

Engineering Biology Transition Awards

Guidance notes

Application deadline

22 September 2021, 4pm

Summary

Engineering biology has the potential to offer solutions to a range of global societal challenges. This opportunity will enable both the **creation of communities, towards new and novel research activities, and provide support for existing research communities, by taking current existing expertise and impact and driving it further through research development and commercial partnership**. We strongly encourage applicants from disciplines and communities seeking to drive cutting-edge fundamental engineering biology ideas and opportunities that can pull-through into impacts in key sectors (e.g. clinical, environmental).

This opportunity aims to:

- Support discovery- and application-inspired research and innovation activities and community development, further facilitating multi- and inter-disciplinary working aligned with the themes of the proposed National Engineering Biology Programme
- Maintain capability and capacity in the UK, by establishing community collaborations both new and through enhancing existing centres of excellence to further develop activities and undergo a step-change
- Depending on the research area, build on existing expertise and fundamental research to drive impact through translation and commercial partnership.

The call has an indicative total budget of up to £15.0M, subject to the quality of the applications received. The budget represents a UKRI commitment to Engineering Biology and while delivered by UKRI-BBSRC, represents the strategic interests of UKRI-EPSC, URKI-NERC, UKRI-MRC and Innovate UK. Applications must be **up to 24 months duration** and are **not expected to exceed £1.875M** (£1.5M 80% FEC).

Please note: Institutions are encouraged to rigorously consider and prioritise applications submitted to this funding opportunity. Through this opportunity we seek to encourage a diversity of awards. While there is no limit on the number of applications per institution, where more than one application is submitted from a single lead institution, it should be clear in the cover letter of each the complementary and thematic distinction between the applications.

Eligibility

This opportunity is being delivered by UKRI-BBSRC on behalf of UKRI partners.

Standard UKRI-BBSRC eligibility criteria apply to this call and applicants from eligible UK-based organisations are invited. Please see [UKRI-BBSRC grants guide](#). Institutions and researchers normally eligible for UKRI funding include:

- HEIs
- Strategically funded institutes
- Eligible Independent Research Organisations (IROs)
- Public Sector Research Establishments

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

New collaborations between and across institutions are strongly encouraged, as well as collaborations with private sector partners. However, please note that businesses cannot be funded through this opportunity. The nature of the collaboration and the role of the industrial partner should be made clear in the case of support.

Partnerships with international research groups, where they add value to the project through access to key facilities or in-kind contributions are encouraged. Funding will only be provided to UK eligible organisations but international researchers can be named as Project Partners as per the standard [UKRI-BBSRC Grants Guide](#).

Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators must be at lecturer level (or equivalent) or above and meet the standard UKRI eligibility criteria.

Applications are encouraged from investigators that may not consider themselves to have a track record in engineering biology, such as individuals from other disciplines that are looking to explore the potential impact of engineering biology across disciplines. It is anticipated that these investigators will provide evidence as to how their current expertise will bring a new dimension to engineering biology and, where appropriate, how these individuals will work with others to ensure the appropriate expertise is sought to ensure the success of the application.

Development of exemplars in engineering biology beyond current known applications are welcomed. In addition to supporting individuals lacking track records in engineering biology, we also encourage individuals who are established in the field of engineering biology to explore new collaborations and ideas, bringing in other disciplines, sectors and academic / industrial partners to explore novel aspects and applications of engineering biology and to catalyse novel innovative ideas.

Please note that this opportunity is distinct to the current Engineering Biology Breakthrough Awards and the same idea should not be submitted to both funding opportunities. However, assuming eligibility criteria are met, an applicant can apply to both funding calls with distinct proposals.

Institutions are encouraged to rigorously consider and prioritise applications submitted to this funding opportunity. Through this opportunity we seek to encourage a diversity of awards.

September 2021

While there is no limit on the number of applications per institution, where more than one application is submitted from a single lead institution, it should be clear in the cover letter of each the complementary and thematic distinction between the applications.

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

How to apply

Please consult the detailed guidance below on how to apply for full details of the attachments required. You must apply using the [Joint Electronic Submission system \(Je-S\)](#) before 16:00 on 22 September 2021. You will be able to submit your applications via Je-S from 2 August 2021.

When applying select:

- council: BBSRC
- document type: standard proposal
- scheme: standard
- call/type/mode: Engineering Biology Transition Awards

Please ensure that the Title of Project is prefixed '21EBTA', failure to do so may result in your applicant not being accepted.

See the [Je-S handbook](#) for advice on completing applications to BBSRC.

