

# KEYWORD

**FAQ**  
**INDUSTRIAL  
COLLABORATION  
PROGRAMME**  
ROUND 3 - 2023

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## APPLICATION

### **How can I contact Royce about making an application for the ICP?**

Initial enquiries should be directed to [info@royce.ac.uk](mailto:info@royce.ac.uk). Our team of Research and Business Engagement Managers can advise on the scope of projects and application process.

### **Will information included in our submission be kept confidential?**

Yes, all submission will be kept confidential to Royce and those on the assessment panel. All information collected will be stored until the close of the programme in 2024, kept for audit purposes and then destroyed. Information will be managed and retained in accordance with [The University of Manchester's Collaborator/Partner Privacy Notice](#), [Records Retention Schedule](#), and [UKRI Standard Terms and Conditions of Funding](#).

### **Can a PDRA (Post-Doctoral Research Assistant) be a Principal Investigator? Are PDRA costs eligible?**

PDRA costs are eligible as part of the staff time element of a project, however, only the following people are eligible to be a PI:

- An appropriate senior manager from industry
- An academic with an academic position (e.g. lecturer or equivalent)
- Holders of early career fellowships whereby the university grants you the same stature as a permanent academic staff member
- University or research and technology organisation technical professional services staff (e.g. Technical facility experimental leads and technical specialists or equivalent)

### **Can a PI be on multiple applications?**

A given PI can be the lead on only one application, and a Co-Investigator on one other application. For applications across multiple partners one lead PI must be chosen for the overall application.

### **Are there any limits on the number of applications a single business or a single academic institution can lead or collaborate on?**

There are no limits on organisations but principle investigators can only lead on one application and collaborate on one additional proposal.

### **Can the industrial collaborator be from outside the UK?**

Yes, international companies can collaborate on the project but they are ineligible to receive funding.

**Can we collaborate with an industry partner that we have worked with in the past (including on a previous Royce MCAP project)?**

Yes, as long as you are working on a new project.

**Can there be more than one collaborator (e.g a University, 2 companies and a national laboratory)?**

Yes, as long as there is at least one company and one academic or RTO or charity involved.

**Can the industry partner be a spin out of the University partner?**

Yes, as long as they are a UK registered company.

**Can Royce application scientists count as a collaborative partner?**

No, Royce application scientists can be costed into projects but cannot lead them or act as the main collaborator.

**If we partner with Royce, do we also need a University/ RTO partner?**

Royce partners will constitute an academic organisation.

**Can two companies or two Universities collaborate?**

All projects must include at least one business and at least one university or RTO

**Can a company take part if they are only providing guidance and no financial support?**

Yes, companies can take part in the project and provide in-kind contributions in the form of staff time or access to facilities.

If a project partner does not wish to claim grant funding or wishes to provide in-kind contributions, it should outline this on a company letterhead document signed by a senior company official. These additional in-kind or cash costs do not count towards the total £125,000 project costs limit and will be required to be included in the contractual collaboration agreement, which must be signed between project partners.

**Is there are any criteria that need to be met for the industry partner? (e.g turnover, employees). Are start-ups eligible?**

Business of any size can take part in the scheme but they must be a UK registered company to receive funding. Definitions of company sizes can be found in Appendix A of the guidance document.

### **Will a collaborator from NHS hospitals be classed a charity or not for profit?**

NHS applicants will be classed as not for profit organisations.

### **Can I find out more about the scope areas?**

All information is provided in the guidance document.

### **Can projects that have passed the proof of concept stage apply?**

Yes if the proposal includes a new activity and/or widens the scope of the concept.

### **Can innovation and commercialisation department at universities be a partner for proof of concept projects?**

We are looking for evidence of an effective collaboration contributing to the project achieving its research development and innovation outcomes. If this can be achieved then yes, it is possible. Although it would be seen more favourable if there is e.g. a spinout or a partner company leading the specific activity.

### **How will any IP generated by these projects be handled?**

IP arrangements will need to be confirmed in the collaboration agreement, bearing in mind the type of collaboration for which funding is being sought. Although this will need to be agreed between the project partners, our expectation is that each party will own IP developed within its respective work packages. Deviation from this clause may result in delay or withdrawal of your grant.

### **Is there a template for a collaboration agreement?**

No, however a collaboration agreement between the project partners could be based on a [Lambert](#) template for university and company collaborations, or a [Brunswick](#) template for university-to-university collaborations. The project partners are responsible for negotiating this after the award, preferably to be agreed before a project commences (NB no project funds will be released until a collaboration agreement is in place).

### **Can a contract template be circulated to proposed partners at the project development stage?**

Yes. The project partners are responsible for negotiating this.

## What are the reporting requirements at the end of the project?

A publicly available case study will be required to show the public benefit arising from EPSRC funding. There will also be the requirement for a short summary report of outputs against the project objectives along with a financial summary on project costs. Industry partners will also be required to submit an independent accountant's report for claims over £50,000. Any claims under £50,000 require a signed Director's statement.

