

Call for Applications to Participate in the 2025 CEOI Creative Ideas Collaboration Lab

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UKSA and CEOI invite early career researchers and technical professionals from academia, industry, and research institutions working in Earth observation (EO) in the UK to apply for participation in the Collaboration and Creative Ideas Lab, by 8 August, 2025.

The Lab consists of professionally facilitated online and in-person workshops during September - October 2025, supported by expert mentors. This initiative offers an opportunity to build connections, develop innovative EO instrument project concepts, reflect on how these can address scientific, societal, and business challenges, and gain experience of developing and pitching proposals.

2 INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the UK Space Agency, the Centre for Earth Observation Instrumentation (CEOI) invites applications from early career researchers/technical professionals to participate in a Collaboration and Creative Ideas Lab. This call, released on 8 July, 2025, is open to early career researchers and early career technical professionals working in academia, industry or other research institutions based in the UK.

This is an exciting opportunity to experience the process of building collaborative relationships, generating new ideas, and proposing concepts involving EO instruments and anchored in addressing scientific, societal and business needs.

The Lab will take the form of a series of professionally facilitated online workshop sessions, culminating with the drafting of a proposal pitch and the opportunity to receive feedback on it, with the view to having ideas ready to develop further in the future. Participants will form teams with other workshop participants to develop their concepts. Project teams will receive guidance throughout the process from experienced mentors.

The Lab workshop sessions will run in October 2025, with a participant briefing and kick-off on 26 September (see full schedule below). **The closing date for applications to participate in the Lab is noon on Friday, 8 August, 2025.** By applying you will be committing to be available for the briefing and all of the Lab workshop sessions. It is anticipated that the review of participant applications will be completed by mid-August 2025, with applicants notified shortly afterwards. **Please note that attendance of the Lab does not guarantee future project funding.**

The CEOI has the objective to realise an excellent, internationally competitive national Earth observation instrument and technology research and development programme. This Lab will contribute to this aim by providing training through experience to early career researchers/professionals, who may go on to lead exciting EO technology and applications developments in the future.

Further information about the CEOI may be found at www.ceoi.ac.uk. The CEOI welcomes enquiries from potential applicants for clarification of any aspect of the Call.

Objectives

The objectives of the Creative Ideas Collaboration Lab are:

- 1) To catalyse connections between early career professionals working on EO instrumentation and applications;
- 2) To provide a creative space to think and generate new ideas;

- 3) To provide mentorship on and experience in idea development and proposal pitching including technical and business case pitches.

As a participant, CEOI aims for you to:

- Develop your professional network outside of your own institution;
- Participate in a supported, professionally facilitated process to develop new collaborations and ideas;
- Build skills for generating, developing, writing and presenting ideas in a format appropriate to securing technology development research funding;
- Benefit from input and feedback from peers and mentors;
- Gain experience in developing funding proposal pitches.

