



E3: Guidance for Full Bid submissions

2019-22

This document describes the policy and method for allocation of the Expanding Excellence in England Fund 2019-22. It provides guidance on the second, full bid, stage of the assessment process for those proposals shortlisted from the initial Expression of Interest stage.



Full bids should be emailed to Research England by
noon on 21 January 2019.

Expanding Excellence in England (E3) Fund

To	Heads of Research, Research England-funded Higher Education Institutions
Of interest to those responsible for	Senior management, Research, Finance, Heads of Department
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Executive Summary

Purpose

1. This document details policies, objectives and methods for the allocation of £75m to expand excellent research through the Expanding Excellence in England (E3) fund. This fund, alongside Quality-Related (QR) funding, will support the strategic expansion of excellent research units and departments in Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) across England. The document provides further information and guidance for the shortlisted bids from the earlier Expression of Interest (EOI) round.

Context

2. Following the Expert Panel's recommendations, 29 proposals have been shortlisted to proceed to full bid stage. This shortlist is expected to result in a success rate of approximately 50% for institutions submitting to the full bid stage.
3. Please refer to EOI guidance document [RE-P-2018-01](#) for more background and context to the E3 fund.

Key Points

4. The E3 fund aims to support the strategic expansion of small, excellent research units¹ in HEIs across England. In order to expand excellence, E3 focusses only on units where there is demonstrable research excellence already, at a limited scale of activity.
5. This is a competitive scheme, and £75m is available through the fund to be allocated between the successful units over three years (academic years (AY) 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22)². We are not setting a minimum or maximum threshold for awards. However, we expect to make a maximum of 15 awards and will only fund those that demonstrate potential to significantly increase the scale and excellence of research activity within the given unit, and have a major impact on national capability within the given discipline/field. Awards will be for the three-year period, allowing successful bidders time to scale up activity and build quality. Funding will be primarily resource in

¹ A unit denotes a research group or cluster as recognised by an institution(s); it could, for example, include a department, division or centre within an eligible institution.

² Funding is indicative and subject to final budget allocations to Research England in the relevant financial years.

nature, although bids that make the case for capital funding as part of the proposal will be considered.

6. Universities will continue to receive their separate QR resource allocations and their formula research capital (RCIF) allocations. There will be no relationship between the outcomes of this competition and those funding allocations. Nor will there be a direct relationship between this competition and the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF2021). It is the intention of E3, however, to support sustainable improvements in the quality and volume of excellent research at those units and departments awarded funding.
7. All bids should have strategic backing at the institution level and we will only accept submissions made through the office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (PVC) for Research (or equivalent).
8. We have established an expert panel, chaired by Professor Sir Ian Diamond, to assess the bids, who may call on other expertise as required, and will make funding recommendations to the Research England Executive Chair.

Action Required

9. Shortlisted institutions should send their full bid submissions by email only, to expandingexcellence@re.ukri.org, by noon on 21 January 2019.

Objectives of the Fund

10. The objectives of the E3 fund are to:
 - Strengthen the contribution of English HEIs to our society, pushing the frontiers of human knowledge, delivering economic impact and creating social impact by supporting our society and others to become enriched, healthier, more resilient and sustainable;
 - Build the capacity and quality of research in departments and units within English universities where excellence exists but at a small scale with potential for growth;
 - Contribute towards the delivery of government strategy, including the Industrial Strategy, the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) strategy and local priorities by supporting sustained improvements in research capacity across

England while maintaining the principle of funding excellence wherever it is found;

- Enhance the skills base and build talent in areas of research excellence where there is untapped potential;
- Stimulate strategic partnerships between HEIs and other organisations outside of higher education.

