

A Systems Hub for a Safe
and Sustainable Energy
Transition in Colombia

**Grant call to
find the Hub's
management team**

Applicant guidance

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About the supporting partners of this grant

The Royal Academy of Engineering

The [Royal Academy of Engineering](#) creates and leads a community of outstanding experts and innovators to engineer better lives. As a charity and a Fellowship, we deliver public benefit from excellence in engineering and technology and convene leading businesspeople, entrepreneurs, innovators and academics across engineering and technology. As a National Academy, we provide leadership for engineering and technology, and independent, expert advice to policymakers in the UK and beyond.

Lloyd's Register Foundation

[Lloyd's Register Foundation](#) has the mission of **engineering a safer world**. The Foundation tackles global safety challenges including safety at sea, of food, of digital systems, and physical infrastructure, as well as of public understanding of risk, safety skills, and **safety for a sustainable future**. The foundation has a live grant portfolio of £122 million over 40 countries.

Engineering X

[Engineering X](#) is a growing collaboration that promotes the role of engineering in tackling safety and sustainability challenges by building global connections across sectors and disciplines. Founded by the Royal Academy of Engineering and Lloyd's Register Foundation, we champion systems approaches and amplify unheard voices to ensure solutions are sustainable and locally appropriate.

Safer Complex Systems programme

[Safer Complex Systems \(SCS\)](#) is a global programme improving the **safety, sustainability, and resilience of the socio-technical systems people rely on** – such as energy, transport, water, and digital infrastructure. When these systems fail, the impacts can cascade across sectors and communities. To address this, the programme **promotes the development of systems thinking and practical, cross-disciplinary approaches for navigating complexity (systems approaches)**.

Launched in 2019 by Engineering X with a £5 million investment, the programme **builds evidence and convenes networks to educate, advocate and support better governance of complex systems**. We work with researchers, engineers and decision-makers to identify emerging risks, co-create inclusive solutions and foster resilient ecosystems. Our ambition is to reduce harm and improve outcomes, especially in low- and middle-income countries

Hexagonal

[Hexagonal](#) (foundation, laboratory, and consultancy) is a Spanish consultancy that supports individuals and organisations aiming to transform the world. Its model is based on six vectors of change – a universal DNA of innovation: open, mix, accelerate, experiment, collaborate, and digitalise. This approach enables Hexagonal to generate systemic impact, navigate complexity, and craft narratives that inspire. Hexagonal have been working with Engineering X on the development of the Systems Hub since December 2024 and will support the Systems Hub Management team over the first 18 months of the Hub.

Glossary

Systemic approach: A way of understanding and addressing problems that focuses on the relationships, interdependencies, and dynamics that shape a system. It seeks to intervene in the root causes of challenges, rather than focusing only on their symptoms, and aims to bring about long-term, sustainable change.

Systems Hub: An entity or collaborative platform that acts as an articulating space to strengthen cooperation and alignment between the different actors in a system. It performs facilitation, intermediation, and catalysation functions, with the purpose of promoting systemic changes through the generation of shared knowledge, the coordination of efforts, and the creation of synergies.

Systems convening: The practice of bringing people and organisations together across traditional boundaries to build shared understanding and catalyse action. It requires empathy, trust-building, and long-term thinking. The Management Team is expected to act as a systems convener.

Systemic impact: Impact that shifts the way a system functions – not just individual projects. This could mean influencing policy, aligning actors around shared goals, or creating new ways of working that spread beyond the Hub.

Adaptive governance: A decision-making and management model that is characterised by its flexibility and responsiveness to change, uncertainty, and learning that emerges in real time. It allows institutions and system actors to adjust their strategies and coordinate better, encouraging experimentation, continuous learning, and collaboration to deal with complex situations.

Mission-oriented innovation: An innovation approach inspired by Mariana Mazzucato's work, which focuses public and private efforts on solving large-scale societal challenges. Instead of funding isolated projects or sectors, mission-oriented innovation defines ambitious, measurable goals (missions) that mobilise and coordinate multiple actors across disciplines, sectors, and territories.

Strategic missions: Strategic missions are the core guiding objectives of the Systems Hub. They translate Colombia's energy transition challenges into time-bound, cross-cutting goals that direct resources, innovation, and collaboration across the ecosystem. These will be the defined priorities of the Hub.

Innovation portfolio: A strategic set of projects, initiatives, or experiments aimed at addressing different aspects of a complex challenge. The portfolio logic seeks to balance short- and long-term solutions, as well as low- and high-risk alternatives, in order to generate systemic impact.

Mission nodes: Mission nodes are the operational workspaces or groups where multisector actors design, test, and implement solutions that collectively form the innovation portfolio of a Strategic Mission.

Grant call overview

Purpose

The Royal Academy of Engineering, through its Engineering X programme, is committed to accelerating Colombia's safe and sustainable energy transition by advancing systemic approaches that strengthen coordination, amplify existing efforts, and generate long-term impact. We believe the best way to do this is by leveraging local expertise and articulating disparate efforts that have the potential to scale if better coordinated through a systems approach.

To this end, we are launching a call for proposals to identify the **Management Team** (a single organisation or a consortium) **that will lead the Systems Hub** for a safer and more sustainable energy transition in Colombia. This team will not implement projects directly, but will serve as a strategic platform who will:

- **manage the Hub's operational and strategic direction**
- **coordinate the definition and implementation of mission-oriented portfolios**
- **facilitate multistakeholder collaboration across sectors and territories**
- **mobilise technical, financial, and human resources**
- **generate evidence and support policy advocacy**
- **manage the budget allocated for this initiative and leverage extra funding**
- **strengthen the ecosystem for long-term impact**
- **promote a culture of learning, adaptation, and systemic innovation.**

We recognise that the scope of this opportunity is ambitious. This is why **Hexagonal** will provide training, guidance, and accompaniment throughout the first year. **Engineering X** will provide accompaniment and funding for the initial three-year period, with the expectation that the Hub will work towards financial sustainability beyond that time frame.

We welcome applications from both established organisations and consortiums that include emerging organisations who demonstrate commitment, curiosity, and the ability to learn and adapt. You don't need to have everything in place from the start – what matters is your willingness to grow, collaborate, and lead with a systems mindset.

Systems Hub structure

This call emerged from a year-long co-creation process with Colombian partners – grounded in research and dialogue – that shaped the Hub's adaptive governance model to reflect local needs, opportunities, and a shared strategy for systemic impact.

The governance model of the Systems Hub will operate at three levels

(depicted below in Figure 1).

The aim of this call is to start the Hub's operations by both finding a Management Team (an articulating actor and strategic convener) and asking for this team to suggest an Opportunities Board (the strategic steer formed by actors from diverse territories, sectors, and organisations).

