



# SFC Call for information

## College Innovation Fund 2019-20 – call for proposals

Issue date: 15 July 2019

Reference: SFC/CI/05/2019

Summary: Colleges are invited to submit proposals to the SFC's College Innovation Fund in the period to 31 March 2020.

FAO: Principals and Business Development Managers of Scotland's Colleges

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## College Innovation Fund 2019-20 – call for proposals

### Introduction

1. The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is pleased to confirm that the Scottish Government has made up to £500,000 available for the College Innovation Fund in financial year (FY) 2019-20 (i.e. to 31 March 2020). We are inviting colleges to submit proposals for funding by 19 September 2019.
2. In this document we set out the strategic context, aims and objectives and assessment process for this call.

### Background and strategic context

3. In FY 2018-19, £500,000 of funding was made available by Scottish Government to SFC to support three strands of College Innovation Fund pilot activity. The three strands, in year one of the pilot, were: a strategic pilot project (FUTUREquipped); the College Innovation Accelerator Fund (CIAF); and College Innovation Vouchers.
4. SFC is pleased to confirm there will be a second year of the pilot in FY 2019-20. The purpose of this call is to identify projects which can best demonstrate effective college and business collaboration in support of Scottish Government strategy.
5. This call for proposals has been informed by the learning from year one of the pilot and feedback from the college sector. This has directed focus toward the development of strategic projects between colleges, businesses and other partners with a similar model to the FUTUREquipped<sup>1</sup> project, piloted in year one. This project supported a collaboration of 13 colleges, 4 Innovation Centres and multiple businesses across health and care, construction, and ICT. The success of this project was recognised when it was shortlisted in the Outstanding Skills Development category at Scotland's Life Science Awards 2019.
6. This call is informed by the Scottish Government's Innovation Action Plan which contains a key priority to use the College Innovation Fund to support Scotland's colleges to work with businesses on innovation activity<sup>2</sup>. The call is further informed by the Strategic Board's Strategic Plan<sup>3</sup> which promotes the role of colleges in helping drive economic growth and productivity in Scotland.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.sfc.ac.uk/news/2018/news-69203.aspx](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/news/2018/news-69203.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> [www.gov.scot/policies/supporting-business/innovation-and-entrepreneurship/](http://www.gov.scot/policies/supporting-business/innovation-and-entrepreneurship/)

<sup>3</sup> [www.gov.scot/publications/working-collaboratively-better-scotland/](http://www.gov.scot/publications/working-collaboratively-better-scotland/)

7. The Strategic Board's Strategic Plan highlights two areas of particular relevance to College Innovation and the role of colleges in delivering positive impacts on productivity:
  - **Business models, workplace innovation and Fair Work**– promoting and supporting the development of highly capable businesses with long-term strategic orientations, which utilise progressive workplace practices, technology, skilled resources and innovation to remain competitive.
  - **Skills for the Future** – encourage and enable a shift to a more demand-led skills system that better responds to the current and future skills needs of employers and individuals, including expanding work based learning, and increasingly supports individuals to up-skill and re-skill.
8. In our new Strategic Framework<sup>4</sup> we say we will use our investments in the College Innovation Fund to stimulate greater economic, social and cultural benefits from the work of colleges. In particular, we will invest in excellent research and innovation that adds to current knowledge, delivers economic and societal value, enhances Scotland's international reputation and attractiveness, and makes the world around us prosperous, healthier and more sustainable.
9. This pilot approach to the College Innovation Fund is intended to inform our longer term strategy for promoting the role of colleges in Scotland's innovation system.

### **Call for proposals**

10. Colleges should ensure that proposed projects have a clear business focus that will benefit the future workforce for Scotland and deliver economic impact. Projects should be innovative, encouraging new skills development or significant changes in working processes and business activity. This should be delivered through collaborative working, either across a group of colleges or with other appropriate partners and organisations. We would also encourage projects to be cross-sectoral and inter-disciplinary in nature, with a regional or national focus as appropriate. Colleges are encouraged to work with their base of SMEs as well as larger employers.
11. For this call we are inviting proposals for two types of project:
  - A single large-scale strategic project, with a SFC contribution of up to £250,000. We envisage this being a cross-disciplinary and collaborative initiative of similar ambition to the FUTUREquipped project, addressing a sector or cross-sector challenge.

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<sup>4</sup> [www.sfc.ac.uk/about-sfc/strategic-framework/strategic-framework.aspx](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/about-sfc/strategic-framework/strategic-framework.aspx)

- Smaller scale targeted projects to meet a particular business need or opportunity, with a SFC contribution of up to £50,000 each. We intend to fund up to five projects of this type. These may be single college to business projects or a collaborative initiative.
12. By promoting collaboration we are aiming to bring together exciting and innovative consortia of colleges and businesses with novel approaches to tackling challenges and realising opportunities for economic impact. Universities may be a partner in a collaboration. However, we expect that the majority of SFC funding will directly support college activity.
  13. Funding will be available for use in FY 2019-20 only. Activity to be funded by SFC must therefore be completed by 31 March 2020. Project activity may continue beyond this period should other sources of funding be secured to enable this.

### **Submission Process**

14. Proposals must be able to demonstrate senior level support from their organisation. Proposals must nominate a lead college and submissions will only be eligible if signed off by the Principal of the lead college.
15. The lead college shall act as the main point of contact for the project and will be responsible for project administration. Project funding will be administered through the lead college unless otherwise agreed.
16. Proposals should be submitted in Microsoft Word format using Calibri font, size 13.
17. The deadline for proposal submissions is **midday on Thursday 19 September 2019**. Proposals should be submitted to [collegeinnovation@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:collegeinnovation@sfc.ac.uk). Any enquiries should be directed to Andrew Youngson, Senior Policy/Analysis Officer, tel: 0131 313 6519 , email: [ayoungson@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:ayoungson@sfc.ac.uk).

