



EFFICIENCY FOR ACCESS

Research & Development

Fund - Third Call

Guidance for Applicants



Research & Development Fund - Third Call Guidance for applicants

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1. Overview

The Efficiency for Access Coalition (EforA), supported by UK aid and the IKEA Foundation, will invest funding into Research and Development (R&D) projects with the **aim to accelerate the availability, affordability, efficiency and performance of a range of low energy inclusive appliances** that are particularly suited to developing country contexts and promote social inclusion.

Affordable and efficient electrical appliances for domestic and small-industrial uses are essential for increasing both the pace and impact of energy access in poor countries.

EforA invites organisations to apply for the third call of the EforA Research and Development Fund. Applying for this grant will involve registering your organisation (if it is not already registered) and then completing an application form that provides a comprehensive breakdown of your R&D project. Full due diligence will be conducted on successful applicants, which may involve an interview and site visit. The successful applicants will then be notified and the project milestones and funding agreements will be finalised. The key dates involved are specified further below.

2. Scope

To be in scope for this call, R&D projects must meet the following two criteria:

- 1) Focus on the development of an innovative electrical appliance technology or product for delivery via inclusive business models in off- and weak-grid settings in developing countries
- 2) Focus on at least one of the thematic areas of Inclusivity or Interoperability, as detailed below.

Inclusivity

While there has been considerable progress in people gaining access to energy services in recent years, many of the hardest to reach people from vulnerable, marginalised and disadvantaged groups continue to be left behind. R&D projects that focus on the thematic area of inclusivity must be targeted towards at one or more of the following vulnerable and disadvantaged groups –

- Gender (women and girls)
- Persons with physical or mental disabilities
- Other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including older people, children, stateless and displaced persons, and people in slums or informal settlements

Gender-focused R&D projects

Men and women differ in the purposes for which they need and use energy, and so do their levels of access to it. Even where infrastructure is physically available, women are often hindered in the actual access to energy services, due to lack of finance, appliances, information, training and education. R&D projects that focus on the area of gender must, at a minimum, contribute towards both Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 7, focused on gender equality and affordable and clean energy. Gender-focused R&D projects should involve either –

- Developing innovative appliance technologies and business models that promote gender inclusion or equality;
- Economically empowering women, at the household level but also women-led enterprises;
- Improving accessibility of appliances for women and girls, e.g. enabling access to appliances that do not require substantial physical strength in traditionally male sectors, such as milling etc.

We strongly encourage gender-focused projects that have gender-balanced project teams to apply, i.e. project teams where not more than two-thirds of the members are of the same gender (between one-third and two-thirds of the project team are women).

Disability and other inclusivity-focused R&D projects

Disability and other inclusivity-focused projects should involve either the development or improvement of an appliance technology or product that assists a vulnerable or disadvantaged group in off- and weak-grid areas. Examples of these R&D projects include, but are not limited to, the development of off- and weak-grid appliance technologies and products –

- For mobility impairments, e.g. assistive technologies that assist mobility, electric wheelchairs, and transport.
- For visual/communication impairments, e.g. voice recognition and talking appliances, digital devices for visually impaired children.
- For hearing impairments
- For humanitarian settings

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- Assistive technologies that are low cost and affordable, can be adapted on site, are available for assembly or production on site, and/or that are able to be commercialised and maintained in rural areas.
- Assistive technologies that enable disabled persons to become more productive, independent and more able to earn a living.

We strongly encourage disability and other inclusivity-focused projects to apply that focus on demonstration of impact or creation of a market via improvements in supply chain, innovation in service delivery, and finance models for delivery of assistive technologies.

All Inclusivity R&D projects must also meet the following requirement -

- Any field trials or user testing conducted must include at least 50 percent of the target group, e.g. at least 50 percent women for gender-focused projects, at least 50 percent disabled persons for disability-focused projects, etc.

