# 2020 Bioinformatics and Biological Resources Fund – Guidance notes

## Background

The Bioinformatics and Biological Resources (BBR) Fund aims to facilitate the establishment, maintenance and enhancement of high-quality bioinformatics and biological resources to support the UK bioscience research community.

Applicants can apply for up to £2m (100% fEC) over 5 years. The indicative budget for the call is up to £6M, subject to the quality of applications received. Please note that all applications must have a start date no earlier than 1 July 2021.

In addition to following the guidance below on the required documentation for the BBR call we would encourage all applicants to refer to the full assessment criteria when preparing their application.

## Required documents

In addition to the completed Je-S application form your submission should include the following attachments:

| Attachment | Max. page length (A4) | Guidance |
|---|---|---|
| Case for support | 8 pages | See below |
| Justification of Resources | 2 pages | All resources requested (directly incurred, directly allocated, staff costs for Research Technical Professionals and Research Software Engineers, PI and Co-I time) must be fully justified.<br><br>Items that would ordinarily be found in a department, for example non-specialist computers, should include justification both for why they are required for the project and why they cannot be provided from the research organisation's own resources (including funding from indirect costs from grants). |
| Data Management Plan | 1 page | Should provide information relating to data sharing and software management. Please refer to the UKRI-BBSRC website for our Data Sharing Policy. We recommend consulting the Software Sustainability Institute website for guidance on software management. |
| Diagrammatic Work Plan | 1 page | A diagrammatic Gantt chart outlining the key steps to be taken and milestones to be reached to realise the project outcomes as described in the Case for Support. Where the resource is part of a larger project, a meta-resource or network it may be helpful to include the interactions within |

| | | the Diagrammatic Work Plan or within the Management Structure where appropriate (see below). |
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| Management structure | 1 page | Should provide a diagrammatic overview of how the project management and scientific advisory functions will operate. This may include the interactions with a wider project, other resources, or networks as appropriate. The proposed membership of the Scientific Advisory Board should be listed.<br><br>Please use attachment type 'other attachment'. |
| Narrative CVs | 2 pages each | See below for guidance on what to include.<br><br>Required for all named applicants and named research staff only. Including a named Research Technical Professional / Research Software Engineer is encouraged where appropriate. Narrative CVs for key technical staff can be included where appropriate although they are not mandatory.<br><br>All narrative CVs should be collated and uploaded as a single pdf. |
| Letters of support – Demand & Collaborative | Variable | **Letters of support demonstrating community demand are mandatory**, at the time of submission, and proposals submitted without these letters will be rejected prior to assessment.<br><br>Please ensure that all letters of support are on headed paper and that they are signed and dated within 6 months of the date of submission of the proposal. Only directly relevant letters of support should be submitted. See below for further guidance.<br><br>**A maximum of 10 letters of support demonstrating community demand** should be provided.<br><br>Collaborative letters of support may be provided as necessary.<br><br>All letters of support plus a tabulated summary should be collated and uploaded as a single pdf. |
| Proposal cover letter | | Applicants should indicate whether they are applying for funding to support an existing or new resource. Applicants' conflicts of interest will also need to be added to the Proposal Cover Letter, please refer to the UKRI website for further guidance. |

## Case for Support (maximum of 8 sides of A4)

The Case for Support should be a self-contained description of the proposed resource, with detailed descriptions of necessary changes and upgrades that are needed to be supported by this proposal. It should include the following information, but these do not indicate mandatory sections within the case. You should choose the most appropriate structure, whilst incorporating all relevant information.

