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Summary

Useful information	
Opportunity Name	Bioinformatics and Biological Resources Fund (24BBR)
Link to Opportunity Guidance (Funding Finder):	https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/bioinformatics-and-biological-resources-fund-24bbr/
Link to Webinar Recording + Slides	<p>The applicant webinar is accessible at the following link:</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zz_CshNzSE4</p> <p>The slides are findable on the Opportunity Guidance linked above under 'Additional Info'.</p>
Opportunity Contacts	<p>For questions related specifically to 24BBR please contact bbr.fund@bbsrc.ukri.org</p> <p>BBSRC aim to respond to emails within five working days.</p>
Helpdesk	<p>Questions regarding the system of TFS should be directed to the helpdesk: support@funding-service.ukri.org</p> <p>TFS Helpdesk: 01793 547490</p> <p>Ensure you reference "24BBR".</p>

Opportunity Q&As

Eligibility, BBSRC Remit, The Funding Service (TFS)

1. Am I eligible to apply?

Standard BBSRC eligibility rules apply to 24BBR. Applicants (Project leads, co-leads or Research co-leads) must hold academic appointments at eligible HEIs or research institutes; industry/companies are not eligible to be applicants but can be involved in proposals as [project partners](#). BBSRC does not fund the industrial collaborating partner. Further information can be found here: [Check if you're eligible for funding – BBSRC – UKRI](#)

2. I am a Research Technical Professional / Research Software Engineer. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. BBSRC recognises the talent for innovation, expert knowledge and technical competence that RTPs possess. Therefore, BBSRC particularly supports the provision of relevant training and upskilling opportunities, beneficial to the success of the proposed project, to be costed in 24BBR applications.

A research technical professional or research software engineer can be listed as a project lead or project co-lead, provided that:

- their appointment is resourced from the central funds of their research organisation at the time of application
- their level of responsibilities and duties is appropriate to a person with substantial research experience
- their contract extends beyond the duration of the project

3. Is my organisation eligible to apply, i.e. is this an open funding opportunity?

24BBR is open to research spanning across BBSRC remit. Before applying for funding, check the [Eligibility of your organisation](#). UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) has introduced new role types for funding opportunities being run on the new UKRI Funding Service. For full details, visit [Eligibility as an individual](#).

4. Is my proposal within the remit of BBSRC?

An overview of BBSRC remit, programmes and priorities can be found here: [Remit, programmes and priorities – BBSRC – UKRI](#)

BBSRC will give priority to fundamental science which:

- addresses important underpinning questions in biology or normal human physiology*, which can advance knowledge and innovation across many sectors, or
- seeks to develop new tools, technologies and approaches that have broad application across bioscience research, for example data rich and systems biology, or
- informs / is informed by research into animal or plant health.

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*BBSRC does not fund research where the primary aim is to understand human disease-specific processes, and/or develop associated interventions

In areas relevant to human health:

MRC will give priority to fundamental science which

- addresses important health questions, or
- is likely to inform research on health or disease, or
- forms part of a multidisciplinary effort / centre of excellence with close links to health research.

[MRC and BBSRC's joint statement on interfaces](#) may be useful for further context.

For advice regarding fit to BBSRC remit / BBR scope specific to your proposal, please contact bbr.fund@bbsrc.ukri.org with a 1-2 page summary of your intended proposal and we will be happy to advise. Please note we aim to respond to queries within 5 working days.

5. Will this opportunity open again in the future and when?

BBR has been run on an annual basis, and while we cannot confirm future funding opportunities at this stage please keep an eye on the Funding Finder or get in touch with any project ideas for a future BBR submission you might want to discuss (bbr.fund@bbsrc.ukri.org).

6. Where are embedded images allowed and in what sections?

Embedded images are allowed in responses to the core questions as appropriate.

- A Gantt chart/diagrammatic workplan is required as an embedded image at the end of the *Approach* section.
- Images are also permitted to be embedded in the *Applicant*, *Team capability to deliver* and *Management strategy* sections of the TFS form.

Please see the relevant TFS form sections for extensive guidance on how to use images in your application (please note that image legends count towards your word limit).

