

# Global Research and Innovation Network for Coronaviruses

## Call Guidance

### Call Summary

UKRI-BBSRC and DEFRA are pleased to announce this call to establish a global research and innovation network for coronaviruses.

**Funding:** £500,000 for a single, international network.

**Project length:** Up to four years (48 months).

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

**Dates:** This Call opens on January 4, 2021 and closes on February 23, 2021 at 16:00

### How to Apply

#### Applications will be submitted via a Je-S proforma:

Applications must be submitted via the Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) System by **Tuesday February 23, 2021 at 4:00 pm**, using the following information:

1. Log in the Joint Electronic System (Je-S)
2. Select Council: BBSRC
3. Select Document Type: Standard Proposal
4. Select Scheme: Standard
5. Select Call/Type/Mode: BBSRC/DEFRA Global Coronavirus Network

#### Select 'Create Document' and follow the on-screen instructions to complete the form

- Applications which include multiple institutions must be submitted on a single Je -S proforma. Applications submitted on multiple forms will not be accepted.
- Applicants must complete all sections of the Je-S proforma
- Please download the Call Guidance and 100% fEC Exceptions Spreadsheet, available via the links in the 'Additional info' section of the call announcement, to ensure you have all the information you need before you begin your application.

#### Proposals must include the following attachments:

##### Case for Support

The Case for Support (up to a maximum of eight sides of A4, the page length includes references, figures etc) should include the following information:

- Track record of the Principal Investigator (PI) and, if applicable, the Co-Investigator (Co-I).
- **The intended focus of the proposed Network:** The Case for Support should articulate clearly how the Network will achieve the expected outcomes and scope of the call.
- **The proposed Network management structure:**

- How will the Network operate?
- What will be the roles of the Network Director, Co-Director and Management Board?
- How will the Network build an interdisciplinary community?
- Who will comprise the membership of the network?
- What will be the spread of disciplines, expertise, capabilities and infrastructure in the Network?
- How will the Network engage with members and stakeholders in partner countries?
- How will the Network engage members with a range of disciplines and experience?
- What activities/events will the Network organize?
- How will new members be able to join the Network?
- What are the expected outcomes and outputs of the Network?
- How will the proposed Network add value above and beyond existing activities?

In addition to the Case for Support, the application should include all standard attachments:

- Data Management Plan [max one side A4]
- Diagrammatic Work Plan [max one side A4,
- Justification of Resources [max two sides A4]

Information about how to complete these documents is available from the BBSRC website <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/>

### **Additional Documentation to include with the application**

The following documents should be uploaded using the attachment type “Other Attachment”

#### **100% FEC exceptions spreadsheet**

- Costs requested at 100% FEC (see ‘Eligible costs’) should be detailed in the 100% FEC exceptions spreadsheet (available as a link in ‘Additional info’ section of the call announcement). The calculated total value of exceptions must be entered under the “Exceptions” heading on the Je-S proforma.

#### **Curricula Vitae**

The PI, Co-I and members of the Network Management Board should provide their CVs, which must be no more than two sides A4 per person.

#### **List of the initial members of the Network Management Board**

An expanded table of the initial members of the Network Management Board should be submitted using the format below. For the “Expertise” column please state the participants’ general area of expertise e.g.: Veterinary Science; Medical Science; Social Science; Policy; Industry, etc.

Name	Institution	Position	Expertise

#### **Letters of Support**

Letters of support should be provided by the following:

- Each member of the Management Board;
- Project partners offering in kind or cash contributions;
- Head of Department or equivalent from the lead Institution.

#### **Assessment of proposals**

- Proposals will be assessed by peer review with an opportunity to respond to reviewer

comments.

- Reviewed proposals will be assessed by an independent panel in March 2021 before a final funding decision is made.

