



## NetDRIVE Third Funding Call – Part A

# Collaboration Meeting Report

St Hilda's College, Oxford

Friday 17 July 2026



*NetDRIVE is funded by the UKRI Digital Research Infrastructure programme (grant number UKRI910)*

## Acronyms

| Acronym         | Meaning                                                                      |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>DRI</b>      | Digital Research Infrastructure                                              |
| <b>NetDRIVE</b> | Network for Sustainable Digital Research Infrastructure Vision and Expertise |
| <b>UKRI</b>     | UK Research and Innovation                                                   |

## Introduction and purpose

Part A of the NetDRIVE Third Funding Call invites social-science-led projects exploring pathways to value and change in sustainable Digital Research Infrastructure (DRI). This collaboration meeting was convened to bring prospective applicants together ahead of the submission deadline: to introduce themselves and their research interests, test early thinking, and begin forming the teams that will take proposal concepts forward.

The meeting was held at St Hilda's College, Oxford, on Friday 17 July 2026, hosted by the NetDRIVE core team, with participants joining both in person and online. The format was deliberately informal and participatory: short introductions and questions in the morning, a facilitated brainstorm and team formation around lunch, and breakout time in the afternoon for teams to develop concepts together.

Further information about the call is available online: <https://uknetdrive.org/netdrive-calls/netdrive-pathways-to-value-and-change>

## Agenda

| Time                 | Session                                                                                    |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>10:00 – 10:30</b> | Registration and welcome coffee/tea                                                        |
| <b>10:30 – 10:40</b> | Core team introduction and short presentation on the Call                                  |
| <b>10:40 – 11:00</b> | Attendee 1-slide self and idea introductions                                               |
| <b>11:00 – 11:30</b> | Question and answer                                                                        |
| <b>11:30 – 12:00</b> | Post-it notes – brainstorm ideas, organise them, discuss                                   |
| <b>12:00 – 12:30</b> | Team formation                                                                             |
| <b>12:30 – 13:30</b> | Lunch – discussion in new teams; each team nominates a spokesperson/facilitator/rapporteur |
| <b>13:30 – 14:20</b> | Team breakout – concept development                                                        |
| <b>14:20 – 14:45</b> | Discussion led by spokesperson/facilitator/rapporteur                                      |
| <b>14:45 – 15:00</b> | Wrap up                                                                                    |

## Synopsis of the event

The morning opened with a welcome and introduction from the NetDRIVE core team, including a short presentation on the aims, topics and practical arrangements of the Call. Each participant then gave a one-slide lightning introduction covering who they are and the ideas they are interested in pursuing. The introductions are internal to the event and are not reproduced in this report; in

broad terms they spanned behavioural and organisational approaches to sustainable DRI, questions of governance, ethics and public value, workforce and research-culture perspectives, futures and foresight methods, and practice-based experience of research computing.

A question-and-answer session followed, giving participants the opportunity to clarify the scope of the Call and probe one another's interests. In the late morning, a facilitated post-it exercise drew out common themes across the ideas presented; participants organised and discussed these clusters, which formed the basis for team formation before lunch. Teams continued their discussions over lunch, each nominating a spokesperson, and spent the early afternoon in breakout sessions developing their concepts. The day closed with each team reporting back to the room, a wider discussion, and a summary of next steps from the core team.

Proposals responding to the Call are to be submitted by 10:00 on Monday 7 September 2026, with £320,000 (Full Economic Cost) available. Guidance for applicants, review-panel guidance and the application template are available on the NetDRIVE website.

## **Participant feedback**

A short feedback survey was circulated after the event; three responses were received at the time of writing, all from in-person attendees, so the findings below should be read as indicative rather than representative.

Feedback on the content of the day was strongly positive. All three respondents rated the lightning presentations at the top of the scale, describing an engaging range of perspectives and an openness among contributors in sharing their ideas. The meeting was rated highly for its usefulness in sharpening and developing ideas, and all respondents made new connections and identified people or potential opportunities for collaboration. Respondents also found that the day helped define a way forward, though one noted the need to consult their wider team before committing to next steps, and another observed that it was not yet clear whether new connections would convert into collaborations. The structure of the day and the venue were both praised.

The most consistent criticism concerned the hybrid format. All three respondents found interaction between the room and online participants difficult: those in the room largely conversed with one another while online participants discussed their own ideas, and one respondent suggested a fully in-person or fully online format would have worked better than a hybrid. A venue internet connectivity issue also limited one respondent's ability to use the meeting chat to engage with online attendees. Two further suggestions for improvement were made: circulating joining instructions and preparatory work further in advance, and asking attendees to indicate more clearly whether they are seeking collaborators — one respondent noted that some presenters appeared to arrive in already-established institutional teams.

## **Participation**

Twelve researchers took part, drawn from seven universities and one specialist consultancy:

- University of Oxford (Oxford Internet Institute and Department of Education)
- University of the West of England
- University of Sheffield
- University of Cambridge
- University of Portsmouth
- Edge Hill University

- University College London
- HighEndCompute Ltd.

Three participants joined remotely. The group brought a deliberately broad disciplinary mix — organisational and behavioural psychology, information systems and ethics, sociology of education and research culture, sustainability of Artificial Intelligence, applied geography and foresight, sustainable construction and policy, and hands-on high-performance computing practice — reflecting the Call's emphasis on social-science-led pathways to change.