

Police STAR Fund 25/26 Call Transcription

Hello and welcome to a short video with key information on the Police STAR Fund 25/26 call.

So what is the Police STAR fund? The Police STAR Fund is an annual call run by the Office of the Police Chief Scientific Adviser. Its aim is to stimulate local innovation and encourage collaboration to solve S&T problems within policing. The Police STAR Fund is the only innovation programme for policing, by policing. Since taking over the fund in 21/22, we have supported 80 projects across 26 forces and five PCC offices alongside 16 national projects with the College of Policing Forensic Capability Network, the National Crime Agency, the NPCC and the Home Office, totalling over £11,000,000 in funding.

So what is it that we are looking for in terms of eligibility? We are open to funding a range of projects as long as the work develops science, technology, analysis and or research within policing. The project must do something new, be clearly defined and have strong science and/or technology elements aligned with the NPCC S and T strategy. It should support the development of new solutions to meet a priority policing challenge, show reference to our recently published ARIs where appropriate and anticipate benefits for wider policing. The Police STAR Fund focuses on early stage development of innovation and research rather than implementation, so projects looking to understand whether something with an S&T focus works i.e. looking at fundamental research, proof of concepts, testing and development are eligible. However, projects are looking to evaluate the implementation of something, procure existing kit or implement something known to be effective already, are not. So we may consider bids which continue existing projects. However, they must have a clear, innovative aspect above what has been previously funded and provide evidence of additional benefit.

So projects will need to be completed within the 25/26 financial year. We have an expectation that projects will cost no more than £300k given the need to spend in the financial year and our desire to fund a variety of innovation. That isn't to say that we wouldn't consider a larger bid, but the justification would need to be strong and we would have an expectation of matched funding to be secured.

So in terms of organisations that are eligible individuals and teams from NPCC forces, Offices of Police and Crime Commissioners, regional organised crime units, counter terrorism policing, the National Crime Agency, the College of Policing and the Home Office are eligible to submit applications to the Police STAR Fund. We do encourage bidders to collaborate with outside partners, including higher education institutions, research organisations and industry partners. However, bids must be led and submitted by eligible organisations.

A full list of eligible organisations can be found in the prospectus available on our website.

So the funding conditions, these are the conditions that we get all projects to agree to. So we ask that spend and delivery should be completed within the financial year of 25/26 and you must notify us at your earliest convenience of possible underspend with any underspend being returned to us by the end of the project. We also ask that you adhere to your own appropriate local controls and that will be making sure that you're aligning with your forces financial processes going through the commercial framework required.

We also ask that you agree to complete regular quarterly reporting project updates to us, and a final report.

So just in terms of the funding conditions, the lead organisation of successful projects will be able to claim funding in arrears at two funding points, the first being October 2025. At that point you're able to claim project spend from between the 1st of April to the 30th of September and then the second will be January 2026 in which you'll be able to claim confirmed spend from the 1st of October to the 31st of December and also forecasted spend for the rest of the year. So from the 1st of January to the 31st of March.

We also ask that you please ensure your organisation is aware of the funding arrangements before submitting a bid. A full breakdown of our funding conditions can be found in the bidders prospectus. It is important that your finance team is aware of the funding arrangements and some of that spend and claim will be done in arrears.

So just some questions to consider when applying for the Police STAR Fund is what is your challenge? Your challenge should be challenge focused. Have a clear defined

challenge identified in evidence. This will not only help with developing your solution, but will also support you in understanding the potential benefits. We ask that you are not solution focused as often it means attempting to retrofit the challenge and often does not meet the full need of a challenge.

So what is already out there in the space? How does it fail to meet the needs of the challenge? It is important that you do a significant amount of research and due diligence to understand the landscape in which your challenge sits and what work has already been done. So you should engage with other forces and relevant national leads to gain their understanding and support. This will help you shape the most useful and innovative solution and ensure that we are reducing duplication and wasted effort.

So what is your solution? What makes it innovative? So have a clear outline of what exactly your solution is. What does it do? How does it address the challenge? Be clear in your understanding of how it is different to what is already available and the value it will add.

How will you deliver your solution? Who will you work with? How long will it take? How much will it cost? Have a plan of how your solution will be delivered. Research who will deliver it with you and work together with them to come up with realistic time frames, costings and risks. Consider different ways your solution could be delivered. Your first approach may not always be the best.

What are the blockers to this solution? What do you need to consider during the planning stage? So you should have a good understanding of what may lead your solution to fail both in its delivery and ability to meet the challenge, consideration of resources and dependencies on other areas of the organisation are important alongside any agreements such as DPIAs which are obviously unknown to take some time, you should also ensure national standards are appropriately considered in relation to a solution.

So moving on to national standards, approaches and frameworks.

We do ask you to align with these, so this is the research concordat and open science commitment, the police industry charter, the Covenant for using AI in policing, POLE data standards, the Data Protection Act, the cyber system management standard, the Equality Act and the website and application accessibility regulations.

So now just to run you through the application process.

This is the process timeline.

So on the 9th of September, our call information call guidance was published on our

website. On the 7th of October EOI opens and you will be able to put in your online form.

