Bioinformatics and biological resources fund: Nov 20

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	**Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)**
Funding type:	Grant
Maximum award:	£2,000,000
Publication date:	15 September 2020
Opening date:	15 September 2020
Closing date:	17 November 2020 16:00 UK time

Last updated: 27 October 2020

Start application ▶

This opportunity aims to facilitate the establishment, maintenance and enhancement of high-quality bioinformatics and biological resources to support the UK bioscience research community.

Resources will be underpinned by significant and demonstrable community demand.

Projects can be up to five years long.

Grants will be awarded at 80% full economic cost for projects up to £2 million (100% full economic cost value).

Lead applicants must be of lecturer level (or equivalent) from any eligible research organisation.

Applications start date no earlier than 1 July 2021.

Who can apply

Standard eligibility criteria, as set out in section three of the **UKRI-BBSRC grants guide (PDF, 374KB)**, apply to this call.

Principal and co-investigators must /documents/grants-guide/be of at least lecturer level (or equivalent) and meet the standard UKRI-BBSRC eligibility criteria.

Institutions and researchers normally eligible for UKRI-BBSRC funding include:

- higher education institutions
- strategically-funded institutes
- eligible independent research organisations (IROs)

Applications from organisations and individuals that are not eligible will be rejected without reference to peer review.

Read more about **who can apply for funding**.

Research technical professionals

UKRI-BBSRC recognises the value of technical expertise to the UK research workforce.

The potential for staff development and training (including post-docs, technical and support staff) will be assessed by the panel.

UKRI-BBSRC particularly supports recognition of the contributions of research technicians and technology and skills specialists and encourages you to cost them appropriately on applications.

Please refer to the UKRI statement of expectations for technology and skills specialists.

Read more about **research technicians and technology and skills specialists**.

Research software engineers

BBSRC notes the significant contribution of staff such as Research Software Engineers and equivalent roles to interdisciplinary computational projects and supports recognition of their contributions and encourages applicants to name and cost them appropriately on applications.

What we're looking for

UKRI-BBSRC recognises the UK bioscience community need for access to state-of-the-art bioinformatics and biological infrastructure, facilities and resources, to

facilitate ground-breaking research in an internationally competitive environment.

The BBR fund addresses this need by providing support to both bioinformatics and biological resources.

Bioinformatics resources enable management, analysis and sharing of large or complex datasets and development of novel software solutions that enable deeper analysis of existing datasets and greater understanding of biological systems, for example, software suites.

Biological resources provide access to materials that underpin cutting edge bioscience research, for example, culture and germplasm collections, mutant lines, DNA samples, clones, genetic libraries and so on.

The BBR fund supports the following types of applications:

- Establishment and maintenance of a new and innovative resource that will be beneficial to a broader BBSRC user base
- Maturation and subsequent maintenance of a project-based resource into a community-based one
- Further development or essential maintenance of an existing community resource, with well-established access mechanisms, to increase its relevance to a broader BBSRC user community, for example, enhancing utility by enabling the resource to meet FAIR principles.
- Association 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.

Proposals in the following areas will not be accepted:

- Proposals that fall outside of the remit of UKRI-BBSRC
- Projects with an exclusive research focus – some elements of research can be included, but should support technological development of the resource to address developing user needs
- Resources already suitably supported via other means
- Principal beneficiaries are outside of the UK
- Principal beneficiaries are outside of bioscience
- Archive-only resources without active usage
- Collections of preserved, non-recoverable specimens (for example, herbaria, formalin-fixed material)

Please contact us well in advance of the deadline if you are unsure whether your application fits within the scope of the call.

This call will follow the standard guidelines for research grant applications for UKRI-BBSRC as described in the **grants guide (PDF, 374KB)**.

You should note:

- the new investigator, industrial partnership award, and LINK schemes do not apply to this call for proposals
- requests for studentships should not be included as part of a BBR fund application.

How to apply

Applications should be made through the Joint Electronic Submission system (Je-S).

In addition to the Je-S proforma, the following attachments should be included:

- case for support (up to eight pages)
- justification of resources (two pages)
- data management plan (one page)
- diagrammatic workplan (one page)
- management structure (one page)
- narrative CV (up to two pages per staff member)
- community letters of support or demand (up to 10)
- proposal cover letter.

For detailed guidance on how to prepare each of these attachments, please carefully follow the attached guidance documents and associated downloads, in the additional info section below.

When applying select:

- council: BBSRC
- document type: Standard Proposal
- scheme: Bioinformatics and Biological Resources Fund
- call/type/mode: 2020 Bioinformatics and Biological Resources Fund

To ensure a proposal is submitted on time we suggest that it should be sent to your institution's Je-S submitter pool approximately a week before this deadline.

