

Invitation to Universities to Bid to Host a Faraday Institution Annual Conference 2025-2027

Introduction and background

The Faraday Institution

The Faraday Institution (FI) is the UK's flagship organisation for electrochemical energy storage research, skills development, market analysis and early-stage commercialisation. It brings together research scientists and industry partners to work on large projects with commercial potential that will reduce battery cost, weight, and volume; improve performance and reliability; and develop whole-life strategies including recycling and reuse. The FI manages large research programmes across 27 universities involving 500 researchers and 120 industry partners across the UK.

www.faraday.ac.uk

The Faraday Institution Conference

The Faraday Institution annual conference brings together our community of researchers, together with other UK and international academics, industry partners, policy makers and funders to disseminate our research and further establish the organisation's reputation as a national convener for battery science. A full set of conference objectives are outlined further in this document.

Our first post-COVID in-person conference was successfully delivered and hosted in collaboration with the University of Birmingham in September 2023, exceeding our expectations:

- 530 delegates
- 71 speakers
- 9 themed sessions
- 160 posters
- 21 exhibiting companies
- 150 organisations represented of which 55 were industry or government
- 231 expressions of interest to speak or present posters

Being a collaborative project, the conference was delivered by the efforts of a Local Organising Committee and Scientific Programme Board, chaired by Professors Peter Slater, Emma Kendrick and Paul Anderson, alongside FIHQ representatives including Professor Pam Thomas, CEO (who co-chaired the Scientific Programme Board) and Events Manager Emily Baird. In addition, the FI secured the support of Conference Collective Ltd, a professional conference organiser who took up the role of secretariat.

“Holding the Faraday Institution conference in 2023 was a great way to showcase the breadth of battery research and facilities at the University of Birmingham. The event offered a wealth of networking opportunities with industry and academic researchers, and it has helped us to develop new links across the UK and beyond.” – **Professor Peter Slater, University of Birmingham and Co-chair of the 2023 conference**

Feedback from delegates included:

- “Best battery conference in the UK. If you want to be on top of what is going on in the UK battery space, you should go.”
- “This is a very accessible conference, it is suitably priced and brings together the UK's top researchers and industry.”
- “The Faraday Institution conference brings together the most significant industry-adjacent battery research taking place in the UK.”

[View our 2023 Conference showreel](#) and feel the buzz from the event. You can also [view our progress to date for our 2024 Conference](#) hosted by Newcastle University, taking place 10-12 September this year.

Invitation to host the Faraday Institution Annual Conference

We are now inviting institutions who are involved in FI research to submit proposals to host and deliver the Faraday Institution Conferences to be held in September 2025, September 2026 and September 2027. Priority will be given to bids submitting a tender for 2025, and subsequent years will be determined in addition.

Institutions are only eligible to host one main Faraday Institution conference in the three-year period.

Conference objectives

The working objectives for the Faraday Institution conference are to:

- Further establish the reputation of the FI research community, raising the visibility of UK scientific excellence in energy storage;
- Energise researchers, committed to deliver great science, ripe for commercialisation, faster
 - Feel part of the FI community
 - Facilitate networking, collaboration and partnership
 - Internalise FI messages on mission, urgency and model & project objectives;
- Showcase project progress and impact and additionality that the FI brings – especially to industry and government present;
- Build a broader community of battery researchers in the UK (external to FI) including in industry;
- Provide career development opportunities for early career researchers (ECR); and
- Provide opportunities for the host university to highlight their capabilities/facilities.
- Showcase the wide range of activity of the Faraday Institution HQ.

Scope of the annual conference

The outline scope of the conference is as follows:

- 3 days (with a set up day one day prior to the start of the conference)
- In-person, with the possibility of an online provision as a fall back for those that can't attend
- 500+ delegates
- Date TBD in September (2023 and 2024 taking place 2nd week in September) but outside university terms and UK state school holidays. Preference for conference open days to be Tuesday to Thursday. The date of LCV Cenex should be avoided (typically the first week in September), as should other known major battery conferences.
- Space provision for at least two parallel streams per day (~200 people per room)
- Up to 60 speakers (around half selected from a call for abstracts)
- Anticipating up to 250 abstracts submitted for talks and posters
- An exhibition area for up to 30 exhibitors, "tabletop" with potential for increasing scope via sponsorship or similar
- Exhibition area to also include space for catering (lunches and refreshments) and networking, and ideally all posters if possible (approx. 160-200 posters).
- If above space not possible for posters, requirement to have dedicated poster space in same building (for approx. 160-200 posters).
- Ample space for delegate registration desks to facilitate 500 delegates.
- Provision of venues (either onsite or local) to accommodate a networking reception and a conference dinner for up to 500 delegates.
- Audience would include FI researchers (PhD upwards), external academics, industry and a few from government and funders, both UK based and international.
- UK focus but welcome overseas speakers and participants.
- Accommodation provision for all participants, ideally onsite or within close proximity (walking distance) to suit all budget options. If no onsite accommodation available, the local convention bureau can be invited to provide an accommodation booking service.

