2020 Bioinformatics and Biological Resources Fund – Assessment Criteria

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

Background

For each proposal, Panel members will consider each of the following criteria, and decide on a single quality score.

Assessment Criteria	Description
Scientific excellence and strategic relevance of the resource	• The extent to which the resource meets the highest international standards of current resource provision in its field. High performance against this factor will indicate a project of the highest standard, competitive with the best activity anywhere in the world. • It is expected that, except in the most unusual circumstances (which should be clearly explained) any proposal that goes on to be funded will be at least competitive with other comparable work internationally and, unless the overall score is moderated by other competitiveness factors, will be well above this standard. • The proposed resource(s) should be either unique or complementary to similar existing resources. The proposal itself does not need to demonstrate uniqueness if it is solely to maintain an existing (unique) resource of the highest international excellence. • The extent to which the proposal addresses the research and policy priority areas of UKRI-BBSRC.
Fit to the scope of the call	• The extent to which the proposal is focussed on: ▪ The establishment and maintenance of a new and innovative resource that will be beneficial to a broader UKRI-BBSRC user base. ▪ Maturation and subsequent maintenance of a project-based resource into a community-based one. ▪ Further development and/or essential maintenance of an existing community resource, with well-established access mechanisms. Further development may be to increase its relevance to a broader UKRI-BBSRC user community, e.g. enhancing utility by enabling the resource to meet FAIR principles. Essential maintenance of a high performing international excellent resource is within the scope of the call. ▪ And/or the association and/or integration of distinct resources, that will enhance their utility and create an upgraded resource with a greater value than the sum of the parts.

Potential for economic and social impact beyond the academic community.	• The extent to which the output(s) from the proposed resource will contribute knowledge that show direct potential for economic return or societal benefits to the UK. • Proposals are expected to demonstrate clear plans with recorded milestones and timelines for the associated activities to develop economic, commercial and societal impacts. • Methods of engagement and measures of success should be outlined including how these will be regularly reviewed throughout the project.	
Cost effectiveness, particularly considerations for long-term sustainability beyond BSBRC funding	• The extent to which the resource the resources requested, relative to the anticipated scientific gains, represent an attractive investment of UKRI-BBSRC funds. • Consideration for the long-term sustainability options for the resource beyond UKRI-BBSRC should be outlined for all resources.	
	New Resources	**Existing Resources**
Quality of the overall arrangements for resource management, advisory functions, as well as user access and engagement	• The proposal should outline the management plans for the resource. This should include the project management and advisory structures, noting that it is a condition of BBR Fund awards that projects have a strategic management board with a biologist as a user. • The team should possess the appropriate combination of skills, expertise and experience to deliver the resource described. • The extent to which the **promise** of the proposed approach to the acquisition of data/materials needed to create the resource. Suitable **plans** for user access arrangements should be described. Any arrangements described for non-academic researchers should be considered carefully, where relevant. • **Plans** for long-term community awareness, uptake and development of the resource should be discussed. • A key element will be the **plans** that exist within the project to achieve the necessary interaction	• The proposal should the management plans for the resource. This should include the project management and advisory structures, noting that it is a condition of BBR Fund awards that projects have a strategic management board with a biologist as a user. • The team should possess the appropriate combination of skills, expertise and experience to deliver the resource described and demonstrate effective management of the existing resource. • The extent to which the approach to the acquisition of data/materials needed to **enhance or maintain** the resource. **Previous and future** user access arrangements should be documented. Any arrangements described for non-academic researchers should be considered carefully, where relevant. • **Evidence** of long-term community access and need for the resource should be discussed. • A key element will be the arrangements that exist within the project to achieve the necessary interaction with relevant users that will ensure that these aims

	with relevant users that will ensure that the aims of the resource are realised.	are realised. **Evidence** of user engagement and feedback that has been incorporated into the planned work would be of value to proposals.
Need / demand and potential benefit to the UK academic research community	• The proposal should provide **evidence of potential** need and/or demand for the proposed resource by UK academic researchers working on problems within UKRI-BBSRC remit. New resources may demonstrate evidence of need/demand through letters of support from members of the scientific community the resource is designed to serve, or though active engagement with their broader community through meetings, data gathering or pilot projects. • Proposals are expected to demonstrate **potential benefits** to the bioscience research community of the resource in question, and the high-quality science they will underpin. In addition to the Case for Support, it is expected that any letters of support from **potential users** will explain clearly how the proposed resource will impact and benefit their research and the research of the wider scientific community they belong to.	• The proposal should provide **evidence** of ongoing need and/or demand for the proposed resource by UK academic researchers working on problems within UKRI-BBSRC remit. Existing resources should demonstrate **evidence** to an appropriate level of usage by the research community the resource is designed to serve, including whether the resource has achieved the level of engagement it originally anticipated, and consideration is given how the additional investment would change this. • Maintenance of existing resources should provide **evidence** of why the resource will continue to benefit the research community in its current form, relative to emerging new scientific discoveries within its community. • Proposals are expected to outline **evidence** for the benefits to the bioscience research community of the resource in question, and the high-quality science they have supported and will continue to underpin. In addition to the Case for Support, it is expected that any letters of support from **previous users** will explain clearly how the resource impacts and benefits their research and research by the wider scientific community they belong to and where applicable how proposed enhancements of the resource will benefit their research.