Interoperability

The EforA Compatibility and Interoperability Technology Roadmap was developed with input from a Technical Working Group (TWG) made up of representatives from solar home system (SHS) companies, PAYGo software providers, appliance manufacturers, an industry association, NGOs, and standards organisations. Interoperability refers to the ability of systems and components to work together in the same environment, including the exchange of information. Interoperability is a key feature of mature markets for a variety of technologies around the world. The Roadmap was developed as a first step towards defining the requirements for that future mature off-grid industry and identifies R&D gaps in the areas of compatibility and interoperability, as well as highlighting where industry coordination is needed.

The Roadmap provides the following recommendations for R&D activities – these are the R&D priority areas that we are primarily interested in. We also encourage R&D projects under this theme to demonstrate a collaborative approach with a coalition of industry partners.

- Development of interoperable power distribution connectivity interfaces and protocols for SHS load management
- Development of power distribution connectivity interfaces and protocols to support the ability of SHS controllers to interface with other SHS, DC mini-grids, or AC mini-grids
- Development of general data connectivity and communications interfaces and protocols for remote monitoring of SHS and appliances
- Low cost embedded controllers and other components that enable the implementation of the communication protocols above.
- Development of technology to enable appliances that require high in-rush currents or have low tolerance for poor power quality to be interoperable with off- and weak-grid power systems, e.g. Embedded or pre-packaged controllers that enable soft-start of motor-driven appliances, allowing the appliances to run on power systems with low surge power capabilities

3. Funding

Grants are available from £50,000 to £300,000. Up to £2 million in funding has been made available for this call.

Applicants are required to provide matched funding. The proportion of funding you are eligible to receive for your project costs is dependent on the size of your organisation, as defined in the table below. If you apply as a partnership, the organisation size refers to that of the lead partner, who will assume responsibility for the project and be the recipient of the grant funding. . If you apply as a partnership, the organisation size refers to that of the lead partner, who will assume responsibility for the project and be the recipient of the grant funding. At least 50% of the staff budget must be allocated to the lead partner, i.e. staff costs allocated for all other partners and sub-contractors must be less than 50% of the total staff costs. In addition, more than 50% of purchases for capital equipment and other costs must be made by the lead partner.

Organisation size	Staff headcount	Turnover	or	Balance sheet total	Proportion of funding available for eligible project costs
Micro	<10	≤ £2m		≤ £2m	Up to 90%
Small	< 50	≤ £9m		≤ £9m	Up to 70%
Medium	< 250	≤ £45m		≤ £39m	Up to 60%
Large	> 250	> £45m		> £39m	Up to 50%

Eligible and non-eligible project costs include:

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Eligible project costs	Ineligible project costs
Personnel costs	Profit
Services	Bonuses
Direct overheads	Dividend payment
Travel costs - direct	Interest payment / financing costs
Equipment and materials	Currency exchange
Indirect overheads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General office costs • Admin support • IT/HR/support function 	Recoverable VAT / local taxes
	Loss of income / opportunity cost
	Patent costs

You will need to provide a budget detailing your project costs in your application form, which will include the amount of grant funding you require and the amount of match funding you will provide for each project milestone. Please note that value for money is one of the main categories by which your application will be scored. Additionally, VAT will only be funded where you can demonstrate that you cannot reclaim it, so all costs must exclude reclaimable VAT.

When specifying personnel costs in your budget, a maximum overhead rate of 25% may be claimed as project costs. Please be aware, however, that we may ask for evidence of how your overhead rate has been calculated, so please ensure you are able to provide this on request. Additionally, if you are claiming an overhead rate of 25%, you may not charge separately for items that would normally be included in overheads, such as general office costs, etc.