Method of Allocation

Available Funding and Overview

11. Up to £25m in funding per annum is available over three years (AY 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22). We are not setting a minimum or maximum threshold for awards; however, we expect to make a maximum of 15 awards and will only fund those that demonstrate potential to have a major impact on the scale and excellence of research activity within the given department or unit. Awards will be for the three-year period, allowing successful applicant's time to scale up activity and build quality.
12. Although funding is primarily resource in nature, bids that make the case for significant capital funding as part of the proposal will be considered. This is limited, however, to a maximum resource/capital ratio of 2:1 across the fund as a whole.
13. Any funds that remain unallocated at the end of the process will be redistributed through mainstream QR funding allocations.
14. We believe that universities need at least three years to build research capacity and quality in small, excellent units and departments and for these to start delivering measurable improvements. We are therefore aiming to make E3 awards so that all the supported projects can start to draw down funding from August 2019, and receive final funding allocations by July 2022.
15. Universities will continue to receive their separate QR research resource allocations and their formula RCIF allocations. There will be no relationship between the outcomes of this competition and those funding allocations. Nor will there be a direct relationship between this competition and REF2021.
16. However, we anticipate that E3 will support sustainable improvements in the quality and volume of excellent research at those units and departments awarded funding. Therefore, we further anticipate that any expansion in capacity where recruitment is

involved would take place in year one of funding, so that any increase in staff volume can be accounted for in REF2021 and subsequent QR funding allocations from 2022/23.

17. This document sets out the guidance for the full bid stage. Bids should be confident that they will be able to comply with the full guidance and criteria for funding (paragraphs 24–93), as well as time-limited spending requirements and compliance with state aid and other relevant legislation. All bids should have strategic backing at the institution level and we will only accept bids made through the office of the PVC for Research (or equivalent).
18. We have called for final submissions from shortlisted EOIs to be submitted **by 21 January 2019**.

Full Bid Steering and Assessment

19. At full bid stage, each project should expand on the information provided in the successful EOI. Any significant variation in the nature or level of funds requested (exceeding 10% of the value originally requested) must be agreed by Research England's E3 secretariat before the bid submission. This will include instances where the panel has indicated, at EOI stage, that the funding request should be adjusted.
20. Alongside assessment by the expert panel, full bids will be reviewed initially within Research England with strategic advice and recommendations for external peer reviewers sought from the relevant Research Council(s) within UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). Research England will further seek the involvement of early-career researchers (ECRs) in the full bid assessment. Further information about the role of ECRs in the assessment process will be provided in Winter 2018.
21. Other partners such as the Office for Students, other government agency/departments, or external consultancy, may also provide expert advice on specific disciplinary, technical or financial areas if required. The intention of this initial assessment is to determine the following:
 - whether the lead institution has met the eligibility criteria described in the guidance;
 - whether the bid contains all the information requested in the guidance;
 - whether the documentation raises any queries that need to be addressed before the panel can agree to its assessment.

22. The assessment panel will recommend funding a number of the shortlisted proposals and, if necessary, reducing the funding allocations to individual projects, or making pro rata reductions across all projects. Research England will explore with the relevant institutions the viability of projects where the funding applied for cannot be provided in full.

23. Membership of the assessment panel is as follows:

- Sir Ian Diamond (Chair) was previously Vice-Chancellor of the University of Aberdeen, Chief Executive of the ESRC and Chair of the RCUK Executive Group. Ian has chaired a number of important higher education committees.
- Siladatya Bhattacharya is Head of the School of Medicine at Cardiff University, and serves on committees relating to reproductive medicine.
- Bruce Brown is visiting professor at the Royal College of Art and previously PVC Research at the University of Brighton.
- Roger Goodman is Nissan Professor of Modern Japanese Studies and Chair of the Academy of Social Sciences at the University of Oxford.
- Karen Holford is Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Cardiff University and previously PVC for Physical Sciences and Engineering.
- Lin Foxhall is Dean of the School of Humanities and Rathbone Chair of Ancient History and Archaeology at the University of Liverpool.
- Frank Kelly is Professor of the Mathematics of Systems at the Statistical Laboratory, University of Cambridge.
- David Maguire is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Greenwich and previously chief scientist at Environmental Systems Research Institute.
- Mona Siddiqui is Professor of Religious Studies, Assistant Principal Religion and Society, and Dean International at the University of Edinburgh.

Eligibility

24. The following paragraphs list the expectations of what constitutes a successful bid at full stage. Further guidance on meeting these eligibility criteria is presented in paragraphs 57–92.

