
University Transformation Framework

Annex A: Application Form

Application form template

1. This is the template to be used for applications to the SFC University Transformation Framework (UTF).
2. Institutions should email the completed form as a Word document to UTF@sfc.ac.uk by **Friday 13 February 2026**.
3. Please complete all sections of the document which, when completed, should not exceed 10 pages in length, excluding the cover sheet. (While each section heading should be retained, please delete our explanatory text so as not to impact on the overall length of the document.) We expect text to be easily readable – do not use a font size that is too small and please use reasonable line spacing.
4. Letters of support (for example from partner organisations) can be included where they are complimentary to the activities described (and are not included in the 10-page limit). We understand that some documentation will be commercially sensitive, and this should be clearly marked.
5. SFC considers equality and diversity in all its activities. Alongside this template, UTF applications must also include an Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA). Applicants can use their institution's EHRIA form or SFC's EHRIA form which is available upon request. EHRIAs will be considered in the assessment process.
6. Following our decisions, successful bidders may be asked to provide additional information to inform award letters, meet any due diligence and public sector duty requirements, and to provide information for dissemination, monitoring and evaluation. For example, we may require a Data Protection Impact Assessment and an Island Communities Impact Assessment.

University Transformation Framework

Application form cover sheet

Project information	
Project title	
Lead university	
Project start date	
Project end date	
Key contact information	
Title and full name	
Position (Vice Principal for Research or equivalent)	
Address for correspondence	
Email	
Project partners	
Other universities involved in the partnership (if applicable)	
Other key partners (if applicable)	
Funding	
Total funding request (maximum £10 million)	£
Profile of funding (if over more than one year)	

Project summary

Provide a summary of the project that the funding will support. Projects should be ambitious but realistic and focus on the specific transformation/innovation the project will achieve for the benefit of the university, its students and the country as a whole.

(Examples of transformation projects could include:

- addressing under-recruitment against funded student places
- meeting demand for specific industry skills shortages
- business improvement/delivery models that drive down operational costs
- developing tertiary models of qualification delivery)

The summary should cover overall aim, key deliverables, major milestones and partners: essentially the who, what, why, where, and when. The summary should be concise, get to the point quickly on what SFC is being asked to fund, be easy to understand and jargon free.

[For successful proposals we may ask for a summary of the project to go on our website.]

Rationale for funding

Explain why this project - the approach and the team/partnership (if applicable) - is the optimal way to achieve the desired transformation/innovation, and how it meets the stated criteria.

Proposals should:

- specifically set out the actual transformation/innovation that is planned (and what would change), and the strategic rationale for those plans.
- be consistent with strategies set out by SFC and the Scottish Government, and should clearly demonstrate the economic benefit for Scotland.
- contribute to meeting demand (from students and/or other stakeholders), with robust evidence provided (e.g. demographic data, student demand data, industry engagement).
- prioritise the enhancement of delivery to Scottish students, assist institutions in achieving sustainable operations, and address funding pressures.
- demonstrate collaboration between universities, or between universities and colleges / other public bodies, supporting delivery of public service reform.
- demonstrate accountability for the use of public funds, ensuring all proposals align with clear transformation objectives and measurable outcomes.
- be transparent, allowing for effective oversight, monitoring and adjustment where necessary.

Fit and organisational buy-in

Describe how this project fits with the lead university's strategy and collaborating partners' key priorities and strategies.

Give evidence of senior management buy-in and fit with organisation and academic capabilities.

Inputs, outputs and outcomes

Using the table below, please detail the key inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes for the project that are coherent with the activities outlined in the narrative above. Please present these by each workstream/work package and note the total funding from SFC's UTF to be deployed for each.

Input	Activity	Output	How financed or resourced	Outcomes	Impacts
Resource (staff time, infrastructure)	How the resource will be used?	What will result from these activities?	By SFC, universities	Change in condition	
[add additional lines as necessary]					

Benefits realisation

How will we know that you are achieving/making progress toward the desired outcomes?

Summary of project costs

Category	Amount of resource	AY 2025-26 cost (£)	AY 2026-27 cost (£) (add additional columns if required)	Total cost (£)
e.g. legal advice, consultancy, marketing evidence pack development	e.g. time, contract length, managers/consultants			

Project risks

Identify the top five risks to this project, how they will be mitigated and their probability versus their impact.

Risk	Mitigation	Probability and impact

Accountability and governance

Describe the governance and management structures and arrangements for the project, identifying who is ultimately responsible for project delivery and success.