Opportunities Board**Strategic direction**

Comprised of multi-sectoral experts who bring perspective on the diverse needs of the ecosystem and make strategic decisions, including the definition of missions

Management Team**Operational core**

it is in charge of day-to-day management of the Hub, coordinates the Hub's articulation in the ecosystem, and coordinates the Opportunity Board and the Mission nodes

Mission nodes**Mission execution**

Set of multisectoral actors designing, testing, and implementing strategic solutions in the face of a mission.

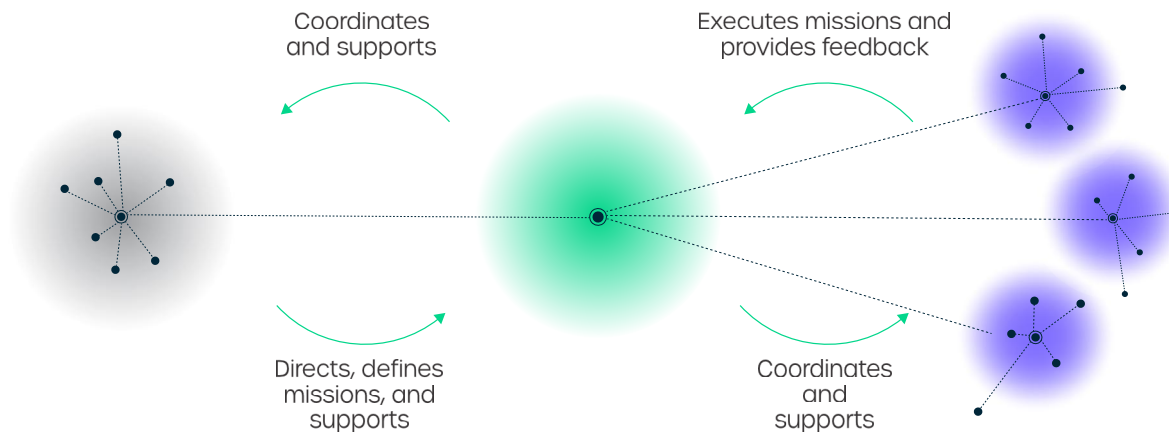


Figure 1. Systems Hub three-level governance model framework

Funding available

There is a total of **GBP £730,500 available over three years split as follows:**

- **up to £500,500** to support Hub operations and ecosystem building, operated by the Management Team
- **£230,000** available to support the implementation of strategic missions disbursed by the Management Team to implementing partners.

The expectation from the outset is that the Hub will work towards financial sustainability beyond that time frame and become an independent and trusted organisation in the Colombian energy landscape.

Who can apply?

- **Legally registered organisations based in Colombia**, applying individually or as part of a **consortium of up to three partners**.
- Types of eligible organisations include universities, NGOs, community-based organisations, social enterprises, private companies, chambers of commerce, innovation hubs, and public institutions.
- Applicants who can demonstrate:
 - experience in **multistakeholder facilitation and coordination**
 - strong **project management** and delivery capacity
 - **budget oversight** and compliance with financial reporting
 - skills in **strategic communication and stakeholder engagement**
 - **fundraising capability** and resource mobilisation experience
 - **legitimacy** and trust within the Colombian innovation ecosystem
 - an interest in **trying new approaches** and a commitment to **systems thinking and reflective learning**.

All project activities and training will be conducted in **Spanish** to ensure accessibility and inclusion of local stakeholders. However, to support international collaboration and learning, **at least one team member** should have **professional proficiency in English**. This person will be responsible for reporting, participating in global events, and representing the Hub in international spaces.

Note: While the project will be delivered in Spanish, the **proposal must be submitted in English** for the Academy's internal records and due diligence processes. Please reach out if you have any concerns regarding this.

Key dates

- **Stage 1** – Expression of Interest (by 7 July – 29 July 2025 4pm BST)
 - **Q&A sessions:** 10, 17, 24 July 2025 3pm BST, 9am COT
- **Stage 2** – Full proposal submission (13 August – 2 September 2025 4pm BST) and interview (4 - 12 September 2025, indicative timeline)
- **Kick-off, training and first mission definition:** October 2025.
- **Overall implementation:** November 2025 – October–December 2028

How to apply

1. Visit the [application portal](#).
2. Log in or register an account.
3. Complete the Stage 1 Expression of Interest form by 29 July 4pm BST.

Applicants who meet eligibility criteria and demonstrate experience and align with the vision of the project will be invited to **Stage 2**, where they will submit a full proposal, budget, and delivery plan that they will discuss in an interview.

Why should I apply?

This is a unique opportunity to help shape **how systemic change is delivered** in Colombia's energy sector. As the Management Team, you will help build a collaborative platform that strengthens connections, enables bold experimentation, and delivers real impact while gaining hands-on experience in systemic innovation and stakeholder coordination.

By applying you will:

- **lead a transformative, mission-driven project with international support from a respected partner**
- **contribute to a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient energy transition**
- **expand your network across sectors and regions**
- **strengthen your capabilities in systems thinking, complex project delivery, and cross-sector collaboration**
- **be part of Colombia's systems transformation journey from the ground up.**

Background to this call

Over the past five years, the **SCS programme has developed systems capabilities and raised systems-thinking awareness** through commissioned research, dialogues, frameworks, reports, and case studies. After interacting with engineers and other disciplines, we realised the importance of systems thinking as a skill and the use of systems approaches to tackle complex, interconnected challenges such as climate change, inequality, and infrastructure resilience. By focusing on relationships, root causes, and long-term impacts, we can avoid unintended consequences and create more sustainable and inclusive solutions.

To put systems thinking into practice through a locally embedded initiative, we developed the idea of a **Systems Hub**. Colombia was selected as the host country for this pilot, following over a decade of successful Academy partnerships and engagement in the region, with initiatives such as the [Leaders in Innovation Fellowships programme \(LIF\)](#), the Engineering X [Transforming Systems through Partnership programme \(TSP\)](#), and the [SCS case study](#) developed by Universidad de los Andes.

Why does Colombia's energy transition require a systemic approach?

Colombia is at a historic crossroads in relation to the energy transition. Its status as a fossil fuel producer – contributing about 2% of GDP and 13% of government revenues in the last decade – converges with an ambitious decarbonisation and sustainable development agenda. Since the launch of the *National Energy Plan 2020–2050 (PEN)* in 2016, the country has initiated a process of diversification of its resources and a structural transformation of its energy sector, reflected in commitments such as the target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. These aspirations are supported by regulations such as the Energy Transition Law and the Climate Action Law, together with the *Roadmap for a Just Energy Transition* in Colombia.