25. All Research England-funded institutions were eligible to submit to the EOI phase. Only bids successful at EOI phase are invited to submit a full bid for assessment.

26. Bids must have the strategic support of the institutional leadership and must be submitted through the office of the PVC for Research or equivalent.

27. The panel expect to recommend a maximum of one bid per lead institution. Only in exceptional circumstances are two bids from the same lead institution likely to be successful. Where an institution submits multiple bids (as lead or otherwise), the institution should prioritise the bids and present a sustainability plan which reflects on the consequences of both proposals being successful. This narrative must be provided by the PVC for Research (or equivalent) in the supporting letter at full bid stage.
28. Bids need to address the objectives of E3 as set out in paragraph 10. The primary use of the awards must be expanding research excellence. Alongside this, projects may also address work on delivering impact from research and enhancing skills, particularly where this focusses on building the research talent pipeline and supporting a diverse workforce.
29. Bids will relate to small units that can demonstrate an excellent foundation of research, with potential to build further excellence in a sustainable manner. While REF2014 may provide some useful context with regards to size and excellence, REF2014 data should not be presented as a sole indicator. Bids should present further relevant current and convincing evidence of their small size and research excellence.
30. Owing to the diverse nature of the sector and the broad disciplinary scope of this fund, a singular definition of 'small' is impractical. However, the panel will be robust in assessing this criterion in the context of the institution and the discipline area. It will be incumbent upon the submitting (lead) institution to describe why the unit(s) may be regarded as 'small' within the context of the sector and discipline. Bids that do not provide sufficient evidence to support their relative size are unlikely to be successful.
31. Successful projects will need to present a credible plan for expanding excellence in a sustainable way. E3 funding is for three years only, so submissions must clearly articulate plans for securing further funding streams beyond the three-year funding period, to ensure that the expansion is sustainable in the long term. Any funding underwritten by the host institution after E3 funding has ceased should be clearly articulated, and the panel should be convinced of the feasibility of such commitments.
32. Additional staff should be appointed early in the funding process (year one) in order to sufficiently build capacity over the remaining funding period. This will ensure that any expansion is reflected in staff volume figures on the 31 July 2020 REF staff census date. The new REF rules mitigate against any expansion having a detrimental impact on the overall REF quality profile because a minimum of one REF output is required per staff member. We would anticipate that senior researchers recruited by an expanding, but already excellent, unit would have at least one output available for submission to the REF.

33. Bids will need to demonstrate the scale and distinctiveness of the opportunity and clearly articulate how they provide a unique contribution to the research base, and align with the objectives of the fund (paragraph 10). Proposals will need to set out how the E3 funding will generate genuine additional research activity or impact beyond that which is already funded through QR or other existing sources. Where a bid focusses on a new direction in research activity, it will need to explain why this is appropriate, such as addressing a new national or international challenge or opportunity. Any claims as to the distinctiveness of the unit's research, outputs and/or impact must be fully evidenced; the panel may seek further expert advice to inform their assessment.
34. Multi- or interdisciplinary bids are welcome where they can demonstrate the scale and distinctiveness of this opportunity. If a collaborative HEI bid is being submitted, the lead institution must explain why this is necessary in an English context, and how the collaboration would lead to research activity of greater value than that which is already underway in the individual institutions.
35. Successful projects will be exceptional, and not just represent a continuation or extension of research activity that could have been supported from QR and other existing sources of funding. A bid may be exceptional in terms of attempting higher-risk or innovative approaches that might not have been justifiable from institutional formula funds, because it supports activity that fits with new emerging national/international priorities, or because it contributes to the discipline in a unique manner. A bid might also be exceptional in terms of proposing an expansion of research excellence, quality and impact generation that could only be achieved through partnerships with organisations outside of higher education or through collaborations with other universities.
36. Bids will need to have a strategic commitment from the HEI, including the commitment of internal financial resource, commensurate with the scale of the institution, and with due regard to the retention of staff beyond the E3 funding period. They will need to demonstrate how the expansion fits with the HEI's overall research strategy, but also justify why expansion cannot be supported by the HEI and therefore why the E3 funding would deliver an additional benefit. The panel will particularly scrutinise bids from those institutions already in receipt of significant levels of QR funding from Research England.
37. Bids will need to set out how they align with national policy, in particular the UK Industrial Strategy or the GCRF strategy, or how they fit with local strategic priorities. This might include describing how the units/departments plan to expand opportunities to work with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) or business clusters.

