



Science and
Technology
Facilities Council

STFC 2020 GRAVITATIONAL WAVES GRANTS ROUND (including Advanced LIGO Operations Support)

Guidelines for Applicants June 2020

Open call – new groups may apply

CLOSING DATE: Grant Proposals and Form X – 6 October 2020

Please read these guidelines carefully

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1 Overview

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This document sets out the guidelines for the Gravitational Waves 2020 Grants Round. While the document provides specific guidance concerning this grants round, it should be read in conjunction with the [STFC Research Grants Handbook](#).

1.1.2 The grants round and these guidelines have been developed to ensure that the process is:

- transparent and accountable, particularly with respect to the means of research prioritisation;
- efficient, both in terms of the requirement for applicants and the reviewers – both panels and peer reviewers, and the use of STFC office resources; and
- provides a timely outcome.

1.2 Timetable

1.2.1 The timetable for the review will be as follows:

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Call open | 22 June 2020 |
| Closing date for grant proposals and Form X | 6 October 2020 |
| Peer Review process | October – November 2020 |
| Applicants to receive and respond to reviewer comments | November - December 2020 |
| Applicants to receive panel clarification questions | November - December 2020 |
| Peer Review meeting | January 2021 |
| Science Board meeting | February 2021 |
| Outcome announced | March 2021 |
| Grants commence | 1 October 2021 |

1.3 Review Panel Remit

1.3.1 A Review Panel will be set up with the objective to review STFC grant support for Gravitational Waves (GW) research. The panel's role is to:

- Assess and make recommendations to the STFC Executive on Gravitational Waves research grant applications;
- Take account (as appropriate) of the recommendations of external reviewers and the conclusions of specialist peer review panels. The latter may be convened by the executive to advise on consolidated grants, contiguous groups of research requests, or research requests which are judged (on the basis of cost or propriety) to warrant such separate, in-depth assessment;

- Advise the STFC's Science Board and the Executive as required on all issues relating to research grants, including monitoring the level of funding allocated to grants; and
- Carry out other such tasks associated with peer review as the Executive might require.

1.3.2 The membership of the panel will be confirmed in due course.

1.4 Remit

1.4.1 Within this call, requests can be made for the following activities within gravitational waves research:

- Detector R&D/development - small scale development of new technologies (including hardware and the use of theoretical analysis and simulations) to improve detector potential and development of technology to improve sensitivity of existing and future suspended-mass laser interferometric gravitational wave detectors.
- Operations - commissioning and operation of detectors to ensure continuity of observation and improved level of sensitivity of observations (including detector characterisation). This includes on site detector support and shifts undertaken by UK groups, as well as provision of computing resources for gravitational wave searches and parameter estimation.
- Exploitation - development and application of tools to model signals, perform searches and analyse data from the global network of gravitational wave observatories, and interpret the scientific significance of the results. This includes the measurement of source parameters; interpretation of gravitational wave observations in the context of astrophysical populations; tests of general relativity; inferences of neutron star structure; cosmology with gravitational waves.

1.4.2 Support for blue skies R&D for non-project specific technologies (i.e. ones that could be used for a range of opportunities including gravitational wave infrastructures which are not suspended-mass laser interferometric gravitational wave detectors) and exploitation activities related to gravitational wave astronomy should be requested through the Astronomy Consolidated Grant scheme. This includes the development of astrophysical models for binary formation and evolution; electromagnetic observations complementary to GW; exploitation of public GW data.

1.4.3 STFC recognises that in some cases a group's research may span both the particle astrophysics gravitational wave programme and the astronomy programme, and it is more appropriate to apply for a coherent programme of

work which has relevance to both the astronomy and particle astrophysics programmes. In this case, you should consider the remit definition to decide where the majority of your research fits and apply to that programme. In order to ensure that the proposal undergoes fair and transparent review, STFC will follow the principles of peer review outlined under the [Applications across Research Council remits](#) policy for e.g. seeking reviewers from both panels, cross panel membership etc. You can also apply to both programmes, as long as you apply for clearly differentiated activities and present two different programmes of work. You should not apply for funding for the same activity to both programmes and STFC will monitor to ensure there is no duplication of funded activity across the programmes. It may be the case that the two applications form part of an overall research programme, but you should explain which activities are relevant to each programme.