Please read the full [BBSRC guidance on research grants \(PDF, 375KB\)](#) before applying.

Your host organisation's administration is required to complete the submission process. Applicants should allow sufficient time for your organisation's submission process between submitting your proposal to them and the closing date.

UKRI partners must receive your full proposal application by **16:00 on 22 September 2021**. Late applications will not be accepted.

As well as the Je-S application form, the following documents must be submitted.

You should attach your documents as PDFs to avoid errors. They should be completed in single-spaced Arial 11 font or similar-sized sans serif typeface.

- Case for Support – Up to eight A4 sides including workplan
- Justification of Resources – Up to two A4 sides
- Capability to Deliver – Up to two A4 sides
- Data Management Plan – Up to one A4 side
- Proposal cover letter (up to one A4 side)
- Host Institution letter of support

Applicants may also submit the following 'Other Documents', subject to project design:

- Project partner letter(s) of support

September 2021

Each document must be provided in PDF format, using the following naming convention:

“21EBTA: <Document Name> – <PI Name>”

For example - “**21EBTA: Case for Support – Joe Bloggs**”

Applications that do not contain PDF attachments will not be accepted.

We advise applicants to read the [UKRI-BBSRC Grants Guide](#) and the [UKRI grant terms and conditions](#) before completing their application and to consult all call guidance and FAQs for detailed guidance specific for this call.

General information

- Standard guidelines for research grant applications apply, as described in the [UKRI-BBSRC grants guide](#).
- Standard font (size: 11 point - we recommend the use of Arial, Helvetica or Verdana typeface) and margin sizes (not less than 2 cm) must be used for all forms (excluding text on diagrams and the use of mathematical symbols). A minimum of single line spacing and standard character spacing must be used. **Applications that do not adhere to these guidelines may be withdrawn from consideration.**
- We require that all documents submitted via Je-S are converted to PDF prior to submission. Applications that do not contain PDF attachments will not be accepted.
- The UKRI-BBSRC’s New Investigator, Industrial Partnership Award and LINK uplift schemes do not apply to this call for proposals. First time Principal Investigators (PIs) should note that, if successful, being the PI on this grant may impact on your eligibility for such New Investigator or equivalent schemes across UKRI. Further information can be found in the FAQ document.
- PhD students should not be included on applications to this Transition Awards call.
- This process will use a rapid peer review and rebuttal timeline and applicants will need to ensure that they are available during 26th October and 9th November to provide rebuttal to comments from reviews. It is anticipated that reviews will be provided to applicants on 26th October and rebuttal is required within 14 days, by close of play 9th November. This is a requirement of application to ensure timely review and assessment and failure to reply within this window could impact on the success of the award.

UKRI-BBSRC reserves the right to reject applications, without reference to peer review, which are deemed to fall outside the remit and scope (including the financial scope) of this call. If required, expert advice from a sub-group of the panel will be sought regarding fit to scope, noting that this will not be an assessment of the quality of the proposal.

The Engineering Biology Transition Awards call has an indicative budget as detailed in the call information. We encourage research organisations to consider the scope and eligibility of potential applications to the call, and prioritise appropriately, prior to submission. We do not seek to implement an institutional cap for proposals but will take such measures if required to moderate demand to a manageable level.

Additionally, subject to the demand and volume of applications received across the three themes, the office reserves the right to conduct portfolio management to ensure a balance of projects are funded through this opportunity.

Application procedure

Required documents

In addition to the completed Je-S application form your submission should include the following attachments. You should attach your documents as PDFs to avoid errors. They should be completed in single-spaced Arial 11 font or similar-sized sans serif typeface.

Document	Max. page length (A4)	Guidance
Case for support (including Diagrammatic Workplan)	8 pages	See below .
Capability to Deliver	2 pages	See below and associated 'Capability to Deliver Guidance' document.
Justification of Resources	2 pages	All resources requested (directly incurred, directly allocated, staff costs, PI and Co-I time) must be fully justified. Please list values requested alongside the justification. Items that would ordinarily be found in a department, for example non-specialist computers, should include justification both for why they 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).
Data Management Plan	1 Page	Should provide information relating to data sharing and software management. Please refer to UKRI-BBSRC website for our Data Sharing Policy . We recommend consulting the Software Sustainability Institute website for guidance on software management .
Proposal Cover Letter	1 Page	Applicants' conflicts of interest will also need to be added to the Proposal Cover Letter, please refer to the UKRI website for further guidance.
Letters of Support	Variable	Collaborative letters of support should be provided by collaborators who will provide expertise or resources necessary for the proposed work. Any number of these may be provided as necessary.