38. Proposals should clearly describe plans for expanding capacity. This could include plans for supporting the development of new research talent, such as postgraduate research students and ECRs, or research technical professionals and those moving into research from other professions/industrial backgrounds. Where plans envisage expanding staff numbers, bids are required to reflect on their institutional strategy and practices in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in researcher careers and commitment to address the wider challenges and opportunities specific to the research area, unit or department. Proposals should also address key skills gaps, particularly those identified in the Industrial Strategy.
39. Collaborative bids which that bring together collective capability are welcome. A lead institution will need to clearly articulate any plans to collaborate with other UK HEIs or to develop partnerships with organisations outside of higher education (business, public, third or cultural sectors) and the value that these partnerships will bring to the research activity. Any co-funding arrangements and the nature of these relationships should be described. While not essential, these are encouraged. At the full bid stage, the lead institution will be required to clearly outline the governance structure relating to the collaboration.
40. We wish to support expansions that are unlikely to be supported through formula funding. Bids need to set out and justify the level of funding requested and explain what added value E3 funding will bring. We do not propose setting a threshold for funding, but anticipate funding a maximum of 15 awards. Where the funding request appears high in relation to the proposed activity, the panel may choose to recommend a lower award.
41. We will pay very close attention to plans for the sustainability of the expansions. There is no continuation of funding available for successful projects; therefore, bids need to show how the additional capacity will be sustained beyond the funding period.
42. In line with monitoring and evaluating the fund, we may also track the continuation of research at increased volume and quality over the longer term using the REF and other measures. In considering future rounds of E3 funding, we will review lessons learnt and outcomes from this competition.

Funding Criteria

Selection criteria (Full Bid stage)

43. In *addition to* the eligibility guidance set out in paragraphs 24–42, the following criteria will be used by the panel at full bid stage in making recommendations on bids to be supported. While the criteria will not be weighted, they will be prioritised as follows:

High priority:

- A credible plan for expanding excellence in a sustainable way;
- Strategic commitment from the HEI, including the commitment of internal financial resource, commensurate with the scale of the institution;
- Scale and distinctiveness of opportunity, including potential impact on national capability.

Medium priority:

- Alignment with either the UK Industrial Strategy or the GCRF strategy;
- Partnerships with organisations outside of higher education (business, public, third or cultural sectors). While not essential, co-funding arrangements with partners are encouraged.

Lower priority:

- Alignment with local strategic priorities, for example, via LEPs or business clusters;
- Collaboration with other UK HEIs, as appropriate.

How to Submit a Full Bid

44. Universities shortlisted for full bid stage should read the guidance and complete the documents provided to the shortlisted institutions as described (paragraph 60), and send them by email to expandingexcellence@re.ukri.org by **noon on 21 January 2019**.

Timetable

November 2018	Confirmation of shortlisted proposals by Research England Executive Chair. Full bid templates and further guidance published (this document).
21 January 2019	Deadline for full bids.
8 March 2019	Meeting of expert panel.
March 2019	Research England Council confirms awards.
August 2019	Funding period begins.
2021/2022	Evaluation of units awarded funding.
July 2022	Final E3 payment.
Beyond 2022/23	Outcomes of evaluation inform future rounds of the competition.

Requirements Following Award

Payment of Funds

45. We will pay grants in AY 2019/20 to 2021/22, during which all expenditure should take place. Payment of grant funding will be made in accordance with the principles laid out in HM Treasury's 'Managing public money' guidance, and aligned to the profile of project expenditure that we agree with each institution. Where project expenditure is likely to be novel, contentious, or made in advance of value being received, the E3 team should be consulted beforehand. Institutions may be asked to provide evidence to support expenditure profiles prior to grant payments being made.
46. We expect institutions to advise us promptly if the expenditure profile changes significantly for any reason. Research England cannot guarantee that funding will be available to cover any changes to the spending profile beyond the academic year for which it has been allocated.

