



**Biotechnology and  
Biological Sciences  
Research Council**

# BBSRC Research Grants

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## *The Guide*

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BBSRC  
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### **Summary of updates to the September 2021 (Version 11.26) Grants Guide**

- 2.5: Description of support available for building community resources within Responsive Mode
- 3.2: Clarification that Independent Research Organisations include Public Sector Research Establishments

## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This document is designed to cover all aspects of research grant funding, including eligibility and application procedures. It can be accessed on the BBSRC Website at the following address: <https://www.ukri.org/publications/bbsrc-research-grants-guide/>
- 1.2. The conditions set out in this document incorporate the understandings reached between the funders and employers of researchers in the UK in the “*Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers*”, which may be found at <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat>. The Concordat sets out key principles for funders and employers of researchers in the UK.
- 1.3. BBSRC reserves the right to amend these regulations at any time and without prior notice. The regulations in effect at any time will be those contained in the most recent version of this guide.
- 1.4. This document should be read in conjunction with the overview of funding areas listed at: <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/funding/grants/>.
- 1.5. BBSRC recognises that excellence in science requires diversity and equality to promote innovation and creativity. BBSRC seeks to ensure that equality principles are applied to all funding activities, and considers that no one should be excluded or hindered from a career in science because of their sex, ethnic background, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership (protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010). Further information on our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is available at <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/about/equality-diversity/>. Any issues that may arise throughout the funding process regarding equality and diversity should be directed to: [Policy@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:Policy@bbsrc.ac.uk).
- 1.6. For additional information on UKRI Policies and Standards, applicants should also refer to the recently launched **Good Research Resource Hub**. This hub brings together UKRI policies, standards and guidance to support our research community to deliver excellent research and innovation, and nurture an inclusive and innovative environment: <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards-and-data/good-research-resource-hub/>.

## About BBSRC

- 1.7. BBSRC’s mission is to promote and support, by any means, high-quality basic, strategic and applied research and related postgraduate training relating to the understanding and exploitation of biological systems. This includes advancing knowledge and technology (including the promotion and support of the exploitation of research outcomes), and providing trained scientists and engineers, which meet the needs of users and beneficiaries (including the agriculture, bioprocessing, chemical, food, healthcare, pharmaceutical and other biotechnological related industries), thereby contributing to the economic competitiveness of the United Kingdom and the quality of life.
- 1.8. BBSRC funds research in:
  - plants (BBSRC is the principal public funder of plant science in the UK)
  - microbes
  - animals (including humans)
  - tools and technology underpinning biological research

from the level of molecules and cells, to tissues, whole organisms, populations and landscapes.

- 1.9. Information about the scientific remit of BBSRC is available at <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/research/science-remit/>.
- 1.10. BBSRC works with the other Research Councils to ensure that applications for funding for research that lie close to remit boundaries are addressed by the most appropriate Council. For example, in general, we fund human physiology, cell biology, and genetics and genomics research relevant to understanding normal human function, but we do **not** fund research focused on specific human diseases and disease processes or abnormal conditions. We fund work on animal diseases, however studies primarily involving animal models of human disease and human toxicology, including abnormal toxicological reactions and drug toxicity, are not in the remit of BBSRC.
- 1.11. BBSRC funds research on livestock species and managed land (e.g. agriculture). Studies on wild species are only within the remit of BBSRC when they act as a suitable model and provide wider understanding of biological processes.

## Enquiries

- 1.12. General enquiries relating to this document, including eligibility, should be sent to:  
[eligibility@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:eligibility@bbsrc.ukri.org)
- 1.13. If you have a general remit query, or require advice on which Committee to submit your application to, send your queries to:  
[remit@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:remit@bbsrc.ukri.org)
- 1.14. If you have any queries for pre award (with the exception of eligibility or remit, see paragraph 1.12 and 1.13 above) please contact:  
[peer.review@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:peer.review@bbsrc.ukri.org)
- 1.15. For any Post Award administration queries please refer in the first instance to the Cross Council Terms & Conditions which can be found on the following web link:-  
<https://www.ukri.org/manage-your-award/meeting-ukri-terms-and-conditions-for-funding/> or consult with your administration/finance office for further guidance. Where you are requesting a change to an existing grant, please refer to the grants maintenance section of the Je-S handbook: <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index.htm>. For any other guidance which is not covered in the above please contact:  
[GrantsPostAward@uksbs.co.uk](mailto:GrantsPostAward@uksbs.co.uk) Telephone 01793 867121
- 1.16. When applying for BBSRC research grant funding, advice on how to complete the relevant sections of the application form is available in the Je-S handbook: <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/index.htm>.

## Standards of Performance

### *General*

- 1.17. BBSRC supports research relevant to its mission through the provision of research grants. The information contained in this section is designed to give researchers an idea of the help and advice that can be obtained from BBSRC and UKRI on research grants and also of what BBSRC grant holders can do to assist BBSRC to promote their research.

## *Obtaining information about BBSRC research grants*

- 1.18. Information on the science areas covered by BBSRC, contact details for the Committee secretariats and details about how to apply for research grants are published on the BBSRC Website (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/funding/grants/>).

## *Applying to BBSRC*

- 1.19. When applying to BBSRC for a research grant you must:
- read and observe the application procedures contained in the current BBSRC Grants Guide (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/grants-guide/>);
  - complete the grant application in accordance with the Je-S Handbook (<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index.htm>);
  - ensure you have obtained the permission of any other person named on the proposal form (for example any Co-Investigators or Project Partners) for the provision of their personal information to UKRI and the processing of their data by UKRI for the purpose of assessing the application and management of any funding awarded;
  - meet deadlines;
  - quote the research grant reference number allocated to your application in any subsequent correspondence.
- 1.20. When a principal applicant submits an application to BBSRC for a research grant she/he can expect:
- fair and efficient handling of the application throughout the assessment process;
  - equal treatment regardless of age, sex, disability or ethnic background;
  - notification of the outcome of the application, normally within twenty-six weeks from the cut-off date and within three calendar months of the decision date.

## 2 THE RESEARCH GRANT FRAMEWORK

- 2.1. BBSRC funds research through a range of different mechanisms, one of which is the provision of research grants for specified projects. The following research grant categories are in line with the Government's policy that Research Councils' funding should be opened up to the fullest extent, consistent with the maintenance of the health of the UK science and engineering base.
- 2.2. The research proposed in a research grant application must address scientific issues relevant to BBSRC's mission. If the application is not within the remit, it will be rejected by the office. Applicants will then be able to submit the application to another Research Council under their eligibility, remit and submission rules. BBSRC's decision will be final. Further information about the role of BBSRC may be found in publications such as "BBSRC Business" and on the BBSRC website.
- 2.3. BBSRC research grants provide researchers with support for high quality research projects of timeliness and promise in which the principal applicant(s) will be personally involved.

### Data-Intensive Bioscience

- 2.4. Data-driven research and the development of associated methods, tools and resources are an integral part of contemporary bioscience (<https://www.ukri.org/news/bbsrc-publishes-review-of-data-intensive-bioscience/>). See paragraph 5.10 for more details on support available.

### Modes of research grant:

#### *Responsive Mode*

- 2.5. Grants are awarded in response to unsolicited research proposals in any area relevant to BBSRC's mission. Responsive Mode is referred to as '**BBSRC Standard Research Grant**' on the UKRI Funding Finder (<https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/>). As a general principle, BBSRC allocates as much research grant funding as possible in Responsive Mode. You can apply for a variety of investigator-led research activities through Responsive Mode. These include, but are not limited to:

- Research projects, **including technology development projects and resources**;
- Equipment or use of existing facilities;
- New facilities or infrastructure provision;
- Research networks and coordination;
- Summer schools.

Support is available through the BBSRC Standard Research Grant for bioscience resources, such as high-quality databases and technical platforms, across their life cycle to facilitate their establishment, maintenance, and enhancement. Proposals need to clearly articulate and justify which stage(s) of the life cycle are to be supported. Before submitting such a proposal, advice is available from the Transformative Technologies Team [tt@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:tt@bbsrc.ukri.org).

- 2.6. Funding is available for up to 5 years. This includes **short duration activities** such as small pilot projects or proof of concept studies, which are often less than two years in duration. Total requested costs should not exceed £2M (100% FEC value but net of any industrial contributions).
- 2.7. Applications are assessed by the appropriate BBSRC Research Committee using the standard BBSRC competitiveness appraisal factors. Proposals that request support for

non-research activities (e.g. use of existing equipment, networks, workshops, infrastructure development, summer schools) should make it clear in the case for support the rationale for the activity and how they address BBSRC strategic priorities.

### *Managed Mode*

- 2.8. Calls for proposals with applications invited with one or more closing dates. These will normally be used in response to an emerging scientific opportunity where there is a need to enhance research activity to stimulate a particular area of science within the established BBSRC science base.

### *Categories of eligible organisations*

- 2.9. UK Higher Education Institutions, all Research Council Institutes, and BBSRC approved Independent Research Organisations (<https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/>).

## Research grant schemes

### *Collaborative Grants with Industry and other users*

- 2.10. BBSRC is keen to promote, wherever appropriate, links between the science base, industry and other users, and seeks to encourage them through a variety of mechanisms. It is recognised that the likelihood of basic and strategic research being taken up by users will be enhanced if there is industrial awareness of and involvement in projects funded by BBSRC.
- 2.11. Accordingly, BBSRC supports science carried out by academic researchers in partnership with UK industry or other user organisations, where an industrial partner makes a contribution to a science base-led project funded by the Council. The Council does not provide funding to the industrial partner. BBSRC will consider proposals for projects involving academic-industrial partnerships that address scientific topics within any area of its remit.
- 2.12. Industrial partners are welcome on all BBSRC research grant applications. However, BBSRC has two formal mechanisms to specifically support collaborative research with an industrial partner:
  - i. **Industrial Partnership Award (IPA) scheme:** Standard peer-reviewed research grants, but with financial support from industrial partners.
  - ii. **Stand-alone LINK scheme:** pre-competitive research, funded 50:50 with industrial partners.
- 2.13. Applications can be submitted in any area of BBSRC remit and are assessed by the Responsive Mode Committees. Applications should be made via Je-S using the standard application form for Responsive Mode grants, but the form should indicate that it is to be considered under the LINK or Industrial Partnership Award scheme when specifying the classification. The same rules and closing dates apply for Stand Alone LINK grants and IPAs as for Responsive Mode applications. The application should be directed to the Committee with the most appropriate remit. Only organisations eligible to receive BBSRC research grant funding may apply.
- 2.14. For LINK and IPA proposals, and other proposals where end users are materially contributing to the research and will benefit from the outcomes of research, one letter signed by the institution's Technology Transfer Office (or equivalent) and letter(s) signed by the industrial partner(s) budget holder(s) (or equivalent) must be attached.

2.15. The following information is required:

- A letter from their institution's Technology Transfer Office outlining the management of outputs from the proposed research including:
  - Objectives of the collaboration;
  - Key tasks, contributions and responsibilities of the different partners;
  - Agreed routes for dissemination of emerging results and management of intellectual assets and/or intellectual property;
  - Any direct or indirect interest from the academic partner in the commercialisation of the project;
  - Confirmation that, if the application is successful, a collaboration agreement will be put in place between all partners before research commences in line with UKRI Research Grant Terms and Conditions.
- A letter of support from each industry partner signed off by the budget holder (or equivalent) that outlines their involvement in the project including:
  - The company's interest in the proposed project;
  - The company's contribution to the collaboration including justification of the value of in-kind contributions where included;
  - Agreed routes for dissemination of emerging results and management of intellectual assets and/or intellectual property;
  - Confirmation that, if the application is successful, a collaboration agreement will be put in place between all partners before research commences in line with UKRI Research Grant Terms and Conditions.