- 1.4.4 If this is the first time you are applying to this call, please contact STFC to ensure your proposed programme fits within the scheme definition. If you previously applied for funding through the astronomy consolidated grant and now wish to apply through this scheme then please contact STFC to discuss transition arrangements, as it may be the case that the start and end dates for your current astronomy grant may not align with the start and end dates for this call.

1.5 Strategic guidance

- 1.5.1 **Please note that capital equipment funding is available as part of this call.**
- 1.5.2 In assessing proposals the Panel will take account of the [Particle Astrophysics Programme Evaluation](#), which seeks to ensure that the critical mass and leadership developed within the UK gravitational waves programme is maintained and that the UK can contribute fully to next-generation projects.
- 1.5.3 The Panel will ensure that:
- The programme supported is scientifically excellent;
 - The programme is clearly in line with STFC's strategic science objectives and priorities; that it addresses the impact agenda (e.g. in terms of technology development and knowledge transfer) and is responsive to changes and future opportunities within the community;
- 1.5.4 It is important that proposals are ambitious and forward looking and that groups still request what they need to carry out their full programme of work; however applicants are asked to note the constrained financial environment within which the STFC is operating.

- 1.5.5 UK Research and Innovation has announced changes to requirements on 'Pathways to Impact'. As a result of this change, you will no longer be required to provide a 'Pathways to Impact' plan or complete an 'Impact Summary' within your grant application. These requirements were removed for all UKRI opportunities submitted after 01 March 2020. As this change is implemented, we ask that you follow STFC guidance concerning Impact when preparing your application to this opportunity: [Case for Support- Impact Funding](#).

1.6 Enquiries

- 1.6.1 For all queries relating to Je-S please contact the Je-S helpdesk
email: JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org
All helpdesk staff are currently working remotely and only respond to queries sent to the mailbox. They can be contacted Monday to Friday 09.00-17.00 UK time (excluding bank holidays and other holidays).
- 1.6.2 For non-Je-S enquiries and FEC related enquiries please contact
Kamalam Vanninathan - Programme Manager
email: kamalam.vanninathan@stfc.ukri.org

2 Consolidated grants

2.1 2020 consolidated grant

- 2.1.1 STFC provides support for the gravitational waves programme through consolidated grants (CG) which were first introduced in 2010. Each university Institution (or equivalent sub-unit with the university) may submit one consolidated grant proposal per subject area every three years. This grants round will consider consolidated grant requests in the ground based gravitational waves subject area. Where more than one department/group at a university is involved in the same subject area a single consolidated grant proposal should be submitted.
- 2.1.2 Applicants should request three years of support and should note that consolidated grants are considered independently of each other. If a CG is awarded which overlaps with an existing grant due to an extension, the existing grant remains active and its duration unchanged.
- 2.1.3 Posts will normally be awarded for three years, but where required an extension of up to one year may be applied for to provide groups with flexibility, for example to delay the start date of a post. An extension cannot be applied for at the time of the proposal submission, but can be applied for once the grant is active and any delayed posts have commenced.

2.2 Consortium grants

- 2.2.1 Groups from different institutions working collaboratively in the same well-defined research area may apply for a consolidated research grant as a consortium. This is intended to allow members of such consortia the opportunity to bid for shared resources, that they might not otherwise be able to secure on their own, perhaps due to the size and/or scope of their activity. In practice, this would require the submission of a single case for support, with either one Je-S form per institution or one Je-S form on behalf of the consortium.
- 2.2.1 **If you are considering submitting a consortium grant, you are required to notify STFC prior to submission.**
- 2.2.2 An individual would only be supported on a maximum of one consolidated grant. Therefore individuals in groups that apply as a consortium would be excluded from also applying as part of their individual institution's application.