### **Assessment criteria**

Proposals will be assessed on the following criteria:

- The relevance of the proposed work programme and activities to the Call objectives and expected outcomes as outlined by the Funders (see below), and the feasibility of delivering the proposed programme within the four-year timeframe of the funded grant.
- The suitability of scientific expertise and experience of the PI and Co-I to leading the coordination of a global network of coronaviruses researchers, and to delivering against the objectives for this call.
- The relevance and breadth of expertise (academic, industry/commercial, policy etc) of the Network Management Board, which should fully support and enhance the ability of the Network PI to deliver against the objectives of this call.

### **Scope of the Call**

Proposals should seek to coordinate research in the following areas:

- Pathogen Biology (including the seasonality, transmission, ecology and evolution of coronaviruses)
- Host Response
- Effective Intervention Strategies

This research should support an integrated 'One Health' approach to tackling existing and emerging coronaviruses, utilising comparative biology between animal and human coronaviruses, and encouraging data use, sharing and accessibility across public and veterinary healthcare.

### **Objectives**

By bringing together researchers across borders, and across the animal and human coronavirus communities, the funders anticipate that the successful research and innovation network will enable the international coordination essential to support the delivery of scientific research and to facilitate collaboration for a sustained, long-term One Health approach to better understanding coronaviruses.

The funders do not wish to be descriptive, but in order to achieve the level of coordination needed, we would expect the funded network to draw together the major global research and industry players working on veterinary and human coronaviruses to compare, contrast and advance the understanding of coronaviruses, and to address some, if not all, of the following aims:

- Embrace a One Health approach to understanding coronaviruses;
- Facilitate research collaborations and serve as a communication gateway for the global coronaviruses research community;
- Integrate with the human coronavirus research community;
- Bring together experts to analyse gaps and identify research priorities, and conduct strategic research to better understand coronaviruses;
- Facilitate sharing of existing knowledge by coordinating current research activities, sharing reagents and resources;
- Develop next-generation control measures, and strategies for their application;
- Determine social and economic impacts of the next generation of improved

intervention strategies;

- Provide evidence to inform development of socio-economic policies;
- Establish a link with existing networks that focus on coronaviruses;
- Develop a website and/or other social networking site as a focus for communication, including regular meetings and workshops.

The expected outcomes of this network activity are as follows:

- Increased integration of human-veterinary coronaviruses research and innovation capacity and capability (One Health approach);
- Deeper understanding of coronaviruses;
- Strengthening understanding of ecologies at the animal-human-environment interface;
- Enhancing understanding of coronaviruses and possible intervention tools.

Each Network will be expected to disseminate the outcomes of its activities widely and appropriately (e.g. through meetings, web pages, newsletters or published reports).

## Network management

It is anticipated that the Network will have a Management Board.

- The membership of the Management Board should be detailed in the full proposal.
- Members of the Management Board should provide letters of support.
- The members of the Network Management Board should NOT be listed on the Je -S proforma and no salary costs should be requested for members of the Management Board.

## Network membership

The membership of the Network should comprise representatives from relevant academic, policy and stakeholder communities. In particular, the Network should bring together representatives from both the veterinary and medical sciences to ensure a One Health focus.

- Networks should be interdisciplinary and comprise a diversity of expertise and experience.
- Networks should include participation at all levels including, where appropriate, postdoctoral and postgraduate researchers as well as more senior members.
- Applicants should consider the wider impacts of work undertaken by the Network and include representatives from the environmental, economic and social sciences where appropriate.
- Successful Networks are intended to be 'open' in that participation by other interested members will be encouraged throughout the life of the Network in order to develop the community as it matures.
- The application proposal should include an overview of how the Network will grow its membership and enable the joining and participation of new members.
- Potential Network members should NOT be listed on the Je-S proforma or in the 'Case for support'. No salary should be requested for members.

## Applicant eligibility

Consortia of academics based internationally may apply, with **one UK Principal Investigator acting as the Network Director**.

For UK-based Network Directors, standard eligibility criteria apply to this call, as set out in the UKRI-BBSRC Grants Guide [Section 3](#).

