

IDRIC Secondment Funding: Call for proposals

Summary

Apply for secondment funding for industry or end user relevant research to support accelerated decarbonisation of industries within UK industrial clusters.

You must:

- be based at a UK organisation
- meet individual eligibility criteria
- be able to deliver the work between now and mid Feb 2024

Projects can be costed to support up to 9 months for a secondee, plus suitable travel and subsistence costs at 100% full economic cost (fEC). We will fund 80% of the eligible full economic cost (fEC). The total fund available is around £500,000 @100% fEC.

Project duration will depend on the start date – all projects must be completed by 15th February 2024 (to allow necessary administrative and impact collection activities to take place before end March 2024). Bearing in mind timescales for review and award, secondments of around 1-6 months are envisaged, but longer proposals will be considered.

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1. Who can apply?

The overall Grant will be awarded to the home organisation to support the secondment to the hosting organisation. The applicant must have arranged the secondment with the hosting organisation before submitting an application. See the application process for more details.

Secondment funding can support secondments from academic research institutions (higher education institutions, research council institutes, independent research organisation) to industry, business, governmental bodies or third sector organisations. Secondment funding may also support non-academics wanting to work with academia. To check your eligibility, please contact IDRIC Skills Research Officer Charlotte.McLean@hw.ac.uk.

1.1. Secondee eligibility

As a secondee:

- You must be a resident in the UK*.
- You must be employed by your home organisation for the duration of the proposed secondment.
- Your current role does **not necessarily** have to be funded by IDRIC. The call is open to the wider decarbonisation community.
- You must have relevant experience within your field and in industrial decarbonisation.
- You should already have permission from the principal investigator of your project or line manager at your home organisation (as appropriate).
- A doctoral qualification is not a requirement; however, preference may be given to applicants of a postdoctoral standing or have equivalent professional experience.
- ***Visa holders:** If you are a holder of a visa to work, that visa must allow you as the secondee to undertake the secondment in the UK for the proposed duration of the secondment. It is the responsibility of the secondee to check with their employer that they are eligible to undertake the activity in line with their visa category and conditions. If you are successful in the application process as the secondee, you must have a collaboration agreement signed by the hosting and seconding organisations.

1.2. Home organisation eligibility

This is the organisation sending the secondee. Only the home organisation will be eligible to receive funds from the award. The home organisation must therefore:

- Be in a position to support a secondee to apply for a secondment project.
- Hold a UK bank account.
- Claim and administer the grant if awarded.
- If a secondee is from a university or research organisation, the home organisation must have the potential to pause a research project and/or extend a contract to allow for the undertaking of the secondment.

1.3. Host organisation eligibility

This is the organisation receiving the secondee for the duration of the secondment. The hosting organisation must:

- Be a non-academic private, public or third sector organisation.
- Have a suitable secondment environment in the UK. The IDRIC secondment fund does not fund international working.
- Not claim any funds.
- Provide a supportive, accessible, and inclusive working environment for the secondee, including networking and peer-learning opportunities.

Note: Higher education institution to higher education institution secondments is permitted under this funding opportunity; however, clear evidence must be provided that the secondment will address intersectoral knowledge exchange. Please, contact IDRIC Skills Research Officer (Charlotte.McLean@hw.ac.uk) to check eligibility.

1.4 Brokerage between hosting organisations and potential secondees

Organisations interested in hosting a secondee who do not yet have a secondee, may use our brokerage scheme aimed at connecting potential secondees to hosting organisations.

Please note: forming connections through the brokerage scheme is not an obligatory step of the application process. It is simply a mechanism to connect those that have not developed a connection between host and secondee. Secondees can work with a hosting organisation that they already have a connection with. If you already have an established host-secondee partnership, you can submit an application form without using the brokerage scheme.

If you would like to use the brokerage scheme, please submit a secondment 'pitch' to the IDRIC Skills Research Officer (Charlotte.McLean@hw.ac.uk). Where appropriate, in order to find a suitable secondee, the 'pitch' will be advertised on the IDRIC website, social media platforms, newsletter and will be disseminated via IDRIC's partner and stakeholder networks.