2.16. The preliminary terms of the agreement outlined in the letters will be reviewed and changes may be requested. The plans set out in the letter will not be legally binding but should form a strong basis for a collaboration agreement if a grant is awarded.

2.17. For further information about other translational awards (e.g. Follow-on funding Programme), please refer to section 2.33 of the Grants Guide.

2.18. For both IPAs and stand-alone LINK grants, applicants should ensure that they fully address the contribution of the industry collaborator to the project, how the collaboration will be managed, and how that collaboration will increase the likely impacts of the project. To assist in this applicants should include the following within their application:

- The case for support should describe the value of the partnership that underpins the proposed research project including details of the scientific benefits to each collaborator;
- Applications should outline how the collaboration will increase the likely impacts of the research. The industry partner(s) should be encouraged to contribute to the application accordingly. Where appropriate, applicants should also consider broader plans for engaging potential industry users of the research;
- A letter of support from the industry partner(s) should be attached to the proposal outlining their contribution to the project and describing their involvement. For LINK proposals the value of the 'in-kind' contribution should be justified as peer-reviewers will be asked to comment on value for money provided by the 'in-kind' contribution. Please refer to section 2.15 for further details;
- A letter should be attached describing the expected IP management and distribution arrangements of this collaboration. Please refer to section 2.15 for further details.

- 2.19. If awarded funding for a collaborative project, a signed copy of the collaboration agreement should be submitted to BBSRC within three months of the proposed start time of the project.

### *Industrial Partnership Awards*

- 2.20. In order for an application to be eligible under the IPA scheme, industry partners must make a cash contribution that is at least equivalent to 10% of the balance of the project costs minus the industry contribution. Example calculations are shown in the table:

| a) Total cost of the whole project | b) Industry contribution (cash) – | c) Outstanding balance of research council eligible costs (a-b)<br>- This is the amount used on the JeS form in the fEC column | IPA – Yes or No  | If successful, amount awarded by BBSRC (80% of the total fEC requested) | If successful, amount expected from institutional central funds (20% of the fEC requested) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| £550,000                           | £50,000                           | £500,000   | Yes – Cash contribution is 10% of the balance          | £400,000  | £100,000   |
| £550,000                           | £40,000                           | £510,000   | No – Cash contribution is less than 10% of the balance | £408,000  | £102,000   |
| £550,000                           | £70,000                           | £480,000   | Yes – Cash contribution is greater than 10% of balance | 384,000   | £96,000  |

- 2.21. BBSRC attaches particular weight to IPA applications and they are viewed favourably in its assessment process for Responsive Mode Research Grants. A responsive-mode IPA project that is judged to be of appropriate quality would normally be funded in preference to a standard grant of equivalent scientific merit, because of the significant user interest demonstrated by the industrial contribution to the cost of the proposed research.

- 2.22. The IPA scheme only applies to Responsive Mode.

- 2.23. Before submitting an application for an IPA, applicants are advised to contact [industry.collaboration@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:industry.collaboration@bbsrc.ukri.org).

### *Stand-Alone LINK*

- 2.24. Applications with a direct cash/in-kind contribution from industry of at least 50% of the full cost of the project and meeting the following criteria, will qualify for stand-alone LINK status:

- the project involves collaborative research with at least one company and one research-base partner;

- overall BBSRC support for a project is no more than 50%;
- the application is for research which is pre-competitive in nature;
- arrangements for ownership and exploitation of the intellectual property arising from the project have been agreed by the partners;
- the project has an appropriate management framework and both the scientific and commercial deliverables are clearly defined.

2.25. Eligible in-kind contributions include:

- the salaries of the personnel working directly on the project;
- materials consumed in the course of the project;
- capital equipment purchased or constructed for the project, less its estimated value to the business at the end of the project;
- sub-contract charges and consultancy fees and cost of equivalent services used exclusively for the research activity, bought from outside sources, project management costs such as travel, office space etc. that are additional to those normally involved;
- an allowance for reasonable overheads;
- reasonable costs associated with any losses incurred by the industry partner.

2.26. If an applicant is unsure if the in-kind contributions meet BBSRCs guidelines, they should contact [industry.collaboration@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:industry.collaboration@bbsrc.ukri.org). Access to data should be provided free of charge.

2.27. In order for an application to be eligible under the LINK scheme, at least 50% of the full project cost must come from industry. This can be either cash or in-kind. Applicants can request the balance of the project cost from BBSRC. The balance being sought from BBSRC should be used when completing the Je-S form. If successful, 80% of the fEC value requested on the form will be awarded by BBSRC.

| <b>LINK Scheme</b> | <b>Total cost of the whole project (academia and industry)</b> | <b>Minimum industry contribution (cash and / or in-kind) – to be entered in ‘project partner(s)’ box on the JeS form</b> | <b>Maximum amount requested from BBSRC - This is the amount used on the JeS form in the fEC column (100%)</b> | <b>If successful, amount awarded by BBSRC (80% of the fEC requested)</b> | <b>If successful, amount expected from institutional core funds (20% of the fEC requested)</b> |
|--------------------|--|--|---|--|--|
| Example Figures    | £1,000,000   | £500,000   | £500,000  | £400,000   | £100,000   |

2.28. Due to the significant user interest demonstrated by the substantial industrial contribution to the cost of the proposed research, BBSRC attaches particular weight to stand-alone LINK applications and, as such, they are viewed favourably in the assessment process for Responsive Research Grants.

- 2.29. LINK projects are required to hold 6-monthly meetings between the project partners. A condition of award is that agendas and minutes of these 6-monthly meetings are made available to BBSRC and BBSRC staff should be invited to attend the meetings. An individual member of BBSRC staff will be assigned to each LINK grant and will be the key contact for the project, monitor the meeting reports and collaboration, and aim to attend some meetings during the course of the project.
- 2.30. Before submitting an application for a stand-alone LINK grant, researchers are strongly encouraged to contact [industry.collaboration@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:industry.collaboration@bbsrc.ukri.org).

### *New Investigator Scheme*

- 2.31. The New Investigator scheme is a mechanism designed primarily to assist newly employed university lecturers, researchers in Research Council Institutes (at a level equivalent to lecturer), and fellows (at a level equivalent to lecturer) to secure their first major element of research support funding.
- 2.32. For details of the specific applicant eligibility requirements for the scheme, please see paragraphs 3.14 to 3.20 of this guide. These paragraphs must be read in conjunction with the standard eligibility requirements for all potential applicants as covered in Section 3.

### Other funding schemes

#### *Follow-on Fund (FoF)*

- 2.33. The Follow-on funding programme is designed to support the translation of fundamental research funded by the Council into practical application, including commercialisation. The aim of the programme is to help researchers maximise the societal and economic benefits of their research.
- 2.34. This programme is a proof-of-concept model where further work on an idea will take it through to the stage at which the route to application is clear, which may include a spin-out or licensing opportunity. The programme enables activities essential to preparing a robust business plan and secure, where appropriate, further funding and support to progress.

Full details can be found at <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/innovation/maximising-impact/follow-on/>

#### *National facilities*

- 2.35. BBSRC accepts applications requiring access to the High Performance Computing facilities at the University of Edinburgh (ARCHER) and the Earlham Institute, also the UK 850MHz Solid State NMR Facility at the University of Warwick. A Technical Assessment Form (TAF) must be included with any application; applications without a TAF will not be accepted and will be withdrawn. This is to ensure that the level of resources requested has been appropriately scoped and that any additional technical considerations have been captured prior to submission.
- 2.36. Applications requiring access to facilities at Daresbury and Rutherford Appleton Laboratories supported by the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC) and to the Diamond synchrotron are also accepted. However, grant holders are expected to apply directly to the facilities for the time required for their research, once they have obtained grant funding. Full details of how to apply to these facilities are available on the website at <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/research/facilities/> or from the User Liaison Offices of the relevant facility.
- 2.37. Applications requiring access to other major national and international facilities are also accepted. It is the responsibility of the investigator to apply to the relevant provider and obtain any access needed for the research project. Planned usage should be identified on

the relevant section of the proposal form and investigators seeking the use of such services are advised to contact the appropriate provider to confirm eligibility requirements and costs prior to submitting a proposal to the BBSRC.

### *Equipment*

- 2.38. Equipment may be sought as part of a grant application to the research Committees, where the items of equipment requested are necessary for the successful delivery of the proposed research. Items of multiple-use equipment (i.e. where the equipment is necessary for the pursuit of the proposed research, but will not be fully occupied on it) may also be sought. The application must set out the other proposed uses and explain the overall benefit to BBSRC science of the equipment investment being sought.
- 2.39. All grant applications that include requests for equipment must adhere to the guidance in paragraphs 5.15 to 5.31 of the grants guide. Additional information about applying for equipment is available at <https://jes.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/pages/GuidanceonCompletingaStandardG/NonStaffResources/Equipment/EquipmentandSurveys.htm>

### *Cross Council reciprocal funding arrangements*

- 2.40. All Research Council Institutes are eligible to apply for BBSRC Responsive Mode funding and in response to calls for proposals. Similarly, researchers from BBSRC institutes can apply to NERC, MRC, EPSRC, ESRC, STFC and AHRC.

### *Organisational Eligibility for Independent Research Organisations (IROs) and NHS Bodies*

- 2.41. Access to Responsive Mode funding is generally limited to Higher Education Institutes and Research Council Institutes. Other independent research organisations (IROs) may also be eligible if they possess an existing in-house capacity to carry out research that materially extends and enhances the national research base and are able to demonstrate an independent capability to undertake and lead research programmes. They must also satisfy other criteria related to their financial and legal status. The eligibility framework for Research Council funding under which applications for IRO status are considered, together with a list of the current IROs, can be found on the UK Research & Innovation website at <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/>. All IROs are subject to periodic review.
- 2.42. From 01 November 2016, the Research Councils introduced a change of eligibility status for IROs. Any organisation currently approved as an IRO for one Research Council is now eligible for all Research Councils. This covers both responsive and directive modes of funding. NHS bodies with research capacity (the Board, NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Special Authority, NHS Trust, NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Local Health Board) and currently listed as an IRO are also eligible to apply to all RCs. Further information is available at <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/>.
- 2.43. Applications for IRO status may be submitted at any time on the standard application form available from and returnable to, the Je-S helpdesk at [JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org](mailto:JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org).

### *Joint research projects*

- 2.44. Joint research projects provide researchers from two or more eligible institutions with an opportunity to apply for resources and funding for the same research project with a view to undertaking specific areas of the research project at each institution. Where this is the case, funds may be requested in either of two ways:
- Submitting one research grant application from the lead institution or,
  - Submitting a research grant application from each institution.

Further details on how to complete joint research project grant applications are given at paragraphs 4.45 to 4.477.

## Collaborative research grants

- 2.45. Collaborative Research grants provide researchers in eligible institutions with an opportunity to participate with other organisations in research projects. BBSRC funds part or all of the work carried out by the applicant, but does not fund the collaborating partner. Examples of collaborative research grants are Industrial Partnership Awards & LINK. See paragraphs 2.10 to 2.29. Applicants must ensure that they have obtained the permission of any other person named on the proposal form (for example any Co-Investigators or Project Partners) for the provision of their personal information to UKRI and the processing of their data by UKRI for the purpose of assessing the application and management of any funding awarded.