3 Classification of posts

3.1 Categories of staff

3.1.1 Consolidated grants have four categories of staff: academics, core staff, non-core staff, and support staff.

3.1.2 New posts may be requested in either the core or non-core categories, or a change in categorisation may be requested, so a post assigned as non-core in the 2016 round may now be requested as part of the core group and vice versa. It is not expected that core posts would represent a high proportion of the non-academic total grant costs.

3.2 Definition of Core Posts

3.2.1 **'Core posts'** are defined as underpinning research activity that is, to a great extent, not contingent on the specific details of the group's future programme of work. It is not normally expected that RA posts would be defined as core posts. Ultimately, the grants panel will make judgements on a case-by-case basis, but the following may be used as a guide:

- expertise in the areas of experimental development and construction;
- expertise in the development, maintenance and operation of experimental computing infrastructure;
- expertise in the maintenance and operation of experiments;
- engineering and technical expertise, e.g. electronic engineers, mechanical designers; and
- senior research posts (typically, these post holders are expected to have at least five years postdoctoral research experience). These staff would only be identified as core staff if their role is essential to the scientific success of the group and they possess unique or critical expertise with skills that would be difficult to replace.

3.2.2 The senior research posts would only be identified as core staff if their role is essential to the scientific success of the group and they possess critical expertise with skills that would be difficult to replace. Pool staff and general secretarial or computing support staff would not be considered to be core staff.

3.3 Making a case for core posts

3.3.1 If requesting core posts, each group must make a case as part of their proposal, stressing the areas of expertise of the post(s), over the last four years. The proposal should also give a plan of work for the next three years (i.e. from 1 October 2021), and explain the contribution of the core post(s).

- 3.3.2 Posts requested as core may be awarded as non-core posts by the panel, if it is felt that the scientific case does not require the long term continuity intended for core posts, but that the case is strong enough to justify funding.

3.4 Non-core posts

- 3.4.1 Non-core posts will be allocated in response to strong physics cases. A competitive allocation procedure will be used for them, comparing cases for continuation of existing, and for new posts.
- 3.4.2 Requests may also be made for support staff. These include administrative effort as well as general computing support. These posts are also considered as non-core posts.

3.5 Project studentships

- 3.5.1 It is possible to apply for project PhD studentships as part of grant proposals. For guidance please see the [STFC Research Grants Handbook](#) section 5.4.4. A strong case needs to be made explaining how essential the student is to the research on which they will be working.
- 3.5.2 The panel will assess the scientific quality of the project, consider whether the project offers suitable training in research methods and techniques, comment on the broader training and consider if the studentship adds value overall to the research proposal. All potential costs should be included in the proposal.

3.6 Co-investigators named on grants

- 3.6.1 Co-applicants who, following peer-review, are not in receipt of any funding for academic time are not usually listed on the grant. However, genuine participants in the research who do not require any funding for academic time such as emeritus researchers or fellows fully or partially funded from other sources are eligible to be named as co-investigators. It is recognised that such individuals may sometimes be difficult to identify, so the PI should alert STFC to ensure that any such instances can be dealt with. Cases should be made for such posts as the grants panel will assess these along with all others. If overheads are sought for such posts, this should be made clear in the case for support.

4 Applying for a consolidated grant

This section should be read in addition to the guidance provided in the [STFC Research Grants Handbook](#).

4.1 Submitting applications through the Je-S system

4.1.1 All proposals should be submitted online using the [Je-S login screen](#). This screen also has links to tutorials and system help. In the event of any queries relating to the Je-S system please contact the Je-S helpdesk directly by e-mail at: JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org. Applicants should use the Je-S form for standard grants, and should apply for a grant of three years duration. The following options should be selected in the Je-S system when putting your proposal together:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Council: | STFC |
| Document Type: | Standard Proposal |
| Scheme: | Standard (FEC) |
| Call: | Gravitational Waves 2020 |
| Peer Review Preference: | Particle Astrophysics |

4.1.2 Failure to select the correct options may mean the proposal does not reach the correct Research Council or department and will ultimately result in your Je-S proposal being returned.