On the 1st of November at 5:00 PM, it is a hard deadline, the EOI stage will close. On the 25th of November EOI outcomes will go out and invites to full stage for those who are successful. At 5:00 PM on the 10th of January, full stage submission deadlines will happen.

And on the 10th of March 2025, full stage outcomes will go out. So we will be notifying projects if they are successful or not. And then on the 1st of April, projects that are successful will be expected to kick off.

So just in terms of applying our application process is 2 stages. The first one is an EOI, so EOI should be submitted through the online form available on our website. It is not available just yet, as this is for submissions between the 7th of October 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM first of November 2024. You will not be able to submit outside of these times. It is a hard deadline. Only application submitted through the online form will be considered for funding.

A version of the EOI form can be found in the bidders prospectus available on our website to help support drafting of your bid, we do recommend doing so prior to putting in your online form. Second stage, if you're successful at EOI, you will move on to full stage. We will ask you to submit a full proposal which will be due by the 10th of January and when invited to full stage you will receive the application form, an assessment criteria and guidance to support the writing of your bid.

This can be found in the bidders prospectus and just a note on the right hand side we have a screenshot of our website. This is for the previous round. It will be updated for the new round but this is how it should look like and that is where you will see the link to apply and get on to the online form.

So just in terms of the EOI questions, you will be asked a variety of questions. There are more than you're seeing at this moment in time. So you'll be asked some of the questions like which of the service lines within the S&T strategy you align with, asking you for your project name and the lead force or lead organisation. But these are the project proposal questions that we're going to run through. So what challenge does your project seek to address?

Outline the problem you are trying to address with supporting evidence where appropriate.

What innovation or research do you plan to undertake? You must briefly outline your innovation or research showing evidence of how it is innovative compared to the current landscape, which is important to show that you've scoped and have an awareness of what is already existing within that space, and explain how you plan to deliver it and over what time frame. Make sure you keep that include that time frame within that question.

What measurable difference will your innovation or research make? So you must outline the benefits and impact of your innovation or research both locally and to wider policing.

So what are the risks and challenges to your success? Please briefly outline the key risks and challenges to your project and how you plan to mitigate them.

Moving on to the EOI assessment criteria. So we do have 4 categories that we assess against. And in terms of scoring, you can see at the bottom that we have one to five, 1 being not demonstrated, 5 being strong demonstration. So in terms of all EO is the Max score is 20 that a bid can receive and the whole bid will be assessed against these four categories, all of it. So there isn't a specific criteria or category for each question. All of it will be assessed under this.

So just to run through these, we have quality of proposal. This is looking at scientific excellence and contribution to existing knowledge, articulation of the issue or challenge the project seeks to address and its alignment to the NPCC S&T strategy. Explanation of how the project will address that challenge and the approach to be taken. A strong science and/or technology element outlined with reference to ARIs where appropriate. A clear work plan outlined with a realistic outcomes and deliverables. Addresses risk to- and management of- the bid over its lifespan and where relevant commits to research transparency and integrity, such as engagement with open science practices.

Looking at pathways to impact, we're looking at the likely importance and timeliness to wider policing, the confidence of ability to positively affect the police mission and share findings and benefits with wider policing, the consideration of dissemination plans to maximise the wider impact of the work. E.g. looking at how this may impact other police forces.

And then we're looking at the capability of applicants, so evidence of sufficient resourcing and expertise to deliver a successful bid, innovative collaborations that would not occur otherwise and where applicable, evidence of how this activity will

serve as professional development for some i.e looking at early career team members.

And value for money. So we have to look for reasonable and justified costs for the specific work and synergies with other activities and costs and impact, which when considered together bring effective additional value to policing.

So just to run you through some top tips on applying for the Police STAR Fund, so when available, which it is already, please do read through all documentation and guidance provided, including the assessment criteria before writing your bid. You should also read the NPCC Science and Technology Strategy. I'd also recommend looking through the ARIs if you haven't already. It is worth reading through that bidders prospectus fully, prior to submitting a bid, and it would also help with drafting. So use the outline EOI questionnaire in the bidders prospectus to help draught your bid before submission.

And before submitting your EOI, check with all relevant parts of your organisation and this is vital to make sure you're checking with your IT, your finance, your data production team, recruitment and vetting to ensure that that bid can be delivered if successful and within the timeframes that you're saying you're able to deliver with them. And although you do not need to provide extensive detail, a good EOI will provide an evidenced and logical justification for the project and to give confidence to assessors that the project has been well considered before submission.

Bids should be clear and concise. EOIs will be assessed by a range of assessors with different backgrounds. Therefore, please ensure your EOI can be easily understood by a non-specialist. Consider getting someone outside of your project team to review your draught before submission and give you feedback.

So when outlining impacts and benefits try to use quantitative as well as qualitative examples where appropriate and able. Your EOI will be assessed as a whole against the four criteria. There is no individual criteria for each question. Therefore when drafting your bid, please consider how the information you have provided across the questions come together to accurately reflect your project.

Fabulous. So thank you for listening. I would recommend having a look through our website. As I said, looking through the bidders prospectus. But if you do have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us at

PoliceSTARFundEnquiries@npcc.police.uk