



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education

Comhairle Maoinachaidh na h-Alba

A' brosnachadh foghlam adhartach agus àrd ìre

Circular

Horizon Fund: call for knowledge exchange proposals addressing the needs of Scottish industry

9 July 2010

SFC/25/2010

http://www.sfc.ac.uk/news_events_circulars/Circulars/circulars_page.aspx

This circular announces to higher education institutions a call for proposals to the Scottish Funding Council's Horizon Fund for Universities for knowledge exchange proposals addressing the needs of Scottish industry.

FAO: Principals and directors of Scotland's universities

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9 July 2010

SFC/24/2010

Horizon Fund knowledge exchange funding AY 2010-11

9 July 2010

SFC/23/2010

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Horizon Fund for Universities guidance

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HE fee waiver scheme for part-time students in academic year 2010-11

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Horizon Fund: call for knowledge exchange proposals addressing the needs of Scottish industry

Purpose

- 1 This circular announces to higher education institutions (HEIs) a call for proposals to the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC's) Horizon Fund for Universities (HFU) for knowledge exchange (KE) proposals addressing the needs of industry (demand-driven) .

Background

- 2 In academic year (AY) 2009-10 we announced a call for proposals, under the Strategic Priority Investments in Research and Innovation Translation (SPIRIT) grant line, for demand-driven KE projects. A total of ten projects supported with a total of £8.1 million SFC funding have been funded from this scheme¹.
- 3 In circular [SFC/24/2010](#) (9 July 2010) we announced that £6 million from the HFU would be allocated for strategic KE projects in AY 2010-11. We are allocating £4 million of this to this call for proposals.
- 4 The SFC will commission an independent evaluation of the 2009-10 SPIRIT competition and projects in August 2010. The learning outcomes from the evaluation will be shared with successful projects funded from this call.

Aim of the call

- 5 The focus of the HFU is on Scottish Government priorities.
- 6 In this call we are focussing upon demand-driven collaborative activity addressing the needs of the key industry sectors identified within the Scottish Government's economic strategy.
- 7 We will support activities which will enhance the operation and productivity of these industry sectors and which aim to create a legacy of further demand-driven collaborative activity.

Focus of the call

- 8 In outcome 3, KE, in SFC's corporate plan we say:

¹ Press release [SFCPR/05/2010](#) - *SFC funding drives university and business collaboration for economic growth*

“We will work closely with the national enterprise bodies to stimulate new demand from business for knowledge exchange from...universities that can be translated into economic gain... particularly those operating in the priority economic sectors.”

- 9 This year the call will focus on the key sectors identified in the Scottish Government’s Economic Strategy (page 29), published in November 2007. Proposals are invited for strategic projects that demonstrate potential impact in any one or more of these sectors, with a particular focus on ‘enabling technologies’. We are particularly keen to receive proposals for projects that involve Scottish small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The key sectors are:
- creative industries (including digital content and technologies);
 - energy;
 - financial and business services;
 - food and drink (including agriculture and fisheries);
 - life sciences (including biotechnology and translational medicine);
and
 - tourism.
- 10 The Scottish Government’s industry-led Technology Advisory Group’s strategy for enabling technologies in Scotland, *Towards a Brighter Future*, states: “Responding to needs of industry, universities and the SFC will focus attention on market needs and the applications of enabling technologies.”²
- 11 Within the enabling technologies area, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (the enterprise agencies) have identified the following priority technology platforms for their respective operations.

² ‘Towards a brighter future’ (TAG) - <http://www.scottish-enterprise.com/your-sector/enabling-technologies/et-strategy.aspx>

Scottish Enterprise	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
sensors	digital connectivity, applications and services
modelling and simulation	assisted living (telehealthcare)
informatics	environmental and clean technologies (ECT) and low carbon
	energy - wave and tidal

12 We have listed our assessment criteria below. However, institutions should note that proposals should:

- **be demand-driven** - the active and formal involvement of the relevant industry group(s) must be clearly demonstrated and this should drive the activity being put forward for support; and
- **demonstrate impact** - proposals should have clear indicators for demonstrating how the proposed activity will generate outputs, outcomes and economic impact for the relevant industry sector in Scotland and the Scottish economy.