4. Eligibility

The minimum eligibility criteria are:

- Applicants must be a legally registered and physically established business, academic organisation, non-profit, public sector organisation, or research and technology organisation from anywhere in the world. Applicants for funding may also form partnerships (such as between academics and businesses, or between entrepreneurs and established businesses). However, the lead partner will assume responsibility for the project and will be the recipient of the grant funding.
- Your application must demonstrate outcomes linked to both the programme's overall objective (of accelerating the availability, affordability, efficiency and performance of a range of low energy inclusive appliances particularly suited to developing country contexts) and the R&D scope for this call, as detailed in the Scope section.
- Applicants must demonstrate sufficient match funding for project costs, as outlined in the Funding section.
- Applicants must demonstrate a track record in research and innovation, and/or provide strong evidence of your capacity to successfully implement the R&D project.
- Applicants must be compliant with fundamental in-country and international human rights, labour standards, and environmental management laws. Applicants must not be involved in any act of terrorism or support terrorist activities.
- Applicants must allow regular due diligence.

Please email us at EforAgrants@est.org.uk if you are unsure if you are eligible or if your application is within the scope of this Call.

5. Key Dates

Stage one

- 21 January 2020 – Registration and Call for applications opens

Stage two

- 22 March 2020, at 18.00 GMT – Submissions of applications closes

Award

- May 2020 – Successful applicants that pass due diligence are notified
- 1 June 2020 – Projects must start by this date

We will also be holding two webinars to present the Call and answer questions, on the weeks commencing on 3 February and 10 February. Details to join will be provided on the [EforA Funding webpage](#) and emailed to all registered organisations.

6. Applying and Assessment

Please ensure you have read the full Guidance for Applicants before applying.

We will not accept late submissions. Your applications are confidential.

The full details of the application process are detailed below.

Stage one - registration

This stage involves initial registration on the EforA website. If you have already registered previously then you will not need to register again. If you have not registered previously, we will ask for organisational details and a main point of contact. Following registration, you will receive an e-mail confirming your registration has been successful. You will then be able to submit an application once the call is open.

Stage two - applications

The second stage involves submission of an application that provides a comprehensive breakdown of your R&D project, including uploading supporting evidence such as studies, reports, data, graphs and figures. As part of your application you will need to specify milestones within your project that you will work towards in order to achieve the project's aims and objectives. Grant funding amount requests must be specified for each milestone, and the grant amount requested in your final milestone must be at least 10% of your total grant request.

Assessment

Applications will undergo an assessment by up to two EforA assessors and independent technical experts, selected from an assessment panel. The assessment criteria are provided below. Please note that an additional ~8% in score will be given to projects that implement at least part of the project in a UK aid priority country. The UK aid priority countries are –

Afghanistan, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo (Democratic Republic of the), Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt (Arab Republic of), Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Iraq, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Tanzania (United Republic of), The Occupied Palestinian Territories, Togo, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (República Bolivariana de), Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Assessment criteria	Key application questions	Weighting
1) Alignment with EforA objectives and scope	1.2, 1.3	2.5
2) Technical evidence	1.4	2
3) R&D project location in at least one UK aid priority country	1.8	+2 (7.7%)
4) Project beneficiaries and impacts	2.1	2.5
5) Innovation and Additionality	2.2	2.5
6) Market for Technology or Product and Scalability	2.3, 2.4	2.5
7) Social inclusion	2.5	1.5
8) Sustainability and e-waste	2.6	1.5
9) Capacity and qualifications	3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5	2.5
10) Project plan and budget (including value for money)	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5	4.5
11) Funding sources	4.7	1
12) Monitoring and evaluation	4.8	1
13) Project management	4.9	1
14) Project risk assessment	4.10	1
	Maximum	28

Note: each category will be scored individually from 0 to 5, prior to the weighting being applied.



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Once every application has been assessed, the assessment panel will meet to determine the applications to be funded based on the assessment scores and potentially applying a 'portfolio' approach. A 'portfolio' approach may be used to ensure funding is spread across multiple scope areas, geographic locations, stages of R&D, project durations, project costs, and levels of project risk. We understand the risks involved in R&D and welcome applications for projects that are both high risk and high reward (impact). Unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the outcome of the assessment and may request feedback.

Due Diligence and Award

The successful applicants will undergo technical due diligence, which may involve requests for further information and data, interviews, and a site visit. Applicants that pass technical due diligence will undergo financial diligence, involving the checking of audited accounts, and must complete a [due diligence and safeguarding questionnaire](#). Please note that we understand that some organisations may not be able to answer some due diligence questions affirmatively. Should this be the case for your organisation, please do not let this deter you from applying as we may seek to mitigate these risks in other ways.

