



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

SFC Financial Transactions: Invitation of Expressions of Interest FY 2020-21

SFC Announcement

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Summary: Announcement of SFC Financial Transactions: Invitation of Expressions of Interest in Financial Year (FY) 2020-21

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SFC Financial Transactions: Invitation of Expressions of Interest FY 2020-21

Purpose

1. SFC invites universities to submit expressions of interest for Financial Transactions in Financial Year (FY) 2020-21.
2. The programme will provide low-interest loans totalling up to £60m in FY 2020-21 to support university proposals under the following themes:
 - Carbon reduction activity, estates development and the student experience
 - COVID-19 University Support Fund (CUSF)

Programme outline

Theme 1: Carbon reduction activity, estates development and the student experience

3. This is to support carbon reduction activity in response to the Climate Emergency, through estates development, such as: implementing innovations to reduce carbon emissions or investing in energy saving projects; and improving the student experience.
4. Priority will be given to projects which link with other universities and colleges or which demonstrate alternative ways to align resources to deliver maximum impact, and those which support institutional responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and contribute to the Green Recovery. Examples might include:
 - Shared buildings/facilities for learning, especially those which catalyse other sources of funding (e.g. City Deal).
 - Reducing the university carbon footprint (through energy efficiency measures or deployment of renewables).
 - Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the estate (via changes in use, space utilisation etc.).
 - Adjustments to buildings to respond to COVID-19 and/or improve the student experience.
5. The scale of the projects should be £1-10m. Institutions can submit multiple applications. Payback periods are likely to be 10-20 years.

Threshold Criteria

6. All Theme 1 projects should:
 - Be relevant to one or more of the programme aims.
 - Comply with state aid rules.
 - Comply with the SFC Financial Memorandum.
 - Be based on sound financial projections, business models and a university's estate strategy.
 - Be able to deploy the funding in line with the programme deadlines.

Theme 2: COVID-19 University Support Fund (CUSF)

7. This is to support sustainability in the transition to the post COVID-19 environment, particularly for those institutions which have exhausted all other avenues of borrowing and still require support (for example, to provide an injection of working capital).
8. There is no maximum loan value, but SFC will aim to maximise the benefit of the overall programme across the sector. There will be a maximum of one application per institution.

Next Steps

9. Universities are now invited to submit a short expression of interest by 7 September 2020. These should include:
 - A brief summary of the project (a paragraph);
 - Status in terms of readiness to proceed;
 - An estimate of the total project budget, and the amount of loan funding sought; and
 - Which programme theme and strand(s) the project relates to.
10. Application forms for proposals are available on request from SFC. Proposals selected for funding will need to be finalised by December 2020.

Further information

11. SFC welcomes early discussions with universities on potential proposals, particularly in relation to collaborative and innovative projects. For application forms and enquiries please contact: Rufus Logan, email: rlogan@sfc.ac.uk, tel: 0131 313 6672 or David Beards, email: dbeards@sfc.ac.uk, tel: 0131 313 6520.



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