The one-A4 page pitch should include the following information:

- Purpose of intended secondment.
- Specifications of job role.
- Details of preferred secondee, e.g. research area, career level (i.e. number of years at postgraduate or postdoctoral level), specific experience.
- Intended secondment duration
- Estimated start date
- The name and professional email address of a person from the hosting organisation that potential applicants can use to contact for further information/to apply. Please note: this information will be included in the secondment advert on the IDRIC website so will be publicly available.
- Information about how a successful applicant will be selected, e.g. CV, meeting, interview and if there are any specific criteria you would use to make a decision between candidates.

It is preferable for prospective secondee candidates to apply directly to the host. It is the responsibility of the hosting organisation to select the most suitable candidate. The hosting organisation may assess and choose their candidate by their preferred means.

Once agreed, the host and secondee can co-create and submit an application (process outlined below in section 3).

Although we will endeavour to find a suitable secondee for hosts, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to broker a suitable match for every host or interested secondee.

2. What we're looking for

IDRIC forms part of the [Industrial Decarbonisation Challenge](#) and is funded by UKRI. IDRIC is designed as a multidisciplinary research and innovation programme, which currently does not exist at the scale required to accelerate the decarbonisation of industrial clusters in the UK. Through multidisciplinary research aimed at reducing costs, risks, timescales and emissions, and cross-cutting activities such as policy, economic, institutional and regulatory analysis, and knowledge exchange, it seeks to protect and bolster the UK's competitive advantage and ability to capture value. IDRIC aims to address the challenges faced by industrial clusters through its research and policy development functions, stimulating cross learning between clusters and providing a strong evidence base allowing them to make informed decisions about future decarbonisation options, policies and institutional reforms.

The overall purpose of the secondment funding opportunity is to support skills development and knowledge exchange between academia and industry, public and third sector in industrial decarbonisation. The secondment opportunity must also be mutually beneficial to the hosting organisation and to the secondee's research and/or career development. Preference will be given to applicants who can clearly demonstrate the benefits of their secondment and how it will achieve some of the success measures listed below.

- Increase engagement between industrial sectors and facilitate movement of people and knowledge between sectors.
- Break silos between industry/public sector/third sector and academia.
- Add value to the hosting organisation, through innovative outputs that contribute to solving real-world challenges in industrial decarbonisation, such as; a specific industry-led research project, development of process/es, development of training resources, writing relevant reports and/or research papers, organising public/stakeholder engagement events etc.
- Bring wider benefits or impacts to the hosting organisation and/or the wider industrial decarbonisation community, e.g. social, environmental or economic impacts.
- Enhance the secondee's knowledge, interdisciplinary skills and allow for exploration in career pathways.

2.1. Scope

This funding opportunity is broad in its scope and is, therefore, open to candidates from a range of backgrounds, disciplines or research areas. The secondment could cover any sub-discipline, interest or topic as long as it is related to industrial decarbonisation.

IDRIC also recognises that industrial decarbonisation is an interdisciplinary field and we would welcome interdisciplinary applications combining technical and social/economic approaches.

The secondment must address an emerging or key research need that will impact the wider industrial decarbonisation challenge.

2.2. Funding

The seconding organisation can apply for a grant to support a secondee for up to 9 months, plus suitable travel and subsistence costs (80% fEC), (however this grant is paid to the home organisation). There is no minimum request for funding. During the secondment, the secondee will continue to be employed by the home organisation. IDRIC secondment funding will cover:

- Direct, replacement salary costs (buying out time of a current employee for the purpose of the secondment).
- National insurance, tax and any pension costs.
- Superannuation (not including bonuses or awards).
- Travel and subsistence costs related to the secondment, including accommodation when staying away from home during short periods or if a longer-term relocation is required.

Given funding is allocated by UKRI on the basis of the UK's Dual Support funding structure, grants issued through this scheme will be paid on the 80% full economic cost basis (fEC).

Research organisations, universities and academic institutions undertaking non-economic activity as part of this activity can claim up to 80% of the total eligible project costs above.