### **Assessment**

18. Proposals will be considered by an assessment panel. The assessment panel reserves the option to propose integration of projects of either size where there is clear overlap and where closer collaboration could significantly increase project impact.
19. A template for proposals is provided as an annex to this call and provides guidance on the expected structure required for submitting proposals. Please note that a full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) is required for the proposal to be eligible.

## Proposal Criteria

20. Proposals should address all of the following high-level criteria which will be used in the assessment process:

- Proposals should be demand-led, evidenced by businesses being part of the collaboration. Projects that attract additional funding beyond the SFC contribution are strongly encouraged.
- Proposals should clearly articulate the challenge/opportunity which the project intends to tackle and how the activities proposed will initiate longer term, sustainable change.
- Proposals should detail the outcomes that will be delivered by the project, including achievable targets and key performance indicators.
- Proposals should include a plan for project sustainability. This could include targeting future funding, forming a new enterprise, securing industrial commitment, influencing policy or any other method appropriate which ensures the project legacy and outcomes continue beyond the project end date.
- Proposals should be innovative and clearly demonstrate the additionality for the partners and the novelty of the interaction between the college/s and business partners.
- Proposals should include clear communications and a dissemination plan that will engage wider audiences with the work of the project and highlight good practice. The plan should also support public awareness raising and promotion of the project's achievements.
- Proposals should provide a clear breakdown of projected income and expenditure over the term of the project.
- Proposals must commit to commence and fully deliver the project in FY 2019-20 (i.e. by 31 March 2020), unless other sources of funding will enable the project to continue beyond this period.
- Proposals must provide a statement of compliance with State-Aid rules.

19. We expect that the outcomes achieved as a result of SFC's investment will be:

- Colleges are engaging more closely with industry, business and other relevant stakeholders.
- We will have developed and exchanged good practice to enhance the understanding of impact that can be achieved through college/business collaboration.
- Wider audiences will be able to access and understand project achievements and impacts through accessible media and documentation. Examples could include production of a short video, social media blogs or other documentation as appropriate.

## Schedule

20. The schedule for this call is:

Action	Date
Call for proposals issued	15 July 2019
Deadline for submission of proposals	19 September 2019
Assessment panel review	Late September 2019
Funding approved and projects commence	October 2019
Projects complete	31 March 2020

21. We will provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants upon request. The level and detail of feedback will be dependent on the number of proposals received.
22. We appreciate that the period between launch and deadline for submission of proposals is very short. We could not have launched this call any earlier as the budget for the College Innovation Fund was only confirmed in June as part of our budget settlement with the Scottish Government. We encourage colleges to contact us should they have any concerns or would like advice on preparing proposals.

## Equality & Diversity

23. SFC considers equality and diversity in all its priorities. SFC asks colleges to be mindful of the Equality Act (2010), including the statutory requirement for Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments (EHRIs) of new and revised strategies and policies. Proposals must include an EHRIA. Institutions can complete their own EHRIA form or use SFC's form which is available upon request. [Further information and guidance](#) is available from SFC's website.

## Data Protection

24. Please ensure that any materials produced, reporting required, promotional information etc. is compliant with data protection requirements.
25. For example if videos are produced that will then be published online, the College must ensure the participants in the videos are aware of how their information will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection

Regulation. For more information about how SFC uses personal data please see our [Privacy Notice](#).

26. We reserve the right to share content, reports and other information with relevant stakeholders to promote and demonstrate the effectiveness of the fund.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Fairbairn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

**Martin Fairbairn**  
Chief Operating Officer

## **Annex A: Proposal Document**

Please complete the following proposal template. Supporting material may be provided in a separate annex. Please ensure that all of the proposal criteria set out in the call document are addressed.

Details of project lead and collaborative partners.

Please give a summary of the proposed project.

Why is/are your collaboration/s the right one/s to deliver this project?

What impact will your project have on your institution and other partners?

Does your project plan have an impact on the wider local/regional economy?

Please detail the activities and proposed timeframe for the project.

### **Financial Summary**

Please provide a clear breakdown of the funding requested against the proposed activity, and detail other contributions from industry and/or other partners.

The following table may be used to summarise projected income and costs. If there are costs not covered by the headings in the table please outline under 'other' and give a brief description.

<b>PROJECT FINANCING</b>	
Amount of funding requested from SFC	
Institution contribution(s)	
Other co-funding	
<b>TOTAL Project Value</b>	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Consumables	
Facilities	
Travel & Subsistence	
Other	
<b>TOTAL Expenditure</b>	

**Project Management**

Please insert details of how the project will be managed, including a project plan or milestones as appropriate. Please outline any governance and management requirements for the project involving multiple stakeholders/consortia.

**Sustainability**

Will your project have further reach beyond the project timelines stipulated? Please give details on how your project will ensure that the outputs of your project will continue beyond the proposed project timeline and have a further legacy?

**Equality Human Rights Impact Assessment**

Full proposals must include an EHRIA

Institutions can complete their own EHRIA form or use SFC's form which is available upon request. [Further information and guidance](#) is available from SFC's website.

**Communication/Dissemination Strategy**

Projects that are approved will require to have a communications plan to allow SFC and your institution/s to promote the project and demonstrate how the funding has been used effectively. Please give details of how you will manage communications ie. launch/other events, media releases etc.

**Project Risks**

Please identify any project risks and how these will be managed/mitigated.

**Submission approval**

As Principal of the lead college, this proposal has been approved by me:

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(Signature)

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(Name)

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(Name of College)