Even when there are multiple initiatives and progress against these aims, it is now evident that no single actor will be able to achieve them. These are the main obstacles we detected:

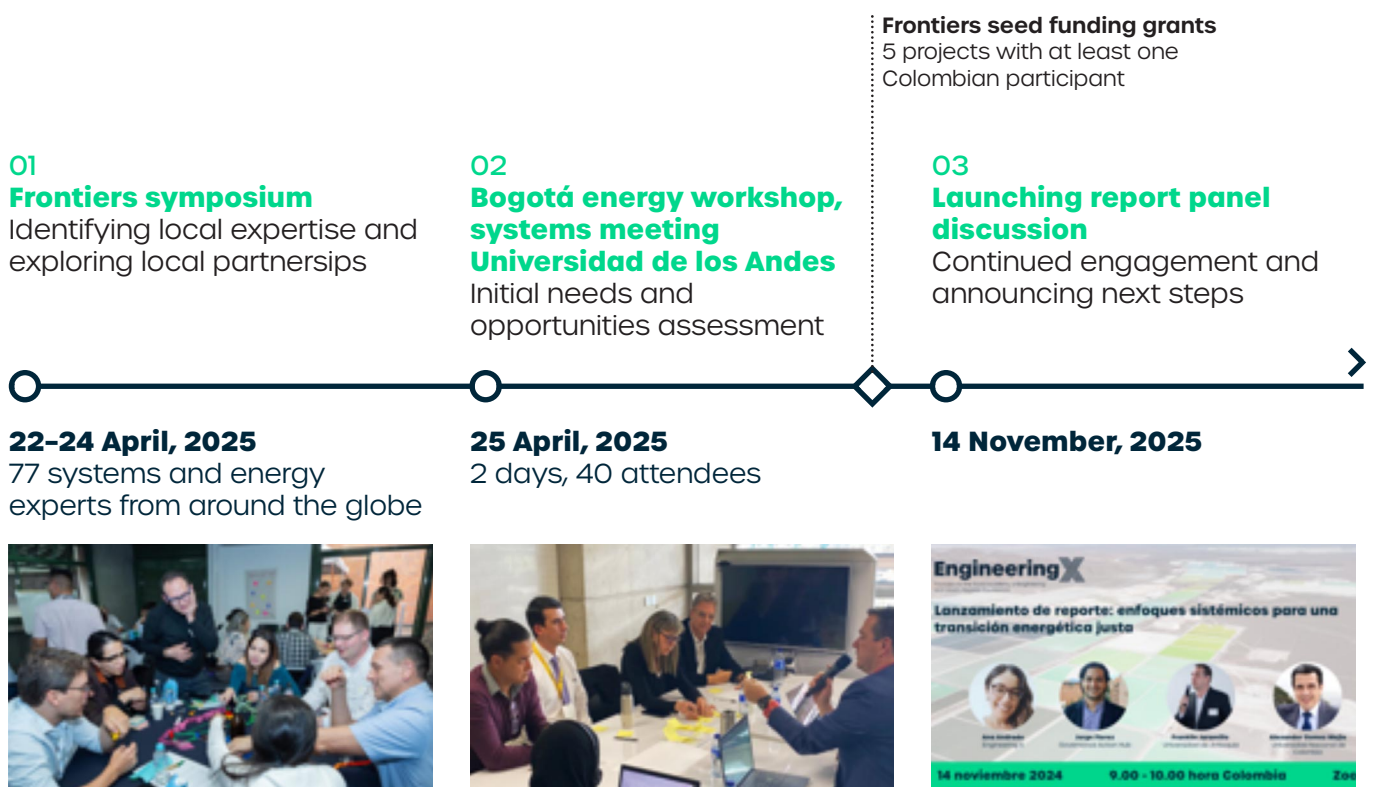
- **Fragmented governance and lack of multilevel coordination:** High levels of disarticulation between public and private actors make it difficult to implement coherent policies and regulations.
- **Lack of a common narrative and shared vision:** There are multiple interpretations of the energy transition, which makes it difficult to generate consensus and collective strategies.
- **Lack of connection and synergies between initiatives:** The fragmentation of the ecosystem generates duplication of efforts and missed opportunities for collaboration.

- **Insufficient and unfocused funding:** Despite the existence of funds for the transition, these are dispersed among small projects with no systemic impact or financial continuity.
- **Limited social participation:** The process is still perceived as highly technical, which excludes key communities and territorial actors, generating resistance to energy projects.

Addressing these requires a new architecture of collaboration – one that connects efforts across sectors, levels of government, and communities. The Systems Hub offers a practical response to this, embedding systems thinking into the transition process and enabling more coherent, inclusive, and impactful action.

How was the idea of a Systems Hub developed?

Engineering X in partnership with Universidad de Antioquia held a [Frontiers symposium](#) focused on systemic approaches for a just energy transition, exploring issues related to governance, south-south collaboration, and end-of-life. This was followed by a session with systems experts with Universidad de los Andes Complexity Centre, as well as a high-level stakeholder workshop with Universidad de los Andes, Universidad de Antioquia, and the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office in Colombia which brought together 40 participants from across the Colombian energy sector (See Figure 2, [Bogotá energy workshop 2024](#)).



This groundwork helped us identify local leadership and assess initial needs and opportunities in the sector. We then partnered with **Hexagonal** to carry out a deeper analysis of Colombia's energy system and its actors, uncovering key dynamics and how best to leverage local expertise. Over 150 stakeholders from diverse regions and sectors were mapped, engaged through interviews, workshops, and collective intelligence sessions. This inclusive process laid the foundations for collaboration, shared narratives, and strategic alignment. With co-creation and equity at its core, the **Systems Hub emerged as a prototype** for the energy future Colombians envision – culminating in a report framing the transition as a systemic challenge (See Figure 3 below).



Figure 3. Systems Hub project timeline (April 2024 to November 2024)

Essential prereading

Before applying, please review the following background documents which summarises the process to date. Reports are available in English and Spanish:

- 1. Bogotá workshop report:** This report summarises a multisector workshop held by Colombian and UK partners focused on barriers and opportunities to increasing access to sustainable energy in Colombia.
- 2. Systems Lab Short report:** This report summarises the co-creation process for the Hub's development.

What is the Systems Hub?

The Systems Hub is a collaborative platform that acts as an articulating space to strengthen cooperation and alignment between the different actors in the energy transition system. It performs facilitation, intermediation, and catalysation functions, with the purpose of promoting systemic changes through the generation of shared knowledge, the coordination of efforts and the creation of synergies.

Objectives

The Systems Hub aims to consolidate a meeting space where strategic alliances are promoted, collective learning is generated, and innovative solutions are articulated to respond to the needs and opportunities identified within the system. It aims to strengthen and connect dispersed actors and efforts to address structural challenges.