The home organisation and the hosting organisation are responsible for all other costs, as applicable. The hosting organisation may want to supplement the grant to attract secondees, e.g. supplement of salary, travel, accommodation etc. If this is intended, the hosting organisation must arrange this **directly** with the home organisation. Please document these costs in the application.

If the applicant is not a research organisation or an independent research organisation, then the Subsidy Control Regime regulations (i.e. formerly state aid) may apply.

2.3. Duration

- Secondments must start between 1st February 2023 and end by 15th February 2024.
- Duration of secondments can be up to 9 months.
- Secondments can be full-time, part-time or remote working (depending on hosting and home organisation requirements).
- This is an open and rolling call for secondment proposals. The first deadline for submission is the 15th March and three further submission deadlines are planned (dates to be posted on the IDRIC website), with the final deadline on 13th September 2023.

2.4. Monitoring and reporting

During the secondment, the secondee must maintain regular contact with their line manager at the home organisation and/or principal investigator.

The secondee **must** provide a final report to IDRIC at the completion of their secondment. The report must include how the secondment has delivered the key objectives outlined in the funding application, if there were any challenges and how these were addressed, the skills and knowledge gained by the secondee, the wider impacts of the project on the hosting organisation and any future collaboration or engagement. The final report will not contain any sensitive or confidential information or data (as we may wish to share the report publicly). Further details on reporting will be provided to successful candidates. Secondees will also be required to complete a short feedback form.

3. How to apply

3.1 Application process

If a secondee has already been selected by the hosting organisation, you should follow the process below. If the hosting organisation does not have a secondee lined up, you can use IDRIC's brokerage service to help you find a secondee (see section 1.4). You cannot apply for this funding until you have found a suitable secondee.

To apply, download the application form from the IDRIC website. The completed application form and accompanying documents should be submitted via the submission portal on the IDRIC website.

This is a rolling call but there is a processing deadline every month. Applications submitted before the deadline will be processed at the start of the following month. Any proposals submitted after the deadline will be processed with the following month's submissions. Applicants will be contacted no later than 4 weeks after these deadlines with a proposal decision.

Your secondment proposal must address the objectives of this funding opportunity and demonstrate how it will achieve these objectives. Please refer to these in your application.

What you must submit:

- General information (see application form).
- Case for support (see application form).
- CV of the secondee (maximum two A4 pages).
- Supporting letter from the hosting organisation (maximum two A4 pages).
- Supporting letter from the home organisation (maximum two A4 pages).

3.1.1. General information

Please include the following information on the application form:

- Secondee details.
- Home organisation details (including details for PI and finance/legal contact).
- Hosting organisation details (including details for host contact).
- Secondment details:
 - Project title
 - Proposed start date
 - Duration of the project (months)
 - Total cost (please include this at 100% fEC total cost, IDRIC will be able to support 80% fEC)

3.1.2. Case for support

The case for support should describe the proposed research and its intended outcomes. It should cover the context, importance, methodology and all the associated work and activities you propose to carry out that will contribute to the funding opportunity objectives. This document is the principal opportunity to explain to reviewers why this proposal should be financially supported.

The case for support is divided into eight sections, as described below:

1. *Short summary (maximum 250 words)*

This summary will be made publicly available if funded. Please ensure that the content is accessible to people outside your discipline/sector/research area, e.g. no jargon or acronyms.

2. *Proposal for secondees' research and innovation activity (maximum 750 words)*

Outline the proposed work and how it will contribute to the funding opportunity objectives.

- Provide the background of the project, including context of past and current industrial decarbonisation activities undertaken at the hosting organisation.
- Provide the aims of the secondment (what research questions will be addressed during the secondment, if any).
- Provide an explanation of why and how the secondment project will address any real-world challenges (this should be explained in the context of the secondee's expertise, and the organisations involved or the broader sector or community).

3. *Secondee*

This is where you should highlight your suitability, including evidence of the following:

- Capability of the secondee to effectively undertake and deliver against the aims of the activity and realise the desired outcomes and impacts.
- Knowledge, skills and expertise that will be gained by the secondee and how their participation in the secondment will aid them in their career.