Events

13 The SFC is working in partnership with the enterprise agencies to encourage a positive response to this call. To help achieve this both agencies will run workshops to raise awareness of this call, identify knowledge gaps and potential collaborations with industry.

14 Details of the workshops are given below. Representatives from HEIs are invited to attend any of these events and places will be reserved on a first come first served basis.

Date	Event	Registration details
27 July 2010	Scottish Enterprise, Radisson Hotel, Glasgow	To register please contact the events team (events@scotent.co.uk)
11 August 2010	Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Cowan House, Inverness	To register please contact: Theresa Swayne (Tel: 01463 244583, email: theresa.swayne@hient.co.uk)

Funding

- 15 Resources available for projects commencing in AY 2010-11 will be approximately £4.0 million per annum for three years.
- 16 Funding for successful projects will be allocated to the lead HEI in charge of the project. It will be the responsibility of the lead HEI to ensure timely allocation of the grant to partner institutions.

Guidance on submitting proposals

- 17 We expect proposals to be both demand-driven and collaborative with industry across the relevant sector areas. We do not anticipate a large volume of proposals for any one industry sector.
- 18 The types of KE activity supported will be largely determined by demand side requirements, and may include, for example, key KE mechanisms such as facilitation and fast-tracking of industry problem-solving and also inward secondments from industry, industry/HEI networks, and industry studentships.
- 19 The amount of funding for any single project will vary depending on the scope of activities, the extent of the collaboration with the industry sector and across institutions with relevant strengths, and the contributions made by partners. For guidance, a maximum SFC contribution of around £400,000 per annum will be made available to any single project.
- 20 Proposals should be fully costed on the basis of full economic costs and should set out industry contributions, cash and/or in kind to project costs, which should be at least 20 per cent of total costs.
- 21 Specific strategic investments by the institution(s) in direct support of the proposal should be clearly identified as costed cash contributions and the source of the contribution identified (for example, general funds, knowledge transfer grant (KTG) or combination) where possible.
- 22 Each submission should be signed off by the principal officer of the lead institution or his or her designated representative.

Assessment

- 23 Proposals, in outline form, will be reviewed by an assessment panel which will draw its membership from the SFC, Scotland's enterprise

agencies, and KE experts based in Scotland and elsewhere working in relevant fields.

- 24 In addition to the principles for the HFU, which are set out in the guidance for universities³, the panel will take into account the following in assessing proposals:
- evidence that the proposed project is demand-driven;
 - potential impact on the relevant industry sector and Scottish economy;
 - the potential for innovation and additionality, both in terms of enhancing the industry – higher education relationship and in delivering specific activity and outcomes;
 - the quality of the proposed collaborations (industry and HEI partners);
 - commitment within the HEIs to the project as measured by direct support or previous/planned strategic investment in the area of the project;
 - integration with other activity in the area;
 - overall value for money; and
 - the potential legacy of the project in terms of continued demand-driven activity.

Application process

Stage one - outline proposals

- 25 This outline stage is intended to reduce the burden on institutions in developing proposals. We will only invite fully developed proposals where there is a high chance of success.
- 26 The assessment panel will assess outline proposals using the evaluation criteria set out above and will rank proposals in order of quality. The SFC's Investment Committee will decide, based on the panel's recommendations, which proposals will be invited to proceed to the second stage.