Who is eligible to host?

Any university that conducts research funded by the Faraday Institution as of end March 2024 is eligible to host the annual conferences. We expect no more than one bid per university. Bids submitted should be by the team that would form the basis of the local organising committee (LOC) which must include a number of Faraday Institution researchers (led by a senior research leader) and individuals from the events/conference team at the same university.

A university's bid should demonstrate that the university has all the necessary resources, including suitable onsite facilities and experienced personnel, to deliver a successful conference based on the criteria outlined below.

Institutions are only eligible to host one main Faraday Institution conference in the three-year period.

What are the benefits of hosting a Faraday Institution Conference?

By hosting the Faraday Institution's Conference, your institution will have the opportunity to:

- Showcase your venue, university, city, and any local industry partners to our extended professional community.
- Highlight new facilities, capabilities or equipment at your university.
- Benefit financially from income derived from the provision of space, catering, AV and associated conference facilities.
- Promote the university's brand in a research area of national strategic importance.
- The LOC can:
 - actively influence the programme content, choice of speakers, and community engagement. The final shape of the programme will be defined by the LOC, FIHQ and the Scientific Programme Committee (SPC).
 - further build your reputation with academia, industry partners and other prospective partners.
 - encourage collaboration around your existing or planned projects.
- Organise a STEM outreach event in conjunction with the conference that may align with your institution's objectives.

What are the responsibilities of the host?

The successful host will:

- Undertake to deliver the conference to a high standard that represents the conference objectives and FI values.
- Help to create a welcoming, supportive, diverse and productive programme of activities that embed EDI practice across all aspects of the conference.
- Co-chair (with the CEO of the FI) the Scientific Programme Board (SPB) and play an active and influential role on this Committee, as well as an option to nominate colleagues to join the SPB.
- Appoint and Chair a Local Organising Committee (LOC) – a senior research leader with relevant experience and knowledge of the FI and the conference themes to support the planning and delivery of the conference programme.
- Provide suitable conference facilities, accommodation, and support services.
- Identify technical facilities and capabilities for webcasting and remote attendance in the event that this is necessary.
- Support the social activities that facilitate networking and community engagement.
- Work with the FI dedicated Event Manager and Conference Collective throughout the planning and delivery of the conference.
- Make best attempts to support raising of additional revenues through sponsorship and other sources of funding to enable conference fees to be as affordable as possible
- Provide internal post-event feedback to be used to inform and support the hosts of future events, as well as providing any quantitative feedback on the economic and social impact on the local area.

What are the responsibilities of the Faraday Institution?

The Faraday Institution will:

- Provide a financial donation of no more than £100,000 to support the costs of venue hire, local services, and facilities to host the conference (this would be reduced should e.g., sponsorship or subvention funding be secured). The amount of the donation will be determined as part of the bid process.
- Underwrite the costs involved in delivering the conference including venue hire, local services, accommodation, catering necessary to host the conference. The budget is managed and controlled by the Faraday Institution.
**Please note that whilst the Faraday Institution's current funding cycle ends in March 2025, we will be able to provide a letter of support from our funder to ensure commitment to funding the conferences in 2025, 2026 and 2027.*
- Set the registration fees for the conference in line with the proposed budget to ensure participation at the conference remains accessible to all who attend.
- Co-Chair the SPB, contribute to the development of the conference agenda, and approve the final agenda and invited speakers.
- Appoint members of the SPB selected from within the FI community, its partners, and the LOC.
- Brief FI research projects on their requested contributions to the conference programme.
- Provide a dedicated FI Event Manager to lead on the conception, planning, delivery and analysis of the conference.
- Develop a paid for online provision (streaming of sessions, access to posters) as a fallback for those that can't attend (subject to demand).
- Post event evaluation.
- Provide the services of a Professional Conference Organising company (The Conference Collective Ltd), to work alongside the FI Event Manager and the LOC to support the day-to-day management and the delivery of the conference.

What are the responsibilities of the Professional Conference Organiser, Conference Collective?

These will include:

- Be an integral part of the conference delivery team, proactively providing support and advice to the LOC and FIHQ to deliver a conference meeting its objectives to high quality.
- Co-develop project plan, responsibilities matrix, risk assessment & mitigation plan and Covid policy etc.
- Support the tender process for selection of the host university.
- Build and maintain a conference website, with full details of agenda, speakers (with photos), exhibitors, links to registration and call for abstracts systems.
- Hold registration funds for the FI and administer payments to vendors, subject to accounting rules and audit guidelines.
- Manage conference registration, including provision of a secure, online registration system.
- Supply and administer an online call for abstracts system.
- With FIHQ, develop an event budget, setting delegate fees accordingly.
- Develop the exhibition proposition. Lead on advertising of exhibition space and be the first point of contact for exhibitors. Work with LOC to develop floor plan, furniture options and communications with exhibitors, oversee build up and break down and assess and monitor health and safety requirements.
- Lead on-site logistics, layouts, poster sessions, signage, catering, AV equipment & staging, rooming lists, social programme. Liaise with LOC on all on-site logistics.
- Be the primary point of contact for speakers around logistics, briefings, conference bookings, receipt of presentations.
- Develop communications / instructions to speakers, poster presenters, exhibitors and delegates.
- Organise appropriate on-site staffing during pre-event briefings, build-up and during the event to ensure smooth running/fire fight as required.