### Reporting timelines:

- Cost log: 15th March 2024
- Final report/case study: 28th March 2024
- Independent accountant's report/Director's Statement: 29th April 2024

Further information can be found [here](#).

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## FUNDING

**Why do all Royce funds need to be spent by the 29 February 2024? Can any 3rd party contributions be spent after the end of February 2024?**

This is a stipulation of the funding from EPSRC due to the need to close off accounts for the end of their internal financial year. However, the contribution from other sources (if applicable) can be spent after this deadline to extend the project.

**How large is the funding pot?**

It is anticipated that a minimum of £2m of funding will be awarded.

**What does the funding cover?**

Industry costs including overheads are allowed. No element of profit or bonus can be included. A full list of eligible costs is given in the [guidance document](#). Applicants are required to give a breakdown of the total projects costs applied for.

If a project involves more than one company then an award letter will be issued to each enterprise detailing their individual award amount.

**Do we need to submit timesheets? What are the reporting requirements?**

Royce does not require evidence to be formally submitted to it beyond the required Statement of Expenditure (for company grants under £50,000) or the independent accountants report (for grants over £50,000) which does include tracking of labour. However, evidence must be retained by the company in the event of an audit by EPSRC.

**What type of State Aid does this funding fall under?**

This competition provides funding in line with the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Further information about the Subsidy requirements can be found within the Subsidy Control Act 2022

If you are unsure about your obligations under the Subsidy Control Act 2022 or the State aid rules, you should take independent legal advice. We are unable to advise on individual eligibility or legal obligations. You must always make sure that the funding awarded to you is compliant with all current Subsidy Control legislation applicable in the United Kingdom.

Royce is unable to fund high risk organisations and applications will be subject to financial and due diligence checks.

Businesses **must** complete a Subsidy Control declaration as part of their application.

The limits on aid intensity are:

	Feasibility study	Industrial research	Experimental development
Small Enterprise	70%	70%	45%
Medium Enterprise	60%	60%	35%
Large enterprise	25%	25%	25%

**If the grant does not cover total project costs, where will the rest of the funding come from?**

For universities, the 20% balance of full economic costs will need to be covered by a department/ university contribution, similar to EPSRC proposals. Companies will need to pay the proportion of project costs not covered by the grant through their own resources.

**How will the industry in kind contributions be demonstrated?**

If a project partner does not wish to claim grant funding or wishes to provide in-kind or cash contribution towards the total project costs, it should outline this on a company letterhead document signed by a senior company official. These additional in-kind or cash costs do not count towards the total £125,000 project costs limit and will be required to be included in the contractual collaboration agreement, which must be signed between project partners. The industry element of the project can continue beyond the 29th February deadline for grant expenditure.

**Where can I find the finance form?**

These are now available on the website, or to download [here](#).

**What should be the requested ratio between academic and industry partners?**

There is no set ratio, this will be for the project partners to determine.

**For PDRA costs, can they be a recently graduated student, rather than a post doc currently in post?**

Yes, but they will need to have an employment contract in place prior to the start of the project. Applicants are encouraged to seek further advice from their organisations regarding the terms of the contract and feasibility given the short duration of the projects.

**Can the academic institution cost non research staff to the project (e.g PhD students, technicians, knowledge transfer specialists)?**

Yes, please refer to the guidance document for full details of what we will fund. Will overhead costs be covered or is there a cost sharing arrangement?  
For industry, RTOs and not for profits Royce funds a flat 15% rate for labour for overheads only.

**Can the 30% of an SME contribution to a project be in kind support?**

No, if a company is claiming costs then this will need to be a cash contribution.

**What if the contract is not signed before the work starts but the collaborating partners agree to work together?**

A project may start without an agreement but we are unable to release project funds until a collaboration agreement is in place.

**What % will be covered for access to the national graphene institute facilities?**

These will be covered at 100% as they form part of the Royce facilities.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## FACILITIES

### **How can I find out what facilities are available at Royce?**

Our facilities and equipment page contains an online catalogue: <https://www.royce.ac.uk/equipment-and-facilities/>

### **Can Royce facilities guarantee completion of projects by the end of February 2024 and what happens if there are delays or overruns?**

The application should be made in consultation with the relevant Royce partner facility/ies managers and should account for likely risks to the project.

### **Can company staff use Royce facilities?**

Facilities can be accessed by companies, but work is typically conducted by full time Royce employees. Access to Royce facilities by company staff may be possible on a case-by-case basis and with prior agreement.

### **Will an application be marked down for not including Royce partners or facilities?**

No, while we encourage applicants to use Royce facilities but will not penalise projects that do not.

### **Can a UK company complete the work in an overseas (eg US) site?**

No, work must be completed in the UK.

### **To use Royce equipment, what type of documentation do we need to provide for the application form?**

To access Royce facilities, applicants will need to contact the relevant facilities manager prior to applying and confirm with them that the appropriate equipment is available and accurate costings for the application. They will be asked to provide the name of the facilities manager on the costing sheet. Please contact [info@royce.ac.uk](mailto:info@royce.ac.uk) and a member of the team will direct you to the appropriate facilities manager.

