



Engineering and
Physical Sciences
Research Council



UCL FESTIVAL
OF CODE

Celebrating Research Software
& Coding Communities

Challenges & opportunities of funding research software

Portfolio Manager ICT Theme – Robert Deller (Robert.Deller@epsrc.ukri.org)
Friday, 18 June 2021



Who am I and what do I look after...

Portfolio Manager in the (capability) ICT Theme

- Responsibility for the Software Portfolio encompassing **Software Engineering** and **Verification & Correctness** Research Areas.
- Engage frequently with *E-infrastructure (capability)* and *AI & Robotics (challenge)* themes within EPSRC.
- Software is ubiquitous and ICT research can span across a wide spectrum of disciplines (i.e. talk to a lot of people).
- New hardware “often” requires new software in parallel (*and vice versa*).

What is research software engineering...

...and who are research software engineers.

“A Research Software Engineer (RSE) combines professional software engineering expertise with an intimate understanding of research.”¹

- Important for the RSE community to define their requirements and for us (as funders/enablers) to **listen**, **respond** and **support** where possible.
- EPSRC/UKRI always eager to hear and champion successes as evidence for future support.

How does EPSRC (and UKRI) support...

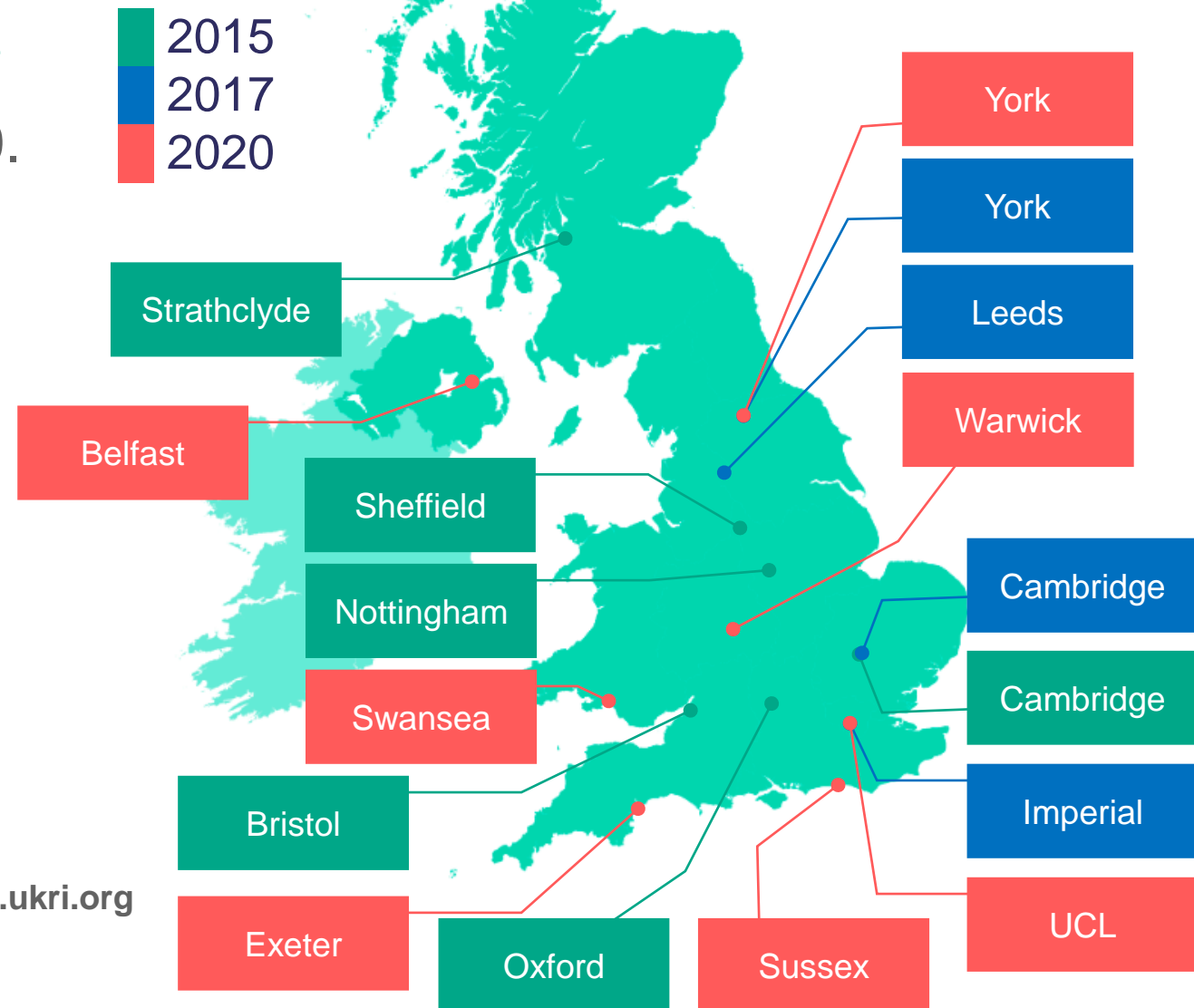
Recent funding opportunities

- RSE fellowships in 2015, 2017, 2020.

“Fellows are provided with significant resources in order to pursue their vision and establish or develop RSE activities within their institution”.²



Michael.James@epsrc.ukri.org
(E-infrastructure)



²www.ukri.org/opportunity/research-software-engineer-fellowships-2020/

How does EPSRC (and UKRI) support...

Software Sustainability Institute

EPSRC lead but supported by **all 7 research councils** with international project partners.

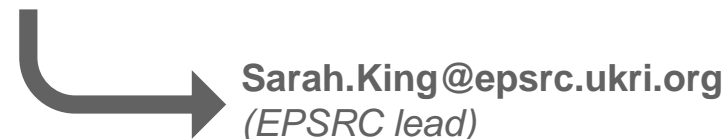
Phase 1 – 2010 - £4.6M
“Prepare”

Phase 2 – 2015 - £3.5M
“Deploy”

Phase 3 – 2018 - £6.3M
“Expand”

“The Software Sustainability Institute cultivates better, more sustainable, research software to enable world-class research. We help people build better software, and we work with researchers, developers, funders and infrastructure providers to identify key issues and best practice in scientific software.”³