### *Collaborations with Institutes*

- 2.46. These are intended to encourage, for mutual benefit, the use and development of complementary experience and skills and experimental facilities between university researchers and researchers from BBSRC strategically-sponsored institutes. Applicants must demonstrate that the proposed research will provide added value over and above what would have been achieved from two separate contributions and clearly show a commitment to joint working from both the university and institute researchers. A programme co-ordinator must be identified, but overall the research should be managed in concert. Applications must contain the written support of the Institute Director. If a BBSRC sponsored institute is applying for funding, the application should be a joint proposal (paragraph 2.44 refers).

### *Other Collaborations*

- 2.47. Potential principal applicants who wish to collaborate with researchers at other institutions and those from other countries are advised to contact the appropriate research Committee prior to submitting an application. The extent and reasons for any collaboration must be described fully in the case for support.
- 2.48. In all instances of collaborative activity **both applicants and collaborators/project partners must be aware that any costs incurred, direct or otherwise, by either collaborators or collaborators institutions (project partners) in connection with collaborations, cannot be met by BBSRC.**

### *Project Partners*

- 2.49. Applicants may name formal Project Partners, that is, a third party person who is not employed on the grant, or a third party organisation, who provides specific contributions either in cash or in kind, to the project. Entitlement to the outputs of the project and/or Intellectual Property will be determined between the parties involved, however any access to project outputs and/or IP must be in line with any relevant Subsidy Control regulation. As a rule Project Partners are expected to provide contributions to the delivery of the project and should not therefore be seeking to claim funds from UKRI. However, where there are specific circumstances where Project Partners do require funding for minor costs such as travel and subsistence, this will usually be paid at 80% FEC unless otherwise stated by us; note that any applicable Subsidy Control regulation and HMRC guidance will also be taken into account which may affect the percentage of these costs that we will fund. These costs should be outlined and fully justified in the proposal and will be subject to peer review.
- 2.50. UKRI Head Office Staff acting in their capacity as a UKRI employee are not eligible to be Project Partners. Organisations that are applicants on the project, including non-lead applicant organisations, cannot also be a project partner.

- 2.51. It is the responsibility of named Project Partners to read and comply with the terms and conditions relating to applications for research grants <https://www.ukri.org/manage-your-award/meeting-ukri-terms-and-conditions-for-funding/>
- 2.52. Each Project Partner must confirm, where appropriate, the availability of the necessary facilities, resources and infrastructure in a project-specific letter of support of up to two pages in length. The letter should be on headed paper, dated within six months of the date of submission of the proposal and have the signature of the named contact in the partnering organisation. The letter should confirm the organisation's role in and commitment to the proposed project and explain how it will contribute to the impact of the project. The partnering organisation's involvement in the project including their contributions to it, whether in cash or in kind, should also be explained in detail in the case for support, including the equivalent value of any in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions can include but are not limited to staff time, access to equipment, sites or facilities, the provision of data, software or materials.
- 2.53. The cash or in-kind values must not be included in the costs claimed on the Je-S form. Project partner contributions in cash or in-kind are not considered part of the fEC of the project. For completion of the relevant part of the Je-S form see the Je-S help text under the 'project partners' sub heading of '**Guidance on completing a standard grant application**' of the Je-S handbook at <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index.htm>.

### *Collaboration*

- 2.54. In instances where a collaboration is restricted to intellectual input into a project or the provision of materials (e.g. cell lines) by a researcher or their organisation **at no cost**, a letter from the researcher or organisation confirming the extent of the collaboration is required.

### *Sub-contracting*

- 2.55. BBSRC considers eligible institutions to be best placed to determine how their work is undertaken. A subcontractor is a third party individual not employed as staff on the grant, or a third party organisation, who is subcontracted by the host organisation to deliver a specific piece of work. This will be subject to the procurement rules of the host organisation. All costs that support the delivery of the subcontract are eligible and will be paid at 80% fEC unless otherwise stated, these should be outlined and fully justified in the proposal and will be subject to peer review. Entitlement to the outputs of the project and/or Intellectual Property will be determined between the parties involved, however any access to project outputs and/or IP must be in line with any relevant Subsidy Control regulation.
- 2.56. Except in instances where the service provider is from the public sector, the conferring of any IP, author or other rights to it by the contractor in relation to the research grant application for which it was contracted to provide a service, is not permissible. The inclusion of an acknowledgement in any resulting material of the sub-contracted organisation's contribution to the research is however acceptable. Should there be an intimation or desire on the part of the contractor and/or subcontractor not within the public sector, for other than such an acknowledgement e.g. co-author status on resulting publications, then the interaction between the parties concerned would be deemed to equate to a collaboration. In such circumstances, paragraphs 2.47 and 2.48 above would apply.

### *Dual Roles*

- 2.57. An organisation or individual can act as both a Project Partner and Subcontractor, however this must be fully justified and will be subject to peer review.

This enables the organisation/individual to receive recognition as a Project Partner for the elements of their contribution to the project that is in an integral or meaningful capacity, which they wouldn't get if they were needing to be included only as a subcontractor. As a rule we would expect project partner related costs to be minor; where the project needs work to be undertaken that is more significant and includes costs other than travel and subsistence, then the organisation/individual to be contracted may need to be included as both a Project Partner and a Subcontractor. An example of where dual roles might be required is when an organisation or individual is giving to the project in kind but are also selected to deliver other work to the project involving non-minor costs to be covered via a subcontract.

## Other funding arrangements

### *Support for international activity*

- 2.58. It is important that the UK bioscience community benefits from European and international funding sources and that BBSRC's science programme is strengthened by international collaboration.
- 2.59. BBSRC promotes international links to exploit new scientific opportunities, and to explore ways of sharing knowledge for mutual benefit. Full details of all schemes which include:
- International Travel Award Scheme (ITAS) International Workshops
  - Brazil, Japan, China, Taiwan, India, Europe, United States and Other Countries Partnering Awards
  - BBSRC-Brazil (FAPESP) joint funding of research
  - FAPESP Pump-Priming Awards (FAPPA)

will be listed on the Funding finder as they are published at <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/>.

- 2.60. BBSRC recognises the importance of increasing UK researchers' knowledge and experience by working in other European countries and the importance of promoting the UK as partner of choice. The 'Money Follows Researchers' scheme allows researchers funded by a BBSRC grant to continue their funded research upon moving to another participating European country. The grant can then be continued at the new research institution within the original terms and objectives.

For further information, see <https://www.ukri.org/our-work/collaborating-internationally/transferring-your-research-grant-to-another-country/>

### *Working with Business*

- 2.61. BBSRC works with industry, government and others to harness business opportunities and deliver economic impact from the research we fund as quickly as possible. Information on the schemes available from BBSRC and its collaborating partners include:
- Research Industry Clubs
  - Enterprise Fellowships (EF) - <https://www.rse.org.uk/enterprise-fellowships/>
  - Industry Fellowships (IF)
  - Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP)

Information about these schemes is available at <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/innovation/>.

## Support for Sequencing

### *Large-scale DNA Sequencing*

- 2.62. There is no special fund or assessment procedure for applications including sequencing but if your application includes large-scale or whole genome sequencing you should include the following information within the standard scientific case for support:
- a description of the purposes to which the sequence would be put and the scientific benefits to be gained, making clear those which would derive directly from the grant and those which would be dependent on further resource;
  - a statement of the UK research user community (where this is wider than the applicants), its international competitiveness, the science for which they would use the resource, and the impact on the wider scientific and user community (e.g. industry);
  - an assessment of the strategic relevance of the activity to the BBSRC Mission and any priority areas;
  - an indication of other known sequence data on the same or similar organisms, available or proposed, (e.g. in industry or overseas) and why these cannot be used;
  - arrangements for the documentation, storage and distribution of the sequence and the capture of resources and data arising from its research use. It will be required that sequence data will be released immediately into the public domain unless there are exceptional arguments which should be explained;
  - arrangements to ensure the awareness of the target user community, and to secure any synergistic benefits from coordinating usage and sharing of data;
  - an appropriate project team including necessary data management expertise and a management or steering Committee where the user community is large or involves many institutions or interests;
  - evidence that the chosen facility has the appropriate technical capabilities in the sequencing and data analysis. Applicants using the Earlham Institute should complete a Technical Assessment Form, which can be downloaded from the following page: <https://www.earlham.ac.uk/national-capability-genomics-and-single-cell-analysis>.
- 2.63. Where no suitable UK academic partner for sequencing can be found, we will consider funding the acquisition of sequence from industrial and/or overseas source. Your choice of sequencing organisation should be justified in terms of scientific suitability and cost effectiveness by following the guidelines above when completing your application.
- 2.64. Enquires relating to support for sequencing should be directed to:

[TT@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:TT@bbsrc.ukri.org)

### *Resources for DNA Sequencing*

- 2.65. Following the introduction of full economic costing (fEC) the resources for DNA sequencing requested through research grants can be supported at either 100% fEC or 80% fEC. In order to qualify for the resources to be granted at 100% fEC, the sequencing will need to be carried out through a contract to an institution or organisation ineligible to apply for BBSRC funding. Funds for sequencing must be applied for and will be awarded in £ Sterling; any grant made will include 100% of the costs only; no indexation will be applied and no further funds will be granted for this activity to cover, for example, currency fluctuations. It is possible to request support for other activities associated with DNA sequencing such as annotation of the sequence, but in order for this to qualify for 100% fEC, it must also be undertaken by an organisation not eligible for BBSRC funding.

### 3 ELIGIBILITY

#### Institutional eligibility

- 3.1. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Research Council Institutes (RCIs), and approved Independent Research Organisations (IROs; see paragraphs 3.2-3.3) may apply for research grants.

#### *Organisational Eligibility for Independent Research Organisations (IROs) and NHS Bodies*

- 3.2. Access to Responsive Mode funding is generally limited to Higher Education Institutes and Research Council Institutes. Other independent research organisations (IROs) including Public Sector Research Establishments (PSREs) may also be eligible if they possess an existing in-house capacity to carry out research that materially extends and enhances the national research base and are able to demonstrate an independent capability to undertake and lead research programmes. They must also satisfy other criteria related to their financial and legal status. The eligibility framework for Research Council funding under which applications for IRO status are considered, together with a list of the current IROs, can be found on the UK Research & Innovation website at <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/>. All IROs are subject to periodic review.
- 3.3. From 01 November 2016, any organisation currently approved as an IRO for one Research Council is eligible for all Research Councils. This covers both responsive and directive modes of funding. NHS bodies with research capacity (the Board, NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Special Authority, NHS Trust, NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Local Health Board) and currently listed as an IRO are also eligible to apply to all RCs. Further information is available at <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/>.
- 3.4. Applications for IRO status may be submitted at any time on the standard application form available from and returnable to, the Je-S helpdesk at [JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org](mailto:JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org).