Its purpose is to serve as an **enabling node**, through:

- **defining and implementing strategic missions** that develop innovative and scalable solutions in the sector
- **facilitate spaces for multisector coordination**, bringing together actors from industry, academia, civil society and government, and strengthening collaborative networks
- **mobilise financial, technical, and human resources** to accelerate projects that have a structural impact on the energy transition
- **evaluate and monitor the impact of interventions**, adjusting strategies, and ensuring iterative learning
- **create evidence for advocacy in public policy**, ensuring that the Hub's learnings contribute to long-term decisions in the energy sector
- **build a community of learning and practice** around systemic innovation in the energy transition

How the Hub works: governance and structure

The Hub will have an **adaptive, dynamic, and decentralised governance** structure that allows for strategic alignment and agile operation, while involving different actors from across the system. It will be organised into **three levels** (see Figure 4 below):

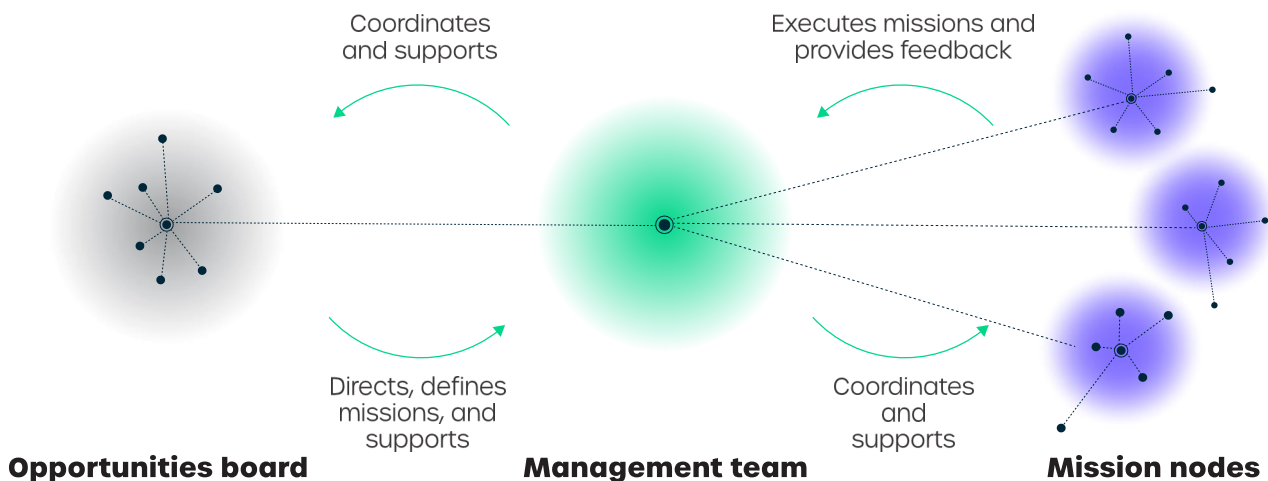


Figure 4. Systems Hub three-level governance model framework

1. Opportunities Board (strategic direction)

A small, periodically rotating group of multisector leaders and experts with legitimacy in the ecosystem. Members of the Opportunities Board must have a strategic vision with an openness to innovation and continuous learning. Their main role is to provide strategic vision and ensure that the Hub is aligned with the opportunities of the energy sector, to facilitate financing and strengthen connections with decision-makers.

The Opportunities Board will include representatives from the private sector, academia, civil society, and multisector organisations. This role is voluntary, but it has the benefits of exclusive access to training and strategic events, positioning in the energy ecosystem as a benchmark for governance, and priority connection with key players in the sector.

Key capabilities:

- **Access and legitimacy in the energy ecosystem:** Gain recognition and credibility among key players.
- **Influence on public policy:** Have the capacity to co-create strategies at the regulatory level.
- **Mobilisation of financing:** Identify the investment opportunities and long-term sustainability.
- **Connection with decision-makers:** Facilitate the articulation of the Hub with high-level organisations.

Responsibilities:

- **Definition of strategic missions:** Define the priority challenges on which the Hub will work.

- **Supervision of Hub execution:** Evaluate the progress of the missions and make corrective decisions if necessary.
- **Approval of strategic resources:** Validate the allocation of funding and key partnerships for the sustainability of the Hub.
- **Adjustments to governance:** Approve changes to the operational structure of the Hub when deemed necessary.
- **Facilitate connections with actors** in the energy sector, ensuring impact and scalability.
- **Promote funding** and ensure the long-term sustainability of the Hub.
- **Monitor impact** and suggest strategic adjustments based on results.

2. Mission Nodes (mission execution)

The Mission Nodes are multistakeholder working groups formed around each strategic mission that is defined by the Opportunities Board and Management Team. Nodes will bring together experts and actors from across sectors to design, test, and implement solutions aligned to mission priorities. They will manage portfolios of innovation projects, focused on system-wide impact and scalability. Funding for missions will be given by Engineering X and managed by the Management Team who will play a facilitating role.

Operating principles:

- **Focus on concrete solutions:** These are not discussion spaces, but operational teams that design, test, and implement tangible solutions.
- **Multistakeholder participation:** Each mission will integrate actors from the public and private sectors, academia, and civil society, ensuring a diversity of perspectives and capabilities.
- **Portfolios of innovation:** Each node will manage a portfolio of interconnected projects, coordinate efforts, and avoid the fragmentation of initiatives.
- **Scalability and replicability:** Solutions with the potential for systemic impact will be prioritised.
- **Mission leader:** Each node has a person responsible for coordinating stakeholders, scaling solutions, and communicating progress.

Key capabilities will depend on the selected mission.

3. Management Team (operational core)

– this is what we are looking for in this grant call

The Management Team, composed of either a single organisation or a consortium, will lead the **operation of the Systems Hub for a Safe and Sustainable Energy Transition in Colombia**. It will be responsible for day-to-day operations of the Systems Hub, facilitating cross-sector collaboration and ensuring efficient implementation. This is a **paid role**, with funding provided to ensure sustainability, transparent delivery, the effective application of systems approaches, and mission-oriented innovation.

Key capabilities:

- **Multistakeholder facilitation experience:** Ability and experience in connecting actors from different sectors and decision-making levels, including prioritising diversity and inclusion values.
- **Operational and administrative management:** Experience in programme and financial management and the ability to manage grant funding to others.
- **Financial sustainability and ability to raise funding:** Experience in fundraising and/or business case development and social business model development.
- **Communication and visibility:** Track experience in positioning topics in the public agenda, campaigning, or shaping narratives.
- **Evaluation and continuous learning:** Implementation of monitoring systems and iterative improvement.
- **Organisational agility and passion for innovation:** Willingness to experiment with new approaches, to learn continuously, and to adapt strategies based on emerging evidence.

Key responsibilities:

- **Management and articulation:** Coordinate, facilitate, and mobilise actors while building partnerships to ensure the integration of strategic efforts towards the objectives of the Hub.
- **Administration and fundraising:** Manage financial and technical resources, mobilising investment for the sustainability of the Hub and guaranteeing operational efficiency.
- **Execution of strategic missions:** Implement and energise the Mission Nodes to solve key challenges.
- **Dissemination and communication:** Design accessible strategies to make progress and opportunities visible.
- **Capacity and community building:** Energise the Hub through events and training in systems thinking for community building.
- **Monitoring and learning:** Implement monitoring and transparency systems to optimise processes.

