

# UK-HyRES Funding Opportunity - Research Fellowships

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## 1 Summary of Call Details

Maximum Award per Proposal	£ 225,000
Expression of Interest call opens	4 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
Information Webinar for Eols	4 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
Closing date for Expressions of Interest	26 January 2026, 9am
Call for Full Proposals opens	23 February 2026, 9am
Call for Full Proposals closes	9 April 2026, 5pm
Interview date(s) for shortlisted candidates	TBC
Notification of successful and unsuccessful proposals	25 May 2026 TBC
Anticipated start date of successful proposals	No later than November 2026

Please check your eligibility for EPSRC funding at: <https://www.ukri.org/councils/epsrc/guidance-for-applicants/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-funding/>

## 2 Research Fellowships – Scope of Call

### 2.1 Purpose

We are looking to fund up to three prestigious UK-HyRES Research Fellowships of up to 18 months each, to support talented early career researchers and innovators who are transitioning to research or innovation leadership.

### 2.2 Eligibility

- The lead applicant (Project Lead, PL) must be an Early Career Researcher (ECR), where ECR is defined as a postdoctoral researcher, application scientist (or similar) or a lecturer/assistant professor within their first three years of appointment. The ECR does not need to have a current role at the host institution, but must have the support of the host institution.
- The PL should not have previously received funding in excess of £100k.

### 2.3 Funding available

- The 100% Full Economic Cost (FEC) of your proposal can be up to £281,250.
- Fellowships will be funded by the UK-HyRES Hub based on 80 % of FEC, i.e. to a maximum of £225,000.
- Terms of grant awards are based on the UK-HyRES Hub terms, which apply principles of active management. Typical EPSRC conditions are also applied.
- Eligible costs include staff costs, consumables, travel and subsistence.
- Equipment costs are not eligible.

### 2.4 Fellowship Duration

A maximum duration of 18 months will be supported by the Fellowship award.

### 2.5 Requirements

- The application should include mentors (academic and/or industrial) to support the research and skills development. Any commitment should be confirmed with a letter of support. UK-HyRES can help match potential applicants to mentors if needed.
- The research must match with the UK-HyRES themes and be about green hydrogen or green alternative liquid fuels.
- Research should not duplicate research already funded by UK-HyRES (<https://ukhyres.ac.uk> for information on current projects).
- In the call, applicants are encouraged to be realistic in their proposals i.e. only include research that can be conducted in the time available (18 months) and within the budget requested, be cognisant of risks and have appropriate mitigation in place and be realistic about the achievable impact and the activities needed to realise it. Proposals should be targeted and give sufficient detail that the reviewers have confidence that delivery is achievable.
- In addition to the research itself, all proposals should embed the principles of EDI and sustainability and should include skills development for the ECR (and others as applicable).
- Successful applicants will be expected to engage with the UK-HyRES activities as applicable.

### 2.6 Main duties & responsibilities of the Research Fellow

- Conduct individual and/or collaborative research projects that result in high quality research in any research area in the hydrogen value chain.
- Develop research objectives, projects and proposals.