#### Eligibility of Applicants and Co-Applicants

- 3.5. In determining whether or not an application will be accepted, BBSRC will consider a range of factors in relation to the applicant(s) such as their status and the duration and nature of their employment. The decision on eligibility resides with BBSRC and is final. Applications will only be accepted from those categories of researchers specifically mentioned in the paragraphs below as being eligible to apply to BBSRC.
- 3.6. Principal applicants must meet the criteria under **each** of the sections i, ii and iii below and Co-applicants the criteria given in **section iv** below.
  - i They must be resident (spend 183 or more days in the UK in the tax year) in the UK at the time of application **or** will be moving to the UK to take up an already agreed contract at an eligible organisation (the contract must not be dependent on the outcome of the application), and will remain resident in the UK for the duration of the proposed project.
  - ii At the time of application they must either:
    - a. be employed by the eligible Research Organisation submitting the proposal and hold a research staff appointment there (academic lecturer level or equivalent) which is resourced from the central funds of the organisation. For RCIs, with the exception of NERC where this will be researchers at the NERC Band 5 level, lecturer equivalent will be researchers at the new unified Research Council Band E level. Additionally MRC ESS staff located within university departments holding honorary university appointments which would outlast the period of a proposed grant may also apply;

- b. if not employed by the submitting organisation (providing they are **not in receipt of funding by non-eligible organisations**), have an existing written formal arrangement with the organisation confirming that the research will be conducted as if the applicant were an employee at lecturer level or equivalent but without salary costs, i.e. that enables him or her to carry out research there and receive from the organisation all necessary management and infrastructural support, and that commits the organisation to take full responsibility for the research and its proper governance;

Or

- c. be scheduled to move to the submitting organisation before the proposed start date of the grant, whether or not the proposal is successful, in such a way that would ensure that criterion a) or b) is met by the time the grant starts (In this case, the affiliation shown for the applicant should be the organisation that would hold the grant).

iii At the time of application, they must have either:

- a. a contract of employment at lecturer level or equivalent that extends to beyond the duration of the proposed grant (or, if not employed by the submitting organisation, a formal non-salaried arrangement as described in iib above that extends to beyond the duration of the proposed grant);

Or

- b. an assurance from the submitting organisation that, *if the proposal is successful*, a pre-existing contract of employment (or pre-existing formal commitment to provide support if not employed at the organisation) at lecturer level or equivalent will be extended beyond the end date of the grant.

iv Co-applicants must also meet the criteria in sections i, ii and iii above but replacing the phrase 'submitting organisation' with 'eligible organisation'.

3.7. Those in receipt of lecturer level equivalent postdoctoral fellowships from either the Research Councils or award-giving bodies such as the Royal Society and the Wellcome Trust may also apply, as may the recipients of internal university fellowships that have a similar lecturer level equivalent status. Potential applicants who are in receipt of a Fellowship should contact [eligibility@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:eligibility@bbsrc.ukri.org) prior to submitting a proposal to confirm eligibility for BBSRC funding. All fellowships must have been secured in open competition. Furthermore, with the exception of internally awarded university fellowships, all fellowships must be tenable at any BBSRC eligible academic institution. Information on the type and nature of the fellowship held, together with its end date and the funding it provides, must be included either in the application case for support or in the applicant's C.V. accompanying the application. In addition, written notification from the fellowship provider permitting the fellow to undertake the additional research and other activities required in association with any research grant application submitted should also be attached.

3.8. Holders of UKRI Academic Fellowships are eligible to apply. However, they must ensure that any commitments they have to existing research projects are discussed with their institutions prior to the completion and submission of a research grant application. Although recipients of UKRI Academic Fellowships who are initially supported as Postdoctoral Research Assistants (PDRA) on research grants are eligible to apply for new research grants in their own right, they cannot start any successful award until they have completed their PDRA duties on the original research grant.

3.9. In authorising an application, the Head of Department in whose department the research will be carried out, or the Director of the Research Council Institute, is agreeing that, in the event of the application being successful, full research facilities and support will be

provided throughout the period of the research and that, in the case of a fellow whose fellowship does not extend beyond the duration of the grant, they are also agreeing to underwrite the fellow's salary costs for the outstanding period in relation to the grant. A letter of support confirming this must be attached to the application. Details of the post the fellow will be appointed to should be given in the application case for support. Authorisation of the application also confirms that there is no conflict of interest between the investigator's obligations to BBSRC and to any other organisation or employer.

- 3.10. Other senior university research personnel with appointments resourced from the central funds of their institutions at the time of application may also apply if they carry both a level of responsibility and range of duties appropriate to a person with substantial research experiences e.g. they occupy a post equating to at least lecturer level. A confirmatory statement to this effect from the Head of Department is required together with a written assurance from the applicant's institution that should the applicant be without a contract of employment extending beyond the period of the proposed grant at the time of application, such a contract will be put in place if the proposal is successful. Those researchers who may fall within this category should contact BBSRC via email ([eligibility@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:eligibility@bbsrc.ukri.org)) for confirmation of their eligibility prior to the submission of any application.

### *Researcher Co-Investigators*

- 3.11. Where a postdoctoral research assistant or equivalent (being ineligible to be either principal or co-investigator in their own right) has made a substantial intellectual contribution to the formulation and development of the project, and will be engaged with the ensuing research, they should be named as Researcher Co-Investigator in the application. This status can be used by the postdoctoral research assistant as evidence of their involvement in acquiring research funding.
- 3.12. A Researcher Co-Investigator will be:
- Named on the proposed research project as the postdoctoral research assistant or equivalent;
  - Identified in the application as a key intellectual contributor to the project;
  - Employed on the project by and based at, the institutions of either the principal or any co-applicant(s).
- 3.13. The institution is responsible for all matters in relation to an employee's contract of employment including the procurement of work permits where necessary. See also paragraph 5.125.12 and Term and Condition RGC 8 of the Cross-Council research grant terms and conditions (<https://www.ukri.org/manage-your-award/meeting-ukri-terms-and-conditions-for-funding/>). BBSRC has no restrictions or requirements on residency, nationality or citizenship in relation to research support staff funded from a grant.

### **New Investigators (see also paragraphs 2.31 and 2.32)**

- 3.14. To be considered under the scheme, applicants at the time of the closing date for submission to the grant round in which the application will be assessed, must have no more than three years full-time employment (or the full-time equivalent taking account of career breaks, part-time employment, etc.) at lecturer or equivalent level. They must also be able to satisfy both the following specific eligibility requirements for the scheme as well as the normal eligibility requirements for BBSRC Responsive Mode grants, Paragraphs 3.5 to 3.8 refer.
- 3.15. Researchers who have been co-investigators on successful grant applications are eligible to apply to the scheme.

- 3.16. Applicants must not have received or currently be in receipt of competitively obtained research or support funding from any source as a Principal Investigator where such funding includes or included Postdoctoral Research Assistant (PDRA) staff support costs; this includes grants associated with fellowships. If, however, PDRA support has been provided by an institution as part of an internal support agreement or as part of the applicants start up package, this must be declared but would not render the applicant ineligible. **Other grant funding requests where the results are not known at the time of submission but which are subsequently successful will also come under this category and therefore details of such requests must be given in the application and their outcome notified to BBSRC immediately they become known.**
- 3.17. Applicants may submit only one New Investigator application to each BBSRC grant round, and they may not submit another type of grant application as a Principal Investigator to the same grant round. Researchers may be awarded only one research grant under the New Investigator scheme.
- 3.18. Although applicants are normally expected to be the sole investigator, in order to encourage projects of an interdisciplinary nature, a co-investigator who is from a discipline other than biological sciences may be included in the application. If, however, the New Investigator is from a non-biological science, a co-applicant from the biological sciences may be included. Collaborators from the same discipline may be included, but there must be no costs associated with the collaborator role. The extent and reasons for any collaboration must be described fully in the case for support.
- 3.19. Applications are submitted through Responsive Mode and are subject to the same closing dates and resource limits (no more than £2M, 100% FEC net of any industrial contributions).
- 3.20. Applications will be judged against the same criteria as other Responsive Mode proposals; however, research potential rather than track record will be taken into account. In addition to the case for support, a letter from the applicant's Head of Department describing the support and financial contribution the institution will be providing specific to the start-up of their laboratory and which is the responsibility of the institution to undertake, is also required.

### *General enquiries regarding eligibility*

- 3.21. If there is any doubt about any aspect of eligibility of either the institution or the applicants, advice can be sought from BBSRC prior to submission via email:  
[eligibility@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:eligibility@bbsrc.ukri.org)
- 3.22. When submitting an eligibility query applicants must include:
- A short description outlining your query;
  - A detailed CV for the applicant(s) the query concerns;
  - Any additional supporting information you may deem relevant, such as a letter from a Head of Department detailing the nature and responsibilities of a particular post or fellowship.
- 3.23. Email queries will be reviewed and acknowledged within one week and applicants should typically expect a response within two working weeks.

## 4 THE APPLICATION PROCESS

### How to apply

- 4.1. BBSRC can only accept research grant proposals submitted using the Je-S (Joint electronic Submission) system available at <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/>.
- 4.2. All applications must be submitted via Je-S before 4pm on the specified closing date and no exceptions will be made for late applications. It is recommended that applications are submitted one week ahead of deadlines.
- 4.3. General enquiries regarding the Je-S should be directed to the Je-S helpdesk.  
  
[JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org](mailto:JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org) Telephone: 01793 444164
- 4.4. Applicants and their organisations both need to register to submit proposals through the Je-S system. Those applying through the Je-S system for the first time need to check that they have a Je-S account that allows them to submit proposals. This should be done well in advance of the closing date ensuring that enough time is also left for the organisation's submission process to take place.
- 4.5. Total requested costs should not exceed £2M (100% FEC value, net of any industrial contributions). Funding is available for up to 5 years.

### Before Applying

#### 4.6. COVID-19 Pandemic

UKRI acknowledges that it is a challenge for applicants to determine the future impacts of COVID-19 while the pandemic continues to evolve. Applications should be based on the information available at the point of submission and, if applicable, the known application specific impacts of COVID-19 should be accounted for. Where known impacts have occurred, these should be highlighted in the application, including the assumptions/information at the point of submission. There is no need to include contingency plans for the potential impacts of COVID-19. Requests for travel both domestically and internationally can be included in accordance to the relevant scheme guidelines, noting the above advice.

Reviewers will receive instructions to assume that changes that arise from the COVID-19 pandemic, post-submission, will be resolved and complications related to COVID-19 should not affect their scores.

Where an application is successful, any changes in circumstances that affect the proposal will be managed as a post-award issue.

- 4.7. An application will not be accepted for a project that is essentially the same as one currently under consideration for funding by a BBSRC Committee, other research council or any other funding body. If in any doubt as to whether or not an application falls within the remit of BBSRC (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/research/science-remit/>), please contact BBSRC via email ([remit@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:remit@bbsrc.ukri.org)) prior to submission. For Responsive Mode applications you will be required to nominate a BBSRC Research Committee to peer review the proposal. Information about the scope of each Committee is available on the BBSRC website (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/funding/grants/>); applicants should note that the scope of each Committee is flexible and that there is considerable overlap between Committees. The office retains the right to reallocate your application to a different Committee for peer review on the basis of its remit and scientific objectives: the office decision on this is final. At the end of the peer review process you will be advised of which Committee assessed your application and of the resulting funding decision.

- 4.8. Applicants must give details of any application in the same field that has been submitted to another BBSRC Committee, other research council, or to any other funding body. In addition, applicants must give details of **all** related current funding from BBSRC, and current funding from other Research Councils and other funding bodies in the same field awarded in the last three years.
- 4.9. Unsuccessful BBSRC research grants proposals must not be resubmitted, unless invited by the Committee. All proposals are checked in the peer review administration process to identify any uninvited resubmissions which will be rejected. Resubmissions will be considered where they have been invited by the Committee, or if the proposal is substantially different in terms of objectives and/or work to be carried out. In which case permission from the Committee programme staff must be obtained, and the proposal must include a covering letter declaring it as a resubmission, detailing the modifications which merit its re-consideration. Proposals for which reviewers' comments have been seen and as a result of which are then withdrawn by the applicant(s) may not be submitted to a subsequent round unless they are substantially different in terms of objectives and/or work to be carried out.
- 4.10. Unless specifically invited, or if prior approval from the BBSRC Office has been obtained, proposals that have already been considered by another research council or funding body must not be submitted. Applications with prior approval must be accompanied by a covering letter explaining the circumstances of the previous application, its outcome and the modifications subsequently made to the proposal. It is expected that substantial changes will have been made to any resubmission, which will be accepted at the discretion of BBSRC.
- 4.11. Applicants/Co-applicants must submit an interim report available at <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/grant-interim-report-doc> on any related BBSRC research grant (excluding those under six months old and training grants) currently held or completed in the last twelve months on which they have been the Principal Investigator. Applications received which do not include this report may not be accepted until such a report is available. This is in addition to the reporting of research outcomes within researchfish® - see paragraphs 6.3 to 6.6 for more information.
- 4.12. Applicants who intend to undertake research work on private or Government property must obtain consent from the owner or the organisation before submitting an application.
- 4.13. Research proposals are expected to comply with BBSRC's data sharing policy and all proposals must include a data management plan. For the BBSRC policy please see the statement at <https://www.ukri.org/publications/bbsrc-data-sharing-policy/>.

