

Police STAR Fund 24_25 Call Transcription

Hello and welcome to this short video where we're going to run through key information for the police staff on 24/25 call.

So let's start with the basics.

What is the police star fund? So the police staff fund is an annual innovation call run by the Office of the Police Chief Scientific Adviser. Which aims to stimulate local innovation, research and evaluation and encourage collaboration to solve science and technology problems within policing.

It is the innovation programme for policing by policing since OPCSA took over the fund in the 21/22 call, we've supported about 53 projects across 24 forces, 5 PCC offices, and then we've also had fourteen national projects across a range of national organisations as well, totalling just over £9 million worth of funding for policing innovation.

So what is it that we're actually looking for with the police star fund call?

So let's start with the basics in terms of project types. We are open to funding all types of projects which develop science, technology analysis and or research within policing. The only stipulation is that it must be evidently innovative and future focused and has to have clear alignment with the science and Technology Strategy. And it needs to anticipate benefits for the organisation running the work. So projects that are looking to procure existing kit or implement something we know works, that's not what this fund is for. This fund is for new research, new innovation and new evaluation. Generally we are looking for that new thing. However, we may on occasion consider bids which look to continue existing projects, but they have to have a clear innovative aspect above what's previously been funded and that additional benefit must be incredibly well evidenced in the bid. So if you are looking to extend an existing project or increase the scope of an existing project but all of the benefits that you list are based on that original project and not that that additional bit that you're applying for funding for. They won't do particularly well because we're looking for that new innovative aspect and that additional benefit. We also have a couple of stipulations in terms of delivery. So projects need to be completed within the 24/25 financial year and we also have an expectation that

projects will cost no more than £300,000. And that's given the need to spend that money within the financial year, limited amount of funds on our end, we want to fund a variety of innovation. We may consider projects that are slightly larger, but there will need to be incredibly well evidenced. Then there is also an expectation on our part that you will have secured match funding.

Some examples of projects that we've funded previously, so you can find a full list of projects that we funded previously on our website, on the police star fund projects pages. But in previous years we've funded things like the development of rapid video response or new digital innovations for forensics, the implementation of AI to support triage of 101 call requests, academic research into the into evidence led prosecutions or the evaluation of implementation of technology that's been developed. So as you can see we fund across it's not just about developing new tech we fund developing new technology, researching core academic research, and also evaluation prior to implementation.

In terms of organisations that are eligible, so individuals and teams from NPCC forces, OPCCs, ROKU's counter terrorism, the NCA, the college, and the Home Office they are all eligible to submit applications. You can find a full list of eligible organisations In the bidders prospectus, which you can grab on our website.

We massively encourage bidders to consider collaborations both within policing; so with forces or national organisations, but also with outside partners, with research organisations, charities and industry. However, bids must be led and submitted by those eligible organisations, those eligible organisations will be the ones that initially receive the funding and they will be the ones that will be kind of on the hook for the projects, as it were, and we will be contacting them as the point of contact for the project.

When it comes to funding conditions and arrangements, so again you can find a full list of our funding conditions in the bidders prospectus. But the headline conditions are the spend and delivery must be completed within the financial year. You need to notify our team as soon as you know if your project's going to underspend and if you do underspend you have to commit to returning that spend, you need to adhere to all appropriate local controls in terms of finance and commercial decisions. So what you have in place in your organisation already. And you need to agree to and

complete regular quarterly reporting updates and a final report which we would provide you with the templates.

In terms of the specifics around the funding arrangements, the lead organisation of successful projects will be claiming funding in arrears at 2 funding points, so the expectation is that lead organisations will initially spend at risk and then you will claim that funding back from us at 2 funding points in the year. In October, you will claim funding for the first six months of your project from the beginning of April to the end of September and that will be based on the evidence you provide us in your reporting. And then in January, you will be claiming funding for the spend between October and December. And then we'll also going to allow you to claim forecasted spend for the first three months of the new Year and that's to streamline things towards the end of the financial year and to make sure that your project can complete on time. You need to make sure that your organisation is aware of these funding arrangements before you submit the bids. So we'd recommend you have a look at those full funding conditions in that bidders prospectus.