| Areas to cover | Details |
|---|---|
| Track Record | The majority of the track record relevant to the project should be located within the Narrative CV and should **not** be repeated within the case for support. You may, however, want to describe:<br><br>• Track record of the team working together<br>• Specific expertise available at the host organisation and any proposed partner organisations to enable the successful delivery of the project.<br>• The specific role of each applicant and collaborator in the project |
| Background to the Resource | Introduce of the proposed resource, including its academic and wider economic and societal context.<br><br>Provide an overview of past and current resource(s) in the subject area in both the UK and abroad including any alternative community resources currently available. You should indicate the community size of the intended resource and how this relates to the field in which it operates. |
| Details of Resource | The case for support should outline the full details of the resource and associated work packages presented in the proposal.<br><br>• Objectives for the proposal should be detailed including individual measurable targets against which the outcome of the work will be assessed. This should refer to the objectives set out in the Je-S proposal form.<br>• Significant technical details for the development, maintenance or enhancement of the resource must be clearly outlined and indicate how this is of internationally exceptional quality.<br>• If applicable, outline any proposed research efforts and how they directly facilitate development of the resource.<br>• For proposals looking to maintain existing resources, you should detail evidence of why significant upgrades are not required at this time and detail why the resource needs continued support to maintain world-leading functionality.<br><br>Additional questions that may be considered:<br><br>• Does the facility begin or continue to support a growing field of bioscience, what is the anticipated growth and does the proposal adequately accommodate this?<br>• How will the resource accelerate science within its field and beyond? |

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| | • What would be the impact on the scientific community if the resource did not exist? How would this impact other, possibly dependent resources? |
| Community Demand | Evidence of community demand should be primarily driven from **UK academic** researchers working within UKRI-BBSRC remit. Other users may be appropriate to provide additional support, especially in highlighting the potential for economic, commercial or societal impact.<br><br>Evidence provided should highlight examples of the high-quality science that the resource will or has underpinned. Examples should be drawn where possible from a wide research community to illustrate the broad impact of the resource to support high quality internationally excellent science.<br><br>The level of community demand should be benchmarked against other relevant resources and/or the size of the community. This will allow the fair assessment of resources with different user bases. The types of evidence that may be appropriate to provide will be different for new and existing resources.<br><br>**Existing Resources**<br>For existing resources this should include usage data of the current resource. Data types may include:<br><br>• Access requests from independent users/ sites<br>• Citations or acknowledgements<br>• Other public resources providing links to the resource<br>• New major acquisitions captured by the resource<br><br>Additionally, existing resources need to evidence why this resource needs to be maintained/updated by the current grant. This could include:<br><br>• Survey data from users on what upgrades are needed<br>• Evidence of an expanding user base, which requires additional resource<br>• Recent developments in the field, which require upgrades to be integrated into the resource.<br><br>**New Resources**<br>New resources should estimate the number of researchers who may engage and benefit from the resource. Evidence, where possible, would be of benefit and may include:<br><br>• Datasets (or samples) in public or private repositories<br>• Citations or acknowledgments<br>• Gap analysis with existing resources<br>• Pilot project uptake or feedback from potential users. |

| User engagement | Discussion of user engagement provision should aim to answer the following questions: |
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| | <ul><li>Is there awareness of the resource within the user community?</li><li>How do you plan to develop the engagement within the proposal timeframe to expand user engagement?</li><li>What considerations have there been for access mechanisms to ensure usability of the resource?</li><li>How have user needs been incorporated into this proposal to ensure it is fit for purpose and will deliver appropriately?</li></ul> |
| | **Existing Resources** Evidence should be provided as to whether the resource has **achieved** the level of engagement it originally anticipated, and consideration is given how the additional investment would change this. **New Resources** Evidence should be provided as to how the resource **plans** to engage stakeholders and ensure that the resource meets their needs and is used by the community targeted by the resource. |
| Resource Management | Proposals may outline how the resource management and advisory structures will operate including outlining any review procedures. Additionally, opportunities for staff training and support to ensure their continuous development should be identified to safeguard the successful delivery of the resource. |
| Long term sustainability planning | In addition, the case for support should outline considerations for the long-term sustainability of the resource beyond UKRI-BBSRC funding, as well as the true cost of running and maintaining the resource in question. The proposal should include:<ul><li>Cost recovery plans, where appropriate, or an explanation why not if not viable</li><li>Details for alternative support plans, aside from UKRI-BBSRC funding</li></ul>Clear arguments as to why UKRI-BBSRC should support the resource now should be provided, if other cost recovery and support plans are deemed unsuitable. |
| Potential for economic and societal impact | Outline how the outputs of the proposed resource will contribute to knowledge and how this may have the potential for economic return or societal benefits. Impact activities should be integrated into appropriate sections of the case for support, **not** presented as an independent work package.<ul><li>All proposals are expected to demonstrate clear plans with recorded milestones and timelines for associated activities to develop economic, commercial and societal impacts.</li><li>Methods of engagement and measures of success should be outlined including how these will be regularly reviewed throughout the project in order to deliver the most impact.</li><li>Any planned activities should be fully justified within the JoR attachment.</li></ul> |