Please note that we are unable to accept late submissions.

How we will assess your application

Assessment process

Applications will be subject to external peer review and you will be provided with an opportunity to respond to reviewers' comments.

You will be able to suggest up to four peer reviewers as part of the Je-S Proforma.

Overall assessment will be conducted by a panel of experts covering scientific, managerial, technical and user aspects of resource provision.

You should expect a decision within 8 weeks of the panel meeting.

Assessment of new and existing resources

Applications for both new and existing resources are assessed as part of the same process.

While similar in principle, the potential and promise of a new resource and the demonstrable user need of an existing resource are not necessarily directly comparable.

For this call a new resource is defined as a proposal where the 'project focus is on development of a new resource that is needed by a community of researchers in the UKRI-BBSRC remit, and which does not currently exist elsewhere'.

Whereas, for an existing resource the 'project focus is on further development or essential maintenance to safeguard functionality of a resource that has an existing user base'.

An existing resource does not need to have previously received funding by UKRI-BBSRC or the BBR fund.

Assessment criteria

Initially the UKRI-BBSRC office will assess whether applications are within the remit of UKRI-BBSRC and are a fit to the scope of the BBR fund.

Only those proposals falling within the scope of the call and within UKRI-BBSRCs remit will be sent out to peer review and assessed by the panel.

The panel stage will assess applications using the following assessment criteria for all applications:

- scientific quality and strategic relevance of the resource:

  - the extent to which the resource meets the highest international standards in resource provision in its field.
  - how well the resource is demonstrated to be unique or complementary to other similar existing resources.
  - the extent to which the resource addresses the research and policy priority areas of BBSRC

- cost effectiveness, particularly considerations for long-term sustainability beyond BBSRC funding:

  - the extent to which the resource delivers value for money relative to the anticipated scientific gains it will provide
  - the extent to which long term sustainability options have been considered, addressed and planned where appropriate

- potential for economic and social impact beyond the academic community:

  - the extent to which the outputs from the resource will contribute to knowledge and potential for economic return or social impact.
  - how well the proposal has outlined methods of engagement and measures of success in developing milestones and timelines of associated activities

- fit to the scope of the call:

- how well the proposal addresses the scope of the call.

To allow for a more nuanced assessment between new and existing resources, the following assessment criteria will look at plans, potential and promise for new resources, while existing resources will be assessed on presented evidence and previous performance:

- quality of the overall arrangements for resource management, advisory functions, as well as user access and engagement:
  - the extent to which the proposal has evidenced or planned interaction with relevant users and the broader research community to ensure the aims of the resource are realised and there is sufficient uptake and continued development
  - the extent to which adequate user access arrangement have been discussed and considered
  - the set-up of project management and advisory structures of the resource to ensure longevity in delivering the resource to a broad user base

- need or demand, and potential benefit to the UK academic research community:
  - the extent to which the community have demonstrated demand for the proposed resource, relative to the total community size.
  - the extent to which the proposed resource will deliver and benefit the wider BBSRC community indicating how the proposed resource will help to deliver high-quality research.

Full assessment criteria can be found in an attached document.

Contact details

For any queries about eligibility, please contact **eligibility@bbsrc.ukri.org** before submitting your application.

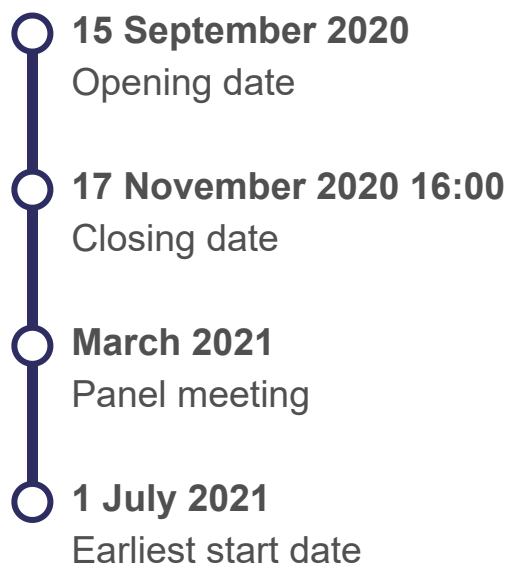For enquires relating to the call please email: **bbr.fund@bbsrc.ukri.org**.

Additional info

Supporting documents

- **Call guidance (PDF, 192KB)**
- **Frequently asked questions (PDF, 149KB)**
- **Assessment criteria (PDF, 113KB)**
- **Equality impact assessment (PDF, 189KB)**

Timeline

15 September 2020
Opening date

17 November 2020 16:00
Closing date

March 2021
Panel meeting

1 July 2021
Earliest start date