Successful applicants that pass due diligence will be notified that they are to be awarded a grant. Discussions will take place with the successful applicant to confirm the start date, project milestones reporting obligations, and other project and applicant details, before finalising a [grant agreement](#). The EforA Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team will also work with the applicant to develop an M&E plan using the EforA [M&E plan template](#), which must be approved before commencing the project.

Once the project commences, awardees will be required to submit a [milestone report](#) and supporting documentation, along with an [milestone expenditure form](#), at the end of each milestone before grant funding is disbursed for that milestone. For the final milestone, awardees must complete a [final report](#), which must be reviewed and approved before the final milestone grant disbursement is made. EforA will also conduct M&E visits as needed.

7. Application Assistance

If you are looking for partner organisations with specific areas of expertise, the EforA team can help support you in your search by matching you with other organisations looking for partners. You may contact us at EforAgrants@est.org.uk and make a request for assistance by 14 February 2020.

Additionally, if you are a Micro-sized organisation (as defined in section 3. Funding), or your organisation is based in a UK aid priority country (as defined in section 6. Applying and Assessment), we are available to assist you in reviewing your draft application. Please note that we will provide a basic review (requiring a maximum of 1 hour of EforA staff time) and the comments provided by the reviewer may differ from the ultimate judgement of the application assessors. If you wish to have your draft application reviewed, you must contact us at EforAgrants@est.org.uk and make a request for assistance by 14 February 2020.

The assistance EforA provides will be managed to ensure that no conflict of interest arises during the assessment process.

8. Intellectual Property Rights

All intellectual property rights (IPRs) developed during and or as a result of the funded project, will be owned by the awardee, and not the funding parties (DFID, etc.). However, the funding parties will be granted a world-wide license to the project IP for reporting and administration of the fund.

As a public funder, UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) has no intention of using this IPR for commercial purposes. Clause 9.3 of the [grant agreement](#) protects awardees from a competing product being developed from the IPR, closing the scope of the license to only allow use of that IP as described in the grant agreement. The licence would be the only benefit to be taken from the agreement, and its use would predominately be focused around Clause 8 (publicity).

9. R&D Categories and Length

Your project should fall under one of the following categories based on the stage of your R&D. The allowable length of your R&D project is based on the stage of your R&D:

- **Early stage for feasibility studies** (lasting 6 to 12 months) – This includes both developing and demonstrating the concept for a technology, and analysis and evaluation of a technology’s potential, aimed at supporting the process of decision making. This is achieved by uncovering its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as well as identifying resources needed and the prospects for success. Feasibility studies will usually help businesses decide to work either individually or collaboratively with other industrial or research organisations, before conducting a subsequent larger project.
- **Mid-stage for industrial research** (lasting 12 to 24 months) – This should be for the purpose of product development, processes or services that lead to an improvement in existing products, processes or services. It can include the creation of component parts to complex systems and may include prototypes in a laboratory or environment with simulated interfaces to existing systems, particularly for generic technology validation.
- **Late stage for experimental development** (lasting 12 to 30 months) – Experimental development may comprise prototyping, demonstrating, piloting, testing and validation of new or improved products, processes or services in environments representative of real life operating conditions. The primary objective is to make further technical improvements on products, processes or services that are not substantially set. This may include the development of a commercially usable prototype or pilot which is necessarily the final commercial product and which is too expensive to produce for it to be used only for demonstration and validation purposes. Experimental development does not include routine or periodic changes made to existing products, production lines, manufacturing processes, services and other operations in progress, even if those changes may represent improvements.

Visit the [website](#) to register and apply for this Call.

10. Contact

For more information, email us at EforAgrants@est.org.uk

Energy Saving Trust manages the Efficiency for Access Research and Development Fund and is the co-secretariat for the Efficiency for Access Coalition, in partnership with CLASP.



EforAgrants@est.org.uk



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