FAQs: UKRI Research and Innovation Infrastructures (RIIs) – Landscape Survey

What size RII are in scope for the Landscape Survey?

We're looking for things that provide a relatively unique research or innovation capability - so a state of the art lab or NMR would not necessarily be in scope if many other institutions in the UK have similar facilities, but a collection of rare texts or data may well be, as would be a regional or national facility. Institutional-based facilities may also be in scope, as long as they're offering some fairly unique or specialist capability. The RII must also offer some type of access to users outside of the host institution to be considered. For smaller equipment and facilities the _equipment.data_ catalogue already does a great job of discovery and promotion and we're not aiming to replicate this. We're looking for the level above that.

My Institute has a facility for its own researchers, is that in scope?

For inclusion in the Landscape Survey the RII must offer some type of access to users outside of the host institution to be considered. There are many ways in which this could occur, such as through peer-reviewed applications, a % of capacity, through Co-I relationships etc. If a RII only provides access to members of the institution it would not be in scope.

Do I respond on behalf of my Institute or my RII?

We need responses per RII, not per host institution. There may be cases where these are one and the same, such as Diamond Light Source, The European Social Survey etc. There may also be cases where one institution only hosts one RII but also performs other functions (e.g. a museum that has a public education role as well as operating a RII). Here we'd need the response to consider just the RII aspect. There will also be many host institutions that house multiple RIIs – and so we'd need separate responses.

What about RIIs located outside of the UK?

We are interested in all RIIs provided to the UK research community, whether they are based in the UK and abroad. For those based abroad, we'd need some type of special arrangement (membership, subscription etc.) that gave the UK researchers access rather than where a RII is open to the world on a competitive access basis. For example, in scope would be a distributed data infrastructure with a headquarters in Israel and hub in the UK. Also in scope would be a single-sited telescope based in Chile where the UK membership afforded UK researchers preferential access compared to a non-member country (although there may still be peer review for quality etc). Out of scope would be a facility in Germany where researchers bid for access based on quality of the proposal, payment etc and there was no special arrangement with the UK such as UK membership of that facility.

Can I get a copy of the survey questions in a word doc so we can work on the responses as a team before completing it online?

Of course, please email infrastructure@ukri.org

How did you decide who to contact for the survey?

We previously undertook a desk study to identify as many RIIs as possible. We included sources of information such as the ESFRI and MERIL international-scope RIIs, GO-Science Science Landscape papers, BIS/BEIS Capital investment reports, NAO audits, Research Council/RCUK/Innovate UK large facility lists and contacts across UK Government Departments etc. We also sought advice from a steering board composed of representatives of the nine constituent bodies of UKRI, BEIS, BEIS partner institutions, national academies, UUK and others.

However, one of the reasons for undertaking this exercise is that we do not already have a comprehensive awareness of what RIIs exist in the UK and it's likely we may have got some of these suggestions wrong. For this reason, in addition to writing to all RIIs that we could identify through these mechanisms, HEFCE and the devolved funders have also contacted all HEIs in the UK and offered potential RIIs to self-nominate and complete the survey by following a link on the Research Infrastructures news page on the UKRI.org website. They've done this by contacting the VC/Pro VC at all HEIs. Some other partners have publicised the link to their networks too for example AIRTO and the National Academies.

All in all there have probably been over a thousand invitations sent through the different channels. If you've received more than one copy we do apologise – it's either because of the multi-pronged approach so we don't miss any or possibly because you've been identified for more than one RII. Also we are sorry if you feel you should have received a personal invite and one hasn't arrived – once we've completed this exercise we will be able to tailor our communications more appropriately.

Can you tell me the names of everyone/the list if RIIs who have been contacted in my institution?

No, unfortunately not, not with any accuracy. The survey has been promoted through our partners as well as through us directly so we do not have a complete list of everyone who has been contacted.

Are the closing dates fixed?

This survey is being released in two phases (this being Phase 1) and in addition to developing an online portal to discover the UKs RIIs, the data will also help inform development of the National Roadmap. The timescales for all aspects are very ambitious – the first draft of the Roadmap and the release of the online tool are both scheduled for later this year.

This survey was originally released in February/March and closed on 19th March. Since then there has been an ongoing analysis of the results that is helping to inform the second phase of the survey as well as other elements of the Roadmap process. Whilst we had a very high return rate (>600 responses) we were aware that a small number of important infrastructures failed to receive or act on the initial survey invite, often because of spam filters. For these we have re-released the initial survey slightly in advance of the second phase of the survey (planned for June).

The deadline for this survey is 23:59 on 15 June 2018. It is fixed and there are no opportunities for an extension due to the second survey closing shortly afterwards.

Can we give you our answers in a word document?

Unfortunately not, we can only accept responses submitted through the online survey.

Why not just do a single survey for RIIs, why the two phased approach?

Phase 1 of the landscape survey will provide us with all the info we need to develop and populate an online tool and to get an idea of the complete picture of the UK's RII landscape. This tool is a really important part of the National Roadmap process but we may need to delve deeper to discover some of the extra information to inform decisions around the Roadmap and the questions in Phase 2 will be informed by RII's responses to Phase 1. Also, we didn't want the survey to be so large or tricky to complete that it became a barrier to involvement. Every RII completing Phase 1 is eligible to complete Phase 2, but it is not compulsory. Not completing Phase 2 will not jeopardise a RII's inclusion in the online tool.

I'd like to see all the responses from my host institution, is that possible?

We will publish all of the eligible RIIs completing the Landscape survey in the online tool unless they have chosen to opt out. Unfortunately, due to data protection regulation we cannot share their raw data including the names of individuals completing the survey.

Can I get a copy of my responses when I complete the online survey?

Yes of course. On completing the survey you can immediately download a pdf of your responses via the link.

I have made an error entering the data but it's been submitted. Can I go back and change it or can you reopen the survey for me?

Unfortunately the tool we're using doesn't allow us to reopen the survey or amend your input directly. But if you email us the correct data we can amend your responses in the dataset for you: infrastructure@ukri.org

I forgot to download my responses – is there another way to get a copy?

Please contact the UKRI team (infrastructure@ukri.org) and we'll try and help you.

What other ways will you engage with the community in developing the Roadmap? What's next?

We will also be contacting users of the RIIs to get their views, and other important stakeholder groups. The best way to keep abreast of opportunities for involvement is through our webpage which will be regularly updated: https://www.ukri.org/research/infrastructure/

Got another question? Just email the team and we'll try and help:

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