**CS20024 – Prior Information Notice for UKRI** **Future Leaders Fellowships Development Network**

**Background**

Operating across the whole of the UK and with a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UK Research and Innovation represents the largest reform of the research and innovation funding landscape in the last 50 years.

As an independent non-departmental public body UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) brings together the seven Research Councils (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC) plus Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England.

UK Research and Innovation ensures the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation. This is done by creating the best environment for research and innovation to flourish.

Announced by the Secretary of State in June 2018, the Future Leaders Fellowships (FLF) programme is a £900 million fund that is helping to establish the careers of world-class research and innovation leaders across UK business and academia. As a cross-UK Research and Innovation scheme it supports early career researchers and innovators with outstanding potential in universities, UK registered businesses, and other research and user environments including research councils' institutes and laboratories.

The support provided by the fellowship will enable each fellow to tackle ambitious and challenging research and innovation projects and develop their own careers. A key aspect of the fellowship award is the emphasis on the individual and their personal and professional development. Applicants must describe how a UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships award will have a demonstrable impact on their career trajectory and include a clear and resourced plan to support their development, in terms of both the delivery of the project and broader professional/development opportunities. All fellows are expected to have access to generic and specialist training, and this is explicitly assessed within the peer-review process. Fellowship applications without this aspect are not considered competitive. Fellows are expected to budget for these activities as part of their applications.

In addition to support received through their fellowship award, there is an important opportunity for UKRI to provide additional value for fellows, to ensure that these fellowships give further opportunities; particularly those that can only be achieved by being delivered at a whole cohort and national level.

The cohort of Future Leaders Fellows provide an important chance for UKRI to;

* work with, and benefit from, the UK’s future leaders in research and innovation
* further add value to the FLF investment through the provision of distinctive training and development opportunities for cohorts of fellows that would not be as effective when delivered at the individual fellow or host organisation level

**Key Objective**

UK Research and Innovation are looking to take advantage of the unique opportunities presented by the cohorts of Future Leaders Fellows by making an FLF Development Network available. It is envisioned that the activities associated with this network will be accessible to all FLFs, and that where capacity is available will also be opened up to wider participation by other Early Career Researchers and Innovators supported by UKRI. This network should;

* Create a strong cohort experience
* Develop the leadership of the fellows
* Enable the cohorts to play a leadership role across the research and innovation community
* Create deep links with UKRI and its investments

In order to deliver this, it is expected that the network will provide a series of networking and development workshops that provide each cohort of participating fellows with the tools to think creatively and to develop and lead new and imaginative thinking that spans disciplinary boundaries. In addition to this, activities should be in place that support and enable the development of skills and leadership in; Communications & media, Public engagement with research, Collaboration & cross-sector working, and Impact. Furthermore, it is expected that the network will enable fellows to engage with and receive mentoring from influential research and innovation leaders and will support engagement with key challenges facing the research and innovation environment.

The proposed network should provide these opportunities for up to 250 fellows, including those funded through rounds one to three of the FLF, and ensure that each intake of fellows into the network is able to access opportunities over a two-year period.

The FLF Development Network should last for three years, and up to £3 million is available to support this.

**Next Steps**

A supplier workshop will be held via webinar on Tuesday 21 April 2020 where potential applicants will be able to gain a deeper understanding of the requirement. There will be a presentation from UKRI that outlines the key required outcomes of this contract, there will also be an opportunity to ask questions.

If you are interested in attending a supplier engagement session, please confirm your attendance by completing the webinar registration form found at <https://ukri.zoom.us/meeting/register/upAuc--hrDsqqjYxls79yx5H68RFwvWm1Q>

The expected format of the day will be:

* **10:30** Start
* **10:45** Presentation from UKRI
* **11:30** Break
* **11:45** Supplier questions
* **13:00** Session end

A formal Request for Proposal will be released via Tenders Electronic Daily and Contracts Finder once the supplier day has taken place and the Contracting Authority have finalised the strategy and documentation.

This Prior Information Notice is being issued in order to undertake a market consultation exercise with regards to the requirements detailed above. UK Research and Innovation would like to invite suppliers to attend this engagement session in order to assess the market's appetite for procuring the proposed FLF Development Network, to provide information regarding the tender and the expected outcomes expected from the network, and to enable suppliers an opportunity to ask questions regarding the FLF Development Network and these expected outcomes.

We request that attendance is restricted to key members of your organisation.

For the avoidance of doubt, this notice is not a Call for Competition; a Contract Notice will be issued as a call for competition. Not registering an interest shall not prevent any supplier participating in a future procurement, nor is it intended that any information supplied as part of the preliminary market consultation shall place any supplier at an advantage in a potential procurement process.