Some key things for you to think about before you start writing your bid for the police star fund. You really want to think about what the challenge is. Projects should be challenge focused. You need to you need to clearly outline what that challenge is that you want to address and how your solution does that. Policing has often has a tendency to find something they think is good and will work, and then retrofit the challenge to fit that solution. Rather than thinking first about the challenge. So be really challenge focused when you're developing your plans and ideas.

When you are developing your plan, make sure you've done enough scoping and research so that you can you do have that evidence and that clear idea on exactly what it is you're going to do, how you're going to do it, and who you're going to do it with before you write your bid.

We'd also highly recommend you talk to areas of your force or your organisation before you submit your bid and make sure they're on board. So in previous years, projects have often either withdrew, they've been delayed, or we've actually had to pull the funding because they've not got force or organisation wide agreement on their project. For example, if you've not got the IT resource to implement what you need. You should make sure you've got all of the parts of your organisation on board with the bid before you submit it as part of the submission process you are asked to confirm that all areas of your business have committed to delivering the project

within the outline time scales if you are successful. So you really need to be thinking about that. And the other thing you need to be thinking about as well is data protection impact assessments, recruitment and vetting. Now these things take time and you need to make sure you have a good understanding of what your project needs in those areas and building realistic time frame considerations to your project planning. In previous years, we have had projects that have not been realistic in their time frames around these things and they have either been significantly delayed or again, we've had to pull funding because they've been unable to meet the commitments that they've made. So work with your force to get them on board with your project, but also to help you understand where what the time frame considerations are around those activities. Longer period of time activities such as DPIAs recruitment and vetting to make sure that you've got them appropriately considered in your application.

So in terms of the timeline for the 24/25 call

The call guidance went live last month and is fully available on our website. EOIs opened on the 16th of October. The EOI will be closed for submission at 5:00 PM on the 10th of November and we will then take them and assess them and your outcomes will be available the week commencing the 27th of November. They will be emailed to you. If you are successful, you will then be invited to full stage.

Which closes on the 19th of January. And then those outcomes come out the week commencing the 11th of March in time for projects to start at the beginning of the next financial year.

As I've just outlined, there is a two stage application process EOI and full stage EOIs must be submitted through the online form which is available on our website and this will close at 5:00 PM on the 10th of November 2023. This is a hard deadline. You will not be able to submit after 5:00 PM on the 10th of November. So please make sure that you do so. Only application submitted through the online form will be considered for funding. You can find a version of the EOI questionnaire in the bidders prospectus to help you draft your bid before submission. If you are successful at EOI, you'll be invited to full stage, which will be due on the 19th of January. When we invite you to full stage you, we will provide you with all of the information, the form, the guidance and the assessment criteria to help you write

your full stage bid. However, we have provided you with an outline in the bidders prospectus so you can understand what it is you will be asked at full stage.

In terms of what you're going to be asked at EOI, so you'll be asked a range of different questions which look at your finances, the alignment with the science and Technology Strategy and the national NPCC portfolios, DPIA considerations and making sure you've got that internal sign off. And then you've got four key questions for the proposal. The question #1 asks you to outline your challenge. So what is the problem you are trying to address and make sure you provide some supporting evidence. To show that where it's appropriate. you're then going to be asked to outline your innovation, research or evaluation, and you need to show evidence there of how it's innovative compared to the current landscape. So you need to show that you've done your scoping, you know what's out there, you know that what's out there isn't good enough for what you need. This is what this is. Why what you want to do is that one step ahead of what's out there. That's why it's innovative compared to what's already in in the in the current market. And then you also need to explain how you plan to deliver it, who you plan to deliver it with. And you also need to give an idea of time frames. So is this a three month project? Is it a six month project? Is it a 9 month project? that needs to be included in that question as well. We're then going to ask you to talk about the measurable difference your innovation, research or evaluation can make. So the 'So what' is this question? So outline the benefits and the impact of your innovation or research and that's not just within your organisation but also its impact to wider policing And if where you can, try and use quantitative examples here. And then also we're going to ask you about the risks and challenges to the delivery of the project and how you plan to mitigate them to give us confidence that you are aware of the challenges that you might face when delivering your project.