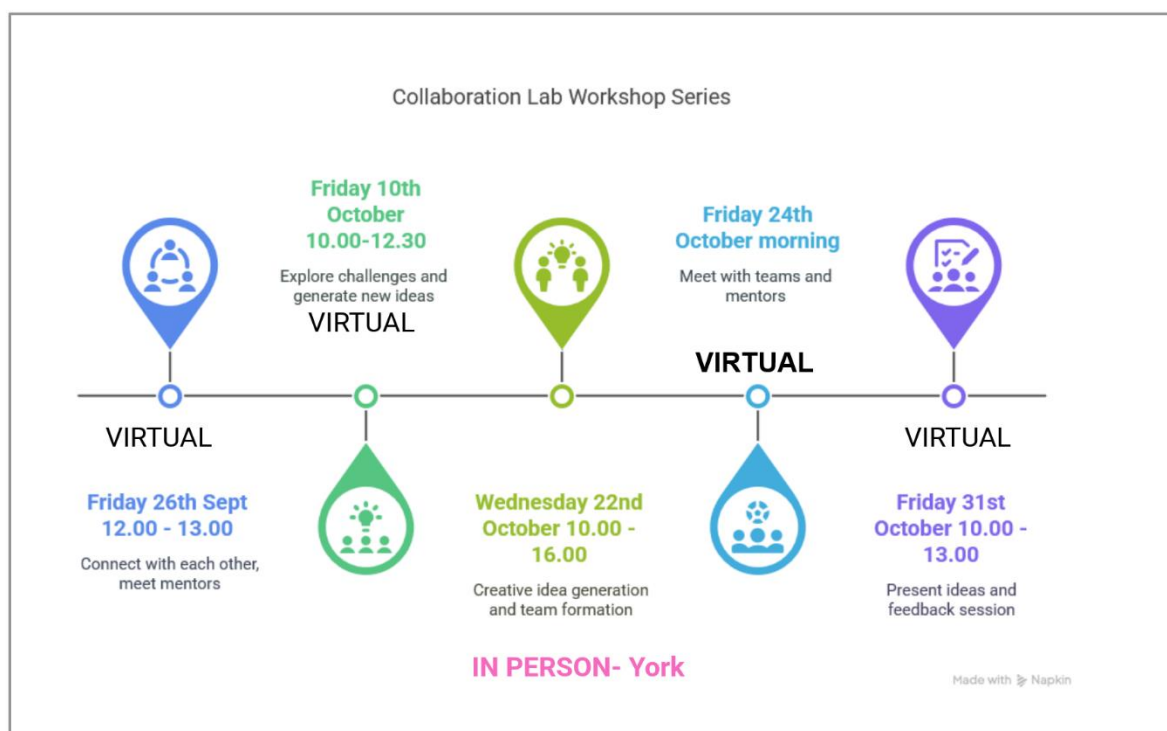
3 WORKSHOP DETAILS

This Creative Ideas Collaboration Lab is a novel format for CEOI and will offer to its participants:

- A space for exploration of new ideas around the application of technology to science, societal and commercial Earth observation challenges.
- The chance to foster new collaborations and expand your network of contacts across the sector.
- First-hand experience of generating, pitching and defending a proposed project idea with a view to future proposal development.

We expect there to be up to thirty participants in total. The Lab workshop sessions will be professionally facilitated and held through a combination of online meetings using Zoom and one in person workshop. Other online tools will be used to assist with collaborative activities.

The Lab timetable will be as follows:



In addition, project teams are expected to work together outside of the formal workshop sessions to progress their project ideas and proposals.

Mentors, with extensive experience in EO technology, proposal development and project management will work with participants throughout the process.

4 GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING AN APPLICATION

Applicants meeting the eligibility criteria should complete the proforma provided and attach a covering letter.

The covering letter must address the following:

- Confirm the applicant's availability to attend the briefing session and all of the workshop sessions, including the in-person day.

5 WHAT IS PROVIDED

Participants will receive access to expert mentors and an opportunity to engage with early career professionals working on EO technology and applications on collaborative idea generation. Refreshments and lunch are provided on the day. Some funding is available to support travel and accommodation for participants whose organisations cannot cover these costs.

6 ELIGIBILITY

We welcome applications from early career researchers/professionals employed by a variety of organisations including academia, industry and government research institutes **based in the UK**. We follow the Royal Meteorological Society's definitions of early career researchers and professionals revised last year <https://www.rmets.org/news/rmets-revises-definition-early-career-researchers-and-professionals>. Please email us well beforehand if you are unsure whether you meet these criteria.

We expect that participants will be working in the area of Earth observation science and technology and have an interest in developing and using new EO instrumentation and applications.

PhD students may apply if they have successfully completed the first year of full-time equivalent study by September, 2025, and include a supporting letter from their supervisor.

7 SELECTION CRITERIA

Based on the information provided in the application pro-forma, applicants will be selected following the following criteria:

- Relevance of background experience;
- Relevance of research/technical interests;
- Motivation for participation;
- Potential for career development through this lab opportunity;
- Eligibility compliance and commitment to attendance.

8 Intellectual Property

As we are not able to put nondisclosure agreements in place for this workshop, please refrain from disclosing sensitive background IP.

9 APPLICATION INFORMATION

Applications to participate in the workshops and should be sent by email to the CEOI.

Email: ceoiadmin@leicester.ac.uk

For further information and formal enquiries contact:

Dr Josh Vande Hey

Email: jvh7@leicester.ac.uk
with ceoiadmin@leicester.ac.uk in cc

CEOI Science Director