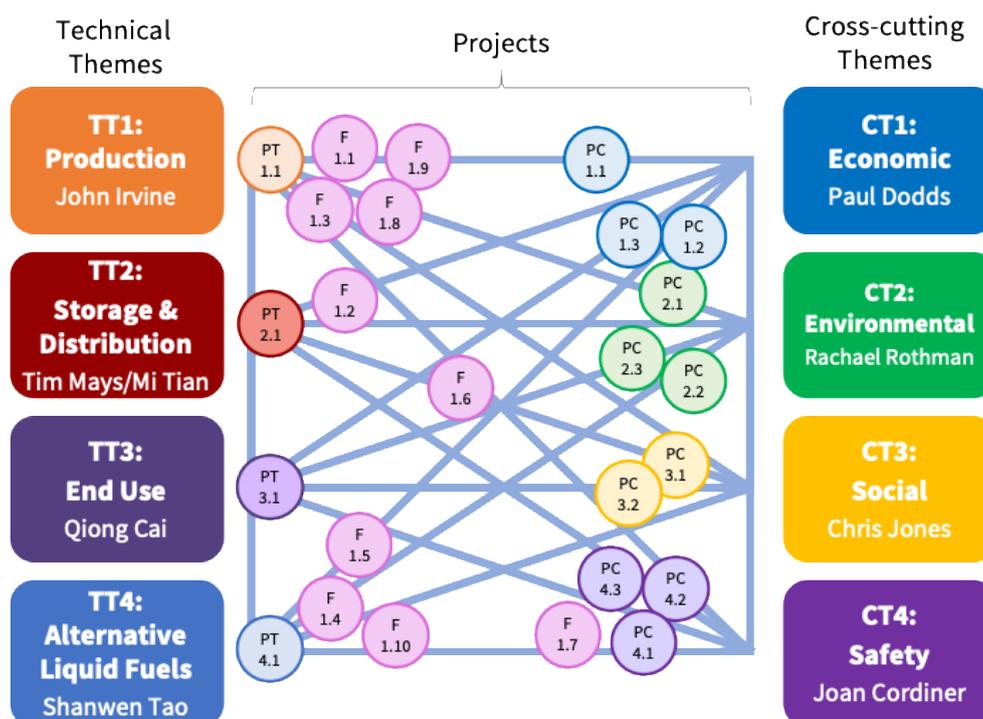
- Set standards by scoping projects and managing its delivery (e.g. timeline, budget, quality) to fulfil research grant proposals.
- Publish in high quality peer-reviewed journals appropriate to the discipline.
- Develop and sustain an external research profile and reputation and international research links through activities such as:
  - Overseas research visits
  - Conference presentations
  - Conference organisation
  - Refereeing
  - Public engagement activities
- Promote and engage in interdisciplinary research activities as part of UK-HyRES.
- Develop a plan for future funding.

## 2.7 Research and Integration with UK-HyRES

Successful proposals will be integrated into the existing UK-HyRES research programme to deliver novel solutions to enable the wider adoption of hydrogen and hydrogen-based liquid fuels to decarbonise the UK economy. Further details of UK-HyRES can be found in the Annex in Section 7.

Projects in each Technical Theme are guided and informed by each of the Cross-cutting Theme Leaders, to ensure appropriate consideration of techno-economics, environmental and societal impacts, and safety.

Research should align with one or more of the Hub’s four technical themes TT1–TT4 or four cross-cutting themes CT1–CT3 (as illustrated in Figure 1).



**Figure 1:** The UK-HyRES Hub structure, showing its themes, leading academics and currently funded projects.

The application should demonstrate fit to the UK-HyRES portfolio, along with two or more of the following: substantial innovation; addressing critical needs; alignment to UK Hydrogen and Industrial Strategies; evidence of substantial industrial pull or technological push.

Collaborations with industry and other non-academic partners are strongly encouraged. The EPSRC requires 100 % match funding for the Hub as a whole; however, we understand that this is not always possible for individual projects.

We look forward to receiving projects that are co-created, co-developed, and co-funded with industry partners. These projects could be key to addressing fundamental challenges in industry and require research and development to overcome these challenges.

### 3 How to apply

There are two application stages. The first is an expression of interest, after which selected applicants will be invited to write a full proposal. Full proposals will be reviewed by a review panel and the PLs will be interviewed, then then final funding decision will be made.

#### 3.1 Stage 1 – Expressions of Interest (EOI)

**Stage 1** is a call for Expressions of Interest, EOI (deadline for submissions 26 January at 09:00 hrs GMT). EOIs are to be submitted electronically via completion of an EOI form which is available on MS Forms [[Stage 1 - Expression of interest form](#)].

EOIs will be assessed by UK-HyRES Theme Leads, members of the Strategic Advisory Board and invited external reviewers, based on criteria 1 to 4 as set out in Section 3.4 of this document. EOIs shortlisted to proceed to the second stage will receive an invitation to submit a full proposal. Due to the volume of applications expected, there will be no feedback provided to applicants who do not proceed past the EOI stage.