Creates and defines a range of programmes and events to support and enhance research software and those who deliver and maintain it.



Sarah.King@epsrc.ukri.org
(EPSRC lead)

How does EPSRC (and UKRI) support...

Opportunities via continuous mechanisms⁴

- RSEs are able eligible to apply as a PI, Co-I and Researcher Co-I on **UKRI** proposals.
- (*New*) Open and Open Plus (**EPSRC**) Fellowships are open to RSEs of all career stages and actively encouraged.
- Justified costs for RSEs can be appropriately included on proposals.

How does EPSRC (and UKRI) support...

Forthcoming opportunities

- The Exascale Computing ALgorithms & Infrastructures Benefiting UK Research (ExCALIBUR) programme⁵ – RSE Knowledge Integration in conjunction with MET Office.



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(E-infrastructure)

⁵<https://excalibur-portal.uk/> & <https://excalibur.ac.uk/hes>

How does EPSRC (and UKRI) support...

Forthcoming opportunities

- *Software for Research Communities* Call (£4.5M).⁶ Proposals that adapt, grow and/or maintain *existing* software to enable new functionalities or workflows, or the use of different computational architectures, to underpin research within the **remit of EPSRC**.

Call opens
29/06/2021



Intent to Submit Deadline
14/09/2021



Call closes
14/10/2021



Grant start date
01/04/2022



Michael.James@epsrc.ukri.org & Sarah.King@epsrc.ukri.org
(E-infrastructure)

⁶www.ukri.org/opportunity/

How can RSEs support EPSRC (and UKRI)...

Mutually supportive

- In keeping with UKRI peer review principals, RSEs are best reviewers of RSE quality.
- More RSE warrants more RSE expertise and perspective. Applications to the EPSRC Peer Review College are welcomed and encouraged.⁷
- More visibility equals more evidence to further emphasize importance of RSE. Capturing impact outside of usual channels to disseminate to wider audiences.
- Applications to the EPSRC Strategic Advisory Teams now open until 29th July 2021.⁸



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Questions?



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