7. Where are attachments allowed and what sections?

Attachments are permitted within the following sections:

- Letters of Support (maximum 10) demonstrating community demand (**mandatory** for 24BBR) in the *Community demand* section.
- Project partners Letters of Support (if applicable) in the *project partners* section.
- Data Management Plan – please use the template supplied on the [Funding Finder](#) under 'Additional info' and upload to the *Data management and sharing* section.

Please see the relevant TFS form sections for extensive guidance on how to use attachments in your application.

8. What are the word limits for each section?

Word limits for each section are visible under 'How to Apply' on the [Funding Finder](#).

9. What is the 'Resubmission Policy'?

The funding opportunity follows the standard UKRI resubmission policy. Any proposal related to a previously unsuccessful grant application must comply with BBSRC's resubmission policy (see [BBSRC policy on resubmissions and revised submissions](#)). Applicants are strongly advised to contact the office prior to submitting an application if they are concerned that their project may be considered a resubmission. Applications that are deemed to constitute uninvited resubmissions will be rejected prior to assessment.\$

10. What is the minimum and maximum time length the award should be? – There is no minimum mandated award duration. Awards can have a duration of up to 5 years.

11. Does the opportunity allow for more than one application from one research organisation?

Yes, but organisations need to be prepared to support all submitted applications if they are funded.

12. Can a Project Lead make multiple applications for one opportunity?

Yes, but they need to be able to justify that they have the capacity to support more than one application and that their time commitment overall on UKRI funded grants does not exceed 100% of their time.

13. My proposal involves partners from multiple institutions. Should I submit a single application or joint applications from multiple institutions?

In contrast to Je-S, the new Funding Service currently does not have the functionality for joint applications, so all institutions must be captured in one single application.

The project lead is responsible for completing the application process on the UKRI Funding Service, but we expect all team members and project partners to contribute to the application. Only the lead research organisation can submit an application to UKRI.

14. Can I involve overseas institutions in my application?

Yes. BBSRC welcomes the involvement of international partners in the research that it funds – however, international partners cannot be listed as applicants (Project Leads, Co-Leads, etc.). International partners cannot receive funding through 24BBR as BBSRC is only able to provide funding to eligible research organisations. Your international partners should be listed in the 'Project Partners' section. The nature of the collaboration and the role of the international partner should be made clear across the 'Vision' and 'Approach' sections.

Further information on eligibility for funding can be found here: [Check if you are eligible for research and innovation funding – UKRI](#)

15. Can I involve industrial partners in my application?

Yes. BBSRC welcomes the involvement of private sector partners in the research that it funds – however, industrial partners cannot be listed as applicants (Project Leads, Co-Leads, etc.). Industrial partners cannot receive funding through BBR, as BBSRC is only able to provide funding to eligible research organisations. Your industrial partners should be listed in the ‘Project Partners’ section. The nature of the collaboration and the role of the industrial partner should be made clear across the ‘Vision’ and ‘Approach’ sections.

Further information on eligibility for funding can be found here: [Check if you are eligible for research and innovation funding – UKRI](#)

16. Can I lead an application as an industrial partner?

No. Standard BBSRC eligibility rules are that applicants (Project leads, co-leads or Research co-leads) must hold academic appointments at eligible HEIs or research institutes; industry/companies are not eligible to be applicants but can be involved in proposals as project partners. BBSRC does not fund the industrial collaborating partner or any costs associated with the collaborator. Further information on eligibility can be found here: [Check if you are eligible for research and innovation funding – UKRI](#)

BBR Scope and 24BBR Plant Health Spotlight

17. I wish to develop a resource with both biological and bioinformatics components, is this allowed?

Yes.

18. Will my proposal be suitable for 24BBR?

The main focus of the proposed resource should be the support of bioscience research, but resources with broader applicability will be considered. Resources with a main focus outside of BBSRC remit will be rejected prior to assessment.

Further information on the MRC-BBSRC remit boundary can be found in our [Joint Statement on MRC-BBSRC Interfaces](#).

Applicants needing further guidance on the suitability of 24BBR proposal are strongly advised to contact the office prior to submission (bbr.fund@bbsrc.ukri.org).

19. My proposal does not fall under the plant health spotlight for 24BBR. Can I still apply?

Yes. While this funding opportunity includes a plant health spotlight, the scope and remit of BBR remains open across BBSRC’s remit. There is no requirement for projects to address the spotlight area, but we would expect relevance to one or more of BBSRC’s world-class ideas and impact themes within our [strategic delivery plan](#).