4.1.3 The consolidated grants for this round will have a start date of 1 October 2021 and an end date of 30 September 2024. You are reminded that all consolidated grants must start on the announced start date. For this reason there is no longer any flexibility to adjust the grant's start date, and when awarded, the latest start date will be the same as the earliest date.

4.1.4 The deadline for the submission of consolidated grant proposals and Form X is 4pm on Tuesday, 06 October 2020.

4.1.5 **Please note:** it is the responsibility of the PI to ensure that their institution's administration department submits the proposal before the submission deadline. Applicants can view the status of their proposal online by logging into the Je-S system – STFC office staff are unable to view the proposal until it is finally submitted by the institution's administration department and has undergone initial checks by the UKRI grants team. Proposals submitted after the closing date **WILL NOT** be considered.

4.1.6 Further information on how to apply for a grant can be found on the [STFC Research Grants Handbook](#).

4.2 Additional documents required

4.2.1 In addition to the online application form which must be submitted through Je-S, the following documents are required:

- A Case for Support which is a single document containing the following:
 - Section 1: Group Overview Report and Proposal
 - Section 2: Cases for the Themes
 - Section 3: Publications table and list
- Separate attachments are required for each of the following:
 - Data Management plan
 - Form X (Staff details form)

4.2.2 Please note: applicants should be careful to classify documents correctly using the options available and submit as PDFs. Failure to do so will result in incomplete proposals being sent out to reviewers (e.g. documents classified as 'Other' are not sent out for review). The Case for Support, and Data Management plan should be uploaded as attachments to the Je-S proposal. The Form X spreadsheet should be emailed to kamalam.vanninathan@stfc.ukri.org.

4.2.3 All documentation should be provided in 11 point Arial font with 2cm page margins.

4.3 Costings

4.3.1 All details relating to the grant costs can be found in the [STFC Research Grants Handbook](#)

4.4 Justification of resources

4.4.1 All costs associated with the research proposal must be justified, with the exception of estates, indirects, infrastructure technician costs and the unit cost of TRAC-determined elements such as investigator salary costs or research facility charge-out costs.

4.4.2 An explanation for all costs requested on the Je-S form must be given in the Case for Support. Each directly incurred post must be given a name or, for unnamed posts, a unique number (e.g. RA1, RA2 etc.). The same name or number must be used in the Je-S proposal, Case for Support and the Form X. Where these details do not match, the documents will be returned for correction.

4.5 Section 1 – Group Overview Report and Proposal

4.5.1 Section 1 should provide a concise report on the scientific progress of the group since the last review, and set out proposals for the future programme. Section 1 should include the following:

- Summary of the group's activities and strategy: The report should begin with a summary of the group's activities/achievements and the strategy for the future programme. Reference should be made to the support your institution provides to your group, with emphasis on recent investments that are relevant to the group's research programme and its component themes. If relevant, you should also refer to any future PPRP (Projects Peer Review Panel) proposals expected to be submitted over the next grant period. This part of the report is expected to be no more than two pages in length.
- References to individuals in the group's reports should be highlighted in bold face.
- Only the publications and equivalent material since 1 April 2015, should be used which provide a track record and appropriate context for the case for support, and references should be made to these in Section 3, rather than including the bibliographic information several times.
- If a theme was funded in the previous grant round but will not continue into the new round then a report on the programme of work carried out by group members in that theme since 1 April 2015 should be included. The maximum length for each theme here is half a page per FTE in the theme, or one page per theme, whichever is the greater. This is in addition to the two page limit above.