The Research Councils' Code of Conduct and Policy on the Governance of Good Research Conduct outlines the expectation that applicants for Research Council funding are expected to observe the highest standards of integrity, honesty and professionalism and to embed good practice in every aspect of their work. As part of this, any private, personal or commercial interests relating to an application for funding to the Research Councils must be declared in a covering letter included as an application attachment. Guidance on providing declarations of interest can be found at <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/UKRI-261120-Declaration-of-Interests-for-applicants-v2.pdf>.

### *Animal Use*

- 4.14. In recent years, there have been numerous attempts and initiatives to improve the standards of conducting and reporting animal experiments in scientific literature. For example, the National Centre for the 3Rs (NC3Rs) developed the ARRIVE guidelines (<https://arriveguidelines.org/>), and these guidelines lay out criteria that should be met in reporting animal studies in order that the results and any conclusions can be appropriately evaluated by others. These criteria address a number of issues relating to the

transparency and validity of experimental design, the avoidance of bias and the adequacy of statistical elements of the study (including statistical power and the use of appropriate analysis methodology).

- 4.15. The NC3Rs has developed guidance for applicants when selecting contractors for animal research and the expectations of UK public funders. A presentation detailing the information that applicants should provide can be found at <https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/news/choosing-contractors-animal-research>

#### **Home Office licences, ethical and welfare standards and review (including animal use overseas)**

- 4.16. Experiments using animals funded by BBSRC must comply with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPAs), amended 2012 and any further embodiments. Institutions and grant holders are responsible for ensuring that all appropriate establishment, personal and project licences required under the Act have been granted by the Home Office, including gaining approval via their institution's local ethical review process. All BBSRC awards are made on the absolute condition that no work that is controlled by the Act will begin until the necessary licences have been obtained.
- 4.17. In addition, applicants must ensure that they are following best practice in relation to animal husbandry and welfare. Where proposed work is not covered under an existing ASPA project license, applicants should make certain that their proposals are received by their local Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB), prior to submission and ensure that any ethical or welfare implications raised are addressed.
- 4.18. Applicants should be aware that all proposals involving the use of non-human primates, cats, dogs, equines and, currently, pigs submitted to BBSRC will be referred to the NC3Rs via their Peer Review Service. In some circumstances, proposals involving the use of other species may also be referred, at the discretion of BBSRC.
- 4.19. BBSRC funded research that involves the use of animals overseas (for example, through international collaborative research), researchers and the local AWERB in the UK should satisfy themselves that welfare standards are consistent with those required under UK legislation (e.g. ASPA) and the expectations set out in the Responsibility in the Use of Animals in Bioscience Research (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/animals-in-bioscience-research-pdf/>) are in force and maintained. All applications involving animal research conducted overseas are required to submit a signed statement (<https://www.ukri.org/councils/bbsrc/guidance-for-applicants/animal-use-in-research/>). This is to confirm that this research would be conducted in accordance with regulatory systems in the UK (and applicable regulation in the host country). In addition, the NC3Rs has produced checklists for specific species. These checklists have been developed to assist in the evaluation of welfare standards so that applicants can more easily determine the UK standards for a given species (rodents, rabbits, sheep, goats, pigs, cattle, *Xenopus*), please see the specific guidance here: <https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/use-animals-overseas>. If the research will use these species then please complete the relevant checklist/s and attach to the application as a Letter of Support. Compliance will be assessed during peer review and implementation of the principles in the guidance will be a condition of funding.

#### **Replacement, reduction and refinement (3Rs) of animal experiments**

- 4.20. Applicants proposing to use animals in experiments must make themselves aware of BBSRC's priorities in the welfare of managed animals and the 3Rs (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/research/briefings/animal-welfare/>). BBSRC are committed to ensuring funded research using animals is conducted in line with the principle of the 3Rs (<https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/>). Experiments using animals which are funded by BBSRC must:

- Use the simplest possible (or least sentient) species of animal as appropriate to the experiment in question;
  - Employ an appropriate experimental design, minimising bias and using the minimum number of animals, consistent with ensuring that scientific objectives will be met to a statistically significant level;
  - Ensure that both pain and distress are minimised and avoided where possible
- 4.21. Applicants must keep themselves aware of developments in best practice, for example through familiarising themselves with publications, experimental design and procedure practice tools accessible through the NC3Rs website (<https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/>) and the BBSRC website. (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/about/policies-standards/good-scientific-practice/>)

### **Proposals involving animal use**

- 4.22. In all cases, applicants whose applications include the use of animals must ensure that their proposal clearly sets out and fully justifies the following:
- Research objectives and how the knowledge generated will advance the field;
  - The need to use animals and lack of realistic alternative;
  - Choice of species and type of animal(s), for example strain, pathogen free, genetically modified;
  - Planned experimental design and its justification;
  - The numbers of animals and frequency of measurements/ interventions to be used;
  - Primary outcomes to be assessed.
- 4.23. Applicants whose proposed programme of research involves the use of pigs should refer to the NC3Rs Standardised questions on the use of pigs (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/standardised-questions-on-the-use-of-pigs/>). All questions relevant to the proposal must be addressed within the Je-S application form and, where appropriate, the Case for Support and Justification for Resources attachments. The NC3Rs will request further details from applicants if they are not satisfied that the questions have been adequately addressed or where applicants have not provided the necessary information.

### **Experimental Design**

- 4.24. BBSRC acknowledges the ethical imperative to reduce the number of animals used in bioscience research, but it is equally important to conduct a study with adequate statistical power to robustly answer the research question being asked. Applicants should therefore provide adequate justification of their choice of experimental design, numbers of animals being used and interventions. It is important that sufficient information is provided concerning methodological issues including (but not limited to) the following:
- The avoidance of bias (for example, randomization and blinding; and how this will be carried out);
  - A clear definition of the experimental unit in the analysis and implications thereof (that is, there is a difference between N samples from one animal, as distinct from one sample from each of N animals, or combining samples from multiple animals);

- A principled justification of the adequacy of the numbers of animals to be included so as to be able to minimise the likelihood of spurious results due to the play of chance alone;
  - Where animals are used in multiple types of experimental approach within a single application (e.g. for tissue supply, pilot experiments or more defined preclinical studies), exemplars for these types of experiment should be provided;
  - The number of different time points at which measurements will be made on each animal;
  - A description of the statistical analysis methods that is planned to be used, explaining how they relate to the experimental design and showing that they are appropriate for the types of data that will be collected. Power calculations and/or justification of why they are appropriate (or not) should also be provided;
  - An indication of the number of independent replications of each experiment to be performed with the objective of minimising the likelihood of spurious nonreplicable results. If there are no plans for studies to be independently verified within the current proposal then this will need to be justified.
- 4.25. The NC3Rs also provide access to a freely available online tool called the Experimental Design Assistant (EDA) (<https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/experimental-design-assistant-eda>). The EDA helps to optimise experimental design and ensure that the number of animals used is consistent with the scientific objectives.

### **Peer Review**

- 4.26. Information relating to the use of animals will be subject to careful scrutiny and will carry substantial weight when the scientific strength of the proposal is assessed. Guidance on where applicants should address each aspect in Je-S (or as a proposal attachment), is given below.
- 4.27. This requirement applies whether or not the animals are to be purchased with funds requested within the proposal itself.

### **Je-S sections and proposal attachments**

#### ***Je-S section on 'Animal Research'***

- 4.28. Within this section, researchers must give details of any procedures categorised as moderate or severe in order that the assessment of the proposal can balance the importance of the potential scientific advancement to the welfare of the animals.

#### ***Je-S section on 'Animal Species'***

- 4.29. Within this section, researchers must provide sound scientific reasons for the use of animals and an explanation as to why there are no realistic alternatives, with an explanation of how the choice of species complies with ASPA.
- 4.30. The experimental design should be outlined, covering all (but not limited to) the points detailed above (see paragraph 4.22).
- 4.31. Researchers are required to provide a properly constructed justification of how the proposed animal numbers to be used were determined. In general, it would be expected that professional statistical advice will be sought in putting this section together.
- 4.32. In many instances this section will include statistical power calculations based on justifiable and explicit assumptions about the anticipated size of the experimental effects.

If statistical power calculations are not given, it is expected that applicants provide a principled explanation to the choice of numbers. In general, explanations based solely in terms of 'usual practice' will not be considered adequate.

- 4.33. The scientific rationale for the experimental design should be explained in the 'case for support'.

#### ***'Case for Support' proposal attachment***

- 4.34. The scientific case underpinning the choice of animal model and the experimental plans should be detailed within the case for support.
- 4.35. It is essential that a clear case is made to how the chosen design will enable the stated objectives of the study to be achieved.

#### ***Je-S section on 'Resources – Animal Costs'***

- 4.36. The costs of both the animals themselves and their maintenance may be requested, and should be listed in this section (see paragraph 5.44).
- 4.37. Applicants considering the use of animals from commercial suppliers should, where possible, use UK suppliers, to minimise the risk of suffering during transport. For cats, dogs and primates, Home Office approved suppliers must be used. Applicants planning research using rhesus macaques should obtain these from the Centre for Macaques (CFM) at Porton Down (<https://mrc.ukri.org/research/facilities-and-resources-for-researchers/mrc-centre-for-macaques/>).

#### ***'Justification of Resources' proposal attachment***

- 4.38. A detailed justification of the animal costs incurred should be given in this section. This should detail the animal costs requested, and may outline any breeding programmes, if appropriate to support the number of animals required. No experimental or statistical details should be provided in this section

#### ***Genetically altered animals***

- 4.39. If the research involves human subjects, genetically modified organisms, or any other sensitive or dangerous materials, work must not commence until approval has been received from the appropriate Local Ethical Committee or other appropriate authority.
- 4.40. Where experiments involve genetically altered animals applicants should refer to the report of GA mice working group 'Assessing the welfare of genetically altered mice' (<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1258/002367706776318971>).

#### ***Biological Resources***

- 4.41. Where published work is expected to include the description of new species or subspecies or otherwise novel organisms, BBSRC grant holders are expected to make these organisms, or the associated germplasm material, available to other researchers through deposition in a recognised biological collection. Recognised collections are considered to be those which publish catalogues of holdings and which make organisms available for use to all UK researchers with appropriate expertise.
- 4.42. Applicants and associated researchers should make reference to their plans for making available the organisms in their research grant application. Organisms should be offered to the most appropriate UK collection. If no UK collection is able to accept them, they

should be offered to a recognised overseas collection. If no collections will accept the organisms, it is expected that the grant holders themselves should make them available to the scientific community for a minimum period of two years following the publication of any paper describing those organisms.

