

From: Oleg Brandt Oleg.Brandt@cern.ch
Subject: Re: [UK DRD1] UKRI Sol infrastructure environment
Date: 19. April 2024 at 08:59
To: UK-DRD1 (Mailing list to coordinate the CERN-UK Detector RD efforts) UK-DRD1@cern.ch
Cc: Pawel Majewski pawel.majewski@stfc.ac.uk, Veronique Boisvert Veronique.Boisvert@cern.ch



Dearest Gas Detector fans,

This is to confirm that our meeting on Monday at 11 am goes ahead.
(there is only one person who cannot make it, our apologies)

All best,
Pawel and Oleg

—

Any dictation mistakes from iOS, all other mistakes are mine!

Am 17/04/2024 um 13:49 schrieb Oleg Brandt <Oleg.Brandt@cern.ch>:

Dear UK DRD1 colleagues,

you will have probably seen on the Hi-Phi mailing list that STFC has updated the Statement of Interest process as the entry route for new major project proposals.

The UK DRD community has been encouraged by STFC to submit proposals. The next submission date is 1 May, and the DRD community plans to submit a handful of proposals. This email to reach out to you as the UK DRD1 community to prepare a DRD1 bid for an SOI, and to solicit your input how such a proposal could look like. The proposal will then be discussed at the UK DRD Steering Board meeting on Friday April 26th, where priority applications will be determined (up to ~5 in total). Given this timeline, we would like to propose a **UK DRD1 meeting on Monday 22 April at 11 am**. Please let me know (by individual email) if you cannot make that time — if a significant number of people cannot make it, we will doodle it (for Monday).

Here is the agenda for Monday: <https://indico.cern.ch/event/1407782/>

For our discussion on Monday, it would be great if everyone could think how an SOI proposal can look like. We need to consider what will be relevant for the entire community as a whole. Given the importance of gaseous detectors and our list of common themes according to DRD1 we believe we are in a strong starting position. However, for such proposals we need to identify future infrastructure bids that the SOI will be working towards. This is not so clear, and we need to be careful about this.

A possible topic for an SOI from UK-DRD1 could be "EcoGases", which is a strong common theme in UK DRD1. Moreover, it ranks highly on the visibility list of the STFC, which increases the likelihood of success. Obviously EcoGases has strong connections to "DetModel" and "Infrastruct" themes. This would need further thought how to connect it to a future infrastructure call.

It would be great if everyone could think about a possible topic for our UK DRD1 submission for the SOI and we can have an informed and fruitful discussion on Monday.

Some more detail:

- 300 words max on the proposal (as asked for by STFC on the proforma)
- The submitted proposals can link to our existing documents (September document and CG submission) to explain DRD to the STFC panel.
- A statement on the priority for now (i.e. can we delay this to our future year)
- The resources for each proposal is 600k over three years. Thus a typical example might include 1 FTE PDRA post and hardware costs. This can then be supported by the CG posts at multiple institutions.

The steering board role will be key here in putting ourselves above self-interest and determining what is best for the community as a whole. If consensus is not reached by discussion on the priorities we will ask for rankings of the proposals, one vote per institute and removing conflicts.

Looking forward to meet and discuss this with you on Monday the 22nd!

Pawel and Oleg

Here is the info from the Hi-Phi email:

Refreshed STFC Statement of Interest process for new, major projects & integration with process for UKRI Infrastructure Fund

STFC has recently updated the [Statement of Interest \(Sol\)](#) process, the entry route for new, major project proposals which is administered through Science Board (SB) (PPAN). The intention of the update was to accommodate refreshed assessment criteria that align with the future prioritisation of the PPAN programme and wider UKRI criteria, including for the UKRI Infrastructure Fund (IF), as well as simplifying the required submission documentation.

As a part of this update, the Sol process will now be the entry point for potential projects that may be routed towards the UKRI IF. A single entry point for these proposals will ensure a strategic view can be taken across the landscape of PPAN projects.

Sols can be submitted throughout the year but will only be considered by SB (PPAN) twice a year, with one Spring and one Autumn deadline each year.

The submission cut off dates for 2024 are:

1st May 2024

1st November 2024

Project teams are encouraged to submit Sols throughout the year and engage with relevant STFC teams for advice prior to submission. These Sol deadlines are not the only window of opportunity and there will continue to be regular opportunities to submit in each year.

Further information including the Sol submission template is available on the [Sol webpage](#).

UKRI Infrastructure Fund- Wave 5 preliminary activities

The entry route for potential STFC IF submissions has been integrated with the Sol process, so the **1st May deadline** mentioned above should be used for Sol submissions that wish to be considered for STFC's preliminary activity prioritisation process. Submissions should use the standard Sol template provided on the webpage.

Project teams intending to submit potential UKRI IF projects should note that STFC will only consider routing proposals towards prioritisation for the fund if they are a high strategic priority, with strong evidence for the timeliness of the submission being vital.

Preliminary activities (PAs) apply to a clearly identified need and concept (or concepts) for a new, upgraded, or other significant change to infrastructure, where spend is required to further develop aspects of the proposal. PAs can be of two types:

De-risking: Required to de-risk a future infrastructure fund investment such as the delivery mechanism or technical

design, better understand the costs, or to run a pilot which will refine the approach before a full proposal can be developed. To qualify as a de-risking PA, there is an expectation that projects should last no longer than 4 years and cost no more than £8m, with no more than £2m in a financial year. £8m is the absolute maximum request, and most PAs are expected to have a total cost of £5m or less.

Environmental sustainability: Required to understand, plan, and mitigate environmental sustainability aspects of a future infrastructure fund investment. There is an expectation that projects undertaking scoping, design or piloting of environmental sustainability options should cost no more than £2m in total to be considered eligible. Applications for existing infrastructures, i.e., retrofitting, are not eligible.

Some projects may require additional piloting or scoping work following a funded PA but only one PA can be funded through the IF. Further piloting and scoping work are eligible for funding through the IF but would be considered as a stage in a proposal for a full infrastructure.

Please contact the STFC Infrastructure Team with any queries, INFRASTRATEGY@stfc.ac.uk.