

NetDRIVE: Working Groups

Third Funding Call – Part D

1. Preamble.....	1
2. Who can apply	1
3. What we are looking for	2
3.1 Background.....	2
3.2 Working Group Topics.....	2
(i) Future Priorities: beyond the current NetDRIVE award.	2
(ii) Roadmap to Net Zero.....	3
(iii) Waste and supply: waste and supply chain transparency, sustainability, and management	3
4. How to apply	3
Creating an application and submitting	4
Online Working Group Initiation Meeting	4
Presentation to the AGM	4
Templates and updates	4
5. How we will assess your application.....	4
6. Appendix 1: Career Stages.....	5
7. References	5

Announcement and guidance

1. Preamble

Funders:	NetDRIVE, University of Leeds
Funding source:	Grant UKRI910
Call Type:	Call for participation
Funds:	Travel, subsistence, honoraria
Closing Date	Monday, September 21 st , 10:00am
Initiation Meeting	Online, week starting October 12th
Report to AGM	Bristol, Nov. 4 th , 5 th , 6th
Contact:	netdrive@eng.ox.ac.uk

Apply to join a NetDRIVE Working Group developing guidance and expert advice on one of these topics: i) priorities beyond the current project, ii) the roadmap to net zero, and iii) the supply chain.

Staff time in this role is not directly funded; travel and expenses will be covered where appropriate. An honorarium may be paid if justified. Initial meeting of working groups will be online in October, followed by a presentation at the NetDRIVE 2026 AGM in Bristol, between Wed 4th and Fri 6th November. We are asking for individual applications to join working groups. Working groups will only proceed to initiation if at least three valid applications from independent institutions are received.

More information about NetDRIVE is available on the project web site, in [the open workplan](#), and in our [first annual report](#). Background is provided in the [2023 scoping study report](#).

Completed application forms should be submitted to netdrive@eng.ox.ac.uk no later than 10am, Monday, September 21st.

2. Who can apply

- Employees at research institutions eligible for UKRI funding
- Employees of charitable organisations working in digital technology and sustainability
- Employees of commercial organisations whose job roles permit them to devote time to an open community discussion
- Individuals and sole traders who have an interest in giving their time to this activity and have a clear understanding of relevant issues.

3. What we are looking for

3.1 Background

[Juckes et al. \(2023\)](#) found that “The journey to net zero computing requires transformational change which can deliver huge benefits as part of the broader transformation to a new generation of digitally enabled research.” The NetDRIVE project is funded to enable this transformational change and is working across four themes: buildings, hardware and code, organisations, and people ([Juckes and Sparrow, 2025](#)).

In 2025 three working groups were established and two have since completed their work:

- Short Format Training Material

- Produced a 30-minute online course <https://sdratraining.sparkhub.eu/>.
- Supply Chain Environmental Sustainability Clauses.
 - The working group produced a [document](#) published on Sparkhub (in the [Procurement and Purchasing](#) section)
- Metrics and Reporting (WGMAR) [ongoing]

This call is recruiting members for three new working groups.

Working group members are expected to contribute time for attending online calls, and for reviewing and contributing to development of a document which will be published.

3.2 Working Group Topics

(i) Future Priorities: beyond the current NetDRIVE award.

The NetDRIVE project ends in March 2028, and the last call for community projects will be launched this summer.

The Future Priorities Working Group should identify key activities that need to be continued and, where possible, identify funding opportunities. These may be within the UKRI DRI programme or beyond. For each activity, consideration should be given to both its value to the community and its fit to funding priorities of different funding programmes and organisations.

(ii) Roadmap to Net Zero

The Net Zero DRI roadmap was created by the net zero DRI scoping project. It sets out 24 targets on the road to net zero (see the [NetDRIVE project page](#) and discussion in [Juckles et al. 2023](#) for more details).

This working group will review the implementation of the roadmap and discuss how it can be exploited to focus and coordinate community activity.

The WG should look at what we can do ourselves and also what we can do through cooperation and by achieving solidarity of purpose with others.

Method: community engagement, e.g. through a community workshop.

(iii) Waste and supply: waste and supply chain transparency, sustainability, and management

Digital technology has a huge and complex supply chain. The immediate suppliers of technology to the DRI are technology firms, but beyond them is a complex supply chain which depends on a wide range of minerals, including many of which are sourced from mines with appalling societal and environmental footprints.

Lack of transparency in the supply chain creates huge uncertainty in life cycle emissions of our digital infrastructure. International legislation is putting pressure on companies to enhance transparency, and this is making inroads, but the information collected is not readily accessible to purchasers or those monitoring footprints.

Likewise, waste management is problematic. Too much waste ends in poorly regulated or illegal dumps, both within the UK and abroad.

The Waste and Supply Working Group will look at the options open for the DRI to take a leadership position in monitoring and facilitating change in this area to enhance sustainability.

4. How to apply

Creating an application and submitting

Completed application forms should be submitted to netdrive@eng.ox.ac.uk no later than 10am, Monday, September 21st.

Any enquiries about the process should be submitted to netdrive@eng.ox.ac.uk. Before submitting an enquiry, please check the updates section of [the call page](#).

Online Working Group Initiation Meeting

There will be a two-hour online meeting in the week starting October 12th. This meeting will include an open discussion about format and scope of working groups and breakout sessions to allow focussed discussion on individual working groups.

Following this meeting there should be a collective decision on four points:

- Does the working group have sufficient members to proceed?
- Should more members be invited to join?
- Who will be the first chair?
- Who will represent the WG at the AGM in Bristol in November?

Presentation to the AGM

For those working groups which have sufficient members to proceed, there will be an opportunity to present a summary of initial discussions to the community at the NetDRIVE AGM in Bristol in November.

Templates and updates

For templates and updates please visit the call web site:

<https://uknetdrive.org/netdrive-calls/third-funding-call-part-a>. On this page you will find:

- Guidance for Applicants
- Guidance for the Review Panel
- Expression of Interest for Sandpit
- Poll for selection of Sandpit date
- Application Template [to be published in September]
- Frequently Asked Questions

5. How we will assess your application

Submissions will be assessed by the NetDRIVE core team. We expect to accept the majority of applicants, but will seek to achieve balance across institutions, potentially asking institutions to withdraw applicants to avoid over-representation. If the ideas put forward appear out of line with NetDRIVE objectives, we will provide feedback and an opportunity for revision.

6. Appendix 1: Career Stages

We have identified four career stages by merging categories used in engineering, or professionals in areas relevant to organisational change:

C1: First Stage Researcher (up to the point of PhD), or technical/support staff (degree and 2-4 years' work experience), or equivalent in other relevant professions.
C2: PhD, or 5 or more years software work experience, or equivalent
C3: Independent researcher, software engineer with management role, or equivalent.
C4: Researcher leading research area or field, or senior management.

These categories are intended to allow us to distinguish between different career stages in a meaningful way without giving undue weighting or disadvantage to specific career paths.

7. References

Juckes, M., Bane, M., Bulpett, J., Cartmell, K., MacFarlane, M., MacRae, M., Owen, A., Pascoe, C., & Townsend, P. (2023). Sustainability in Digital Research Infrastructure: UKRI Net

Zero DRI Scoping Project final technical report. Zenodo.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8199984>

Juckes, M., & Sparrow, S. (2025). Net-Zero Digital Research Infrastructure Vision and Expertise. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14626648>

Juckes, M., Cutting, J., Sparrow, S., Maalouf, A., Smith, G.& Li, L. (2026). NetDRIVE Annual Report, 2025-2026. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20933904>