#### 3.2 Stage 2 – Full Proposal

Invited full proposals (9 April, 9am GMT) will go through a robust peer review process.

Proposals will be assessed based on criteria 1 to 5, as set out in Section 11 of this document. The application template will be provided to applicants who successfully go through to full proposal stage, and consists of the following sections:

- **Part I: Project details**
- **Part II: Case for Support**
- **Part III: Track Record and PL Development**
- **Part IV: Justification of Resources (JoR)**
- **Letters of Support**
- **PL CV**

#### 3.3 Review Criteria - Overview

Proposals will be reviewed on:

- Quality, ambition and novelty
- Development, training, support and mentorship of the PL
- Ability to deliver the research and complete within the time and resources requested
- Clear plans for proposed research, project management, engagement, EDI, skills development and impact
- Partnerships and Collaborations

### 3.4 Proposal Assessment Criteria

The panel will score the proposals according to the following criteria. At stage 1, Expression of Interest (EOI), only criteria 1- 3 apply.

1. Vision and quality (Stages 1 & 2)
  - a. The likelihood that the fellowship will deliver, or lead to, a step-change in knowledge and understanding of the topic and how this could lead to larger scale research activity for further concept development.
  - b. The ambition and adventure of the research and appropriateness of the proposed methodology.
  - c. The innovative approach, relationship to the context of the call and timeliness.
2. Likely impact (Stages 1 & 2)
  - a. Potential of the research to advance the commercial application, policy and/or social environment pertaining to hydrogen and alternative liquid fuels.
  - b. The relevance and appropriateness of beneficiaries identified, collaborators proposed, and the additionality that this offers.
  - c. The understanding of how a breakthrough will contribute to the competitiveness of UK industry.
3. Development of the Project Lead (Stages 1 & 2)
  - a. Development and training programme for the PL that will help support them to become a leader in the field of hydrogen and alternative liquid fuels.
  - b. Mentorship in place to provide advice and training to the PL.
4. Fit to the Call (Stages 1 & 2)
  - a. Proposals must be aligned to one of more of the UK-HyRES themes. The UK-HyRES Hub reserves the right to reject proposals deemed to be outside of this scope.
  - b. Contribution to a balanced portfolio within the UK-HyRES research programme.
5. Expertise of the applicants (Stage 2)
  - a. The appropriateness of their expertise to the proposed research.
  - b. The potential to participate in longer-term collaboration.
6. Project management (Stage 2)
  - a. The effectiveness of the proposed planning and management, including management of risk.
  - b. Appropriateness and affordability of the estimated resources.

**Process:** Where applicants are unsuccessful after stage 2, feedback will be provided in writing within 28 working days of the final decision. Any feedback will be for information only; there will be no opportunity to discuss or appeal the decision.

The criteria listed 1-5 are the assessment criteria. The bulleted list is a summary of the information contained within the criteria.

## 4 Funded projects required outputs

- For EPSRC funds, a final, publicly disclosable report and slide pack (5 to 10 slides) that summarises key impacts, findings and follow on work enabled from the research, which will be used to verify completion and inform future activities.
- A project summary which can be published on the UK-HyRES Hub website on announcement of the Flexible Funding award.
- A summary of funding opportunities that the investigators expect the award to enable.

Please note that the research undertaken as part of the UK-HyRES Flexible Funding call is also subject to:

- Discussion and feedback from the Strategic Advisory Board at their biannual meetings.
- Successful applicants attending the UK-HyRES Hub Annual General Assemblies (or other dissemination events as required) to present the findings, impacts and follow on work from their research.
- The PL of flexible fund research projects reporting on the research outcomes to the UK-HyRES Hub to input into ResearchFish and attending intermediate project meetings (in person or remotely) to report on project progress as required.

## 5 Terms and Conditions

- Terms and conditions of standard UKRI FEC grant awards apply (<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/UKRI-161123-FECGrantTermsAndConditions-Nov2023.pdf>)
- All project outputs and engagement should be branded as 'UK-HyRES Hub'. Brand materials and guidance will be provided to successful applicants.
- For published outputs EPSRC reference EP/X038963/1 must be quoted.
- Salary budget requested should be at a level commensurate with applicant's skills, responsibilities, expertise and experience.
- Whilst this fellowship scheme provides the opportunity for the applicant's development and dedicated time to focus to their own programme of research, it should not be construed as providing a guaranteed route to promotion. Applicants should consult with their Host Institution's HR Department and their Researcher Promotion Policy in this regard.