Additional support from Engineering X and Hexagonal

We know this is an ambitious aim and we want to make sure this feels like a partnership. That is why **Hexagonal** will provide accompaniment throughout the first year and **Engineering X** will provide accompaniment and funding for the initial three-year period. The presence of these actors at the beginning of the implementation of the **Systems Hub Colombia** responds to key needs identified in the characterisation phase for:

- **neutrality and articulation**
- **continuity and learning**
- **systemic facilitation**
- **systematisation and documentation.**

Engineering X will act as:

- **Funder:** Providing the necessary resources for the Hub's first year of operation and facilitating connections with international funds.
- **Strategic Facilitator:** Ensuring the Hub's alignment with global trends in systems thinking and energy transition, overseeing impact assessment, and mobilising international strategic partners.
- **Member of the Management Team:** Actively participating in the management and direction of the Hub.

Hexagonal will have an advisory and training role focusing on:

- **Training** the Management Team and the Opportunities Board in systemic methodologies and multistakeholder facilitation.
- **Accompanying the development of capacities** in systemic thinking and collaborative innovation approaches to ensure effective governance.
- **Facilitating the co-creation** of the Hub's missions.
- **Providing methodological advice** for multistakeholder meetings.
- **Support the documentation** and systematisation of learning.

Call to find the Management Team

This call initiates the building of the Systems Hub for a Safe and Sustainable Energy Transition in Colombia. We are looking for a Management Team – **an organisation or consortium – that will take the lead in implementing and coordinating the Hub’s operations.** Working alongside a soon-to-be-formed Opportunities Board, this team will help shape a portfolio of mission-aligned projects, strengthen collaboration across sectors, and drive systemic impact.

Note: If you’re interested in contributing to the Systems Hub Colombia in a different capacity – such as a member of the Opportunities Board, expert, funder, collaborator, or community representative – but not as part of the Management Team, we’d love to hear from you. Please write to Ana.Andrade@raeng.org.uk to explore other ways to get involved.

The Opportunities Board will be shaped and defined during this call process as well.

What are we looking for in a Management Team?

The Management Team’s role goes beyond implementation. It must bring strong coordination capacity, a spirit of experimentation, and a willingness to learn emerging methodologies such as systems thinking, systems convening, and mission-oriented innovation. While prior experience with these approaches is not required, openness to learning and applying them is essential.

During this **first three years of the Hub the Management Team will:**

- **facilitate the full implementation cycle** of two mission portfolios
- **build a strong ecosystem of local stakeholders and legitimacy among them**, including communities in different territories, policymakers, academic partners, funders, and various delivery partners
- **refine and strengthen a governance model** that allows agile coordination between the Management Team, Opportunities Board, and Mission Nodes
- **establish robust operational systems**, including risk mitigation, budget management, reporting, and compliance
- **develop internal capabilities** in systems thinking, systems convening, adaptive governance, and collaborative innovation
- **demonstrate measurable impact and created a cohesive narrative** to tell the story about that impact to potential funders
- **secure funding** from national and international partners to ensure sustainability as well as developing a transition plan that ensures local ownership
- **position the Hub as a reference** of innovative practices in Colombia and internationally.

The proposal you submit should lay out your vision for how to achieve these milestones. Below is a suggested timeline that you can adapt in your proposal.

YEAR 1: Nov 2025 – Nov 2026 Hub conception and mission implementation	• Recruitment, onboarding, and systems and governance training of the Hub Management Team. • Launch of the first mission: design, partnership building, and allocation of budget to selected projects. • Multistakeholder events to position the Hub. • Oversight of the first set of mission-aligned projects. • Ongoing monitoring, risk management, and learning processes. • Evaluation of progress and adjustments to the model. • Creation of a cohesive narrative and storytelling framework for stakeholder engagement. • Creation of a financial sustainability strategy.
YEAR 2: Dec 2026 – Nov 2027 Hub consolidation and expansion	• Launch of a second mission and expansion of the mission portfolio. • Strengthening of governance, team capability, and operational systems. • Deepen partnerships and ecosystem facilitation, including systems to train the trainers. • Enhanced learning, evaluation, and communications outputs. • Progress on fundraising and long-term sustainability planning. • Stakeholder engagement event or showcase.
YEAR 3: Dec 2027 – Nov 2028 Hub sustainability and transition	• Final round of mission delivery and learning capture. • Establishment of long-term governance and decision-making mechanisms. • Completion of final evaluation of the pilot Hub. • Strategic planning for the next phase (2029 onwards). • Implementation of the fundraising strategy and transition planning. • Formal decision on the future structure and continuity of the Hub.

Available funding

The Systems Hub has a total budget of **£730,500** over its initial three-year implementation period, designed to ensure effective delivery, generate strategic learning, and support future scalability.

Of this total, **£500,500** will be managed by the Hub's core Management Team and allocated flexibly across the budget categories listed below. The remaining **£230,000** will be allocated specifically for the implementation of the mission(s) portfolio – supporting projects and innovations aligned with the Hub's strategic priorities. The flexible portion of the budget should be strategically distributed across five budget categories to ensure:

- **the operational sustainability of the Hub**
- **the mobilisation and coordination of key stakeholders**
- **strategic oversight and learning through MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning)**
- **effective fundraising and long-term sustainability planning**
- **clear, credible communication of progress and outcomes.**

The grant may be used for the categories and applied in the ranges described below.

Distribution of resources (maximum):

Budget category	% of total budget	Purpose / notes
Admin & operational costs	20 – 22%	Staff salaries, office, legal, and overheads
Travel	10 – 12%	Field visits, coordination meetings, regional outreach
Events & collaborative spaces	12 – 15%	Co-creation workshops, Hub-hosted dialogues
Communications & outreach	5 – 10%	Branding, media, digital platforms
Monitoring, evaluation & learning	7 – 8%	Learning frameworks, data collection, adaptation
Fundraising & sustainability	7 – 8%	Partnership building, donor engagement
General operations reserve	14 – 18%	Core operations, flexible use across categories

Please take this into account when preparing the budget for your proposal.
Your budget to allocate in these categories is £500,550.

Applicants should ensure that their proposal's indicative budget:

- links each major costs to an activity or outcome
- describes internal processes for financial control and oversight
- acknowledges where funding decisions may depend on performance milestones or approval of mission implementation plans

Proposals that include flexible or adaptive elements (e.g. use of the General Operations Reserve) should explain how financial adjustments will be made transparently and in line with the Hub's objectives.

Eligible costs

Applicants are encouraged to interpret the budget categories with both strategic intent and operational realism. In general, costs will be considered eligible if they:

- directly contribute to the Hub's delivery, coordination, learning, or outreach
- are clearly linked to an activity, role, or outcome described in the proposal
- are accompanied by appropriate justification and traceable documentation.