4.6 Other information

4.6.1 The following information should also be provided (and does not count towards the pages limits set above):

- For the programme of work carried out since 1 April 2015, an explanation of any expenditure which has resulted in a variation of 20% or more against the funds awarded against each heading in the original announcement.
- Other STFC support and non-STFC support: The Grants Panel seeks information on STFC support outside the consolidated grant over the review period, for example grants funded through PPRP, IPS (Innovations Partnership Scheme), and Fellowships etc. Examples of non-STFC support include organisations like the European Research Council. The Panel is only interested in support which has been obtained for equipment, consumables, travel and staff posts directly involved in the programme; it is not necessary to detail any other items.

- Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers: The applicant is required to report on how the concordat is being implemented within the context of the group.
- Group-wide Support posts: A case, no longer than one page, should be made for the administrative and computer support requested. Where administrative or computing support is requested under the 'Other Directly Allocated' heading, the following information should be provided for each post: type (e.g. administrative support or computing support), name, FTE, duration and total cost per person. The cases for support posts should be in alphabetical order by surname, or post title for unnamed posts. Support posts should be included on Form X below the scientific and technical posts. The order and format of names should be consistent in both the case for support and Form X.
- Group-wide Non-Staff costs: A case, no longer than one page, should be made for group-wide non-staff costs such as public engagement resources and consumables (which include equipment items under £10k). Where items of equipment over £10k are sought, a case for support should be provided (maximum half a page per item, which is in addition to the one page limit). This should: provide a technical justification related to the programme of research it is intended to support, noting whether the equipment is critical for the programme of work; set out the full cost of the equipment with the Institute's proposed contribution; and give an indication of when the equipment is needed.

4.7 Section 2 – Cases for the Themes

- 4.7.1 This part of the proposal should provide the information requested by Theme. A theme consists of a clearly defined, cohesive, scientific programme of work. Where there are strong synergies between themes within a proposal, applicants should consider if it would be more appropriate to combine themes in order to create a cohesive programme. Each theme should contain the following sections: Part (a), Part (b) and request
- 4.7.2 Part (a) A report on the programme of work carried out by group members since 1 April 2015. This should explain if there have been any major changes to the programme compared with the original plans, and provide an assessment of the extent to which the major aims have been met.
- 4.7.3 Part (b) A science case for the group's future programme for the time period – 1 October 2021 to 31 September 2024. This should set out the science case for the proposed programme of work over the requested period. For each scientific area it should address the following:
- What are the major goals and scope of the programme/theme?

- How does the programme/theme fit within the international context?
 - How will the programme/theme advance the field?
 - Explain how the main highlights of related previous research since 1 October 2016 relate to the proposed programme of work.
 - What methodologies and techniques will be applied to the research and what facilities will be required to achieve the programme aims?
 - Where work on the scientific area is proposed as part of a consortium of university groups, the relationship between the groups and added value of funding the area as a consortium should be explained. Alternatively, if not applying as a consortium please explain the synergies with other groups carrying out similar activities.
- 4.7.4 The maximum page limit for Parts (a) and (b) for all the themes is half a page per FTE for Part (a) and one page per FTE for Part (b). FTE is defined as per-head for an academic or fellow, and the actual proportion of time for a researcher (includes PDRAs). To reflect that themes may vary in their size of programme, it is up to groups to determine how they wish to split the overall page limit by theme. Where page limits are not adhered to, proposals will be returned. Where an individual is working on more than one theme, a justification needs to be made within each theme whilst remaining within the page allowance. The page allocation should be divided between the themes.

Scientific posts

- 4.7.5 A case relating to the proposed programme and Form X must be made for the continuation of each current staff post, or fraction of a post, and for initiation of new posts. In line with the principles of FEC, cases must be included also for academic staff posts for which no salary funding is sought.
- 4.7.6 A scientific case for each post (including project studentships) should be made, with a maximum of half a page allowed for each post indicating if the post is considered core, and a proposed plan of work identified for the next relevant period of the post identifying the FTE fraction spent on the theme. The case for investigator time should be justified in terms of the future programme, not past productivity, including posts where no funding is sought.
- 4.7.7 Posts should be justified in the following order: a) academic posts, b) core posts, c) non-core posts, d) support posts. Within each category, posts should be listed alphabetically by surname, post title for unnamed posts. The posts on Form X must be listed in the same order. The naming format used must be consistent on the case for support, Je-S form and Form X.

