



BBSRC standard research grant

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)
Funding type:	Grant
Maximum award:	£2,000,000
Publication date:	20 September 2020
Opening date:	N/A
Closing date:	Open - no closing date

Last updated: 1 March 2021

[Start application ►](#)

Our standard research grants are for researchers at eligible organisations that include:

- higher education institutions
- research council institutes
- approved independent research organisations.

We will award 80% of the full economic costs of your research, and your organisation must agree to find the balance.

Projects can range in size up to £2 million and last up to five years. Funding can support a range of activities from research projects to technology development, new infrastructure and equipment, use of equipment and facilities, networks, and summer schools.

[Open all](#)

Who can apply

You can apply if you are resident in the UK for at least 183 days in a tax year and hold a lecturer or lecturer-equivalent position at a UK higher education institution, research council institute or a UKRI-approved independent research organisation.

Principal applicants must be employed at the submitting research organisation at lecturer level, or equivalent, or due to move to the organisation before the start date of the grant. Or if not employed, applicants must have an agreement that the research will be conducted at the submitting research organisation as if they were an employee at lecturer level, or equivalent.

Co-applicants must be employed at an eligible organisation and meet the same employment criteria.

[See the eligibility section in our research grants guide \(PDF, 375KB\).](#)

Early career researchers

If you are an early career researcher who has:

- held a lecturer or equivalent-level position for no more than three years full time
- not obtained funding from any source as a principal investigator, including postdoctoral research assistant staff support costs

you can secure your first major element of research funding through the new investigator scheme.

You will be assessed following the same procedure as other applications, however research potential rather than track record will be taken into account.

Industrial partners

Industrial partners are encouraged on all research grant applications. There are, however, two formal ways to seek support for your research if you are working with an industrial partner:

- Industrial partnership awards: academic-led research with significant industrial involvement and where an industry partner contributes in cash at least equivalent to 10% of the full economic costs of the project
- Stand-alone LINK: collaborative research with at least one company where at least 50% of the full project cost comes from industry either in cash or in-kind

We do not fund the work of your industrial partners. Industrial partners must agree ownership and exploitation of the intellectual property at the outset and clearly define the proposed scientific and commercial results in a management framework.

COVID-19 update: New investigator scheme

In recognising the level of disruption caused by COVID-19 restrictions to the progression of early career researchers, applicants submitting under the new

investigator (NI) scheme to 21RM2 and 21RM3 with the closing deadlines of 28 April 2021 and 29 September 2021 respectively, are being informed that a slight relaxation on the time limit of NI's employment at lecturer-level has been temporarily introduced.

Applicants who wish to submit their standard grant proposals under the NI scheme for the remainder of 2021, will need to have held a lecturer, or equivalent-level, position for no more than 3.5 years at the time of the closing date for submission to the grant round in which the application will be assessed. The other criterion that necessitates NI applicants to not have obtained funding from any other source, or funding body, as a principal investigator remains unchanged as it currently stands.

A subsequent review of this relaxation will take place later in the year, following the closing date of 21RM3 (29 September 2021), to ascertain whether further extension is still required. Any announcements with regards to changes beyond 2021 will be communicated accordingly on this page in due course.

What we're looking for

This scheme supports excellent investigator-led research across the breadth of our scientific [remit](#).

Funding of up to £2 million is available for up to five years for:

- research projects, including technology development projects
- equipment or use of existing facilities
- new facilities or infrastructure
- research networks and coordination
- summer schools.

You can apply to undertake biotechnology or biological research in:

- plants
- microbes
- animals (including humans)
- tools and technology underpinning biological research.

Investigations within and across scales are supported, from molecules and cells, to tissues, whole organisms, populations and landscapes.

We welcome multidisciplinary proposals that cross into other research council areas but expect the primary focus of your work to fall within BBSRC's remit.

We work with other research councils to ensure that applications close to remit boundaries are assessed by the most appropriate lead council. Please [contact us](#) with any queries about the suitability of your application before applying.

We have a strong commitment to funding curiosity-led research and to advance excellent bioscience across our portfolio.

You are encouraged to consider the relevance your proposed work to the long-term research and innovation priorities set out in our [delivery plan](#).

In addition, we have identified several priority areas in which we wish to encourage and promote submissions to advance these goals:

- animal health
- bioenergy: generating new replacement fuels for a greener, sustainable future
- combating antimicrobial resistance
- data-driven biology
- food, nutrition and health
- healthy ageing across the lifecourse
- integrative microbiome research
- new strategic approaches to industrial biotechnology
- reducing waste in the food chain
- the replacement, refinement and reduction in research using animals
- sustainably enhancing agricultural production
- synthetic biology
- systems approaches to the biosciences
- technology development for the biosciences
- welfare of managed animals.

