



## **GFIL Future Frontiers Fund (FFF)**

### **FAQs**

#### **Who can apply?**

The competition is open to UK-based SMEs, start-ups and early-stage businesses, sole traders, and individual entrepreneurs, including staff and students from research institutions and the FE/HE sector. Our definition of SMEs is taken from the [UK Government's SME action plan](#): any organisation that has fewer than 250 employees and a turnover of less than €50 million or a balance sheet total less than €43 million.

#### **What types of projects are likely to be funded?**

The FFF is looking to support truly innovative concepts that can address challenges related to tackling climate change, protecting our environment, and delivering a net zero future. Within this broad remit we wish to encourage early-stage ideas (TRLs 1-3) that have the potential for significant impact.

- TRL 1: basic principles observed and reported
- TRL 2: technology concept or application formulated
- TRL 3: analytical and experimental critical function or characteristics proof-of-concept.

#### **How will projects be selected?**

Projects will be selected via a simple online application form. Successful applicants will be expected to demonstrate:

- That the idea, technology, product or service could have significant impact in addresses challenges related to tackling climate change, protecting our environment, and delivering a net zero future.
- That the idea is novel and credible
- That there is a potential market and likely demand.
- An understanding of the key questions that need to be addressed in order to achieve proof of concept, and a viable project plan to deliver this within the available time and budget.
- Value for money.

In addition, we will take a portfolio approach, in order to ensure a breadth of solutions are supported.

Applications will be evaluated by a panel of academic experts and commercialisation professionals. Representatives from Green Future Investments Ltd may also participate in the evaluation process.

### **Is the participant expected to make any financial contribution?**

No. The agreed funding is provided by Green Future Investments Ltd via the University. Applicants are not expected to make a financial contribution but are welcome to contribute additional funding to the project to enhance the impact.

### **Who will own the IP arising from the project?**

All IP generated during the project will belong to the applicant. However, prior to receiving funding, you must inform us if your project requires access to any third-party IP.

### **How can I be sure that my ideas will remain confidential?**

Projects can be covered by a standard Confidentiality Agreement, which is available on our [application platform](#). This can be signed prior to the kick-off meeting if required. Cranfield University works with a very wide range of industrial clients and all staff are accustomed to dealing with confidential information.

### **Do I have to pay back the award?**

No.

### **What is the value of the award in any single project and what does it cover?**

Grants of approximately £10,000 per project will be awarded, depending on the needs of the project. This may be used for equipment, consumables, third-party services, and travel and subsistence

Staff costs/salaries are not eligible. If you have other costs, you will be asked to describe these in the application form.

Please note that travel and subsistence costs should be essential for the project, kept to a minimum and clearly justified in the text. Academic conferences are not considered appropriate for this grant. We do not expect to fund international travel, unless there are exceptional circumstances that make this an essential part of the project.

Third-party services should be used to deliver essential skills to the project that the applicant does not have, and should complement the work done by the applicant themselves.

In addition, applicants will receive support from Cranfield University, including up to four days of a staff mentor to provide technical expertise and to help guide and coach throughout the project, and/or access to appropriate facilities that might enhance the proposed project plan (if required). This package of support will be determined at the kick-off meeting.

### **Will I need to provide evidence of my expenditure?**

We will request a statement on the actual versus proposed expenditure in the reporting process and require receipts for all individual items over £500. We will not ask to see other receipts as a matter of course but reserve the right to carry out audits for up to one year after the end of the project.

### **How will I get paid?**

Payment of the grant will be made in two tranches: 50% following signing of the Award Letter and 50% following receipt of the final report. Exceptions can be made at our discretion if essential equipment is required that costs more than £5,000.

Please note that the total award value is inclusive of any VAT incurred by the awardee.

### **How long can the projects last?**

Projects can run for up to six months, but shorter timeframes are also welcome.

### **Does the team have to be located at Cranfield?**

No. Kick-off meetings can be held face to face or online, but if subsequent use of testing or prototyping facilities is required, applicants are strongly encouraged to engage with their staff mentor and relevant technicians on the Cranfield campus.

### **Are there any reporting requirements?**

A short (one page) report is required at the midpoint of the project to check progress against milestones and expenditure, and a slightly longer (max six page) report within one month of the project end date. The final report will include what has been achieved through the FFF award, what the plans are for further development of the project, and any suggested improvements to the FFF programme. Templates will be provided for the reports.

Participants will also be asked to respond to a simple questionnaire 6 months and 1 year after the end of the project. This is to enable us to track impact over a longer period.

### **What else is expected from participants?**

We ask for a time commitment from your team members as appropriate to the needs of the individual project, and availability during key planning periods (such as the initial kick-off meeting). We also expect a record to be kept of expenditure (with receipts for all individual items over £500).

### **What will happen next if I am successful?**

Successful applicants will be invited to a kick-off meeting with the Cranfield staff mentor to determine an appropriate package of support, and to discuss the programme of work and associated timings. Once this is agreed, we will send an Award Letter, incorporating the final agreed project plan, to the applicant for signature.

### **Will feedback be provided for unsuccessful applicants?**

Due to the anticipated volume of applications, we will not be able to provide tailored feedback to individual applicants.

### **Will there be additional calls for proposals?**

Yes, we anticipate the next call to come out in January 2025.