Complying with State Aid and Other Relevant Legislation

47. Institutions should take into account the need for allocations to be compatible with all existing legislation³. Funding will not be given unless sufficiently clear evidence of compliance with state aid rules is provided.
48. We will need to collect additional information on funded proposals as part of the awarding process. Heads of institution will be requested to provide evidence and assurance that lead institutions have identified, considered and addressed any state aid implications of proposals that are recommended for funding in accordance with EU legislation, and have sought legal advice if appropriate⁴. A template and further information will be provided to such institutions for this purpose at the award stage.

Monitoring and Evaluation

49. Research England will monitor the progress of successful E3 projects. Lead institutions will be expected to provide information on the progress of their expansion in the unit awarded funding at quarterly and yearly intervals. Each lead institution will also be required to submit a final evaluative report at the end of the funding period.
50. Full bids will need to identify a key set of indicators against which performance will be measured. These will need to measure improvements in both research capacity and quality in line with the overall objectives of the E3 fund and the specific objectives of each individual proposal.
51. In the longer term, programme-level evaluation will be key in determining the success of this fund and its place within the funding landscape. Research England will work with funded HEIs to realise the shared core performance dimensions in order to evaluate the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes and impact of E3 funding.
52. By submitting an application at either the EOI or full bid stage, institutions agree that any information relating to their bid (both successful and unsuccessful bids) may be used in future evaluation exercises. Successful institutions may be audited by Research England, or an organisation commissioned by Research England, at any

³ A guide to state aid regulations for universities active in research, development and innovation is available at <https://hvfcfp.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/AURIL-and-PraxisUnico-State-Aid-Guide.pdf>

⁴ Research England's assessment and satisfaction with material provided as evidence of complying with state aid requirements does not constitute any form of legal guarantee.

stage, to ensure funds are being used in accordance with the terms and conditions of grant.

Freedom of Information

53. Research England is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which gives a public right of access to information held by a public authority. This may result in applications, communications between us and the institution, information arising from this work, or the outputs from the work undertaken being subject to disclosure if a valid request is made to us. We will comply with such requests in accordance with the legislation and our own policies.
54. Institutions can, if they wish, provide potentially sensitive information (such as information relating to commercial interests) in a separate annex attached to the application form. This will highlight to us that there are concerns about disclosure. With annexes, the proposal must not exceed the maximum length as stated in the application template.
55. Where we consider it to be appropriate and practicable, we will seek the views of applicants before disclosing this information in response to a Freedom of Information request. The applicant acknowledges that information provided in the annex is of indicative value only, and that Research England may nevertheless be obliged to disclose this information. Our assumption will be that all information in the main application documents can be disclosed on request.
56. Further information about the Freedom of Information Act is available at www.ico.org.uk.

Guidance on Preparing a Full Bid

57. Please provide all documents relating to your bid in a single email and submit it to expandingexcellence@re.ukri.org by **noon on 21 January 2019**. Documents must be submitted as follows:
58. Where requested, documents should take the form of a single PDF file covering the submission and any evidence to support the case. If your institution is shortlisted for more than one bid, the same supporting letter (from the Head of Research) should be submitted and attached to each bid, and this must include a clear narrative as to their relative strategic importance.
59. A collaborative, or joint, bid is one in which it is expected that named partner institutions will be in receipt of E3 funding across the lifetime of the funding period, as well as assuming a significant level of risk with the lead institution. The lead institution will be in receipt of the money directly from Research England, and is expected to administer payments to partners. In this scenario, all partners must be eligible for Research England funding. Where institutional partners will not receive E3 monies, nor share financial risk, this is therefore not considered a formal collaborative, or joint, bid in terms of the requirements of the bid.
60. Please provide all documents relating to your bid in a single email. The email should include the following:
- Item 1: A single PDF document incorporating the submission and any evidence to support the case.** This should include supporting letters from your PVC of Research (or equivalent), any HEI collaborative partner in the case of a bid from several institutions, and/or from any external partners indicated within the submission. *The cover sheet for this item is provided as Annex A.*
- Item 2: Details of resource and capital spending strategies as a single PDF document.** *The template is provided as Annex B.* This document provides space to detail recruitment and staff development strategies and, for those bids with capital funding elements, details as to how this money will be spent. Please do not add to, or write outside of, the template as provided unless otherwise requested to do so.

