Space Environments and Microgravity Science Announcement of Opportunity

Closing date: Friday 18 August 2017, 16:00

Summary

The UK Space Agency is making funding available for space environments scientific research. The purpose of this AO is to support microgravity and space environments research whose experiment has already been adopted by a national or international agency via an AO and which solely and specifically address questions linked to exploration and as such are out of the remit research council funding. By supporting such science the UK Space Agency will enhance the UK's capabilities in exploration and support areas that can lead to spin-out technologies.

Remit of Call

This scheme is open to academics and individual scientists from the UK or overseas, working at UK Research Organisations, for proposals to fund:

- **Fellowships** to develop promising early career researchers or allow existing academics to discipline-hop
- **Post Doctorate Research Assistants**
- **Studentships**
- **Academic Support**

Although extensions to current fellowships will be considered, preference will be given to new fellowships.

Proposals will only be considered for research that has already been selected for access to the required space environments facility / resources via a national or international agency AO.

This call is only able to fund research proposals that solely and specifically address questions linked to exploration and as such are outside the remit of funding from the Research Councils.

Award Duration

For PDRAs, awards will normally be for two years and no more than three years; fellowships will be offered for no more than 36 months in total but could be held part-time for up to six years. Support for academics must be justified and of reasonable length in relation to the experiment.

Award value

Awards will be made in line with standard STFC criteria for PDRAs and fellowships. Grants will be administered by STFC, in accordance with their financial rules, on behalf of the UK Space Agency. Reasonable costs will be permitted, but it should be noted that all costs must be justified and that the appropriateness and justification of sums requested will form part of the assessment criteria.

How to Apply

Please read all of the guidance carefully. Contact the Agency if you have any questions.

Application forms should be completed but **not submitted** on the JeS system:

Please fill in a **JeS form** via https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/ for a ***STFC Standard Proposal*** (note: not a fellowship or studentship) and **produce a .pdf of the completed form**. To do this, follow *document actions --> print document -->* select print format as *'pdf' --> download the print*.

Send this **.pdf** file, along with the relevant annexes as listed below, to
SpaceExploration@ukspaceagency.bis.gsi.gov.uk

Please note: it is the responsibility of the proposal Principal Investigator to clear their submission with the relevant finance and research offices of their institution. Such clearance must be obtained prior to submission.

Applications must be received no later than **16:00 Friday 18 August 2017**. Applications received after this will **not** be considered.

Annexes:

Project Studentships should have the following annexes:

1) **Case for Support:** This should be no more than three sides in 11pt text (A4 paper, with minimum 2cm margins) (excluding references). Containing the following information:
    a) **Description of the Project**
    b) **Supervision -** There should be a brief description of the experience the supervisors have. New lecturers are encouraged to apply and should indicate their experience to how the institution will support them.
    c) **Monitoring of Progress -** This should explain the monitoring process that will be used and the type of remedial actions that could be put in place if required. Does the institute have an approved code of practice covering PhD student supervisory and monitoring procedures?
    d) **Training Opportunities -** This section should detail the training that would be provided to the student, both compulsory and optional. This should include the number of lecturing (instruction) hours attended by the student over the duration of the award, excluding summer schools. The project must provide the student with training in the methods of research associated with the work to be undertaken. The student must have the opportunity to undertake broader skills training during the course of a PhD.
    e) **Research Environment -** Provide some contextual information of the research environment, including the number of PhD students.
    f) **Justification of Resources Requested**

2) **Impact Plan:** one side, 11pt text (A4 paper, with minimum 2cm margins)
3) **Current Funding List for the PI:** This should include title, funder, value, duration and level of applicants time spent on the project. If the title is not self-explanatory include a sentence to explain what the project is about.

Fellowships should have the following annexes:

1) **Case for Support:** This should be no more than six sides in 11pt text (A4 paper, with minimum 2cm margins) (excluding references). Containing the following information:
   a) **Description of the Project**
   b) **Monitoring of Progress -** This should explain the monitoring process that will be used and the type of remedial actions that could be put in place if required. Does the institute have an approved code of practice covering monitoring procedures?
   c) **Research Environment -** Provide some contextual information of the research environment, including the number of PhD students.
   d) **Justification of Resources Requested**

2) **Impact and outreach plan:** one side, 11pt text (A4 paper, with minimum 2cm margins)

3) **Curriculum Vitae:** two sides in 11pt text (A4 paper, with minimum 2cm margins)

4) **Publications List**

5) **A statement from the Head of Department** at the host institution in support of the application (maximum one side of A4 in 11pt text)

6) **Two references** in support of your application. One, and only one, must be from the host institution. The reference from the host institution must provide an explicit statement *outlining the advantages gained from hosting the fellowship.*

7) **Letter of support** from a relevant UK instrument team member or PI.