20. I intend to submit a proposal focussed on plant health for 24BBR but I am not sure if my project fits the plant health spotlight. Please can you advise?

In addition to adhering to the overall BBR scope, resources that want to be considered under the plant health spotlight are expected to:

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- Demonstrate the resource is directly and primarily relevant to the plant health community
- Focus on plant health problems involving pathogens (fungal, oomycete, viral or bacterial) or invertebrate pests (e.g. insects, nematodes, molluscs) as well as insect vectors of plant pathogens.

The final decision whether a project falls within the scope of the plant health spotlight lies with BBSRC.

Applications falling within the Spotlight area are assessed in open competition with other 24BBR proposals, and Spotlight aligned applications will not receive an uplift.

21. Does 24BBR support genome sequencing projects?

Projects primarily focussed on performing genome sequencing are not supported by 24BBR. Sequencing may be performed where this is needed in order to establish a particular resource; for example, the sequencing of gene libraries.

Funding

22. What funding is available, and do you have a rough estimate per award?

Key information regarding what funding is available can be found on the [Funding Finder](#)

Resources vary significantly in terms of scale and scope, so estimates per award are not informative as to a 'typical' resource. Applicants can apply for up to £2m. BBSRC will fund 80% fEC. The total budget of BBR is £7m, with an additional up to £2m available for proposals which qualify for the plant health spotlight.

23. Can we include costs for travel / project meetings / networking activities / community outreach?

Yes.

24. Can I apply for PhD Studentships?

No, BBSRC funding for PhD students or any other type of student may not be included. BBSRC has distinct mechanisms for funding student training.

25. Is it possible to apply for continuation funding of an existing resource previously funded under BBR?

Requests to support existing resources, which were funded previously through BBR or alternative funding sources, are permitted under this funding opportunity: Please see the funding finder listing for further information.

26. Can funds for equipment purchase be requested?

Yes, equipment purchases are permitted as part of this funding opportunity as long as they are directly relevant to the delivery of the proposed resource. There is no defined upper limit on what proportion of the requested cost falls into a particular category within the overall

limit of £2m. Applicants are expected to fully justify the need for any resources that are requested (including equipment).

Further information regarding equipment costs can be found here: [Directly incurred costs – BBSRC – UKRI](#)

Assessment

27. Will I get an uplift as a New Investigator/with an industrial collaborator?

No, these uplifts do not apply in this funding opportunity. These schemes are used in Responsive Mode and can confer an uplift after the ranking of applications. First time Project Leads (PLs) should note that, if successful, being the PL on a grant which includes funding for Postdoctoral Research Assistant (PDRA) staff support costs will subsequently exclude them from being a New Investigator in Responsive Mode.

28. How can I demonstrate community need / demand for my resource?

Letters of support demonstrating community need are **mandatory**, at the time of submission, and proposals submitted without these letters will be rejected prior to assessment. Please see the 'community demand' section under how to apply for further details.

29. Why is there a limit on the number of letters of support demonstrating community demand?

The BBR Fund Panel has frequently commented that it is the content of the letters provided, rather than the sheer number, which demonstrates the value of a proposed resource to the UK bioscience research community. Applicants should submit a representative selection of letters (**no more than 10** as a single PDF) that demonstrate the breadth of the research their resource will enable and comment on the value of the work proposed to the research community.

Letters of support that fail to demonstrate community demand, in particular template letters indicating generic support without identifying a particular usage, are of negligible value for the assessment and should not be submitted. Carefully chosen letters containing relevant evidence of the requirement/ benefit to be gained are of greater value than large numbers of letters.

30. What is the membership of the assessment panel?

Overall assessment will be conducted by a panel of experts covering scientific, managerial, technical and user aspects of resource provision. The 24BBR panel will be published once the assessment is concluded.

31. How long is the assessment process and when will we receive the outcomes of our application?

We aim to hold the assessment panel in July and hope to be able to inform applicants of the outcome by end of August.

Contact

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If your question has not been answered by the information given above, please contact BBSRC staff on bbr.fund@bbsrc.ukri.org and we will do our best to answer your question.