

## **OUTPUT FROM THE FACILITY FUNDING MODEL: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1. *What is the Facility Funding Model?***

The Facility Funding Model is a new process set up by the Research Councils, at the request of BIS, to recommend the appropriate level of sustainable operational funding for the large facilities for each CSR period.

### **2. *Why was a new process required?***

Following a number of difficult funding years for STFC the previous government instigated a Ministerial Review of STFC (The Drayson Review) in December 2009. The outcome of the Drayson Review was a set of new arrangements designed to ensure that STFC can plan with greater predictability and provide its community with more stability. A key feature of these arrangements was the division of STFC's budget into three areas:

- International facility subscriptions (CERN; ESO; ESRF; ILL);
- Domestic large facilities (Central Laser Facility [CLF]; Diamond; ISIS);
- Core programme (Particle Physics; Astronomy; Nuclear Physics; Campuses and Technology Development).

From 2011/12, RCUK would work with STFC to agree the availability and support requirements for our large domestic facilities at the beginning of each CSR period, with indicative planning covering the subsequent spending period, i.e. three years fixed + three years indicative in total. The funding for the delivery of these agreed requirements would be top sliced from the science budget prior to individual allocations being made to the Research Councils and allocated separately to STFC by BIS. The process was to start from the beginning of the current spending round (1st April 2011) and STFC would manage the domestic large facilities budget independently from the remainder of its budget allocation. A project (the Large Facilities Funding Model Project) was therefore established in April 2010 to develop and implement the new Facilities Funding Model process. Following the change of government in May 2010 the project continued, the only change being that the six years funding would now be four years fixed and two years indicative to match the new governments four year CSR period.

### **3. *What is the impact of the project on the user community?***

In terms of the range of large facilities available (both international and domestic) and how to apply to access those facilities there is no change.

### **4. *Does the project apply to all large facilities?***

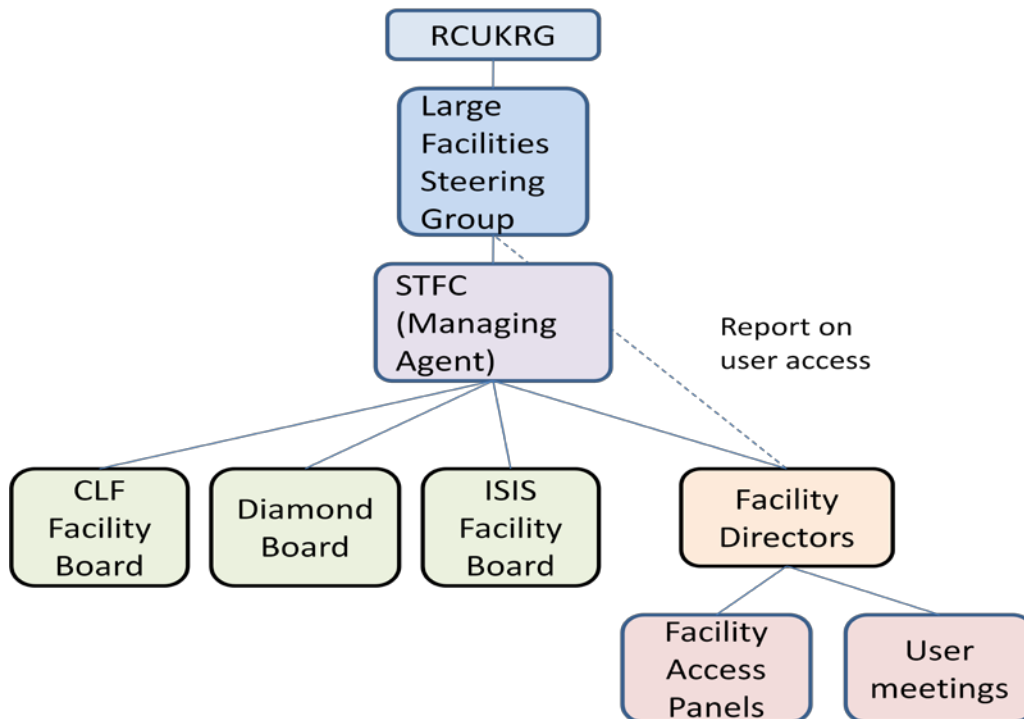
No; at the moment the project / new Facilities Funding Model process is specifically for the UK national large facilities based at RAL i.e. the CLF, Diamond and ISIS.

