UKRI-BBSRC Follow-on Fund
BBSRC – what we do

• Invest in **world-class bioscience research** in UK Universities and Institutes

• Invest in **bioscience training and skills** for the next generation of bioscientists

• Drive the **widest possible social and economic impact** from our bioscience in industry, policy and public goods

• Promote **public dialogue** on bioscience
# BBSRC research and innovation priorities

## Advancing the frontiers of bioscience discovery
- Understanding the rules of life
- Transformative technologies

## Tackling strategic challenges
- Bioscience for sustainable agriculture and food
- Bioscience for renewable resources and clean growth
- Bioscience for an integrated understanding of health

## Building strong foundations
- People and talent
- Infrastructure
- Collaboration, partnerships and knowledge exchange
How we work with Business

BBSRC supports collaboration

• Creating opportunities for engagement.
• Strengthening and developing links with the users of bioscience research.
• Enabling the bioscience research base to respond to industry challenges.
Collaborative Research

OPEN - IPA and LINK enable industry partners to leverage investment in a research project conducted at a UK Research Organisation (RO).

**Industrial Partnership Awards (IPA)**
- leverage a **10% cash investment** from the industry partner.
- more **fundamental** academic-led research.

**BBSRC LINK**
- leverage a **50% cash and/or in-kind contribution** from the industry partner.
- more **applied research** with significant industry involvement.
Collaborative Research

STRATEGIC

e.g.
• Industry Clubs
• Academic Industry Networks with PoC Funding (BBSRC NIBB)
• Themed calls (High Value Chemicals)
• Catalysts (Agritech and IB)
• **Flexible funding**, supporting the earliest stages of innovation, where the route to application is unclear.

• Research Organisations with highest level of funding from BBSRC (including Strategically Funded Institutes) invited to apply to competition.

• Total investment £4.5M since 2017 (£100k each p.a.)
Driving Innovation

Supporting academics to pursue the translation and commercialisation of their work through the most effective means possible.

**Follow-on Funding (FoF)** supports the translation of our research to maximise the potential societal and economic benefits. It aims to bridge the gap between BBSRC-funded research and the point at which other funding or investment becomes available by reducing the risk for future investors.

- 31% of projects contributed to the establishment / development of spin-out company
- Over 50% of follow-on fund awards end having demonstrated real-world usefulness
- 71% of award holders said their project contributed to new / improved IP

FoF Evaluation, July 2014: [http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/about/policies/reviews/funded-science/1407-follow-on-fund-evaluation.aspx](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/about/policies/reviews/funded-science/1407-follow-on-fund-evaluation.aspx)

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• Enables researchers who have a sound understanding of the market opportunity to execute a defined programme of work that has clearly defined and complementary technical and business plan development milestones.

• Technical work for example can involve scale-up manufacturing processes or product refinement to ensure it meets industry needs.

• The business plan will describe your approach towards the application / commercialisation of your product or service, evidenced by market research.
Standard FoF: up to £250K for projects between 12-24 months
Super FoF: up to £800K for projects between 12-24 months

Projects must draw substantially on previous research funding from BBSRC and fall within our portfolio.

Next call for proposals closes 6 October 2021 at 4pm
https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/follow-on-funding-call/
Readiness for Follow-on Funding

- No longer answering a research / fundamental science question
  - Focus must be towards market / user needs and the technical work needed to progress towards this

- In the first instance, please discuss with your Technology Transfer Office (TTO) or equivalent
  - They are best placed to advise regarding readiness and to guide you through the process

- BBSRC IAA funding and/or the Innovate UK ICURe programme can assist in preparing the ground work for your FoF application
What good looks like

A high-quality Follow-on Fund proposal will include:

• A clear understanding of the opportunity – market size, competition, where the innovation fits

• Letters of Support and Project Partner Letters of Support that support the opportunity and market need

• Clear milestones

• A clear articulation of how the proposed technical work will effectively progress towards meeting market / user needs
Working with Project Partners

It may be appropriate and necessary to work with external partners in order to progress the innovation, including:

- to access scale-up capability
- To test the innovation within a real-world setting

However, where appropriate there will need to be a Project Partner Letter of Support in place...

**Section 2.14 Grant Guide requires LoS to detail:**

- Objectives of the collaboration
- Key tasks, contribution and responsibilities of the different partners
- Agreed routes for dissemination of results and management of intellectual assets and/or IPR
- Any direct or indirect interest from the academic partner in the commercialisation of the research

A signed LoS is required from each partner

LoS need to confirm that if the grant is successful, a collaboration agreement will be put in place.
Some common pitfalls

- Letters of Support that are generic and do not show understanding of the project or clear commitment
- Not describing clearly how or why the innovation is better than current market alternatives
- Not enough clarity provided around current IP position
  - Is it know-how or a patent(s), do you have Freedom to Operate?
- Project trying to address too many opportunities
Creation of spin-out companies: where you are matters

- In general, speed of first investment is quicker in the ‘Golden Triangle’ than outside: strength of locality, access to capital, access to expertise etc…

- Access to BBSRC FoF the same inside and outside of ‘golden triangle’.

- However, having access to BBSRC FoF further speeds up investments to the subsequent spinout companies.

- **Please note:** Spinouts are one route to impact, other routes may include a licensing opportunity or the creation of a social enterprise.
Translational funding: other benefits

- 48% of BBSRC Follow-on-Funding (FoF) projects attract further translational funding (MRC, Wellcome etc…)
- 43% of BBSRC FoF projects lead to IP protection (patent filing)
  - Note: compared to 3% in responsive mode
- 46% of FoF projects lead to collaboration mostly with private sector as a means to take forward the IP
Elasmogen Ltd: shark proteins for drug discovery

- University of Aberdeen (Caroline Barelle, Andrew Porter)
- Super-FoF, BBSRC-RSE Enterprise Fellowship, IAA's
- Collaborating with Almac Discovery Ltd, Merck Group, Amgen Inc and Feldan Therapeutics
- Award winning Elasmogen, attracted over £6M in grant and private investment since being established in early 2016

Case Study Link (PDF document):
https://bbsrc.ukri.org/research/impact/elasmogen-shark-proteins-for-drug-discovery/
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UKRI-BBSRC Follow-on Fund Webpage:
https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/follow-on-funding-call/