- Attend and minute SPB meetings to keep informed of discussions around agenda and speakers and provide advice from an event delivery and flow perspective.
- Co-chair meetings of the LOC (to be attended by FIHQ staff and LOC) that will oversee and coordinate all event organisation.
- Advise on best practice with regards to equality, diversity and inclusion as it impacts conferences, and act as a champion for EDI issues throughout conference planning and execution.
- Ensure GDPR compliance in all procedures and practices.

Content of proposals and submission deadlines

Prospective hosts of the Faraday Institution Annual Conference are asked to submit a bid in electronic format to Jacinta Scannell, Conference Collective Ltd (Jacinta.scannell@conferencecollective.co.uk), copying in FIHQ Events Manager Emily Baird (emily.baird@faraday.ac.uk) by Friday 10th May 2024.

The bid must include the following:

- 1-2 page summary of your proposal – including a compelling reason why the conference should be held at your university. What would make the conference unique? How would it stand out as a location? Are there VIPs from the university or local industry you'd propose to include in the programme? What facilities would you highlight?
- A full bid document addressing how each of the host's responsibilities and the evaluation criteria (see below) will be met.
- Brief CVs of lead researcher(s) and other key members of the proposed LOC.
- Proposed dates and duration.
- An outline budget proposal on the template provided.
- Contact details including email and phone number of lead researcher(s) responsible for submitting the bid.

Timescale

- Invitation issued to universities: By end of March 2024
- Deadline for receipt of bids: Friday 10th May 2024
- Time for queries/checking bids: Mid-May 2024
- Notify shortlisted bidders: by end of May 2024
- Shortlisted bidders will be invited to an online discussion with the FI and the Conference Collective: Between 10th-14th June 2024
- Notify successful host: By end of June 2024, with a site visit in July prior to finalising contracts.

Evaluation process

The FI Selection Committee will use the following criteria in evaluating proposals. These are in no specific order and the relative weight placed on each will be determined by the Selection Committee.

Local Organising Committee

- Are LOC representatives active and contributing members of the FI research community?
- Are all the important roles for conference delivery covered, and are there enough people involved to make event delivery manageable at a local level?
- What experience do the researcher(s)/events team have in delivering similar conferences or events?
- What unique support is offered by the local institution?
- What new sources of support are likely from local and regional industry?
- Is there a plan for administrative support?
- Does the proposal consider EDI and accessibility across all aspects of the project?

Scientific Programme

- Will the proposed venue/destination attract broad and diverse participation?
- Does the proposed Scientific Programme Board have relevant expertise in energy storage?
- Will the suggestions from the Scientific Programme Board provide a mix of scientific, educational, training and professional development content?
- Is there added value in any optional tours suggested?

Location

- Is the proposed location desirable and accessible for conference participants?
- How convenient and affordable is travel for all participants?
- Does the venue bring the FI conference to a new location?
- How will the conference benefit undergraduate and graduate students and other battery researchers at the host university?

Facilities

- Are the facilities appropriate to deliver the needs of the conference programme and the number of delegates expected?
- Are the facilities suitable for the exhibition requirements?
- Are there adequate facilities for networking, poster and social activities?
- Is there sufficient accommodation available at the venue/region? Is there a low-cost option?
- Is the venue experienced at providing catering for large conferences, including a conference dinner and social events?
- What are the T&Cs associated with venue booking? What are cancellation policies?

Dates

- Are the proposed dates within the range specified for the conference?
- Do the dates create potential conflicts with other relevant conferences?
- If the dates are outside the range, is the LOC's argument for those dates compelling?
- Would the LOC be interested in hosting the 2026 or 2027 conference, if their bid is not successful for the 2025 conference?

Finances

- Are the proposed costings on the template budget realistic and viable?
- Does the LOC have the opportunity to raise additional new sources of support from local contacts (university, sponsorship from local industry, subvention funding) to subsidise expenses and enrich the conference experience?

Questions

Should you wish to discuss the scope of the conference, LOC responsibilities or to seek other clarifications before submitting proposals please contact Emily Baird emily.baird@faraday.ac.uk 07481 378178 or The Conference Collective Ltd Jacinta.scannell@conferencecollective.co.uk 0208 977 7997.