- 4.43. For microorganisms, applicants should note that the requirements of intellectual property rights may mean that organisms may have to be lodged in a culture collection registered for this purpose under the 1977 Budapest Treaty on the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the purpose of Patent Procedure.

### *When applying*

- 4.44. There are no restrictions on the number of applicants named on a research grant application. All applicants must be actively engaged in the proposed research project and the intellectual input of each applicant to the research must be clearly defined in the case for support.
- 4.45. Unless otherwise specified in the call notice, when the application involves work at more than one eligible institution, funding for a Joint Research Project may be requested by either submitting one joint application from the lead institution or by completing separate applications from each institution.
- 4.46. With one joint application, the institution submitting the application must be the lead institution. The principal applicant must be from the lead institution and will be the person to whom all scientific correspondence is directed. All other applicants and their affiliations must be entered on the application form.
- 4.47. With separate applications, the first named applicant on each form must be the principal applicant from that institution. One principal applicant should be identified in a separate covering letter as the lead applicant to whom all scientific correspondence will be directed. Only applicants directly working on each institution's component of the project should be entered on that institution's form.
- 4.48. Applications for Industrial Partnership Awards must comply with the IPA guidance in section 2.
- 4.49. Where the work is in collaboration with an institute or unit of another research council or with an organisation that is not a UK university, BBSRC sponsored institute or MRP, the extent and reasons for the collaboration must be explained. Details of the staff expertise and facilities that will be provided by the collaborator(s) must be included in the case for support. For collaborations with MRPs, the Director must confirm that the necessary funding for the MRP part of the collaboration will be available from the Scottish Government.
- 4.50. Any relevant interactions with other groups in the UK or abroad, relevant to the research should also be explained.
- 4.51. Applicants whose applications include the use of animals must fully justify the choice of species and numbers of all animals required, including power calculations where appropriate. Please note that this requirement applies whether or not the animals are to be purchased with funds requested within the proposal itself. Please refer to paragraphs 4.14 - 4.40 above for full instructions on the details required when including animal use in an application.
- 4.52. The case for support should be a self-contained description of the proposed work with relevant background and references and should not depend on additional information such as the inclusion of external links. The citation of preprints is acceptable (as stated at <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20200930163851/https://bbsrc.ukri.org/>

[news/policy/2017/170131-f-policy-briefs-winter-2017/](https://news/policy/2017/170131-f-policy-briefs-winter-2017/)). Peer reviewers are advised to base their assessment solely on the information contained within the application, and instructed not to access external links. BBSRC reserves the right to withdraw proposals that contain links to additional information which extends the case for support. Further details of the requirements for the case for support can be found on Je-S help text (<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/pages/GuidanceonCompletingaStandardG/CaseforSupportandAttachments/BBSRCSpecificRequirements.htm>).

- 4.53. Studentships and/or student resource may not be requested, or included, on BBSRC research grant applications. BBSRC studentships are only available through application to the various BBSRC training award schemes. Further information is available on the BBSRC website (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/skills/>).

4.54.

Attachments page lengths for Responsive Mode (other schemes and calls may have differing requirements but these will be specified in the call text).

| Attachment  | Maximum page length | Notes  |
|---|---------------------|--|
| Case for Support (including Track Record)   | 8 sides of A4       | Page length includes references, figures etc. The suggested track record page length is one to two pages with the remaining pages being used for the scientific case. <b>The overall maximum page length for the combined track record and scientific case is eight pages. The Case for Support must be self-contained, external links are not permitted, see paragraph 4.52.</b>  |
| Diagrammatic Workplan   | 1 side of A4        | Diagrammatic workplan representing timelines and milestones. Cannot be used to extend the case for support.  |
| CVs   | 2 sides of A4 each  | Required for all named applicants and named research staff only. CVs are not required for named technicians.<br><br>Please note that as part of our commitment to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (sfдора.org/), BBSRC applicants are advised not to use journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an individual scientist's contributions. More information on the Peer Review Framework and the statement on responsible use of metrics from UKRI can be found at <a href="https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/how-we-make-decisions/">https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/how-we-make-decisions/</a> |
| Justification of Resources  | 2 sides of A4       | All resources requested (directly incurred, directly allocated and exceptions, including PI and Co-I time) must be fully justified. For items that would ordinarily be found in a department (including non-specialist computers), justification must be provided both for why the items 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). It is expected that the Research Organisation will provide computers and laptops for the PIs and Co-Is and other research staff on continuing contracts.   |
| Data Management Plan  | 1 side of A4        | <a href="https://www.ukri.org/councils/bbsrc/guidance-for-applicants/what-to-include-in-your-application/data-management-plan/">https://www.ukri.org/councils/bbsrc/guidance-for-applicants/what-to-include-in-your-application/data-management-plan/</a>  |
| Letters of support (optional, but may be required for specific schemes and calls) | None                | Only directly relevant Letters of Support should be submitted  |

|  |                        |   |
|--|------------------------|---|
| Interim report   | As per report guidance | Required for any related BBSRC research grant currently held (excluding those under six months old and training grants) or completed in the last twelve months on which the applicant has been the Principal Investigator (Paragraph 4.11 applies)  |
| Facility form (optional, but required for some facilities)                             | None                   | If facility access is being requested specifically for the Earlham Institute, the supercomputing ARCHER2 facility at University of Edinburgh, or the UK 850MHz Solid State NMR Facility at the University of Warwick, a technical assessment form is required. The Research Complex at Harwell requires a letter of approval from the Research Complex Director. Failure to include the required forms will result in withdrawal of the proposal. <b>Note: Any costs associated with these specific facilities should be entered into the 'Other Directly Incurred' Costs field in the Je-S application form. Costs should not however be included for the ARCHER2 facility as BBSRC reimburse EPSRC directly for use time.</b> |
| Equipment quotations (optional, but required in some instances. See relevant guidance) | None                   |   |
| Head of Department Statement (optional, but required for some schemes and calls)       | None                   |   |
| Proposal Cover Letter (mandatory on all schemes except Outlines)                       | None                   | Applicant's Declaration of Interests must be included in the Proposal Cover Letter – please see the guidance provided at <a href="https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/UKRI-261120-Declaration-of-Interests-for-applicants-v2.pdf">https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/UKRI-261120-Declaration-of-Interests-for-applicants-v2.pdf</a> .  |

### Submitting applications

- 4.55. All BBSRC Committees support basic, strategic and applied research. Further details of their coverage can be found on the Committee Web pages on the BBSRC Website (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/funding/grants/>).
- 4.56. Applications can be submitted at any time and will be processed for the meeting linked to the next available closing date. A list of closing dates and their associated meetings can be found on the website <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/bbsrc-standard-research-grant/>. There is a minimum processing time of 8-10 weeks for an outline proposal and 18-22 weeks for a full proposal required between the receipt of an application and its consideration in Committee. The appropriate meeting and Committee to consider an application will be decided by the BBSRC Office, whose decision is final.
- 4.57. A list of applications recommended for funding will be published on the BBSRC Website and linked to the 'Post-application information' page <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/funding/post-application/awarded-grants/>. Notification of awards will be sent via Je-S.

- 4.58. Unless specifically requested, outlines are not required.
- 4.59. An application may be returned to your Submitter Pool via Je-S for amendment. The notification will state the nature of the amendment(s) required, and a date for the return of the application. Applications submitted after the due date will not be accepted. Any alterations to any other part of the application will also result in rejection.

### *Assessment of applications*

- 4.60. Scientific assessment of research quality will be undertaken by UK and overseas experts in the field from academia, Government and/or industry, against all of the following criteria:
- Scientific excellence;
  - Industrial and stakeholder relevance;
  - Relevance to BBSRC strategy;
  - Economic and Social impact;
  - Timeliness and promise;
  - Value for money and,
  - Staff training potential of the project (where resources are requested for postdoctoral or other research staff).
- 4.61. UKRI recognises that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major interruptions and disruptions across our communities and are committed to ensuring that individual applicants and their wider team, including partners and networks, are not penalised for any disruption to their career(s) such as breaks and delays, disruptive working patterns and conditions, the loss of on-going work, and role changes that may have been caused by the pandemic.

Reviewers and panel members will be advised to consider the unequal impacts of the impact that COVID-19 related disruption might have had on the track record and career development of those individuals included in the proposal and will be asked to consider the capability of the applicant and their wider team to deliver the research they are proposing. Where disruptions have occurred applicants can highlight this within their application, if they wish, but there is no requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption.

- 4.62. Applicants must nominate four reviewers who can give an independent assessment of the proposed project. Nominees must not be recent collaborators, or members of any of the applicants' own institutions. No more than four potential reviewers should be nominated. Applicants must not nominate more than one reviewer from an institution. Applicants may give reasons in a covering letter if there are potential referees whom BBSRC should not approach but BBSRC reserves the right to make the final selection.
- 4.63. The principal investigator will normally be given the opportunity to reply to comments from the reviewers. Responses will be considered by the Committee in making its decision. BBSRC will not enter into correspondence or discussion concerning reviewer comments prior to the meeting. Any further feedback, if available, can be requested after the Committee meeting.
- 4.64. Resources requested should be described in sufficient detail for the peer reviewers to identify what is required for different aspects of the work. If costs are not sufficiently clear and well justified the Committee may cut costs before awarding the grant.
- 4.65. For Joint Research Projects where work involves more than one eligible institution, research grants will be awarded to the lead institution in respect of single applications, and to each institution in respect of multiple applications. In all cases the principal named

applicant and institution will be responsible for accounting for the expenditure of funds awarded under the individual research grants (paragraphs 4.45 – 4.47 refer).

*Funding decision timetable and availability of feedback on unsuccessful applications*

- 4.66. The point at which the funding decisions on Responsive Mode research grant applications are made is the meeting of the Committee Chairs. This takes place approximately one month following the individual Committee meetings associated with a grant round. No information will be available on individual applications prior to that meeting.
- 4.67. Formal notification of the result of your application will be sent to you as soon as possible following the relevant meeting. From the date of this notification, you will have one month in which to request feedback on your application. Feedback will then be provided by email from the BBSRC Delivery Team within 3 months. Where a proposal is not assessed as meeting the 'international quality' threshold it will not be discussed in detail at the Committee meeting. Only limited feedback will be available in such circumstances.

## 5 RESOURCES:- FULL ECONOMIC COSTING

### Introduction

- 5.1. All research grants and fellowship applications are costed on the basis of full economic costs (fEC). If a grant is awarded, the Research Councils provide funding on the basis of 80% of fEC. The organisation must agree to find the balance of fEC for the project from other resources.
- 5.2. Universities and other higher education organisations will use the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) methodology to calculate full economic costs. This methodology has been validated by a quality assurance programme and is subject to ongoing review through arrangements put in place by the Funding Councils and the Research Councils. Other Research Organisations can apply for full economic costs provided that the methodology they adopt has been validated by the Research Councils as appropriate and robust. A questionnaire has been designed to determine this. Research Council institutes that are eligible to apply to BBSRC for research grants and fellowships will use a fEC methodology validated by their parent Research Council.
- 5.3. All organisations can opt to use a default rate for indirect costs, as an alternative to applying a comprehensive fEC methodology. Special dispensation estates and indirect costs can be used where an institution's research volumes are low. Universities and other Research Organisations need to obtain dispensation from full operation of TRAC to use this approach. Other Research Organisations must indicate when they next seek to submit a research application, a wish to adopt default rate(s). The default rate(s) are published periodically by Research England, a part of UKRI on its website, and are based on averages of actual rates in use in the university sector. Non-universities must decide for themselves whether these default rates are applicable to their circumstances.
- 5.4. All costs that contribute to the full economic costs of a project may be included in fEC. There are, however, some costs that do not form part of the fEC of a project or are required to be charged in a specific way. These include:
  - Redundancy costs for research staff: provision for redundancy costs should be made in the gross Cost of Capital Employed (COCE), which is a charge within Indirect Costs;
  - The costs of maternity, paternity and sick leave for Investigators, together with other employment-related costs, are not chargeable to Research Councils (except where the Investigator is also a Research Fellow or a Research Assistant funded from the grant);
  - Depreciation on Research Council-funded equipment may not be included in Estates costs or charge out rates for use of equipment or facilities. TRAC provides guidance on how to deal with this;
  - Academic time preparing research proposals together with time spent on dissemination after a grant has ended should be charged to Research Support – an item within Indirect Costs;
  - Publication costs associated with peer reviewed journal articles and conference papers should not be included in grants as these are funded by UKRI APC publication funding;
  - Applications should be made at current (year 1) prices, inclusive of VAT and other taxes, where applicable, with no allowance for inflation. Grants that are awarded will include a sum to take account of inflation and future pay awards over the duration of the grant.