- 4.7.8 For each academic post listed, the level of effort and experience/skills required should be justified in terms of their specific activities in the programme of work. Biographies and CVs are not appropriate for this purpose.
- 4.7.9 For non-academic staff, applicants should describe their role in the programme of work in terms of their specific skills and activities, and describe any non-publication related scientific output.
- 4.7.10 Academics should apply for the actual amount of their time they expect to spend on research, taking into account other commitments (e.g. teaching, other funded research activity). The typical amount of time requested is 60% FTE per year. Academics are entitled to request 60% FTE and will not be disadvantaged relative to those requesting less time. If a proposal is only requesting a particular investigator's time for part of the grant duration (e.g. if an academic has fellowship funding for the first two years of the grant and so only seeks funding for the last year), this needs to be made clear in the text, as the Je-S form does not have the facility to enter this information. Similarly, if an academic is requesting variable levels of FTE support during the grant this also needs to be made clear, with the different amounts of FTE and exact start and end dates of the changes specified. If no salary costs are requested for a particular investigator but estates and indirect costs are requested for that investigator, this needs to be made clear in the text as it will not be apparent from the Je-S form.

Please note: it is imperative that the correct level of time is sought, because it is likely that scaling of some kind may be applied to the academic positions.

- 4.7.11 Bids for continuation of existing posts, and for additional staff support, will be assessed on their merits by the Panel. The overall group size and the number of academics in the group are among the factors that the Panel may take into account in their deliberations.
- 4.7.12 If a Visiting Researcher is requested, please enclose a CV of the proposed visitor as an appendix to the case for support, and a justification of the request in terms of their scientific role in the proposed research, in half a side of A4.
- 4.7.13 New themes: for any new activities or initiatives, part (a) above should be replaced by a description of the applicants' previous work in the field and its relevance to the work proposed. The same page limit applies.

4.7.14 List of references: the reference list, given in Section 3, is supplementary and is not counted in the page limit.

4.8 Non-staff costs

4.8.1 A case, maximum one and a half pages in total within each theme, should be made for travel and subsistence, public engagement resources and consumables (which includes equipment items under £10k). Where items of equipment over £10k are sought, a case for support should be provided (maximum half a page per item, which is in addition to the one page limit). This should provide a technical justification related to the programme of research it is intended to support and note whether the equipment is critical for the programme of work, set out the full cost of the equipment with the Institute's proposed contribution and an indication of when the equipment is needed.

4.8.2 It should also be made clear where items are being purchased for shared use with other institutions and where items are being purchased to build one larger item. It should be noted that it is possible for one university to make a bid for equipment on behalf of several groups. Detector systems or other equipment which will be jointly constructed by more than one group should have a single case in one consolidated grant proposal which should be referred to by the other groups that intend to request a share of the costs instead of each group presenting a separate case for the same equipment. In general, STFC expects to contribute around 50% of the cost of equipment items, with matched funding from the university, although applicants can request a STFC contribution of more than 50% and this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. For further information please see the [STFC Research Grants Handbook](#).

4.8.3 Applicants should request the full estimated cost of group travel, in line with the rules of their institution, including a justification of the request. The Panel also expects that groups should seek travel funds from sources other than their institutions.

4.8.4 Other Directly Incurred (ODI) costs:

- When applying for ODI costs, please ensure that the funds requested are clearly listed under the separate headings given in your Case for Support. The cost of the items listed should agree with those provided in the Je-S form. Please refer to the [STFC Research Grants Handbook](#) when putting together these lists and ensure that these items are individually less than £10k. Requests for consumables which support the whole proposal should not be split proportionally across themes; instead they should be presented as an

overall cost on the proposal. Please ensure that items are not included that should be part of the Estates or Indirects, or met by the University.