Item 3: Financial information as an Excel spreadsheet. *The template is provided as Annex C.* Please do not add to, or write outside of, the template as provided unless otherwise requested to do so.

Item 4: A completed document checklist, confirming that all necessary elements of the bid have been included. *The template is provided as Annex D.* Bids with incomplete documentation will be automatically referred back to institutions.

61. All documents should be saved in the following format: “Item [X] E3 full bid – [Lead HEI] – [Unit Name]”.
62. The main part of the bid (Item 1) should be no more than 15 pages in length (excluding letters of support), and the email file size of the whole bid (including all evidence, annexes and financial information) should be no greater than 5MB. Guidance on the structure to this part of the submission is provided below.
63. Main text submissions should use Arial font and be no smaller than 10pt, with line spacing set to 16pt. Pages should be numbered and include the name of the submitting institution and unit within a header on each page. Text should be suitably subtitled and figures can also be included (but still count towards the 15-page overall limit). Any listed, published academic references should be cited as ‘Author, (Date), *Title*, and Publication’.
64. The templates at Annexes A, B, C, and D, as described above, were provided to institutions when invited to submit a stage two bid.

Guidance on the Structure and Content of Item 1 – Main Submission

65. You should ensure that the bid commences with the cover sheet as provided at Annex A. While we do not provide a formal template, the main body of the bid should follow the headings outlined in paragraphs 67–92 below.
66. Where the request for information mirrors the EOI, a fuller and more detailed response, with evidence to substantiate claims made, is expected at this stage. Items 1, 2 and 3 will contribute to a holistic assessment of the bid. All items will be treated with equal weight and importance by the panel.

Summary

67. Summarise the nature of the research and an overview of the plans for expanding capacity, in line with the overall objectives of E3 funding, in no more than 300 words.

We will publish this text from successful bids on our website when these are announced.

Unit Size and Current Activity

68. The submitting institution will need to provide a full and accurate current staffing profile⁵ (including research, technical and professional support staff, and those from any collaborating institutions), and provide benchmarks with units/institutes undertaking research within the same/similar discipline (nationally and/or internationally as appropriate) in order to demonstrate why they are small in comparison. The panel would like further clarity on who works for the unit and what their role is. The panel will not undertake any wider analysis, but may seek confirmation of any evidence provided. It is up to the submitting institution to provide sufficient evidence of the size of the unit, relative to relevant benchmarks, that is accurate and convincing.
69. Describe the unit's research activity as it currently stands, indicating its strengths, impact, research grant income and other sources of funding from 2014.

Research Excellence and Distinctiveness

70. The panel will examine evidence of the unit's current research excellence. The evidence for excellence must be relevant to the discipline area and, where quantitative data are provided as evidence, please ensure you clearly contextualise the data presented. This evidence should not necessarily be limited to the results of REF2014. Excellence could pertain to the recognition, outputs and impact of the unit as a whole and/or of individual researchers within.
71. The panel will also want to understand the broader environment within which research excellence is fostered, including (but not limited to) research integrity, open research and the use of responsible metrics.
72. The panel will need to understand how the research fits within the national policy landscape for research in this area, for example, in addressing strategic challenges on a national or international scale, and including the extent to which the unit has been supporting the development of researchers for the future.

⁵ This should match details provided in Item 2

73. Where units undertaking similar research exist (but at a larger scale), the bid must demonstrate that the unit's research is distinctive and complements, rather than duplicates, existing research activity. Any claims with regard to distinctiveness must be properly evidenced.

74. Institutions will need to describe the nature of any existing collaborations or partnerships (where these are not named as official partners in the bid) and how these relationships contribute to the research excellence and/or distinctiveness of the unit. Where these relationships are material to the proposed capacity building (including its sustainability), letters of support evidencing this relationship are required.