We particularly welcome approaches that encourage working with partners to improve the effectiveness of research and the realisation of impact, promoted through three further priorities:

- collaborative research with users
- research that informs public policy
- international partnerships

You should consider the potential impacts of your research and how they relate to BBSRC's strategy, including the aims of our priority areas where relevant.

[More about our themes and priorities.](#)

Working with Brazilian researchers

You can apply to work on projects with Brazilian researchers based at higher education and research organisations eligible for support from the State of São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP).

Proposals must be in fields supported by both BBSRC and FAPESP. Funding for the work of Brazilian scientists on the project is funded by FAPESP.

[More about working with Brazilian scientists.](#)

[More about FAPESP.](#)

How to apply

You must apply using the [Joint Electronic Submission system \(Je-S\)](#) before 16:00 on the day of the deadline.

When applying select:

- council: BBSRC
- document type: standard proposal
- scheme: responsive mode
- call/type/mode: select appropriate call.

If you are applying for the new investigator, FAPESP, LINK or industrial partnership awards, you should also select 'grant type' in the document menu and then select the relevant classification: new investigator, FAPESP, LINK or industrial partnership award.

Applications for LINK and industrial partnership awards should also be accompanied by letters from the institution's technology transfer office and from the industry partner outlining the terms, value and benefits of the partnership.

You must nominate the relevant BBSRC [research committee](#) to review your application. Our scientifically qualified staff will check your choice and make a final decision on which research committee should peer review your application.

We recommend that you apply well before the latest deadlines, these are listed in the timeline.

See the [Je-S handbook](#) for advice on completing applications to BBSRC.

Please read the full [BBSRC guidance on research grants \(PDF, 375KB\)](#) before applying.

Applying with Brazilian partners

For applications under the FAPESP agreement, you must apply with a joint proposal for both partners and include:

- a covering letter confirming the proposal is to be considered under the BBSRC-FAPESP agreement (see [UKRI-FAPESP lead agency agreement guidance \(PDF, 260KB\)](#))
- CVs of all named researchers in both countries
- a FAPESP-consolidated budget spreadsheet completed by the São Paulo researchers included as a letter of support in Je-S
- a completed FAPESP research proposal form included as a letter of support in Je-S.

How we will assess your application

Your application is first assessed by external reviewers appointed by us. You must suggest four independent reviewers from outside your institution that you have not

recently collaborated with. The principal investigator will have an opportunity to respond to comments from reviewers.

Your application will then be considered by our research committees made up of independent experts. These are:

- committee A: animal disease, health and welfare
- committee B: plants, microbes, food and sustainability
- committee C: genes, development, and science, technology, engineering and maths approaches to biology
- committee D: molecules, cells and industrial biotechnology.

The committees have a core membership of relevant UK and overseas experts from academia, government and/or industry. We also call on a further pool of experts to assess applications.

Your application is assessed on:

- scientific excellence
- industrial and stakeholder relevance
- relevance to BBSRC strategy
- economic and social impact
- timeliness and promise
- value for money
- staff training potential of the project (where resources are requested for postdoctoral or other research staff).

We lead on assessing joint proposals with Brazilian scientists with input from FAPESP.

Contact details

- For queries regarding eligibility, contact: eligibility@bbsrc.ukri.org
- For queries regarding scope and remit, contact: remit@bbsrc.ukri.org
- For information about collaborating with industry, including lead agency work with NSF Fapesp and SFI contact: industry.collaboration@bbsrc.ukri.org
- Contact the policy team on: policy@bbsrc.ukri.org
- For questions regarding BBSRC International Collaborative Agreements, contact: inca@bbsrc.ukri.org

Additional info

Supporting documents

- [Industrial partnership awards](#)
- [LINK](#)
- [FAPESP](#).

Timeline

- March 2021**
Research committee assesses applications (20RM3)
- 13 January 2021 16:00**
Application deadline (21RM1)
- 21 May 2021**
Research committee assesses applications (21RM1)
- 28 April 2021 16:00**
Application deadline (21RM2)
- 21 September 2021**
Research committee assesses applications (21RM2)
- 29 September 2021 16:00**
Application deadline (21RM3)
- 22 February 2022**
Research committee assess applications (21RM3)

Related content

[BBSRC: Investing in doctoral training](#)

[FAQs for Industrial Partnership Awards and 'stand-alone' LINK grants](#)

[State of São Paulo Research Foundation \(FAPESP\) website](#)

Related opportunities

[BBSRC standard research grant: welfare of managed animals](#)

NOTE This is the first phase of our new website – let us know if you have [feedback](#) or would like to [help us test new developments](#).

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