

IT as a Utility Network+ Call (due to be announced from 25th September)

Call for proposals for ITaaU Network Plus/Food Standards Agency pilot studies

Important Dates

- Answers to questions received before the 15th October will be posted on 12th and 19th October 2016.
- Closing date for applications: 5 pm Monday 2 November 2015
- Review Meeting ITaaU & FSA Friday 6th November 2015
- Selected Projects announced Monday 9th November 2015 (selected projects will then be contacted agree a contract)
- Earliest Project start date 23 Nov 2015 (subject to agreed contracts in place)
- Workshop to report on projects 7th – 8th March 2016
- Final reports and invoices to be submitted by 23rd March 2016

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 are part funded by the Food Standards Agency (FSA). It is in the shared interest area of the Internet of Things (IoT) that this call is positioned. These pilot studies will be no longer than 5 months in duration and are intended to test new ideas or create novel linkages between research areas.

Applications for projects in the area of impact of the IoT and the UK Food network are welcomed. Suggested areas include but are not limited to:

- a. IoT data, data standards and sharing;
- b. IoT Transport & Food, particularly temperature control;
- c. Organise hackathon events to exploit, disseminate and excite opportunities of IoT from farm to table;
- d. What happens to food in people’s home? – Temperature control in domestic settings.

Criteria

- Individual projects can request up to £20,000 total funding (total spend up to £25,000 as per FEC 80% funding for RCUK projects)
- Projects are expected to last for a maximum of 3 months and must finish with all deliverables completed and invoices sent to Southampton by 23rd March 2016.
- All projects must align with the Food Standards Agency’s strategic plans and projects must be able to demonstrate impact within the FSA remit (<http://www.food.gov.uk/science>)

- Projects must be interdisciplinary in nature, and should preferably involve more than one institution or organisation.
- Projects must also involve and engage with end users (for example the general public, food companies or practitioners, or similar)
- 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 together with FSA 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/funding/eligibilityforrcs/>
- Applicants must include in the budget travel to the ITaaU/FSA workshop in 7-8th March 2016 (most likely that this will be held in London) in order to report on their project.

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 will be conducted by ITaaU and the FSA

- Suitability for the call: Is it IoT/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.
- The usual EPSRC evaluation criteria will be used (e.g. quality of the proposed research, novelty and timeliness etc) and in addition the proposed research will be judged on its relevance for food safety, the UK food market and the FSA priorities (<http://www.food.gov.uk/science>).
- 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.
- Evidence of consideration and planning for security and privacy concerns: Due to IoT devices collecting large amounts of data in domestic settings proposals should consider

security of implementable projects, data privacy, the impact of the data protection act and potential privacy challenges.

Pilot Project Management and conditions of resulting awards.

Successful applicants will receive a grant award letter from the University of Southampton with full details of terms and conditions of the award and allow for any issues with respect to background IP to be highlighted but the key points are summarised below:

1. The awardee shall carry out the work detailed in the proposal, a copy of which will be appended to any agreement with the University of Southampton, and shall do so in accordance with good academic practice.
2. The awardee shall establish an agreement with any/all collaborators, which shall be consistent with the terms and conditions in the agreement with the University of Southampton.
3. No extension to the duration of the project shall be permitted.
4. The ITaaU Network coordinator will liaise between the ITaaU investigators and the successful pilot projects.
5. During the course of the project the awardee will write at least two interim reports describing the activities and achievements to date for the Project. 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.
6. Projects will be expected to attend and report to a workshop on 7-8th March 2016 prior to completion of a final written report.
7. A final report should be submitted to the University of Southampton by 23 March 2016
8. Copyright and IP will be part of the discussion for the award of a contract. Unless otherwise agreed the copyright in the report shall vest in the authors. In order to contribute to the growth of the network and its associated research base the outputs and/or reports will be shared with ITAAU+ and FSA and appropriate rights granted for inclusion on their web site and other promotional materials at their sole discretion. Outcomes from the projects will be included in the ITaaU/FSA IoT programme report, which will be made available on an open access basis. The FSA requires all results to be made publically available.
9. The awardee shall acknowledge RCUK and ITAAU+ and FSA in all publications, marketing and other material generated in relation to the Project.
10. The awardee should submit one invoice for payment of actual expenditure (as per FEC 80% funding rules) by 23 March 2016. The invoice should be accompanied by a statement of expenditure showing actual costs incurred. The amount of the award as stated above shall be the maximum amount available and is inclusive of VAT if applicable. The permissible expenses shall be as set out in the Call document. No expenses incurred prior to the commencement of the Project can be recovered. Payment shall be made within 30 days of receipt of invoices.

Key dates

Call formally announced Monday 28th September

Questions received before 15th October will be answered on 12th and 19th October, posted on the ITaaU Web Site.

Deadline for applications submitted by e-mail to the admin team at s.j.milsted@soton.ac.uk: 5pm Monday 2nd November, 2015.

Successful applicants will be notified by 9th November 2015

Successful projects starting from 23rd November, 2015 subject to contracts.

ITaaU/FSA Workshop in London which project teams will need to attend and report back to 7th-8th March 2016

Final reports and invoices due 23 March 2016

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

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