UCRI Research Development Fund (RDF, formerly known as RDTF) call process, criteria and scoring guide

Process

- Applications are submitted through the template with supporting statements by the relevant Research Division lead and Head of School.
- As part of sign off, the Research Division lead confirms that the basic eligibility criteria are met.
- Each application is assessed independently by three UCRI members
- The assessors are the relevant Research Dean, and two others randomly assigned. Where this results in two Research Deans from the same Theme, these are reassigned to another member. Where possible, Research Deans will receive half the allocation of other Deans.
- Potential conflicts of interest should be declared at the initial allocation stage in response to the email projects
- Applications are scored against four criteria on a scale from 1-5 with the following weighting.
  - Support research excellence and lead to enhancement of the University's research reputation; (40%)
  - Deliver value for money. This may include leveraging external funding; developing partnerships or public engagement; or translating into products or services. (30%)
  - Align with strategic priorities of the Research Theme and/or Research Division. (20%)
  - The feasibility of the delivery of the project in terms of methodology, applicant track record, and institutional/school support (10%),
- Total score/average (median/mean) score by criteria are included and the applications ranked by total score.
- Assessors are asked to give a confidence marker on their assessment (at proposal level) on a threepoint scale (not confident, confident, very confident), which can be used to contextualise scoring.
- Assessors are asked to indicate an overall 'fundable/not fundable' judgement.

- UCRI discusses the applications and takes a collective decision, drawing on the scoring outcomes, the qualitative comments and the reviewers' confidence markers. A visualisation of the range of scoring will be developed to identify overall position and any notable variation in scoring.

Criteria

Eligibility

- Proposals can cover a broad range of disciplines and project types. The funding is not intended to support the completion stage of research outputs.
- The application is led by a Research Division staff member with contractual research responsibility. In 2024, the competition will be restricted to Mid-Career researchers (MCRs) as confirmed by the applicant as follows:
    - I am a Grade 7 or Grade 8 on a permanent academic on a research intensive or Teaching & Research contract with 5-15 years cumulative experience within these grades (allowing for professional and personal career interruptions).
    - I have completed my probationary period.
    - I have demonstrated independence and leadership of a research area.
    - I have published works or outputs of intellectual distinction in line with expectations of the discipline.
    - I have a track record of securing research income in line with expectations of the discipline.
    - I have undertaken at least one external role, such as journal editorship, research funding panel, external committees (academic, professional), significant public engagement roles, have

Assessment Criteria

- The extent to which the proposal will support research excellence and lead to enhancement of the University reputation.
- The extent to which the proposal will deliver value for money. This may include leveraging external funding; developing partnerships or public engagement; or translating into products or services.
- The level of alignment with the strategic priorities of the Research Theme and/or Research Division
- The feasibility of the delivery of the project in terms of methodology, timeframe, applicant track record, and institutional support.

Scoring Guide

	Score 1	Score 3	Score 5
Research excellence	The proposed research project is unlikely to produce research outcomes (outputs/grants/impact) of high quality and enhancement of the University's	The proposed research project could produce research outcomes (outputs/grants) of good quality and some enhancement to the University's research	The project will produce research outcomes

Strategic alignment	The proposed research project doe not align with Research Theme/Research Division strategic	The proposed research project aligns to some extent with the Research Theme/Research Division	The proposed research project aligns closely Theme/Research Division
Feasibility	The proposed research project has a low probability of successful deliver	The proposed research project a set out looks broadly feasible	2 (t