In particular, the following types of expenditures may be eligible if clearly explained:

- time allocations for core staff engaged in strategy, facilitation, monitoring, or fundraising
- honoraria or consultancy fees for local experts or conveners where permanent staff are not appropriate
- platform fees or subscriptions if essential for collaboration, stakeholder engagement, or data gathering
- materials and minor equipment (e.g. tablets for field data collection, facilitation kits, comms materials) where their use is essential to delivery and not covered by other partners
- in exceptional cases, accessibility-related costs, such as translation, sign-language, childcare, or transport support, where these enable more inclusive participation
- contingency spending under the General Operations Reserve that supports adaptation or resilience in delivery.

Ineligible costs

Certain costs will be considered ineligible because they do not align with the purpose of the grant, may duplicate funding from other sources, or do not meet Academy requirements. These include, but are not limited to:

- costs unrelated to the Systems Hub activities or incurred outside the agreed implementation period (October 2025–September 2028)
- infrastructure, buildings, large physical assets, and vehicles
- facilities, including air conditioning units, office building, furniture
- recurrent costs not tied to project delivery, such as general institutional overheads beyond those defined under admin and operational costs

- political, religious, or advocacy activities that do not align with the Hub's neutral and inclusive mandate
- gifts, alcohol, or hospitality unrelated to project delivery
- cash disbursements to individuals or communities that are not linked to a contractual agreement or specific service
- retrospective costs (expenses incurred before the start date of the project)
- double funding of the same cost item from another donor, unless co-financing arrangements are clearly declared and managed
- inflation costs and costs due to exchange rates
- loans, further grants, or revolving funds.

Financial management principles

- **Transparency and accountability:** The Management Team will be responsible for the administration and execution of resources, ensuring their efficient distribution and alignment with the Hub's objectives. Financial monitoring and auditing mechanisms will be implemented to guarantee the correct use of funds.
- **Adaptive management:** You are not required to follow the ranges outlined in the distribution of resources table on pg 18 strictly in your proposal. We appreciate different contexts require different amounts, however significant deviations should be justified clearly in your proposal. We understand that plans may change as the project progresses. The "General Operations Reserve" is intended to allow for changes and ensure continuity across years.
- **Sustainability and mobilisation of extra resources:** The success of the Systems Hub will depend on its ability to operate autonomously and sustainably, avoiding dependence on a single funding source. During the first year, the Management Team will actively focus on identifying new sources of funding (public, private, international), develop strategic funding alliances, and explore innovative investment models.

We are committed to being a collaborative partner, and this grant has been designed with collaborative grant making principles at its' core. The workplan and budget submitted as part of this application should be considered indicative, and we will work with the successful applicant to refine them ahead of contracting. The plan and budget will be reviewed and refined on a yearly basis to maximise impact and effective use of funds.

Eligibility criteria

To be considered for funding, all applicants must meet the eligibility criteria. These are the minimum requirements needed to qualify for the selection process. Proposals that do not fulfil these criteria will not move forward. Read this section carefully to ensure your organisation or consortium qualifies before submitting your application.

1. Timeline alignment	Proposals must align with the Systems Hub's timeline to run from November 2025 and complete them by November 2028.
2. Who can apply?	Applications may be submitted by: • an individual organisation • as a consortium of up to three organisations. If as an individual organisation, the organisation must demonstrate the ability to fulfil all the core functions as outlined in the Reviewer Criteria. If applying as a consortium: 1. A lead organisation must be identified who will be responsible for financial and administrative coordination and be the primary contact point. 2. The application must clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of each organisation and demonstrate how the partnership adds value (e.g. through complementary expertise, networks, or implementation capacity). 3. A formal, signed agreement between consortium members must be required if your proposal is successful.
3. Types of eligible organisations and sectors	Eligible organisations include, but are not limited to: • Universities or research centres (public or private). • Nongovernmental organisations (NGOs). • Private companies or social enterprises. • Intermediary organisations (e.g. chambers of commerce, innovation hubs). • Multisector platforms or consortiums of research and innovation entities.

4. Location	If applying individually, the organisation must be legally registered in Colombia. For a consortium, the majority (2 out of 3) must be registered in Colombia.
5. Language	All project activities and training will be conducted in Spanish . However, to support international collaboration and learning, at least one team member should have professional proficiency in English and the ability to submit reports and expenditure statements. If applying as a consortium, it would be helpful if this person is in the lead organisation. The proposal must be submitted in English.
6. Declarations and letters of support	Applicant agrees to the declaration and has included a signed letter of support that is signed by a representative from each organisation affirming their commitment to the consortium. We recommend initiating this internal process early to avoid delays.
7. Complete documentation	All documentation requested in the application form (listed in detail in the document upload checklist, found in the supporting documents section under 'How to apply') need to be provided in the correct format (PDF). Please note if something is requested in a specific format you will be unable to upload it in a different format.

Organisations can submit a maximum of two applications. For example, a single organisation may participate as a partner in multiple applications, each with different lead applicants or consortium partners.

We recommend reaching out to the appropriate office in your organisation as soon as possible to ensure this is completed by the application deadline.
Applications will only be considered if the application is complete, with all the relevant documents attached.

Not eligible

Individuals are not eligible to apply. Applicants must be part of an eligible registered organisation that is based in Colombia.

Reviewing criteria

After confirming your application meets the **eligibility criteria** it will move forward to expert review. Reviewers will evaluate the strength and potential of your proposal using a set of **reviewing criteria**, to assess your vision, strategy, capabilities, and potential for systemic impact.

Reviewers will use a scorecard to guide this process and ensure fairness across all applications. Keep the criteria in mind as you shape your proposal.

1. Management Team structure and delivery capacity

Assessment of the coherence, credibility, and readiness of the proposed Management Team (individual or consortium) to lead and deliver the Systems Hub effectively. This includes:

- appropriateness of the team structure with clear roles and responsibilities and time commitment
- evidence of previous collaboration
- complementary expertise among partners
- financial delivery capacity
- experience in strategic communications.

2. Collaboration experience and facilitation capacity

Evaluates the extent to which the applicant (individual or consortium) has demonstrated experience of working with diverse stakeholders. This includes:

- breadth and relevance of past collaborations
- quality of engagement
- credibility and demonstrated results.

3. Strategic vision alignment and systems-thinking mindset

Evaluates the strength and clarity of the vision for the Systems Hub, and how it addresses Colombia's systemic energy challenges. This includes:

- systems thinking and systems convening (ability to spot potential collaborations)
- strategic alignment with the programme's objectives
- familiarity with adaptive and collaborative governance models
- ability to learn, adapt, and respond to complexity.

4. Network legitimacy and convening power

Assesses the ability of the team to **convene across sectors and networks** and act as an **articulator of articulators**. The team should have experience in **alliance-building** to convene diverse actors and catalyse action. Includes strength of proposed Opportunities Board and engagement plans.

5. Equity, diversity, and inclusion

Evaluates how the proposed approach ensures equity and inclusion across internal practices, programme delivery, and partnerships, with particular attention to reaching diverse territories and unheard voices.