## Directly Incurred Costs

- 5.5. Expenditure that is to be directly incurred for a project and only that project and is supported by an auditable record.

### *Audit requirements for directly incurred costs:*

- 5.6. Councils expect DI staff to use timesheets so that their actual time is recorded against a project to form the basis of the costs charged. Where a person is contracted to work 100% of their time on a single project (whether they are working full-time or part-time), timesheets are not necessary as their costs can only be charged to that activity. In all other cases, timesheets or project time records are required. This includes those who may be contracted to work on two or more projects, since it is essential when charging to have a means of recording and verifying the actual time applied to each activity. Research Councils' expectations are that time recording will be undertaken regularly and continuously and that records will be verified at least monthly.
- Staff
  - Travel and subsistence
  - Equipment
  - Other costs

### *Staff*

- 5.7. The payroll costs of all staff, full or part-time, who work on the project, and whose time can be supported by a full audit trail may be included. The need for such staff should be justified in the justification of resources attachment.
- 5.8. Where an application includes provision for named research, technical and support staff, BBSRC will normally expect to award funds at 80% of the level requested. Research Assistants, whether named or unnamed, should be requested at a salary level commensurate with the skills, responsibilities, expertise and experience necessary to carry out the proposed research activity. They should also only be employed by an eligible institution named in the application and be based at that institution.
- 5.9. It will be for those submitting the proposal to determine the extent to which market conditions make it difficult to recruit staff of appropriate quality in areas of high market demand and therefore require an uplift from normal salary levels. Provided the uplift has been fully justified within the justification of resources attachment, BBSRC will make the award at that level. BBSRC reserves the right to provide support at a different level if it is considered appropriate.
- 5.10. **Data-driven research** and the development of associated methods, tools and resources are an integral part of contemporary bioscience. As such, support can be request in the following areas:
- Research Data Management: Support may be requested for any costs related to research data management which will be incurred during the project and not be covered by Directly Allocated or Indirect costs. These costs must be fully justified.
  - Professional support: Proposals should be fully scoped and are expected to include the necessary full or partial FTE roles associated with professional support for data-intensive bioscience, such as for data analysis and management. This can include support through the use of shared facilities and technical professionals such as Research Software Engineers where appropriate (see below).
  - Skills: Applicants should ensure professional support roles for data-intensive bioscience are made at appropriate salary points in recognition of the competitive market for staff

with strong quantitative expertise (please also see paragraph 5.9). Proposals can also support upskilling costs. The rationale for these costs must be clearly articulated in the justification of resources.

- 5.11. Salary increments over the period of the project should be taken into account but not anticipated future pay awards. Where it is expected that named research staff will be promoted during the lifetime of the grant, provision may be made for this in the grant proposal. If a grant does not include provision for such costs, funds may be transferred from other Directly Incurred and Exceptions headings.
- 5.12. The Research Organisation is responsible, as the employer, for the contracts of employment of the staff concerned and, consequently, for any redundancy or other compensatory arrangements that may be required. Work permits, if required, are a matter for direct negotiation between the Research Organisation and the relevant Government departments. BBSRC has no restrictions or requirements on residency, nationality or citizenship in relation to research support staff funded from a grant.

### *Travel and subsistence*

- 5.13. Travel costs for journeys that are an essential part of the investigation and are directly related to the research project can be claimed as a direct cost on the research grant. All journeys must be identified individually and be fully justified in the application. Travel and subsistence will be in accordance with an institution's own regulations.
- 5.14. Costs for attendance at conferences may be included where such attendance will be of direct benefit to the research. BBSRC will expect Research Assistants employed on the grant to have first call on conference attendance. Conferences should, as far as possible, be individually identified in the proposal and attendance justified.

### *Equipment*

- 5.15. Applicants should read the information on the UKRI website at <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/UKRI-261120-EquipmentGuidance.pdf> to which the BBSRC-specific information on the revised process is supplementary.

#### Equipment below £10,000

- 5.16. Individual items of equipment below £10,000 will continue to be included in proposals for individual research projects at 80% FEC. They should be included in Other Directly Incurred costs. If VAT and/or Import Duty do not apply, a value of zero should be entered in these fields.

#### Equipment between £10,000 and £138,000 (incl VAT)

- 5.17. For single capital items of equipment between £10,000 and £138,000 (incl VAT) additional justification of the requirement for these items, and details of the proposed contribution to the cost of the equipment, must be provided in the justification of resources as detailed in the UKRI guidance: <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/UKRI-261120-EquipmentGuidance.pdf>
- 5.18. Applicants should read carefully the section on how to apply in Je-S. Proposals must include a letter of support from the appropriate institution authority detailing the proposed contribution to the cost of the equipment. BBSRC will contribute no more than 50% of the final purchase price of any item between £10,000 and £138,000 (incl VAT) and will expect the Research Organisation to contribute the remainder. This contribution must not be conditional e.g. on the success of other applications for support, and must not be from other BBSRC grants. The peer review Committee or panel will be asked to consider the proposed contribution in relation to the value for money of the proposal and this may

influence the final position of the proposal in the rank ordered list. The final decision on the percentage contribution will be made by BBSRC taking into account the available capital budget.

- 5.19. For joint proposals, we expect the applicants and their Research Organisations to agree amongst themselves the levels of contribution from the different organisations, and the ownership and hosting arrangements for the equipment. Information should be provided in the justification of resources.

#### Equipment above £138,000 (incl VAT)

- 5.20. Applications for research projects seeking single capital items of equipment above £138,000 (incl VAT) must include the required 2 page business case, separately for each item. As described above, the expectation is that the equipment will underpin a range of research including both existing and potential future research projects. Quotations are mandatory for equipment items above a threshold of £115,000 (net VAT and Import Duty (£138,000 incl VAT)). Where the actual cost of the equipment item exceeds £115,000 three quotations must be provided. Please consult <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/UKRI-261120-EquipmentGuidance.pdf> for further guidance
- 5.21. The case for any item of equipment over £138,000 (incl VAT), and of the resources associated with its operation, sought as part of Responsive Mode grant applications and that have been recommended for funding by the peer review Committees will be considered at the meeting of Committee Chairs. The arrangements for consideration of any such equipment sought in response to initiatives or other targeted calls will be explained in the relevant call information.
- 5.22. Proposals must include a letter of support from the appropriate institution authority detailing the proposed contribution to the cost of the equipment. Single capital items of equipment over £138,000 (incl VAT) will normally be funded at 50% of total cost and the institution will be expected to provide the remaining 50%. This contribution must not be conditional e.g. on the success of other applications for support, and must not be from other BBSRC grants. BBSRC may agree a contribution of up to 100% where the application and business case demonstrates that the instrument(s) will enhance national capability in meeting a strategically important need by the BBSRC research community, and the case shows a clear ongoing commitment to maintain and operate it for this purpose. Final funding decisions will need to take into account the capital allocation available to the BBSRC, and may require negotiation with the institution.
- 5.23. Proposals will be considered according to the following criteria, taking into account the advice of the peer review Committee:
- The quality, breadth and strategic relevance to BBSRC of the science that will be enabled by the equipment and the plans to maximise access to the equipment;
  - This may include consideration of the geographical location of the equipment in relation to the likely user community, and in relation to similar instrumentation that might be available elsewhere;
  - The proposals for the management and resourcing of access to the facility, including training where necessary;
  - Value for money - including the efficiency and affordability of running and access costs, the extent of non-BBSRC contributions, and discounts on capital purchase costs etc.
- 5.24. BBSRC may seek further information in relation to any of the above assessment criteria, or any other aspect of the case, before reaching a decision.

- 5.25. The location and support for access to these larger items of equipment is a strategic decision taken with a view to maximising the benefit to national capability. Consequently, BBSRC may decide e.g. that equipment may be co-located with existing provision elsewhere or located somewhere it considers more suitable. It may also decide to seek other proposals to host the items concerned before taking a decision

### Instrument development

- 5.26. Equipment over £10,000 to be used for instrument development is not affected by the new rules for equipment funding. More detail on what constitutes instrument development can be found in the UKRI guidance: <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/UKRI-261120-EquipmentGuidance.pdf>
- 5.27. This exception **only** applies to applications for equipment to be used in the development of new instruments. It does not cover equipment associated with the adaption of existing hardware or the development of software etc.
- 5.28. Items of equipment for instrument development may be funded at 100% FEC, although BBSRC reserves the right to request institutional contributions in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.29. Applicants should note that the guidance applies to individual pieces of equipment. *i.e.* other equipment requested on the proposal but not related to the instrument development will be subject to the standard rules for equipment funding.

### Additional time for assessment

- 5.30. The assessment of single capital items over £138,000 (incl VAT) may involve additional steps. Applicants may wish to take that into account in setting a reasonable start date for proposed projects and making submissions well in advance.
- 5.31. For further information please email: [research.committees@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:research.committees@bbsrc.ukri.org)

### Other Costs

- 5.32. Costs sought should be specified as far as possible in the proposal and justified in terms of the requirement for the research proposed. This heading may include:
- Consumables;
  - specialist publications (not expected in institutional libraries);
  - field work/fees;
  - computing (recurrent cost of computing dedicated to the project only, e.g. stationery supplies and software licences, not costs associated with use of central computing facilities);
  - Publication costs (within the period of the grant) associated with research outputs, other than journal articles and conference papers, such as books, monographs, critical editions, catalogues etc. Full justification for such costs must be provided (*note 1*);
  - consultancy fees;
  - recruitment and advertising costs for staff directly employed on the grant;

equipment related items, such as relocation, maintenance (external contracts/agreements) (*note 2*);

- rental/access charges for equipment (specify equipment or service being used, basis of charging and required hours of usage) (*note 3*);
- equipment, complete items costing less than £10,000 (including VAT) only;
- direct services and facilities charged on a usage basis where administrative systems efficiently and robustly support this to provide an audit trail. This includes requests for costs for the use of Earlham Institute (formerly TGAC) facility sequencing (previously Earlham Institute facilities were requested as Directly Allocated costs) and the UK 850MHz Solid State NMR Facility at the University of Warwick.