Scale of the Opportunity

75. The submission will need to explain why the lead institution is best placed to undertake the proposed research at a national level, and at the scale proposed, in line with the overall objectives of E3 funding.

76. *Where appropriate*, the submission should demonstrate why a collaborative effort between HEIs is required and why they are best placed to undertake the proposed research at a national level, and at the scale proposed.

77. The submission should demonstrate why this expansion is of critical importance to the national research base and should be funded by E3. Examples may include (but are not limited to):

- developing original programmes of research at the national or international level;
- the public benefit in relation to research, and any wider social, cultural or economic impacts;
- building upon or developing relationships with local organisations (LEPs, small/medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), etc.);
- developing a pipeline of talent for an innovative economy;
- enhancing strategic partnerships with other HEIs and organisations (business, public, third or cultural sectors).

The Plan for Delivering and Sustaining Expansion

78. Submissions should discuss how E3 funding will be used to catalyse the upscaling of research activity as indicated in the previous sections, in line with the overall objectives of E3 funding. This could include (but is not limited to):

- timing of and profile for recruitment;

- building work/equipment required (where pertinent);
- more information on the need for and recruitment of non-academic staff, including technical and professional services staff, for example;
- workshops and conferences to be held or attended;
- creating new, or expanding upon existing, partnerships, and the nature and importance of these relationships;
- information about any associated staff materially linked to, but not directly working for, the unit that are highlighted elsewhere, e.g. as institutional commitments.

79. The bid should provide evidence of a robust and well-thought-through project plan, including any pertinent information on how building plans will be delivered at the logistical scale (where further detail is pertinent beyond that requested in Item 2). The following must be included:

- A plan to monitor and evaluate the success of its delivery including:
 - i. **milestones**;
 - ii. **key performance indicators** and timings covering the key aspects of the expansion (including recruitment/EDI goals, equipment and estates planning as laid out in Item 2). Particular attention should be paid to the need to spend the E3 funds by July 2022;
 - iii. a plan that demonstrates how the unit/institution will keep the E3 payment profile (per 'Item 3') on track. This should link to a **high-level risk register** to underline potential risks to the expansion plans and mitigating actions therein.
- Detailed project management and internal governance arrangements;
- *where appropriate*, detailed joint governance arrangements with HEIs named as partners for the bid;
- *where appropriate*, how relationships with non-collaborating HEIs or external organisations will be managed.

80. The panel will need to understand how any expansion in research capacity will be sustained in the long term. Expanding research capacity is not a short-term endeavour, and the success of an institution's E3 funding cannot be measured by REF2021 results alone, nor is E3 intended as funding solely to boost institutional QR allocations in the short term. A detailed review of the sustainability of the expansion beyond the E3 funding period and REF2021 is therefore required.

81. Sustainability is not reflected in financial resourcing alone; sustainability plans must also relate to the development of a future research agenda, future talent and current researcher careers, and attending to the research culture and environment of an institution/unit. To reflect the importance of EDI in the panel assessment, as it relates

both to the excellence and sustainability of research, the unit's/institution's strategy and goals with regards to diversity is addressed directly in 'Item B'.

82. Where staff recruited through E3 are done so only on a fixed-term contract, the panel will require a narrative as to how their temporary employment will lead to increasing research capacity in the long term.

Institutional Strategic Commitments

83. Describe any commitments (financial, in-kind) the HEI will undertake during the three years of the E3 project. There is no expectation of, or call for, match-funding with E3 funds. The panel will need to see evidence that any expansion in staff and PhD numbers can be physically accommodated by the institution.
84. Describe how the institution is proposing to share risk with E3 investment, beyond the funding period. These commitments will likely link up with areas of sustainability planning, as we expect institutions to commit to retaining some but not necessarily all staff recruited via E3 funding. This commitment will need to be clear, and reasons for not underwriting contracts explained clearly, and include an explanation of how the institution will assure the proposed longer-term financial commitment(s).

