Security, Privacy, Identity, Trust,
Engagement, NetworkPlus

Call for Participants: Third Annual SPRITE+ Sandpit

Closing date: 24 October 2022

SPRITE+ is pleased to invite Members and Expert Fellows to apply to attend a hybrid sandpit on **Future Digital Identity**. Up to £160k of SPRITE+ funding will be made available to fund interdisciplinary projects arising from this sandpit.

Background

SPRITE+ is the EPSRC-funded (grant reference EP/S035869/1) NetworkPlus for Trust, Identity, Privacy, and Security (TIPS). We work with academic and non-academic stakeholders to build and strengthen the TIPS community and identify requirements and promising new directions for research. We have a 'pump-priming' budget to fund activities that explore and test new ideas, and that create new collaborations between academic disciplines, and between academic and non-academic partners.

The research challenge: Digital identity: Created, Remembered, Forgotten

This topic of this year's sandpit is the future of digital identity, defined broadly. Sandpit participants will explore and develop interdisciplinary projects from scratch that tackle issues relating to future opportunities and challenges in:

- Establishing identity (broadly defined) in digital contexts
- Verifying identity across digital systems and contexts
- Understanding how identities can be forgotten or disappear

Some of the questions we might explore include (but are not limited to):

- How will new and emerging technologies create, exacerbate, or mitigate challenges to identity creation, verification, or erasure?
- What are the social, legal, cultural, political, environmental, and behavioural implications of evolving approaches to digital identity and the development of new biometrics?
- What makes up an individual's identity online and who controls an individual's identity?
- What roles do identity creation, verification and erasure play in the delivery of future government or commercial (etc) services?
- How do organisations ensure trustworthy operations in users' identity lifecycle management?
- How do digital identity management systems tackle user acceptance and adoption?

We expect participants at this sandpit to approach the topic of identity from many different perspectives. We welcome applications from researchers across STEM, Arts and Humanities, and Social and Behavioural Sciences, including from those who have not previously worked on digital identity as well as those with an established track record in TIPS topics. We warmly welcome applications from industry, NGOs, government, and the police. Non-academic participants will play a central role in the development of proposals and in the successful projects.

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Sandpit outputs

Up to £160k of SPRITE+ funding will be made available to fund interdisciplinary projects arising from this sandpit.

Successful projects will explore Future Digital Identity from novel, interdisciplinary perspectives. Funding might cover the costs of conducting scoping studies, research engagement with organisations and/or the public, feasibility studies, and demonstrators. The aim is to explore promising 'proof of concept' ideas that could be developed into further, more ambitious funding proposals (e.g., to UKRI, Innovate UK, or other funds).

The timescale for each project will be no longer than four months, and each project funded is expected to be between £12,500 and £37,500 (at 100% full Economic Cost (fEC)), of which SPRITE+ will fund 80% fEC (in line with UKRI rules). In practical terms, this means that SPRITE+ will fund 80% of the total costs outlined in successful proposals. For example, if your proposal is costed at £37,500 (100% fEC), SPRITE+ will fund £30,000 (80% fEC). Project Partners and non-academic Members may contribute in-kind resources.

Expected commitment from participants

The sandpit will be run online and in person at the following dates and times in January 2023:

- Session 1 (online): 10 January, 12.30-4pm
- Session 2 (in-person residential at De Vere Cranage, CW4 8EW): 12-13 January from 10.30am on day 1 until 4pm day 2
- Session 3 (online): 18 January, 12.30-4pm
- Session 4 (online): 25 January, 12.30-4pm

Participants must attend every session in full and will be expected to engage with each other and with Project Partners in between the formal sessions, to develop and refine their ideas. Suggested reading and videos may be provided before and during the workshop and participants are encouraged to explore relevant research and grey literature.

An application to attend will be taken to mean you are available for these dates and able to engage fully.

The short application form can be found here.

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Further details

What can I expect?

Sandpits are intensive, interactive experiences where you will work with fellow participants to create new ideas from scratch. Our first and second sandpits in 2020 and 2021 resulted in us funding ten new short projects – and one team that didn't get funded from the sandpit went on to submit a successful £200K bid to another funding call. Here's some of the feedback from previous participants:

> *"The sandpit brought people together which would have never met otherwise. I met fantastic colleagues and am very grateful for this opportunity. It was a focused and well-structured event which was also exceptionally well organised and facilitated. Thank you!"*

> *"An excellent experience and one that I would highly recommend. Rather than having months to plan and think about a project it forces you to think creatively and strategically, taking on board other interests and feedback."*

> *"Highlights for me are: Forming connections with other people in the area, particularly from other disciplines. Understanding and discussing key issues. Developing project proposals at speed. Getting valuable insight from mentors at every stage of the process. Mentor and funding clinics to get the support we need."*

How will the sandpit work?

Our approach to the sandpit is similar to the UKRI sandpit approach. A sandpit is highly interactive and involves participants from different disciplines and backgrounds exploring and developing innovative approaches to a challenge. Because of Covid, we successfully ran our first two sandpits entirely online. This year we are taking advantage of a relaxation in Covid restrictions to run part of this sandpit in person.

After an introductory half day session online, we'll have two days in the beautiful setting of the De Vere Cranage Estate in Cheshire. This is where we'll define the scope of the challenge, share understandings of the challenges, and explore the expertise brought by the participants to the sandpit, form teams and start to shape the projects.

A week after the in-person sessions we'll convene for another half day online to present the developing projects and receive peer review feedback from other participants. We'll also offer optional funding clinics that week for project teams to discuss the practicalities of funding and the grant conditions (e.g., what expenses are allowed, managing the project).

