

UKRI FLF Development Network Supplier Day Questions

1. What Career stage are Future Leaders Fellows at?

The FLF supports individuals who are in the early stages of establishing themselves as leaders in their field or sector. When considering their proposal applicants are asked to use the individual eligibility criteria as set out in the [overview of the scheme](#) and the [person specification](#) to assess and justify their suitability for the scheme with reference to the objectives of the programme as given in the [FLF guidance for applicants](#).

2. How many early career researchers should a bid address?

The Network should support the approximate 210 fellows awarded through rounds 1 to 3 of the FLF, and have the capacity for a further 40 early career researchers and innovators who are supported by other UKRI schemes. Identification of these additional 40 participants will be carried out by UKRI.

3. What is the mix of FLFs across different sectors?

Fellows are working in fields and sectors across the whole of UKRI remit, and Network activities should be relevant to supporting the development of all those taking part. Further [details of those funded can be found on the FLF webpage](#).

4. How long should support be provided for?

Over the three-year duration of the Network, fellows should be able to access a two-year programme of activities.

5. What are your expectations regarding the timing and phasing of delivering the additional support?

We are looking for the initial opportunities to be available to fellows soon after the Network has been awarded. We expect fellows to have the flexibility to undertake a two-year programme of activities at some point over the three-year duration of the Network.

6. How much support will be required for individuals?

Up to £3 million (excluding VAT) over three years is available to support activities for 250 FLFs and early career researchers and innovators to take part in a 2-year programme of activities. It is expected that the Network cover costs associated with venue hire and the travel and subsistence of those taking part in Network events. The £3 million is available to support Network specific activities and should not be used to enable fellows to engage with support that may already be available from their host organisation.

7. Do Network events have to be held at a variety of locations?

Yes, to aid in the accessibility of events and to support the formation of regional cohorts of fellows it is expected that events be held at a variety of locations across the UK.

8. How should the Network engage with UKRI in the preparation of bids?

Although full details of the activities that will be carried out between the Network and UKRI are not required at this stage, it is expected that bidders recognise the areas where engagement with UKRI is required and set out how they plan to incorporate UKRI into the planning and delivery of these aspects of the Network. Bidders should not contact different groups within UKRI to arrange engagement as part of bid development.

9. UKRI seems to have done a considerable amount of work with the FLF cohorts to date - what would you say has been received most positively from the Fellows and what has not engaged them in the way you hoped?

Direct feedback has been limited to one face to face meeting, and we expect the Network to be reactive to the needs of the fellows as the Network activities progress. Things that have been positively received to date include how fellows can place their work in a national and international context, how they can influence both their field and wider policy, and consideration of how cohorts can work together on interdisciplinary / sector projects.

10. Is there an incumbent provider for this contract and are there existing schemes (UK or international) that UKRI considers leading practice and what type of institutions or companies are involved?

This is a new Network and there is no incumbent provider. There are existing programs that provide some individual aspects of what the Network is looking to deliver, but nothing that covers the range of required activities over the diversity of the fellows and early career researchers and innovators who are to be supported.

11. Do the anticipated start dates take account of the current situation with COVID-19 as this could impact on development times and scheduling of events?

Noting the current disruption, a 90 day tender period is in place to help enable suppliers produce their bid. We ask that suppliers use the published deadlines when considering Network activities, but there should be contingency plans in place for alternative approaches to be taken should there be continued disruption caused by COVID-19.

12. Do you expect bidders to be able to address this tender under one roof or are they able to choose the areas they are expert in?

We are looking for the Network activities to all be included under one roof. To cover the breadth of activities that are to be undertaken as part of the Network we expect that a consortium of suppliers will be required to come together in order to provide the Network.

13. In a consortium bid, will supporting documentation be needed from all members (policies, financial statements etc)? will there be a recognition of the burdensome nature of this from SMEs and micro-businesses?

One supplier within the consortium will need to be nominated as the lead supplier to provide the supporting documentation.

14. To ensure excellence in all the areas of engagement that you have identified, are there opportunities to create alliances of suppliers to collaborate, and, if so, are you able to circulate contact details of suppliers who would be willing to create such an alliance?

All suppliers taking part in the webinar have been asked to provide confirmation that they are happy for their details to be shared with those who took part. Details of those who confirmed this have been circulated amongst those who took part.

15. Do you have expectations around the number/ frequency of workshops and activities per year and what are the expectations regarding online verses face to face delivery? Can you give a rough estimate of the expected split of time to be spent addressing the different required elements of the Network development list?

As long as the requirements set out in the tender document are met we are not being prescriptive in terms of the number of Network events expected or the way in which these are delivered. We are looking for providers to be imaginative in their provision of Network activities and to use whatever methods they think are most appropriate for delivery of the Network. Similarly, UKRI is not looking to mandate the amount of time spent addressing the different aims of the Network; providers should spend whatever time they feel is appropriate to meet the aims.

16. Are you open to the 250 Network participants being broken into smaller groups as we find a much more interactive approach is enabled?

UKRI fully expects the fellows to undertake Network activities in smaller cohort groups. Activities should support both horizontal (i.e. same starting round) and vertical (across round) cohort development to enable shared experiences between and across different stages in the fellowship.

17. Would UKRI consider the network / activities to be compulsory or mandatory for FLF participants, or entirely optional, or somewhere in between? To what extent do UKRI want a programme that applies to everybody, regardless of stage of fellowship they are at?

UKRI will be strongly encouraging all FLFs to take part in Network activities and providers should ensure that activities are relevant and attractive to the diversity of fellows who are supported, regardless of the topic of their work, the sector they work in, or the stage of their fellowship they are at.

18. As the first rounds of FLFs are mostly academic with limited numbers from business should the Network be aimed at academics?

The activities of the Network should be equally relevant to those based in academia or business settings. A lot of academic fellows are working with businesses as part of their fellowships and the Network should provide opportunities to break down barriers between those looking to gain knowledge and experience of working with other sectors.

19. Will providers be responsible for the evaluation of the Network or will an external evaluator be brought in?

We would expect the Network to have processes in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the activities undertaken and of the impacts of activities supported through provision of the plus funding. However, formal evaluation of the Network will be included as part of the wider evaluation of the FLF programme which is being coordinated by the UKRI Evaluation team.

20. What consultation has UKRI carried out with the external community / third parties in the formulation of the Network tender?

UKRI has not consulted with third parties while putting the Network tender together.