2020 Bioinformatics and Biological Resources Fund – Frequently Asked Questions

These frequently asked questions are provided as guidance to applicants on common queries. Applicants should contact us if further clarification is required or if they have queries which are not covered here or in the main call text.

Scope

1. I wish to develop a resource with both biological and bioinformatics components, is this allowed?

Yes.

2. Does the BBR Fund support genome sequencing projects?

Genome sequencing projects are not supported by the fund. Sequencing may be performed where this is needed in order to establish a particular resource; for example, the sequencing of gene libraries.

3. Is it possible to apply for continuation funding of an existing resource previously funded under the BBR Fund?

Requests to support existing resources, which were funded previously through BBR or alternative funding sources, are permitted under this call: Please see the in-depth guidance document for points that need to be addressed and evidence that should be provided when apply to maintain and/or develop an existing resource.

4. My proposal has relevance to other Research Council's scientific remit. Will it be suitable for the BBR Fund?

The main focus of the proposed resource should be the support of bioscience research, but resources with broader applicability will be considered. Resources with a main focus outside of UKRI-BBSRC remit will be rejected prior to assessment. Applicants needing further guidance on the suitability of a proposal for the BBR Fund are strongly advised to contact the office prior to submission (bbr.fund@bbsrc.ukri.org).

Funding

5. What is the scale of resources that can be requested?

Total requested costs should not exceed £2M (100% FEC value). Funding is available for up to 5 years.

6. Can we include costs for travel, project meetings and networking activities?

Yes.

7. Can funds for equipment purchase be requested?

Applicants can request equipment if necessary for the proposed resource, and there is no defined upper limit on what proportion of the requested cost falls into a particular category within the overall limit of £2m. Applicants are expected to fully justify the need for any resources that are requested (including equipment). Equipment will be funded at 50% FEC, unless a case for instrument development can be made which would permit funding at 100% FEC.

8. Can I apply for PhD Studentships?

No, UKRI-BBSRC funding for PhD students or any other type of student may not be included. UKRI-BBSRC has separate mechanisms for funding student training.

Attachments and assessment

9. Will I get an uplift as a New Investigator/with an industrial collaborator?

No, these uplifts do not apply in this call. These schemes are used in Responsive Mode and can confer an uplift after the ranking of applications. First time Principal Investigators (PIs) should note that, if successful, being the PI on a grant which includes funding for Postdoctoral Research Assistant (PDRA) staff support costs will subsequently exclude them from being a New Investigator in Responsive Mode.

10. How can I demonstrate community need / demand for my resource?

<u>Letters of support demonstrating community need are mandatory</u>, at the time of submission, and proposals submitted without these letters will be rejected prior to assessment. Please see the attached Guidance document for full details of what to include.

11. Why is there a limit on the number of letters of support demonstrating need?

The BBR Fund Panel has frequently commented that it is the content of the letters provided, rather than the sheer number, which demonstrates the value of a proposed resource to the UK bioscience research community. Applicants should submit a representative selection of letters that demonstrate the breadth of the research their resource will enable and comment on the value of the work proposed to the research community.

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

12. What is the membership of the assessment panel?

Overall assessment will be conducted by a panel of experts covering scientific, managerial, technical and user aspects of resource provision. The 2020 panel will be published once the assessment is concluded.

13. My proposal involves partners from multiple institutions. Should I submit a single application or joint applications from multiple institutions?

Either approach is acceptable.

14. I previously submitted a grant application that was unsuccessful. Can I submit the proposal to the BBR Fund?

Any proposal related to a previously unsuccessful grant application must comply with UKRI-BBSRC's resubmission policy (see UKRI-BBSRC Grants Guide). Applicants are advised to contact the office prior to submitting an application if they are concerned that their project may be considered a resubmission. Applications that are deemed to constitute uninvited resubmissions will be rejected prior to assessment.

15. Can I involve industrial partners in my application?

Yes. UKRI-BBSRC welcomes the involvement of private sector partners in the research that it funds. Your industrial partners should be listed in the 'Project Partners' section. The nature of the collaboration and the role of the industrial partner should be made clear in the case of support. Please note that UKRI-BBSRC is only able to provide funding to eligible research organisations (see UKRI-BBSRC Grants Guide for further information).

16. When is the outcome of the call likely to be known?

We are unable to give a precise date by which outcomes will be announced, but it is anticipated that we will be able to notify applicants by the end of April 2021.

Contact

If your question has not been answered by the information given above, please contact UKRI-BBSRC staff on bbr.fund@bbsrc.ukri.org and we will do our best to answer your question.

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