Monitoring and Evaluation

85. The panel requires submissions to include plans and key performance indicators both for the institution's own internal monitoring, but also to allow Research England's monitoring of progress and spend during the E3 period. This monitoring should link to a plan to evaluate the success in expanding research capacity, maintaining excellence, and the seeds of sustainability in the long term, as outlined in the bid, at the end of the funding period, 2022. In preparing submissions, it should be noted that programme-level evaluation will continue beyond the lifetime of the 2019-22 round and that we will work with the successful institutions beyond the funding period, therefore plans must include an element of monitoring beyond 2022.

Financial Information

86. Financial information should be provided separately in the template provided at Annex C. This asks for information in three areas, covering the periods immediately before, during and after the E3 funding period:

- a. expenditure and sources of finance in each year relating to the resource and capital elements of the bid. Expenditure must be sufficient to use all of the E3 funding within the period in which it is awarded;
 - b. the unit's operating income and expenditure;
 - c. a profile of Research England payments.
87. Please note that Research England does not have a full economic cost (FEC) policy as with Research Council proposals. Instead, institutions should consider the financial sustainability of all the activities for which they are requesting funding.
88. *Where you deem it appropriate*, please use the subtitle 'Financial Information' in your main bid to highlight anything pertinent from your Annex C template where you believe clarification is required (but note that any extra information beyond Annex C counts towards the 15-page limit).

Supporting Letter(s) and Agreement of Institution

89. Letters of support should be appended at the end of the main text. This must include a letter from the Head of Research (PVC or equivalent) that clearly states:
- the strategic importance of the bid to the institution;
 - why a long-term and sustainable expansion is not possible without E3 funding;
 - the details of the HEI contributions and commitments.
90. Further letters of support are required from any collaborating institution (confirming governance arrangements and any contributions or commitments they are undertaking) and any individual or organisation named as a partner or who otherwise have a material bearing on the evidence submitted in any aspect of the proposal. Please do not include supporting letters falling outside of the above parameters.
91. We require confirmation from the head of the institution (Vice-Chancellor or equivalent) that they have agreed to the bid being submitted, and that any pertinent institutional commitments (e.g. financial, structural) will be met. A signed statement or confirmation email should be incorporated into this bid.
92. We do not expect the supporting letters to contain any extra or restated information that should be included in the main bid as outlined above. As such any supporting letter should be a maximum of two sides of A4, with the exception of those institutions submitting more than one bid (as lead HEI or otherwise), where the maximum limit is three sides of A4, unless otherwise agreed with the E3 secretariat.

Terms of Reference for the Expanding Excellence in England (E3) Fund Expert Panel

Membership

Chair: Prof Sir Ian Diamond

Panel: Professor Siladatya Bhattacharya – Cardiff

Professor Bruce Brown – RCA

Professor Roger Goodman – Oxford

Professor Karen Holford – Cardiff

Professor Lin Foxhall – Liverpool

Professor Frank Kelly – Cambridge

Professor David Maguire – Greenwich

Professor Mona Siddiqui – Edinburgh

Terms of Reference

1. The expert panel will make recommendations to the Research England Executive Chair on:
 - Bids to be supported in the first round of the competition;
 - Bids to be supported in any future rounds of the competition;
 - Any terms and conditions to be attached to specific projects.
2. The expert panel will provide advice to the Research England Executive Chair on:

- The overall conduct of the competition for the Expanding Excellence in England (E3) Fund;
- The approach to be taken to monitoring and evaluation to provide evidence that the funding has delivered the objectives of E3 and to support any case for future rounds of the competition;
- Changes to be made to the fund's guidance and criteria, drawing on the experience of the first round, to deliver fully the Government's and Research England's policy priorities and the objectives of the fund should future rounds of the competition be taken forward;
- The appropriateness of processes for due diligence and confirming awards (such as requesting additional information or setting project-specific terms and conditions);
- Any other comments on the successes or challenges of the fund and the influence on overall directions in research policy in the long term.

List of Abbreviations

AY	Academic Year
ECR	Early-Career Researcher
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
E3	Expanding Excellence in England
EOI	Expression of Interest
GCRF	Global Challenges Research Fund
HEI	Higher Education Institute
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
PVC	Pro-Vice Chancellor
QR	Quality-Related Funding Allocation
RCIF	Research Capital Investment Fund
REF	Research Excellence Framework
UKRI	United Kingdom Research and Innovation