4. *Hosting organisation*

Highlight the suitability of the hosting organisation for undertaking the proposed work with respect to the support they can provide and how they can contribute to the delivery of the proposed research/project.

5. *Impact*

This is where you should highlight the wider benefits and impacts the project will have to the wider industrial decarbonisation challenge (e.g. social, economic, environmental, technical). It is crucial that the research proposed has been developed with a view to its impact on decarbonising the UK industrial clusters and that it demonstrates this potential in the proposal.

- Summarise the benefits and impacts the secondment project will have to the wider industrial decarbonisation challenge (e.g. social, economic, environmental, technical).
- Identify any other beneficiaries of the project activities (including the seven clusters).
- Describe how you will communicate this impact to the wider community, if applicable.
- Describe the impact the secondment may have on the secondee's research/career?

6. *Activity Plan*

Please provide an activity plan that should include:

- The key approach, methodology (if applicable), KPIs and timeline for completion of tasks/work packages.

- A list of management and monitoring arrangements (e.g. reports, host monitoring etc).
- Description of the risk management.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), including how you have implemented EDI considerations in your proposal and (if relevant) team as well as through the delivery of the work.

7. *Data sharing and IP considerations*

Please use this section to consider if there are any implications for data sharing, confidentiality agreements or sensitive data and how you will address any potential barriers.

8. *Summary of Resources Required for Secondment*

This section of the application form will ask for more detailed information on the resource needs to support the secondment and justification for the inclusion of each item. Please follow EPSRC guidelines for allowable costs and use Full Economic Costing (fEC): <https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/fundingguide/resources/>. Projects can be costed for a secondment of up to 9 months (plus suitable travel and subsistence) at 100% full economic cost, we will then fund 80% of the full economic eligible costs. All costs must be fully justified.

The only costs that should be included are:

- The replacement salary costs of the secondee incurred by the secondment activities.
- The travel and subsistence that they will incur by undertaking the secondment.

In this section, please also describe any contributions from host or home organisations (e.g., cash or in-kind).

3.1.3. *Supporting letter from host organisation*

The maximum page limit for the letter of support is two A4 pages.

In your project partner letter of support, you must:

- Confirm the organisation's commitment to the proposed project, including any in-kind and/or cash contributions
- Articulate the value and impacts of the proposed work on the hosting organisation.
- Articulate the benefits of collaboration with academia/connecting with researchers to the hosting organisation.
- Specify the full nature and timescale of the support that will be provided and how the partner will provide added value.

3.1.4. *Supporting letter from secondee's organisation*

The organisation sending the secondee will receive funding to support the secondment. The maximum page limit for the letter of support is two A4 pages.

In your project partner letter of support, you must:

- Confirm the organisation's commitment to the proposed project, including any in-kind and/or cash contributions
- Specify the full nature and timescale of the support that will be provided.

4. How we will assess your application

4.1. Assessment process & criteria

Once submitted the proposals will be checked by the Skills Research Officer to ensure applications meet the requirements of the fund. If there are any minor issues with an application, the Skills Research Officer may request further information or changes. The applications will then be reviewed by the IDRIC Management Board to make a final decision. It is the intention for the review and award process to take no longer than 4 weeks from the application closing date.

The proposals will be assessed against criteria outlined below. Note that the indicators should be used as a guide, and it is not necessary for each proposal to address all indicators under each criterion.

Table 1: Criteria and indicators

Criterion	Indicators
Research Excellence	<p>Relevant indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambition and innovation • Appropriateness of activities • Achievability in the timeframe available • Value for money
Industrial Cluster Decarbonisation Impact	<p>Relevant indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact and relevance of the research to the UK industrial clusters • Impact of proposed stakeholder engagement and embedding of impact in the proposal • Likelihood of the impact being realised
Suitability of secondees	<p>Relevant indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expertise and track record • Effectiveness of the proposed planning and management • Consideration of EDI
Suitability of hosting organisation	<p>Relevant indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting letters demonstrating one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project partner support during the project (including in-kind or in-cash funding) ○ Stakeholder engagement support during the project ○ Expectation of user need

5. Additional information

For further information, please contact info@idric.org or visit the [IDRIC website](#).