## 6 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

The UK-HyRES Hub supports the UKRI Key Principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

- Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is a critical aspect of a healthy research culture – how projects are designed, carried out and who is involved.
- Research and innovation should be 'by everyone, for everyone' – a dynamic, diverse, and inclusive research and innovation system in the UK is an integral part of society and should give everyone the opportunity to participate and to benefit.
- We need to be diverse to accommodate that research and innovation is unpredictable, is often created through new and unanticipated combinations, and can take many forms.
- By recognising and nurturing all people in the system and diversifying interactions, we will enrich our lives by creating knowledge, enabling us to understand the world around us and empowering us to tackle the many challenges we face as individuals and as communities, nationally and globally.
- The whole workforce are key contributors in the research and innovation system – from the lead researcher or innovator to those who keep the lights on or maintain the large infrastructure and equipment in our laboratories, small businesses or on our research vessels
- By valuing all, we recognise that a diversity of ideas, opinions, knowledge, and people enrich our work and enlarges our knowledge economy

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*Please note that all questions and comments about UK-HyRES, including about its funding calls, may be directed to UKHyRESadmin@bath.ac.uk.*

## 7 ANNEX: Call purpose and background

### 7.1 UK-HyRES Purpose

Hydrogen and alternative liquid fuels (H&ALFs), such as ammonia, are essential for the UK to reach Net Zero emissions by 2050. Hydrogen is a highly versatile energy vector suitable for use in many hard-to-decarbonise sectors where other energy options, such as electricity, are not suitable. UK-HyRES aims to identify, prioritise, and seek impactful solutions to research challenges across the entire hydrogen value chain from production via storage and distribution to end use.

### 7.2 UK-HyRES Background

The EPSRC has awarded £10.7M to UK-HyRES (<https://ukhyres.ac.uk/>) for a five-year research grant which began 1 June 2023, following an extensive co-ordination phase from April 2022 to (end) May 2023.

In addition to this strong support, UK-HyRES has to date secured over £5.5M in leveraged co-funding from industry, civic and other research partners and £8.1M from the Hub's core universities for PhD students and other targeted investments.

End-use areas include heating, power, mobility, and chemicals. Alternative liquid fuels such as ammonia are also an important theme. There is a strong focus on sustainability and safety in all the Hub's projects. Additionally, with its substantial flexible fund of £5.1M (FEC), UK-HyRES will facilitate a series of calls for new research projects and fellowships. These projects must have close alignment with the UK-HyRES themes and be responsive to the research challenges and opportunities identified.

UK-HyRES will drive forward the national effort in hydrogen research that is needed to facilitate this critical area of technology to meet industry and government needs.

The team will coordinate a national, interdisciplinary programme of research to ensure a pipeline of projects that can deliver practical hydrogen and alternative liquid fuels technologies that are safe and environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable, de-coupling fossil fuels from our energy system and delivering greener energy.

### 7.3 The UK-HyRES Hub Structure

UK-HyRES provides a network and collaboration platform for fundamental research, and is a focus for industry, policy, and other stakeholder communities, to tackle research challenges that underpin the production, storage, distribution, and end use of H<sub>2</sub>&ALFs.

The Hub's unique structure has been developed to deliver maximum impact – focusing on four technical themes (production, storage / distribution, end use and alternative liquid fuels), and four cross-cutting themes (environmental, economic, social acceptance and safety).

The team will develop UK-HyRES into a global centre of excellence and impact in hydrogen and alternative liquid fuel research within its five-year funding window and into the future.

### 7.4 Flexible Funds: Call for Research

The Hub plans to release calls throughout the five-year programme, to bring together the UK research community in hydrogen and hydrogen-based liquid fuels, both those who are already involved in hydrogen research and those who must be involved in future.