- Computing: Please note standard desktops and laptops should normally be provided by the institute. Where higher specification desktops or laptops are required, for the completion of specific grant related activities, justification should be given.
- Public engagement: Applicants may request funds for public outreach activities on consolidated grants, subject to a well justified case. A description of the proposed activities and a justification of the resources requested should be included as a separate section within Section 2 of the proposal document. This section should be a maximum of one page. For more guidance please see the 'Public Engagement' section of the [STFC Website](#).

Support for Advanced LIGO operations

4.8.5 Requests for support for Advanced LIGO operations should be made as a theme within Section 2. If required, this theme can be split into work packages. If there is cross-over between this theme and others (especially in relation to descriptions of physics results and exploitation activities) then please refer to other themes if appropriate, rather than duplicate information. Should UK institutes participating in operations support wish to provide a joint case rather than individual cases, this is allowable.

4.8.6 Part (a) of the report should contain:

- a brief overview of the facility used, the status of the detector, and a summary of the data taken;
- brief highlights of the physics results with major UK involvement, and a description of the UK contributions, including a list of UK personnel in coordinating roles since 1 April 2015;
- the status of UK-funded items (hardware and software) and how these items are performing;
- A summary of the support awarded in the previous operations round, and how this was spent.

4.8.7 Part (b) of the report should contain:

- A brief overview of the future programme of the detector, highlighting physics goals and future UK exploitation activities;
- the requirement to fulfil detector operation and maintenance obligations
- The implications of future upgrades on the request for resources

4.8.8 The total page limit for operations support themes is 10 pages. The request for resources and justification should be made as per the instructions given above for all themes.

4.9 Section 3 – Publications

4.9.1 Please read the [STFC Research Grants Handbook](#) with regard to the Publications Table, in particular the new section relating to the Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA). The sections that follow are specific to Gravitational Waves.

4.9.2 A table of the group’s publications accepted for publication or published from 1 April 2015 until 31 March 2020 should be provided in the following format:

| | Number of refereed Publications | Number of refereed publications where a significant contribution was made | Number of technical reports ² | Number of technical reports ² where a significant contribution was made | Number of conference proceedings |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Investigator | | | | | |
| A N Other 1 | | | | | |
| A N Other 2 ¹ | | | | | |

¹ A N Other 2 was on maternity leave from June-Dec 2018

² Technical papers are defined as those specifically arising from instrument development or construction and not un-refereed science papers.

4.9.3 For the purposes of this exercise ‘Investigator’ includes Research Assistants and academics. The second column, ‘Number of refereed publications where a significant contribution was made’ should be a subset of publications from the first column in which the investigator has led the research. In the case where there is a justifiable career break such as a period of maternity leave, or extenuating circumstances, a footnote should be added as shown above.

5 Peer Review Process

5.1 Introducers

5.1.1 A member of the Panel will be allocated as “introducer” for each consolidated grant proposal. As in previous rounds, the Introducers role is to clarify any issues which are unclear in the grant proposal documentation and lead the discussion at the Peer Review Meeting.

5.2 Reviewers

5.2.1 Rather than nominate a single reviewer on the proposal form, applicants are invited to send reviewer nominations for each theme to kamalam.vanninathan@stfc.ukri.org. The Panel will take the nominations into consideration when assigning reviewers, but it is not guaranteed that the nominated reviewers will be used.

5.3 Applicants’ responses to reviewers' comments

5.3.1 Following the reviewers process, applicants are then given the opportunity to see and comment on the reports via the Je-S system.

5.4 Peer review meetings

5.4.1 A peer review meeting will take place to consider the proposals and make recommendations on the programme to Science Board and the STFC Executive Board.

5.5 Assessment criteria

5.5.1 The Panel will assess all proposals in accordance with the assessment procedures set out in the [STFC Research Grants Handbook](#).