Applicants must demonstrate inclusive leadership, commitment to participatory approaches, and clear alignment with the values and policies of the Academy.

Overview of the selection process

The selection of Management Team will follow a two-stage process, shown in Figure 5, designed to assess strategic alignment, organisational capability, and systems convening potential.

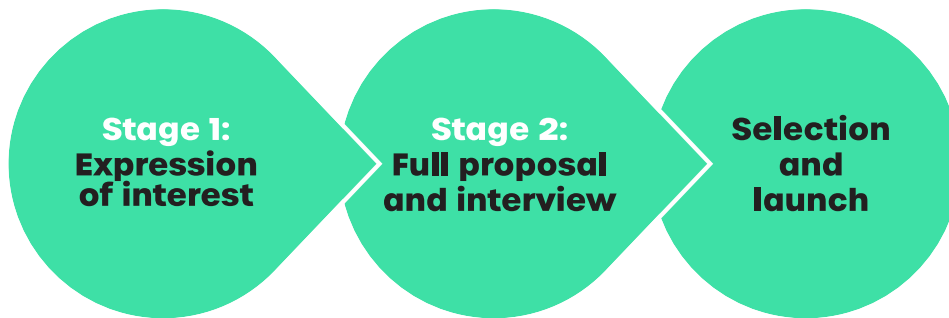


Figure 5. Systems Hub two-stage selection process

Please note the following are indicative timelines and might be adjusted.

Stage 1:

Expression of Interest (by 7 July – 29 July 2025 4pm BST)

The first stage focuses on identifying organisations or consortiums aligned with the Systems Hub vision. Applicants will be assessed on their organisational suitability, core capacities, values alignment, and legitimacy within the Colombian and international energy ecosystem. Applicants will share their vision for the Systems Hub and why they believe they are a suitable fit to be the Management Team.

Stage 2:

Full proposal submission (13 August – 2 September 2025 4pm BST) and interview (from 4 - 12 September, indicative timeline)

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal (by 13 August).

Applicants will submit a proposal that will include a workplan and indicative budget for the first 3 years of the Hub, as well as considerations for the future sustainability. This will be further tested in an interview, held in English and Spanish, where applicants will be asked to present on their proposal in detail.

Extra information will be requested that demonstrates your experience in systemic convening, risk management, learning strategies, and financial soundness. The goal is to assess their readiness to lead a complex, multistakeholder initiative and their capacity to mobilise resources and partnerships.

Application guidance

Stage 1: Expression of interest

Both stages will be submitted via the Academy’s Grant Management System.

After logging in to the system via the Academy website and selecting the Engineering X Systems Hub Management Team Grant Call you will be presented with the ‘Instructions’ screen. Here you will see some general instructions on how to use the system as well as the following list of the eight sections on the application form:

- SECTION 1: Applicant and organisation details**
- SECTION 2: Management Team structure and capacities**
- SECTION 3: Experience working in partnerships and facilitation capacity**
- SECTION 4: Vision and motivation**
- SECTION 5: Network legitimacy and convening potential**
- SECTION 6: Equity and inclusion strategy**
- SECTION 7: Engagement with Engineering X and the Academy**
- SECTION 8: Applicant declaration**

At any stage in the application process, you can save your work and return to it later. You can answer the questions in any order, and you may freely skip some sections to return to later if you wish. It is therefore advised to view the application early on for an indication of what is required, and you should also ensure that you have all the necessary documentation at hand when you start completing the application, such as a copy of all CVs.

We will conduct a Q&A session on Fridays 10, 17 and 24 July in case you have any queries or comments regarding the application form. We welcome any feedback that can make this process inclusive, locally relevant, and engaging.

Please note – if a question in the application form states a document needs to be uploaded as a PDF, **the system will only allow you to upload a PDF.**

SECTION 1: Applicant and organisation details

Lead applicant’s contact details	These are the details we will use to contact the lead applicant. You will be asked for your name, email address, institution you represent/role. Include the organisation name in the ‘address’ section. You will be asked to confirm Yes/No if you are a legal entity in Colombia.
Are you able to meet the English proficiency requirements?	Please select Yes or No from the dropdown list to confirm if you have at least one team member with professional English capacity and the ability to submit reports and expenditure statements in English.

List the names of all core team members.	Complete the table with the names, email address, organisation, and languages spoken by the core team of individuals who will be working on the project.
What is the proposed start date?	This is a flexible start date, but we are looking for a team that is available to begin from October 2025. Please provide here your availability to begin working.
What is the proposed end date?	Please provide the end date – we would expect this to be by September 2028 for this initial phase but would hope the Management Team would continue.
Team experience and organisational capacity supporting documentation	Upload key supporting documents (PDFs) including: • a tailored CV (2 pages max) demonstrating team roles and suitability to meet key capacities • your organisational chart or governance structure • your legal status confirmation (e.g., certificate of registration).

SECTION 2: Management Team structure and capacities

Are you applying as an individual or as a consortium?	Indicate if you are applying as an individual organisation or as a consortium. It is NOT a requirement to have partners; however, the assessment process will consider if an individual organisation or consortium meets the requirements. If you are applying as a consortium, consider implementation leads (individuals that will be assigned to this project) should be based in Colombia. <i>You will be asked to provide further evidence in Stage 2 on the roles and commitment of proposed partners.</i>	
Lead organisation profile(s) and track record.	Provide an overview of your organisation(s), including your mission, legal status, area of operation, years of activity, and purpose.	Max 300 words
If you are applying as a consortium, list the details of all partners.	Provide an overview of your partner organisation(s) in the consortium, including their mission, legal status, area of operation, years of activity, and purpose. Leave this question blank if you are not applying as part of a consortium.	Max 600 words

Consortium structure	If you are a consortium, tell us why you have decided to work together and if you have collaborated in other projects in the past.	Max 250 words
What is the proposed structure of the Management Team?	Explain the proposed structure of the Management Team which must detail clearly assigned roles and responsibilities. Make sure to include time commitment (i.e. full-time commitment, part-time commitment)	Max 300 words
Experience in fundraising and managing similar budgets	Describe your experience managing similar budgets, and any partnerships or resources you would leverage to support the Systems Hub.	Max 300 words

SECTION 3: Experience working in partnerships and facilitation capacity

List recent collaborations with civil society, industry, government, or academia.	For each, indicate the partner, your role, the project name, funding source, and the outcome(s). You might add supporting digital evidence such as links to websites and LinkedIn posts. This will allow us to understand your experience in multistakeholder collaborations. You may upload up to three letters of recommendation of funder organisations and strategic partners that you have partnered with in the past. This is not mandatory but might strengthen your application.	Max 400 words
Experience in multistakeholder facilitation	Describe your experience in convening multistakeholder meetings and leading discussions in those forums.	Max 300 words