## Narrative CVs (Maximum 2 sides A4 per individual)

Instead of submitting a traditional academic CV, we invite applicants to submit a two-page Narrative CV. This should act as a narrative which explains how the individual's relevant experience and expertise demonstrates their ability to successfully deliver the proposal. A CV which simply lists past positions, publications, and funding will not adequately support an application.

Applicants should draw on a breadth of examples which illustrate of they how they have contributed to new ideas, hypotheses and tools, as well as how they have contributed to teams and collaborations, the research community, and to wider society. Applicants should describe only a selection of their outputs and, in each case, clearly explain the relevance to their ability to deliver the proposed project.

**All individuals should describe contributions across the levels below.** The relative size of each section will vary depending on the relevant skills and experience of each applicant.

1) **Eligibility criteria: State your current position, indicating how you meet the eligibility criteria as outlined within the [UKRI-BBSRC Grants Guide](#).**

2) **How have you contributed to the generation and flow of new ideas, hypotheses, tools or knowledge?**

Examples might include: contributions to and skills acquired from past research projects, and key outputs such as data sets, software, and research and policy publications. In each case the relevance to delivering the proposed project should be summarised.

3) **How have you contributed to research teams and the development of others?**

Examples might include: project management, supervision, mentoring or line management contributions critical to the success of a team or team members, or where you exerted strategic leadership in shaping the direction of a team, organisation, company or institution.

4) **How have you contributed to the wider research community?**

Examples might include: how you have contributed to wider collaborations and networks across disciplines, institutions, and / or countries, commitments such as editing, reviewing and committee work, positions of responsibility, and activities which have contributed to the improvement of research integrity or culture, or examples where you have shown visionary strategic leadership in influencing a research agenda.

5) **How have you contributed to broader society?**

Examples might include: engagement across the public and / or private sectors or with the wider public, past research which has contributed to policy development or public understanding, and other impacts across research, policy, practice and business, and other examples of and how you have ensured your research reaches and influences relevant audiences.

6) **Additional information**

Any additional relevant information you wish to include in support of your capability to deliver, which may include further information about key qualifications and relevant positions, secondments, volunteering, or other relevant experience such as time spent in different sectors. There is no need to provide information about career breaks, part-time working etc, however if there are any details you do wish panel members to consider in their assessment of the proposal they may be included here.

## Letters of Support

**Evidence for community need**

Letters of support demonstrating community need are **mandatory**, at the time of submission, and proposals submitted without these letters will be rejected prior to assessment.

Letters demonstrating community need should give an indication of community demand for the resource in question, demonstrating the breadth of research and the high-quality science relevant to BBSRCs remit that the resource would underpin.

A **maximum** of 10 letters of support demonstrating community demand should be provided.

UKRI-BBSRC expects letters of support aimed at demonstrating demand to explain clearly the impact and benefit of the proposed resource on the writer's research and the associated community and if possible where this research has demonstrated particular scientific, economic or societal impact.

Letters of support that fail to do so, in particular template letters indicating generic support without identifying a particular usage, are of negligible value for the assessment and should not be submitted.

Carefully chosen letters containing relevant evidence of the requirement/ benefit to be gained, are of greater value than large numbers of letters.

**'Collaborative' letters of support**

'Collaborative' letters of support should be provided by collaborators who will provide expertise or resources necessary for the proposed work. Any number of these may be provided as necessary.

The separate letters of support and a tabulated summary of those letters should be collated and provided as one **single** pdf document.

## Contact

Please provide as much information as possible in your email to ensure a rapid response.

For call-specific queries please contact: bbr.fund@bbsrc.ukri.org

For Je-S system queries please contact:

- Email: JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk
- Tel: +44 (0) 1793 44 4164