

## IT as a Utility Network+ Call

### Call for proposals for ITaaU Network Plus pilot studies

**Closing date for applications: 9<sup>th</sup> May 2014**

#### **Summary**

Applicants are invited to apply for short-term pilot research study funding from the “IT as a Utility Network+”, set up as a priority challenge area by the RCUK Digital Economy Theme (DE). These pilot studies will be no longer than 6 months in duration and are intended to test new ideas or create novel linkages between research areas.

#### ***The priority areas for applications are as follows:***

- ✓ Playable Cities – Bristol’s Watershed defines a playable city as “a city where people, hospitality and openness are key, enabling its residents and visitors to reconfigure and rewrite its services, places and stories. It is a place where serendipity is rife and there is permission to be playful in public.”
- ✓ Personal propensity profile for risk: how, why and when do we trust IT utilities?
- ✓ Integrated infrastructure: how can IT act as the facilitator of better IT?
- ✓ Libraries of the Future: maker spaces, knowledge production and information transformation
- ✓ Social inclusion: helping people to help and better understand other people
- ✓ Social cohesion and governance: what are the roles of IT utilities in monitoring food, weather, transport and even the executive?
- ✓ Emerging economies: what lessons of innovation in the use of IT utilities can be found?

#### **Criteria**

- Individual projects can request up to £40,000 total funding (total spend up to £50,000 as per FEC 80% funding)
- Projects are expected to last for a maximum of 6 months.
- Projects must be interdisciplinary in nature, and should preferably involve more than one institution or organisation. Interdepartmental collaboration is the minimum acceptable level of interdisciplinarity; industry involvement is strongly encouraged.
- Projects must also involve and engage with real users
- Projects must be able to demonstrate reasonable prospects of continuation funding to enable sustainable development.

- Applications must be made on the ITaaU application form, and must not exceed 8 pages. They must be accompanied by a Gantt chart style project plan.
- Applicants must be eligible for EPSRC funding. For information on the eligibility of organisations and individuals to receive this funding, see the EPSRC Funding Guide: <http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/apprev/basics/Pages/fundingguide.aspx> As this call is a targeted funding opportunity provided via RCUK funding, higher education institutions, and some research council institutes and independent research organisations are eligible to apply. A list of eligible organisations to apply to RCUK is provided at: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/Pages/Eligibilityforrcs.aspx>

## **Assessment process**

Proposals will be assessed in two stages:

Stage 1: Management team sift. This is done against the criteria for applications e.g. relevance to network, fit to priority areas etc and correct completion of the application form.

Stage 2: Peer Review of selected proposals

- Suitability for the call: Is it DE? Is it research? Is it novel? Is it IT as a Utility? Is it relevant to the call themes; Articulation of problem and “so-what?” factor (what makes this project stand out?) Identifying the potential to inform the research challenges for IT as a Utility is encouraged. How will the project help grow and sustain the ITaaU Network?
- Standard RCUK assessment criteria will also be applied: Quality; Importance; Impact; The applicant’s ability to deliver the proposed project within budget and in time;
- Evidence of a planning and management process for the duration of the project will be required.

## **Pilot Project Management**

The ITaaU Network coordinator will liaise between the ITaaU investigators and the successful pilot projects. The Pilot projects will be required to keep the ITaaU investigators informed of progress (e.g. via reports, a web site or a blog) and take part in network activities as appropriate to the project. Projects will need to submit a report on the activities and outcomes of the projects, along with their invoice within a month of the end of the pilot project.

While the usual RCUK rules with regard to Intellectual Property will apply, it is expected that the outputs of any project will be shared with the “IT as a Utility Network+” Management Team for inclusion in the project web site and other promotional materials to inform the Network as a whole and wider public in an appropriate and timely manner in such a way as to achieve some of the main aims of the funding, that is growing the Network and its associated research base.

The funding will be awarded via a sub-contract with the University of Southampton, which will specify the agreed terms and allow for any issues with respect to background IP to be highlighted.

## **Key dates**

Call formally announced 7 April 2014.

Deadline for applications submitted by e-mail to the admin team at [s.j.milsted@soton.ac.uk](mailto:s.j.milsted@soton.ac.uk): 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

Successful applicants will be notified by 16<sup>th</sup> June 2014

Successful projects starting from 1<sup>st</sup> July subject to contracts.

## **Contacts**

For further information on the IT as a Utility Network+ visit <http://www.itutility.ac.uk/> and for the Digital Economy theme visit

<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/xrcprogrammes/Digital/research/Pages/home.aspx> and

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/ourportfolio/themes/digitaleconomy/Pages/default.aspx>

Please contact the ITaaU Network+ administrator ([s.j.milsted@soton.ac.uk](mailto:s.j.milsted@soton.ac.uk)) with any queries.