SECTION 4: Vision and motivation

Describe a key systemic challenge in Colombia's energy transition.	What is one systemic challenge in Colombia's energy transition that your organisation is uniquely positioned to address – and why? Explain how this challenge is interconnected across actors, geographies, or institutional levels and how your existing work or perspective gives your insight into its root causes.	Max 300 words
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Share your vision for the Systems Hub and how it could add value to Colombia's energy transition.	Describe what your vision for the Hub would be over the next three years. This does not to be a detailed proposal, you will be asked to submit this in Stage 2. Consider the suggested governance structure presented in the guidance notes "What is the Systems Hub?" section. You can suggest changes and improvements according to the strengths of the proposed team.	Max 500 words
Team suitability and motivation to apply.	Describe why you would be well placed to act as the Management Team. Why are you motivated to apply? Why now?	Max 300 words
Organisational capacity to adapt and approach to learning.	Give an example of when your organisation had to respond to a complex or unexpected challenge. What did you do, what was new or different about your approach, and what did you learn?	Max 400 words

SECTION 5: Network legitimacy and convening potential

Who do you think should be in the Opportunities Board and why?	Share your ideas for who should be in the Opportunities Board. Consider type of organisations and evidence your networks. Be as specific as possible, adding the name and role of the individuals you would be able to invite.	Max 300 words
How would you work with the Opportunities Board to strengthen your work and the wider impact of the Systems Hub?	How will you use your networks, legitimacy, and facilitation experience to turn the Systems Hub into a wider community of practice beyond the Opportunities Board (and the Mission Nodes)? Give concrete examples of the types of actors you can convene, and how you would create ongoing spaces for collaboration.	Max 300 words

SECTION 6: Equity and inclusion strategy

Describe your organisation's approach to ensuring equity and inclusion in your activities and partnerships.	Describe your organisation's approach to ensuring equity and inclusion in your programmes and partnerships.	Max 300 words
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SECTION 7: Engagement with Engineering X and the Academy

Please note that this section will not be scored. This is only used to understand our audiences better.

Experience working with Engineering X and the Academy.

Have you engaged with the co-creation phase of the Colombia Systems Hub?

Yes/No. If yes, please detail your engagement below.

Do you (or your partners) hold (or have previously held) any other grants with either Engineering X or the Royal Academy of Engineering?

How did you hear about this scheme?

Please select this box if you are happy to receive emails from the Royal Academy of Engineering regarding future funding opportunities.

SECTION 8: Applicant declaration

Acknowledgement of using AI tools

If you do use generative AI tools to help write your application, you must acknowledge the name of the tool you used and tell us how you used it. For example:

- "I acknowledge the use of [insert AI system, version number and link] to generate materials for background research / styling / proofreading."
- "I acknowledge the use of [insert AI system(s), version number and link] to generate materials that were included within [insert section titles] in modified form."

Applicant declaration

I confirm here and by submitting this application that:

- All information is accurate at the time of submission, and I will update the Royal Academy of Engineering of any material changes which may affect the project.
- The ideas presented are my own and not plagiarised or containing IP that is not owned by myself, except for that IP that I have express permission to use in this way.
- All contributions have been appropriately referenced or credited including the use of any online tools such as AI generative tools used in developing my application.
- I understand that failure to cite and declare references or sources for material information will result in my application being removed from the process, or the uncorroborated information disregarded.

**Applicant declaration
(continued)**

- I understand that the Academy will disclose the information submitted in this application to reviewers for the purpose of assessing this application. Any external reviewer we ask to assist us has agreed to keep this information confidential.
- I have the express permission of any individuals whose contact details I have shared as part of this application process, to share these details with the Academy for the purposes of administering the application.
- I understand that the Academy or other third-party evaluators may contact me for the purposes of Monitoring and Evaluation of this programme.
- I have read and understood the Application Guidance.

Document upload checklist

- **Tailored CV of the proposed team (2 pages) demonstrating team roles and suitability to meet key capacities**
- **Your organisational chart or governance structure**
- **Legal status confirmation (e.g., certificate of registration)**

What happens after Stage 1?

If shortlisted, you will be invited to submit a full proposal and indicative budget, as well as participating in an interview. This will allow the panel to explore your vision, delivery approach, and collaborative mindset in more depth.

Stage 2 overview

You will be asked to submit:

1. A proposal outlining your vision for the Systems Hub that will include:

- A refined vision for how the Systems Hub will function in the first three years. This will include how it will enable actors to collaborate to improve decision-making and support innovation in the energy transition.
- A description of your proposed governance and delivery model.
- Year 1 -3 priorities and strategies for learning and adaptation, as well as ideas of 'easy wins'.
- Partnership and communications approaches.
- Approach to learning and measuring success, including short-, medium-, and long-term indicators.
- Risks and mitigation.

2. A proposed indicative budget for 3 years using the Stage 2 Budget Template, including:

- Projected operational costs (in GBP).
- Financial sustainability approach.
- Details of in-kind contributions or other funding sources.
- Uploads: Financial documentation, governance processes, legal registration.

Applicants will be shortlisted for interview which will include a presentation of their proposal and questions on vision, approach, collaboration, and risk.

Please note that this requested budget is indicative. We are committed to being a collaborative partner, and this grant has been designed with collaborative grant making principles at its' core. We will work with the successful applicant to refine the workplan and budget ahead of contracting. The plan and budget will be reviewed and refined on a yearly basis to maximise impact and effective use of funds. Payments will be aligned with the agreed workplan, and funding will be disbursed in stages – rather than as a single upfront payment–based on delivery and reporting milestones.

You will also be asked to upload a **signed letter of support** from your organisation confirming internal approval to apply and manage the grant if successful. For consortiums, an agreement will need to be included that evidences the long-term commitment to the project signed by all partners.

Diversity and inclusion

The Royal Academy of Engineering is committed to diversity and inclusion and welcomes applications from all underrepresented groups. It is the Academy's [policy](#) to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged or receives less favourable treatment because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

This has several implications for this call:

- We require you to ensure that your project design, monitoring, and evaluation is informed by diverse voices and enables participation by an appropriately diverse group of stakeholders.
- We want to ensure that the planned activities, expected outcomes, and set objectives are equitable and benefit marginalised groups as this is part of embedding systems approaches. You should consider the different needs and interests of underrepresented groups who are part of the project's target population or indirectly affected by the project activities and outcomes.

Policies to consider when applying

All researchers and organisations we fund must comply with our grant funding policies and positions which, with our Conditions of Award and Letter of Offer form the Grant Agreement.

You can find all the policies on the Academy website. Please read all relevant policies for your application, these include:

- [National Security](#)
- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [Subsidy Control](#)
- [Use of generative AI tools in funding applications and assessment](#)
- [Grant agreement](#).

Please find all of the Academy policies here: [Grant policies](#)

Contact us

For more information about **Safer complex systems Programme** please [visit our website.](#)

For further enquiries regarding this grant call, please contact the Programme Manager, [Ana Andrade](#). Ana is a native Spanish speaker and is able to respond your queries in Spanish if needed.