³ *Horizon Fund for Universities guidance* (circular [SFC/22/2010](#))

- 27 Institutions intending to develop a proposal should submit an outline proposal in **no more than five pages** using the template attached at Annex A, by **noon, Friday 17 September 2010**.
- 28 Evidence of industry commitment to the aims of the project should be in the form of a supporting letter from the lead industry partner and/or representative of the industry group. This letter should be returned with the application (this will not count towards the page limit). **Additional material will not be considered.**

Stage two – full business plans

- 29 Following the Investment Committee meeting on 22 October 2010, we will contact lead proposers regarding the outcome of outline proposals.
- 30 For those proposals being invited to proceed to stage two, full project business plans should be received by **noon, Friday 17 December 2010**. We would expect these plans to fully address any feedback from the assessment panel, to set out a cost-effective and credible work plan, and to act as working documents for projects as well as informing the SFC.
- 31 Business plans will not be assessed by the panel. Rather, this stage is intended to develop project plans and agree project outcomes so that the SFC may issue letters of grant to lead HEIs appropriately. However, should the quality of any proposal change significantly between stage one and stage two the SFC may decide to reject a proposal at this stage rather than develop it further.

Timetable

- 32 The expected timetable is as follows:

Stage one

- 27 July 2010 - Scottish Enterprise event in Glasgow and 11 August 2010 - Highlands and Islands Enterprise event in Inverness;
- Noon, Friday 17 September 2010 - deadline for submission of outline proposals;
- early-October 2010 - assessment panel meets to evaluate proposals;

- 22 October 2010 – SFC Investment Committee considers panel’s recommendations;
- late-October 2010 – proposals invited/rejected to stage two;

Stage two

- Noon, Friday 17 December 2010 - deadline for submission of full business plans;
- February 2011 – SFC announces successful projects and projects commence.

Further information

33 For further information contact Keith McDonald, Policy Officer, Strategic Development, Tel: 0131 313 6674, email: kmcdonald@sfc.ac.uk.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MTS Batho', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

MTS Batho
Chief Executive

Outline proposals

Completed forms should be emailed to KEcompetition@sfc.ac.uk by noon, Friday 17 September 2010. **Forms must not exceed 5 pages** (any material submitted beyond this limit will not be considered).

General information (this does not count towards the page limit)

Project details	
Project title:	
Industry sector/s:	
Main proposed KE activity:	

Lead HEI – principal applicant	
Surname:	Forename(s):
Title:	Position:
Institution:	
Address for correspondence:	
Tel:	email:

HEI partner applicants: please complete for each institution

Full name	Institution and department

Lead industry partner/s – please provide details for the <u>lead partner/s</u> (please include letter of support)	
Surname:	Forename(s):
Title:	Position:
Institution:	
Address for correspondence:	
Tel:	email:

Industry partners: please provide details for the other partners - please indicate whether partner is a small/medium sized enterprise (SME)

Organisation	Industry sector

Outline proposal (maximum of 5 sides of A4)

The outline proposal should broadly set out what it is the project will set out to do, why the project should be funded, how the project will be conducted, and what success might look like. Overall, the proposal should articulate the potential outcomes the project will have for the relevant industry sector and the Scottish economy and the strengths of the proposed collaboration with industry (see the focus section in paragraph 12 of the circular).

Please provide brief information in any format (for example, tabular) using the following headings and a minimum font size of 10 pt:

- Demand identified and the active involvement of industry;
- Mechanisms for collaboration, both with industry and between HEIs;
- Proposed activities to meet indentified demand;
- Indicative project timetable/schedule;
- Objectives and measurable success criteria including proposed key performance indicators (KPIs) for delivery of outcomes;
- Roles and responsibilities of key people and plans for project governance/management;
- Alignment of project with lead and HEI partner KE strategies; and
- Funding (using table below or similar format).

Total value of proposal (HEIs, industry, SFC and other sources):
Total (estimated) value of contributions from industry partners: Cash: In-kind:
Total (estimated) value of contributions from HEI partners: Cash: In-kind:
Breakdown per year of total estimated costs for the project, based on full economic costs* :
Net funding sought from SFC (profiled over the relevant academic years):

Authorisation (this does not count towards the page limit)

Signature of principal officer or representative (in scanned format):	
Job title:	
Institution:	

Please remember to attach the letter of support from the lead industry partner/s (this does not count towards the page limit)

* Proposals will be assessed in terms of overall value for money therefore this section should clearly set out the planned expenditure for the whole project.

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