

# Human Functional Genomics Initiative clusters – Webinar – Q&A

26<sup>th</sup> of April 2023.

Version 1.0

- 1. For the Expression of Interest stage, do we need to provide an indicative budget?**
  - *It is not a requirement to provide an indicative or detailed budget at this stage. However, clusters are expected to range from £2 million to no more than £4 million in size over the 4-year fixed period. If you do have an idea of the total budget and you would like feedback from the MRC office over the proposed scale of funding you are welcome to provide this to us at the EOI stage.*
- 2. What is the expectation for how the new CRISPR initiative will be available to the clusters?**
  - *MRC is supporting a new arrayed CRISPR screening laboratory, which will be part of the overall initiative, further details will be announced in due course. The laboratory will be available for screening campaigns for UK researchers, and MRC has secured the use of the laboratory at no-cost to academics, however, use will be dependent on the feasibility of the screen and available timing and capacity at the lab.*
- 3. Can international partners be allocated funding within the UK host organization?**
  - *While this clusters call should be viewed as a UK-centric activity to boost UK capability and capacity in functional genomics, we recognize that research is an international endeavor, Co-investigators based at overseas research organizations can be included in the project team and costed on the grant, the costs going to an overseas organization should usually cover direct costs only and not exceed 30% of the total full economic cost. You should clearly justify why the international expertise enhances the programme and why this expertise is not within the UK. International organizations (academic, industrial, clinical) may also be included as project partners, where either a cash or in-kind contribution is demonstrated. Costs cannot be provided to project partners located in the UK or internationally. Please refer to the MRC guidance for applicants for further specifics. <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/MRC-140223-GuidanceforApplicants-22.4.pdf>*
- 4. Can you clarify the selection procedure for the Expression of Interest stage?**
  - *All expressions of interest received will be evaluated as to whether they align with the call scope, proposals deemed out of scope will not be invited to the full application stage. Should many similar expressions of interest be received, an option will be provided to applicants to share their details, such that similar proposals in development may wish to consider combing their interests into a single full application. It is highly unlikely that two or more clusters with significant overlaps will be supported at the funding stage.*
- 5. Are proposals related to oncology out of scope for the Human Functional Genomics Initiative clusters call?**
  - *Proposals related to oncology are out of scope for this call. However, the use of cancer cells lines in non-oncology projects is permitted, where appropriate. Both MRC and BBSRC support functional genomics research through alternative means including the standard MRC research boards and BBSRC research committees. We encourage you to contact either research council if you wish to explore this further.*
- 6. For example, if we develop a software technology that could be of relevance. We wouldn't want to lead a proposal but would be interested to partner. Is this possible?**
  - *Acting as a co-investigator, collaborator or project partner in this capacity would be deemed appropriate as opposed to leading a project directly and we encourage you to contact any potential collaborators.*
- 7. Is there any indication about what will come after 4 years?**

- *The initiative and clusters call is considered a fairly modest activity for such an important research area and will build the foundations for potential future activities with a view to enabling a range of long-standing sustainable activities in keeping with the UK innovation strategy (2021) and other public sector publications including, UK Life Sciences Vision (2021), Genome UK (2021), MRC Strategic Delivery Plan (2022) and BBSRC Strategic Delivery Plan (2022).*