**NOTE:- The Justification of Resources should make clear if elements of costs for a complete service e.g. glasshouse use are split between different categories of costs e.g. technicians and consumables and identify their location within the proposal. This is required to enable comparisons of different approaches using the same overall resource.**

*Note 1 - Publication costs: open access charges, page charges, reprints*

*Publication costs associated with peer reviewed journal articles and conference papers etc. must not be included in the application.*

*Note 2 - Cost of equipment maintenance*

*Applicants should include a breakdown of equipment maintenance costs. The costs claimed on the research grant must be on the basis of use for the project.*

*Note 3 - Rental/access charges for equipment*

*BBSRC will not meet rental access charges on equipment that has been funded by BBSRC or any of the other research councils. BBSRC grant holders should not be charged any element of the capital costs of research council funded equipment. Requests for rental access charges must be accompanied by confirmation that the equipment was not funded by BBSRC or another research council. How charges have been arrived at must be clearly shown.*

- 5.33. Patent costs, and other IPR costs such as those relating to licensing agreements and the establishment of spin out companies, are not eligible costs on research grants.

## Directly Allocated Costs

- 5.34. The costs of resources including services used by a project that are shared by other activities. The project's use of the resource or service will be estimated and not based on direct usage.
- Investigators
  - Estates
  - Other directly allocated

## Investigators

- 5.35. This heading provides for the costs of all Principal and Co-investigators working directly on a project, if their time charged to the grant will be based on estimates rather than actual costs. Where costs are actual, auditable and verifiable – through hourly time recording; they should be included under the Directly Incurred heading. Investigator time, not cost, must be justified in the justification of resources attachment.

- 5.36. It is a requirement of the fEC costing methodology that, for any one investigator, the maximum amount of time that Research Councils will fund across all the projects they support is 1650 hours a year (equivalent to 37.5 hours a week, 44 weeks a year).
- 5.37. Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators whose time is not fully funded on other Research Council grants, but who are not paid a salary by the Research Organisation (e.g. Emeritus, honorary staff or certain fellowship holders) should show their hours attributed to the project, but with a zero salary cost request.
- 5.38. Salary increments over the period of the project should be taken into account, but possible future pay awards should not be anticipated. Where it is expected that individuals will be promoted during the lifetime of the grant provision may be made in the grant proposal.
- 5.39. If a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator is retired, the expectation is that their involvement in a project would be covered by a contract with the Research Organisation. Any associated costs should be classified as Directly Incurred.

### *Estates Costs*

- 5.40. These costs may include building and premises costs, basic services and utilities, and any clerical staff and equipment maintenance or operational costs that have not been included under other cost headings. They will be calculated by the Research Organisation and a single figure will be required at time of application.
- 5.41. Where an individual will be working away from the Research Organisation on long-term secondment for a period in excess of six months during the project, estates costs should not be charged for the period of secondment. No reduction should be made for shorter term absence.

### *Other Directly Allocated Costs*

- 5.42. These comprise all other direct costs calculated on the basis of estimates of use when the project is running. Items that can be included within this heading are:
- Research and technical staff whose time is shared across several projects (such as pooled technicians) and is not supported by an audit record;
  - Charge out costs for major facilities (with the exception of specific facilities detailed in paragraph 5.32);
  - Charge out costs for use of existing equipment;
  - Animal costs (see paragraph 5.44);
  - Charge out costs for departmental technical services.
- 5.43. With the exception of charge out costs for departmental technical and administrative services the need for the resources (but not the costing basis), should be justified in the justification of resources attachment.

### *Animals*

- 5.44. These costs may be shown as either directly incurred costs or directly allocated based on how the costs are recorded. Applications must include a breakdown of animal costs, including weekly maintenance charges in the Je-S application.

### *Indirect Costs*

- 5.45. Non-specific costs charged across all projects, based on estimates that are not otherwise included as Directly Allocated costs:

- Support time of academics;
  - Central service departments;
  - Library/learning resources;
  - Gross Cost of Capital Employed (COCE).
- 5.46. These should include the costs of administration, such as personnel, finance, library and some departmental services together with a charge for the gross cost of capital employed (COCE).
- 5.47. Like estates costs, indirect costs will be calculated by Research Organisations and a single figure will be required at time of application. Information about the derivation or justification of indirect costs and estates costs will not be required.
- 5.48. As with Estates costs, where the level of research staff effort to be awarded is different to that requested, an organisation will be required to re-calculate within 10 working days the estates and indirect costs, using the same costing basis applied to the original application. If an organisation is unable to recalculate the costs on this timescale, they will be adjusted by BBSRC in proportion to the change in staff resource.

## Exceptions

- 5.49. Directly Incurred costs that are funded at 100% of fEC, subject to actual expenditure incurred, or items that are outside fEC.
- 5.50. In certain instances resources for DNA Sequencing may be supported at 100%; paragraph 2.65 refers.

## Cash Limits

- 5.51. Research grants have an amount added at the time of announcement to take account of expected pay awards and inflation over their lifetime. The value awarded is the total financial commitment entered into by BBSRC and is known as the cash limit of the grant.

## 6 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND USE OF INFORMATION

### Monitoring

- 6.1. BBSRC places increasing importance on monitoring and evaluation of the research it funds. Although it is the responsibility of grant holders to manage the programme, BBSRC reserves the right to call for periodic information on progress of the research or to visit grant holders.
- 6.2. In some circumstances, e.g. larger or longer term grants, responsive research initiatives or thematic research programmes, where there are special conditions associated with research grants, interim reports or site visits may be required.

### Research Outputs

- 6.3. All Grant Holders must use researchfish® (<https://researchfish.com/>) to record key findings and specific outputs from their grants.
- 6.4. Grant Holders must report outcomes on a regular basis for all current grants and for at least five years post completion.
- 6.5. BBSRC will monitor submissions to ensure that acceptable levels of information are being provided into researchfish®.
- 6.6. Detailed information on researchfish® can be found at <https://www.ukri.org/manage-your-award/reporting-your-projects-outcomes/>

### Use of information

- 6.7. BBSRC takes all reasonable steps to ensure the contents of research grant applications are treated as confidential. The application form and any associated papers sent by BBSRC to reviewers and members of its Committees are sent 'In Confidence', and are accompanied by a note explaining the implications of confidentiality. Reviewers and Committee members involved in assessing proposals may need to consult in confidence with colleagues about individual research grant applications. Where this happens, the confidentiality criteria must be adhered to by the consultees.
- 6.8. Entitlement to project outputs and Intellectual Property: The decision as to whether parties can derive entitlement to the outputs of the project and/or Intellectual Property (IP), rests with the parties involved, however any access to project outputs and/or IP must be in line with any relevant Subsidy Control regulation. Any entitlements should be set out in a formal collaboration agreement, as per fEC Grant condition [RGC 12.1](#)
- 6.9. For successful applications scientific information will normally be transferred to the BBSRC Portfolio Analyser (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/research/grants-search/>), UKRI Gateway to Research (<https://gtr.ukri.org>) and other publicly available databases. The following details will be recorded for all BBSRC funded research grants:
  - Title and abstract of the research project;
  - institution and department;
  - name(s) of applicant(s);
  - name of any collaborating and/or co-funding organisation or body;
  - the value of the research grant;
  - start and end dates and duration of the research grant;
  - Committee awarding the research grant.

- 6.10. BBSRC must be notified in writing at the application stage if applicants do not wish personal data or information that could affect Intellectual Property Rights to be transferred to the databases. In these circumstances, applicants must provide alternative summaries of their research grant which can be made publicly available via the Portfolio Analyser.
- 6.11. BBSRC research grant applicants are asked to classify both their own research expertise and their proposed research grant project using a series of keywords and classification codes that are included in the application form. This information is of assistance in the selection of appropriate reviewers to assess the research grant application. It is also used in analysing the range of research funded by BBSRC.

## ORCID

- 6.12. The Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) provides a free registry to obtain a unique digital identifier for researchers and scholars, which allows them to manage a record of their research activities.
- 6.13. For researchers, an ORCID identifier supports automated linkages between them and their professional activities to ensure their work is properly recognised. ORCID records hold information such as name, email, organisation and research activities. Individuals control how their data is shared through managing data privacy settings within their ORCID account.
- 6.14. For further details, applicants should refer to <https://ie-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/pages/UpdatingAccountPersonalandExpe/UpdatingAccountPersonalandExpe.htm>.

## GRANT HOLDERS

- 6.15. As a BBSRC grant holder you will be required:
  - to observe all aspects of the conditions set out in this text incorporating the understandings in the agreement between the Funders and Employers of Researchers in the UK in the Concordat: <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat>
  - to support postdoctoral researchers employed on BBSRC grants as set out in our “Vision for Postdoctoral Researchers” (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/skills/developing-careers/postdoctoral-vision/>)
  - to adhere to the BBSRC Statement on Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/about/policies-standards/good-scientific-practice/>)
  - to undertake reviews of research grant proposals submitted to BBSRC when requested.

In addition:

- UKRI Grants will notify the institution that a research grant has been awarded;
- UK SBS will make regular research grant payments to the institution once work on the project has started.

## Feedback

- 6.16. BBSRC would welcome feedback from you on what we do and how we do it. If there are any comments you may wish to make, please email your contact at BBSRC.

*To be fully effective we also need your help:*

## Information

- 6.17. We frequently have to provide information to Government on Science and Society issues and on a variety of scientific topics relating to those parts of the science budget for which

the BBSRC is responsible. So that we can respond promptly, we may ask for information about you and/or your project. When this happens, we will explain why we are requesting information and how it will be used. Please reply on time; it will help BBSRC, but it may also help you and your research.

*If you have a query:*

- 6.18. If you have a query about the way your research grant application has been dealt with or any other aspect of BBSRC research grant funding, please raise it with the person dealing with the Committee area to which your application was submitted, details of which can be found on the Committee web pages at <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/funding/grants/>.
- 6.19. Your query will be dealt with under BBSRC's Service Standards but if you remain dissatisfied with the way in which it is handled, you may register a formal complaint with the BBSRC Complaints Officer.
- 6.20. Full details of UKRI's Complaints Procedures can be found at <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/contact-us/make-a-complaint/>.

*Using our experts*

As a BBSRC grant holder you can make use of BBSRC's expertise in areas such as:

**Science and Society**

- 6.21. UKRI's Communication and Engagement Team has a wide range of experience encompassing media relations, public engagement and public dialogue activities, digital communications, copy writing, issues management and advice and stakeholder liaison. If you would like advice with any of these activities or for further information please contact UKRI Communications and Public Engagement Team at [communications@ukri.org](mailto:communications@ukri.org).

**International Relations Unit**

- 6.22. Through their wide ranging network of contacts and their liaison work, BBSRC's International Relations Unit can help you to maximise international opportunities. For further information, please contact the unit at [bbsrc.iru@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:bbsrc.iru@bbsrc.ukri.org).

**Business Interaction Unit**

- 6.23. BBSRC's Business Interaction Unit has a wide variety of Knowledge Transfer support mechanisms to enable researchers to maximise the economic and social impacts of their research through collaborative research and training, commercialisation opportunities and people and information exchanges. For further information, please contact [business.unit@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:business.unit@bbsrc.ukri.org) or see our website <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/innovation/>.

## **7 CROSS-COUNCIL RESEARCH GRANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR PRE AND POST FEC GRANTS**

- 7.1. These are linked from the UKRI website under 'Terms and Conditions of Research Council FEC Grants' at: <https://www.ukri.org/manage-your-award/meeting-ukri-terms-and-conditions-for-funding/>.
- 7.2. Research Grants awarded by the following Research Councils are made to Research Organisations on the basis of these single sets of core terms and conditions:
- Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)
  - Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)
  - Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
  - Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
  - Medical Research Council (MRC)
  - Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)
  - Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC)
- 7.3. Individual Councils may add additional conditions to the grant to reflect the particular circumstances and requirements of their organisation, or the nature of a particular grant. Acceptance of a research grant constitutes acceptance of both the core conditions and any additional conditions.
- 7.4. The Research Councils reserve the right to vary these terms and conditions as required.