8) **A copy of the outcome of the AO, ITT** etc. providing evidence that the experiment has secured the use of a facility.

9) **Current Funding List for the PI:** This should include title, funder, value, duration and level of applicants time spent on the project. If the title is not self-explanatory include a sentence to explain what the project is about.

Post Doctorate Research Assistants should have the following annexes:

1) **Case for Support:** This should be no more than six sides in 11pt text (A4 paper, with minimum 2cm margins) (excluding references). Containing the following information:

   a) **Description of the Project**
   b) **Management plan:** Proposed management of both the project and resources, identifying the training and career development opportunities for personnel working on the project.
   c) **The relationship to any earlier or current work** of the applicant(s) and/or collaborating organisation(s) and any relevant work elsewhere.
   d) **Justification of Resources Requested**

2) **Impact and outreach plan:** one side, 11pt text (A4 paper, with minimum 2cm margins)

   Please note: If the proposal is from a **named** PDRA, a CV and Publications list **must** be included.

3) **Curriculum Vitae:** two sides in 11pt text (A4 paper, with minimum 2cm margins)

4) **Publications List**

5) **Letter of support** from a relevant UK instrument team member or PI.

6) **A copy of the outcome of the AO, ITT** etc. providing evidence that the experiment has secured the use of a facility.

7) **Current Funding List for the PI:** This should include title, funder, value, duration and level of applicants time spent on the project. If the title is not self-explanatory include a sentence to explain what the project is about.

Support for Academics should have the following annexes:

1) **Case for Support:** This should be no more than three sides in 11pt text (A4 paper, with minimum 2cm margins) (excluding references). Containing the following information:
   a) **Description of the Project**
   b) **Monitoring of Progress –** This should explain the monitoring process that will be used and the type of remedial actions that could be put in place if required. Does the institute have an approved code of practice covering monitoring procedures?
   c) **Research Environment –** Provide some contextual information of the research environment, including the number of PhD students.
   d) **Justification of Resources Requested**

2) **Impact and outreach plan:** one side, 11pt text (A4 paper, with minimum 2cm margins)

3) **Curriculum Vitae:** two sides in 11pt text (A4 paper, with minimum 2cm margins)

4) **Publications List**

5) **A copy of the outcome of the AO, ITT** etc. providing evidence that the experiment has secured the use of a facility.

6) **Current Funding List for the PI:** This should include title, funder, value, duration and level of applicants time spent on the project. If the title is not self-explanatory include a sentence to explain what the project is about.

IMPORTANT: Before submission, please ensure you have included the following:

	Studentship	Fellowship	PDRA	Support for academics
JeS form	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Case for Support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Impact Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CV	No	Yes	*Possible	Yes
Publications	No	Yes	*Possible	Yes
HoD Statement	No	Yes	No	No
References x2	No	Yes	No	No
Letter of Support	Possible	Possible	Possible	Possible
Current Funding	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

* If the proposal is for a *named* PDRA, a CV and publications list *must* be included in the application.

Proposal Assessment

A final assessment and ranking of proposals will be made by a review panel. Proposals submitted should have already been selected by a national or international agency which was subject to a science review, so the focus of the panel will be judging priority and checking cost are appropriate.

In considering the proposal, the panel will use the following criteria:

- Scientific excellence of the proposal
- Ineligibility for research council funding
- Certainty of access to facilities (flight opportunity etc.)
- Relevance, cross-disciplinarity and timeliness
- Justification and appropriateness of requested resources
- Studentships- quality of training and supervision
- Fellowships- the potential of the individual including the capability to perform the wider and responsibilities on an academic career
- PDRAs- how far a PDRA would enhance the project
- Team membership- the research record of academics applying for support funding
- Impact and outreach plan

The panel, in finalising the awards to be made, may take account of the distribution of awards in terms of subject, type of award and institution.

Key Points to Consider

- Submitted proposals should include science output that would be gained from the project; care should be taken to ensure that the proposal is concise and well written.

- All of the information boxes on the JeS form must be filled including Objectives; Summary; Academic Beneficiaries and Impact Summary. The Summary must not be the same as the Objectives as the Agency may use the Summary for the public in futures press releases or Agency news stories.

- Any additional documentation that is included in the .pdf, but is not stated in the guidance above (e.g. covering letters or additional letters of support) will **not** be considered. It will not be seen by reviewers or the review panel and will not count towards the proposal.

- If any part of the proposal extends over the page limit, the additional pages will not be considered and will not count towards the proposal.

Further Information

For further information, please contact:

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