The funding for international subscriptions (ESRF and ILL) is provided in a separate ring-fenced budget to STFC that is negotiated separately to the budget for the

national facilities. The Facilities Funding Model process does take cognisance of these international facilities and, where it would be beneficial for changes proposed for the national facilities to occur at the international facilities, the STFC Managing Agent will work with the ESRF and ILL to introduce these.

**5. What is the governance and management structure for the new Facilities Funding Model process?**

The governance and management structure for the new Facilities Funding Model process is shown below:



**6. What is the Large Facilities Steering Group<sup>1</sup>?**

The Large Facilities Steering Group has been established by RCUK as part of the new governance, monitoring and auditing regime for the large facilities. It will be the responsibility of the Large Facilities Steering Group to decide on the level of core operational funding for each facility at each CSR, based on the requirements for the large facilities in terms of the science that they support and advice from the Facility Directors on what they can provide at their facility and at what cost.

**7. What is the composition of the Large Facilities Steering Group?**

Membership of the Large Facilities Steering Group is decided by the Research Councils and the Wellcome Trust. Membership is currently drawn from BBSRC, EPSRC, MRC, NERC and the Wellcome Trust; AHRC and ESRC may decide to become actively involved in the Large Facilities Steering Group in the future as their

<sup>1</sup>The Large Facilities Steering Group = the Facilities Steering Group referred to in documents produced by the Large Facilities Funding Model project.

overall funding level at each CSR will also be impacted by the amount of funding that is top-sliced to support the large facilities. STFC is a member of the Large Facilities Steering Group in its role as Managing Agent for the large facilities and provides the secretariat to the Group.

Current Large Facilities Steering Group membership is as follows:

Lesley Thompson, EPSRC (Chair)  
Colin Miles, BBSRC  
Anne-Marie Coriat, MRC  
Michael Schultz, NERC  
Richard Wade, STFC  
Anna Curson, Wellcome Trust  
Jennifer Scratchter, STFC (secretariat)

#### **8. *Who is the STFC Managing Agent?***

The STFC Managing Agent is STFC's Chief Operating Officer, Prof Richard Wade.

#### **9. *What is the role of STFC Managing Agent?***

The role of the STFC Managing Agent is to:

- Work with the other research funders via the Large Facilities Steering Group to determine the level of funding for each of the large facilities;
- Provide oversight to the monitoring of the large facilities to ensure that they deliver the required access to the facilities for the user community as agreed by the research funders;
- Actively manage and carry out the process of deciding which facilities are considered for funding to provide the research funders requirements and appraise the facilities response to those requirements and advise the research funders accordingly.

#### **10. *Who are the Research Funders?***

In relation to the facilities funding model the Research Funders are those research councils (and the Wellcome Trust in the case of Diamond) that support the user community to undertake leading research at the UK large facilities (CLF; Diamond; ISIS).

#### **11. *How do the Research Funders obtain input from the end user community about their scientific needs?***

Each funding body has its own advisory structure which will be consulted to obtain input from the end user community. Advice will also be sought from other institutions that fund the actual research carried out by the user community on the large facilities.

#### **12. *What is the Requirements document?***

The Requirements document will articulate the level and type of large facility access (lasers, synchrotrons and neutrons) required for the research councils (and Wellcome Trust in the case of Diamond) user community for the coming 4+2 years, including the anticipated budget.

**13. Will the facility provision provided by the international facilities (ESRF and ILL) be taken into account in any decision making process?**

Whilst funding is provided via a separate process for the international facilities, the capacity and capability provided by those facilities to the UK user community in return for the UK subscription payment will be taken into account (by both the STFC Managing Agent and the Large Facilities Steering Group) when the final levels of funding are being discussed for the national large facilities to ensure that there is complementarity of facility provision.

**14. What is meant by sustainable operational funding for the facilities?**

Sustainable operational funding is the funding required (both resource and capital) to operate the core facility in a sustainable manner at the level (capacity and capability) agreed by the Large Facilities Steering Group.

Sustainable operational funding does not include any additional funding that the facility may obtain e.g. from external contracts, industrial usage, international agreements, research grants awarded to the facility or facility staff.