In terms of how that EOI will be assessed, the assessment criteria has four categories. Each category will be marked out of a score of five, giving each EOI a total of 20. Now the EOI is assessed as a whole against these four categories. It's not that each question is assessed on there's a separate criteria for each question. It takes everything in as a whole. And in order to score A 5, you will have to hit everything in the category, we don't expect many EOIs to hit fives in these categories. And when we're looking at assessing them, so if we take, for example, quality of

proposal, so in that category, we're looking for scientific excellence and contribution to existing knowledge. You've got a good articulation of your challenge, which aligns with S&T priorities. We're also looking for you to explain how that project is going to address the challenge and how you plan to deliver it. To give us confidence that that what you're saying you can do, you can do you need to provide realistic outcomes. Especially within the timeframes and an overview of the risks.

Within that project as well, and where relevant, committing to research and transparency and integrity, so as an organisation we commit to open science principles which you can find out a little bit more about in the bidders prospectus and also more widely on our website. So there's an expectation there that you'll also commit to that too. So for example, with that particular category, if you had a really interesting idea that is well thought out and well planned. You've got a good idea of how you're going to deliver it. You've evidenced. You've evaluated the risks and you've got mitigations, but actually you've not articulated a very large challenge. It's not clear what it is that, that innovation, the challenge that that innovation is trying to address. You can't score probably more than a three. You have to make sure that as a whole Your the quality of your EOI proposal is good across all four of those questions. The other categories that we assess against are pathways to impact. So on this one, we're looking for the importance to wider timeline and wider timeline and timelines to wider policing. That confidence of the ability to positively affect the policing mission. So here we might look for whether you have collaborations with other forces or with national entities, whether you are looped into the NPCC portfolio, national portfolios. Whether it is a challenge that's quite niche or and therefore only relevant to one or two forces, or whether it is a wider challenge. That being said, projects that only address a niche challenge, but is an incredibly important challenge could still score highly. We also have a category that looks at the capability of applicants. So here we're looking for evidence that the project team that submitted the bid will be able to deliver it. And then also obviously its public money, so we are evaluating for value, for money, So that's that the costs are reasonable and justified, and also when we look at that wider landscape, it provides value for money. So here, if you were looking at a project that was looking to duplicate something that's already happened somewhere else, that probably wouldn't provide particularly effective value for money.

And then finally, I'm just going to run you through some top tips for writing your EOI

bid. So make sure you read through all of the documentation and all of the guidance provided. We have provided you with quite a lot of information on how to on what we're looking for and how to write your bids, including the assessment criteria. Make sure you've read it all before you write your bid so you know what we're looking for. Use that draft EOI questionnaire that's in the prospectus to help you craft your bid before you look to submit it.

At EOI, you don't need extensive detail, but you do need to provide an evidence and logistical justification for the project and what you provide needs to give confidence to the assessors that the project has been well considered.

Your bid should be clear and concise. EOI stage bids are assessed by a range of assessors with a different backgrounds in policing and science and technology. Therefore, you need to ensure that your EOI can be understood by a non-specialist. So we would really recommend getting someone outside of your area, outside of your immediate project team, to review your draft before submission to make sure that it can be understood by someone who's not fully entrenched in your thinking. When you're looking at outlining impacts and benefits and providing evidence, try to use quantitative as well as qualitative examples where it's appropriate and where you can find them. And then again, just to re-emphasise at EOI, you are assessed against those four criteria, but it's not a criteria for each question. It is across the whole bid. Therefore, when you're drafting your bid, please do consider how the information you've provided across those questions come together o accurately reflect your project.

So hopefully you found this video helpful. As I've said, there's lots of information on our website. Go, go and have a look at what's on there and what's provided there. And if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us on PoliceSTARFundEnquiries@npcc.police.uk. Thanks very much.