		The separate letters of support and a tabulated summary of those letters should be collated and provided as one single pdf document.
Project Partners	Variable	All project partners should be included within the Project Partner section on Je-S by completing the Project Org Details, Contact Details and Direct contribution to Research Project and/or Indirect Contribution to Research Project, and attaching the project partner Letter of Support.

Case for Support (maximum of 8 sides of A4)

The Case for Support should be a self-contained description of the proposed work with relevant background, and should not depend on additional information. Applicants must not include URLs to web resources in order to extend their Case for Support. Panel members will base their assessment only on the written information contained within the form. UKRI-BBSRC reserves the right to withdraw proposals that contain links to additional information extending the Case for Support.

It should include the following:

- The project title at the top of the document.
- Descriptions of the work proposed in the application, including the proposed project, approaches and methods.
- Clear articulation of how the proposed project addresses the scope of the call.
- Descriptions as to how the proposed project aligns with at least one of the themes of the National Engineering Biology Programme and supports research and innovation and community development in this context.
- A description as to how this proposed project will maintain capability and capacity in Engineering Biology in the UK.
- A description as to the novelty of the research area, and where appropriate, subject to the extent of previous work, how this proposed project is looking to enhance existing excellence and drive impact through translation and commercial partnership.
- A statement on responsible research and innovation in the context of the proposed idea
- A statement on the potential for economic and societal impact, outlining how the outputs of the proposed project will contribute to knowledge and how this may have the potential for economic return or societal benefits

- A diagrammatic workplan for the proposed project, typically in the form of a Gantt chart, outlining the key steps to be taken and milestones to be reached to realise the project outcomes.

If your study involves the use of animals, please refer to section 4.13 – 4.39 of the [UKRI-BBSRC grants guide](#) for information on how this should be incorporated into your proposal. Similarly, if there are any potential human/clinical aspects, please refer to MRC Guidance on Ethics and Approvals <https://mrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-applicants/5-ethics-and-approvals/>

The Case for Support should **not** include a track record as this information will be captured in the Capability to Deliver document (see below).

References should be included in the page limit and appear in a list at the end of the Case for Support and be linked to relevant text. We strongly encourage references to be given as DOIs to allow additional space for the scientific case. Within the list of references, URL links to relevant publications or online resources are permissible.

Capability to Deliver (maximum of 2 sides of A4)

This should be a narrative explaining the applicants' relevant experience and expertise to demonstrate their eligibility and ability to successfully deliver the proposal. Where a lead applicant lacks a track record in engineering biology, this section should demonstrate how their expertise in an outside discipline offers value in the context of their proposal, and this section should demonstrate the applicants' skills and experience.

All teams should describe the contributions of each individual and the role they will play in delivering the Transition award. Additionally, the current position of each PI and Co-I on the grant should be stated indicating how they meet eligibility criteria as outlined within the [UKRI-BBSRC Grants Guide](#).

CVs are not required. Relevant eligibility and track record information will be captured through the Capability to Delivery document. Please see the Capability to Delivery Guidance for further detailed guidance.

Workplan

Please note that this section has been updated on 13th of September 2021. The guidance has been updated to clarify that applicants must include the workplan in the 8-page Case for Support page limit.

When you access Je-S, the system may suggest that a separate Workplan is required as a mandatory document. In order to satisfy the system requirements, please submit a blank document on Je-S that refers to the Case for Support.

Other Information

Please contact the office via engbio@bbsrc.ukri.org if you have any conflicts of interest to declare as outlined in the [UKRI Guidance on Declarations of Interest](#). Additionally, please contact the office with concerns regarding conflicts for members of the community who may be asked to sit on the review panel.

Although project partners are not required for this call, you should attach Letters of Support for each partner included in the application.

Equipment quotations and facility access forms should only be included where they are necessary as indicated in the [UKRI-BBSRC grants guide](#).

UKRI-BBSRC reserves the right to reject applications that do not include the required attachments or include attachments not specified in this guidance.

Post award

- UKRI partners will decide the final funding value of each grant.
- A sample of successful proposals may be audited.
- Grants will be awarded under specific Terms and Conditions.

Contact

Please provide as much information as possible in your email to ensure a rapid response.

For call-specific queries, please contact: engbio@bbsrc.ukri.org

For Je-S system queries please contact:

- Email: JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk
- Tel: +44 (0) 1793 44 4164