**
 - Loss of key people
 - Market redirection: Changing project exploitation route requiring work/schedule re-planning
 - “Business” Prioritisation: Pressure within organisations to prioritise other work – perception that part-funded work is of lower priority than commercial/academic activities
 - Dependency on completion of other projects
 - Dependency on time-critical contributions from unfunded collaborators

Ways to avoid

- **Better contingency / mitigation planning:**

- Being more pragmatic at bid stage on what is achievable in allocated time
- Better assessment of project delivery risks and possible mitigation action
- Inclusion of contingency in baseline delivery plan (timescales)
- Earlier procurement of long lead items
- Are academic leads thinking of these projects in more “commercial” terms

- **Tighter Project Management**

- Use of experienced PM's – some academic teams successfully sub-contract PM role from outside
- Frequent team meeting drumbeat – weekly at critical times
- Avoidance of dual-hatted PMs – either technical delivery or management, not both (n/a to Pathfinder Projects)
- Preference for industrial lead on larger projects
- Evidenced through provision of Project Management Plans (for larger projects only)

- **Assumption of pre-knowledge** on the background to the technology
 - Cannot assume that the reviewers are aware of previous projects
- Failure to show how **this development step fits into a larger story** and how it could end in a flight opportunity;
- Generic, **generalised risks**, without much thought to impact or mitigation
- **Poor-quality Gantts**
 - A few blocks stuck end to end is not a good or informative Gantt chart.
 - Unreadable pictures of very complex Gantts
- Using non-grant receiving partners could be considered a delivery risk
 - Show support by letters of commitment
- You can submit or be a Partner in multiple proposals
 - But the assessors may question if you **have the resources** to deliver all
- Staff **resources** may appear unrealistic:
 - Reliance on a yet to be recruited person, and/or giving e.g. 80% of the hours to an unspecified RA
 - Unrealistic number of hours assigned to a senior technical specialist
- Simplistic business plan
 - e.g. global market is £4B; we will win 1%, hence this is a multi-million £ ROI
- Poor rework of a previously submitted proposal that does not meet the criteria
- Poor quality and/or no review of bid documents

Ask yourself “So What?” 3-5 times

- If you have any questions during the bid phase you are welcome to contact members of the CEOI team for clarification.
- These will be conducted in confidence.
- The Points of Contact are:
 - Kevin Smith; kevin.smith@stfc.ac.uk
 - Nicolas Lévêque; nicolas.leveque@airbus.com
 - For contracts & administration, Nicola Oldham CEOIadmin@le.ac.uk
- Note: the CEOI leadership team is not part of the proposal evaluation team.