The following week, participants will present their proposals to a funding panel which will include members drawn from our Advisory Board, Expert Fellows group, Project Partners, and other stakeholders.

The Panel will recommend proposals for funding and those involved will be given time to prepare a brief written proposal covering their intended activities, with costings (at 80% fEC). The deadline for submission of written proposals generated at the sandpit will be 3 March 2023. Further guidance on this part of the process will be available at the sandpit event.

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After satisfactorily completing normal contract and due diligence procedures with University of Manchester, projects can start. All grant holders will be expected to complete a short end of project report within 1 month of project completion. Successful project teams may also be invited to present their findings at the SPRITE+ Conference in Belfast at the end of June.

Who should attend?

We anticipate that approximately two thirds of places will be filled by academic researchers and one third by non-academic research users.

We want to bring people together who would not normally interact and particularly welcome applications from individuals who have not previously engaged in the 'TIPS' community. We encourage applications from individuals working in SMEs and third sector organisations, and from academic researchers from all disciplines, including engineering, physical sciences, life sciences, the social sciences, and the arts and humanities. **Participants from academia are welcomed at any stage of their research career if they meet UKRI eligibility requirements to receive grant funding.** If you have any questions about your eligibility, please get in touch at admin@spritehub.org.

What funding is available?

Up to £160k of SPRITE+ funding will be made available to fund interdisciplinary projects arising from this sandpit. The timescale for each project will be no longer than four months, and each project funded is expected to be between £12,500 and £37,500 (100% fEC figure).

Whilst we expect proposals to be co-created with non-academic stakeholders for maximum impact, funding can only be allocated directly to eligible academic researchers as described in UKRI's Eligibility Guide. This means that although costs associated with the contributions of non-academic partners can be included in successful proposals, non-academic participants cannot lead projects.

Funds will be awarded at 80% fEC in accordance with normal UKRI practices. In practical terms, this means that SPRITE+ will fund 80% of the total costs outlined in successful proposals. Funds awarded will be subject to standard UKRI grant terms and conditions, which are non-negotiable.

The duration of work funded by this sandpit should not last more than four months and should commence no later than 1 May 2023 and finish no later than 31 August 2023.

Please note that attendance at the Sandpit does not guarantee funding. Teams with projects that are not funded from SPRITE+ funds may nevertheless decide to develop their proposals into bids to other funding calls. For instance, in 2020, one of the unfunded Sandpit projects went on to do very well in another funding call.

What costs do you cover for participation?

For academic participants, SPRITE+ will cover travel, accommodation, and meal costs for the in-person days of the sandpit. According to UKRI expenditure rules, non-academic participants are liable for their own costs. Please contact us at admin@spritehub.org if you wish to discuss further.

We recognise that some potential participants may face barriers to online participation, including poor connection speeds, childcare/babysitting costs, or the need for BSL interpreters, captioning, or

audio description. We are committed to doing what we can to help participants overcome such barriers. Successful applicants will be eligible to apply for support through our SPRITE+ access fund to help them participate fully and effectively in sandpit activities. Please contact admin@spritehub.org to arrange a discussion (in confidence) if you want to explore what could be available to you.

How to apply

Applications are invited from SPRITE+ Members and Expert Fellows from:

- Academia (applicants must be eligible to receive UKRI funding, please see the UKRI Eligibility Guide)
- Professional practice (non-academic)

All applicants should be registered members of SPRITE+. You can apply for membership (which is free of charge) here.

Applicants should complete the short application form and submit to admin@spritehub.org by **24 October.**

Assessment criteria

Proposals will be reviewed against the following selection criteria:

- The ability to develop novel and adventurous research ideas
- The potential to contribute to research at the interface between disciplines
- The ability to work in a team
- The ability to engage productively with people from a range of backgrounds within and outside your sector

Please note:

- We do not assess your academic publication or research track record as part of the process. We are more interested in your ability to engage creatively and constructively in a multidisciplinary environment to generate novel ideas, and the way in which you demonstrate an appreciation of the challenges of future digital identity.
- You should approach the sandpit without a specific research project in mind. Novel ideas are co-created by sandpit participants from scratch.
- We will select participants based on the information in the application form and will endeavour to achieve a diverse spread of participants from across disciplines, experience, and backgrounds.

Key dates

19 September 2022	Applications open
19 October 2022	Deadline for queries
24 October 2022, 4pm	Applications close
By 2 December 2022	Applicants notified of decision

10 January 2023	Sandpit session 1 (online)
12-13 January 2023	Sandpit session 2 (in person)
18 January 2023	Sandpit session 3 (online)
25 January 2023	Sandpit session 4 (Funding panel, online)
27 January 2023	Funding Panel give in-principle decision
3 March 2023	Deadline for written proposals
March – April 2023	SPRITE+ team will work with the PIs' research support offices to complete contractual work asap. Projects can start as soon as contracts are in place.
1 May 2023	Latest date by which projects should start
31 August 2023	Deadline for project completion
Within 1 month of project completion	Submission of end of project report

Privacy notice

SPRITE+ is fully compliant with GDPR. We will treat proposals as confidential and share only with the Management Team and peer reviewers. Copies of unsuccessful applications will be destroyed after the evaluation process. Copies of successful applications will be destroyed within 3 months of the sandpit. Anonymised statistics will be recorded to inform the organisation of future Sandpits and to monitor efforts to attract applicants from diverse backgrounds.

Please note that the information you provide in sections 1, 2, 3 and 6 of your application form may be shared with other participants prior to the sandpit.

For details of how SPRITE+ handles Members' data more generally, see our Privacy Policy.

Further information

You can read our FAQs document here (to be updated until 19 October 2022).

If you have any further questions regarding this call, please contact email admin@spritehub.org.