5.6 Cost revision following review

5.6.1 If, as a result of the Panel review of the grants, a reduction is recommended in resources on a proposal, STFC will amend the award on a pro-rata basis in line with the reduction or increase in research staff effort awarded. In exceptional circumstances it may it may be necessary for STFC liaise with the research organization.

6 New Applicant Scheme

6.1 New Applicant Scheme

6.1.1 Newly appointed academic members of staff (lecturers or lecturer equivalent fellows) who have joined a department between grant reviews may exceptionally apply separately for support. This will potentially allow them to begin to establish a research programme on appointment. If grant funding is agreed, funding is likely to be awarded as an addition to the department's existing consortium or consolidated grant.

6.1.2 It should be noted that the number of awards is likely to be very limited and funding will be extremely competitive. Where awards are made it is likely to be at the level of Travel, Consumables, Computing and Secretarial Support.

6.2 Eligibility

6.2.1 Applicants may not be funded on more than one grant. For example, if an individual transfers from another university, they cannot hold resource on both a new applicant grant, and a consolidated grant at their previous institution.

6.2.2 Applicants must be employed on a full or part-time basis as academic members of staff at the grant-holding University by the start date of the new applicants grant. Note that the usual eligibility rules apply – please see the [STFC Research Grants Handbook](#).

6.2.3 Applicants will need to demonstrate that there are insufficient funds within the flexibility of the existing grant to support their research.

6.3 Terms of the scheme

6.3.1 Applicants must be the sole investigator.

6.3.2 Applicants can only apply once at any institution for a new applicant award.

6.3.3 Applicants can apply for funding for a minimum of a year and a maximum of three years (or until the issue of the department's/consortium consolidated grant). Applicants can apply for limited resources to allow the applicant to begin to establish a research programme.

6.3.4 The relevant grant panel will assess applications against the same criteria as the consolidated grant proposals (and funding will come from the appropriate grants line); however, research potential in addition to track record will be taken into account.

6.3.5 Grants are not renewable and cannot be extended.

6.4 Proposals

6.4.1 Applicants should submit a one page pre-proposal for consideration by the executive in consultation with the relevant grant panel.

6.4.2 Requests will be considered under urgency procedures.

6.4.3 The pre-proposal should briefly set out the circumstances, explaining why a new applicant proposal is appropriate, and how the application matches the eligibility criteria set out above.

6.4.4 The pre-proposal should also briefly sketch the nature and strength of the scientific case that would be described in full if permission for a full proposal is given.

6.4.5 The pre-proposal should provide an indication of the requested resources.

6.4.6 The pre-proposal should be accompanied by a brief letter from the Principal Investigator of the consolidated grant held by the department concerned, confirming the employment status and timing, and explaining carefully why the new member of staff's research cannot be supported using the spending flexibility allowed within the existing grant.

6.4.7 If the case for funding is considered to be potentially a high priority, applicants will be advised of next steps.

7 Other Useful Information

7.1 Cross-disciplinary or cross-council proposals

7.1.1 For advice on cross-disciplinary or cross-Council proposals please see [STFC Research Grants Handbook](#)

7.2 Unconscious bias

7.2.1 Details relating to unconscious bias can be found at:
<http://www.stfc.ac.uk/funding/research-grants/peer-review-and-assessment>

7.3 Equality and Diversity

7.3.1 Information about STFC's commitment to promoting equality and diversity is at: <https://stfc.ukri.org/funding/promoting-equality-and-diversity>

7.4 The peer review framework

7.4.1 Peer Review framework information is at:
<http://www.stfc.ac.uk/funding/research-grants/peer-review-and-assessment>

7.5 Researchfish

7.5.1 Researchfish is an online system which is pivotal in demonstrating the case for investment in science. STFC has a responsibility to demonstrate the value and impact of research supported through public funding. By using Researchfish we have a central means for researchers to log the outputs, outcomes and impacts that have been realised through STFC's research funding. Outputs are then made available through the Research Councils' 'Gateway to Research' portal. Further information can be found at:
<https://stfc.ukri.org/funding/funded-grants/researchfish/>