Principal investigators (Network Directors) must be of at least lecturer level (or equivalent), be based at a UK research institution, and meet the standard UKRI-BBSRC eligibility criteria.

Institutions and researchers eligible for UKRI-BBSRC funding under this call include:

- HEIs
- Strategically funded institutes
- Eligible Independent Research Organisations (IROs)
- Public Sector Research Establishments (PRSEs). A full list of eligible organisations is available here: <https://www.ukri.org/files/research/current-list-of-eligible-psres-for-spf-programmes-feb-2020/>

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

The Director of the Network should be the named PI on the proposal. Requests can also be made for one Co-Director, who will be named as the Co-I, to assist the Network's Director in this role.

It is expected that the day-to-day management of each Network will be undertaken by a suitably qualified Network Manager.

**Network Directors or Co-Directors who are not based at UK institutions are not eligible to apply for this call.**

**Recruited Network Managers or other administrative staff must be based permanently at an eligible UK Institution in order to be eligible for salary costs.**

### International partners

The funded network can work with multiple international partners, but will be particularly encouraged to partner with the following regions:

- China
- North America
- Europe
- SE Asia
- Africa

In addition, the funded network should ensure it works with and complements activities of e.g. STAR-IDAZ and Global Virus Network (<https://gvn.org/about/>)

Please note:

- Funding cannot be sought for, or transferred to, international partners.
- International Partners can offer in-kind or cash contributions to the project, but they cannot claim any costs from the award.
- The Network Director, Co-Director or Network Manager cannot be based in a partner country during the duration of the award.

### Eligible costs

#### Salaries and support costs

- The Network PI and Co-I cannot claim salary costs from this grant to support these roles.
- Costs can be requested for an appropriately skilled Network Manager (full or part-

time) to be responsible for activities such as the day-to-day Network management, event coordination, and website development for the Network.

- Costs can also be requested for additional administrative support to assist the Network Manager, if required. As a community support role, the salary of the Network Manager can be requested at 100% FEC. No general estates and indirect costs should be claimed in association with Network Manager's role.
- The time spent on managing the Network should be reasonable and is not expected to form the majority of costs of the proposal. These costs should be justified in the Justification of Resources document.
- Salary costs for members the Network Management Board and/or Network members should NOT be included in the proposal.

### **Network events**

- Costs for supporting and facilitating Network meetings and events, including room hire, catering etc. that will be used for the benefit of the wider community, rather than just the host Institution, can be requested at 100% FEC.
- These costs should be justified in the Justification of Resources document.
- The Funders recognise that international travel and large in-person gatherings may be unfeasible or restricted during part, or all, of the lifetime of the Network. While there can be some reasonable financial contingency for future travel and subsistence in the requested costs, the Network should aim, where possible, to host virtual events and meetings while travel and social restrictions are still in place. This should be reflected in the Justification of Resources.
- This grant will not support research costs. Network Proposals are exempt from overall Estates and Indirect Costs, as research will not be undertaken.
- Funds cannot be used to purchase consumables, items of research equipment, to fund other research costs, or to link ongoing single collaborative projects.

### **International travel considerations**

- If international travel does occur, applicants must follow travel advice set out by their institutions and the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Commonwealth Office before departure, and should check travel guidance for countries of interest when preparing an application.
- BBSRC will not cover the cost of any time spent in quarantine as a result of travelling on this grant.
- To manage risks associated with travelling, applicants should make optimal use of remote working solutions.

### **Monitoring the progress of the Network**

The funded Network will be expected to comply with all reporting criteria, including regular progress reports in addition to Research Fish inputs. BBSRC will request an annual progress report from the Network for each year of operation. A proforma will be provided by BBSRC for this purpose. The Network will also be required to provide a final report one month prior to the cessation of this grant to present the key outcomes and impacts of the Network. Annual reports and the final report will be shared with the grant co-funder, DEFRA.

## Contact

Enquires should be submitted to:

[Elly.Tyacke@BBSRC.ukri.org](mailto:Elly.Tyacke@BBSRC.ukri.org)