UK Research and Innovation

Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) guidance

Introduction to SAB

All sLoLa projects are required to have an external Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), a group of experts who provide independent advice as a 'critical friend' to your sLoLa team on scientific and technical matters. They can offer support and advice in:

- the strategic direction of your project
- objectives of your project
- horizon scanning
- specialised knowledge to address and solve complex scientific issues
- aligning the project with the latest advancements and standards in the field
- team questions and resources
- project or team management issues
- supporting career development of early career researchers (ECRs) and Postdoctoral Research Assistants/Associates (PDRAs)
- updating on outreach and networking activities
- celebrating and showcasing project milestones

Your SAB should act as you 'critical friend' giving constructive feedback. We would suggest arranging SAB meetings at least once a year to present project development, latest findings and to discuss further actions or any encountered problems.

Participation in the mid-term review and end of project process

The SAB are required to engage in the mid-term review process and will be asked to provide independent comments on the progress of the project and outlook for the remaining time of the award.

As part of the end of project process, the SAB will be encouraged to provide comments on the project, including on the impact and added value of the work.

SAB Size

There is no limit of members on your board, however we would recommend a minimum SAB size of 3 members.

Eligibility of SAB members

SAB members should have:

- The right expertise and experience fitting your project
- A good reputation in the research field
- Committable time to be on your SAB
- Motivation to contribute to your SAB
- Can be from within or outside the UK

SAB members must be independent of both the applicants' academic institutions and the project partners associated with the proposal.

Active collaborations with potential SAB members would be a conflict of interest and are not allowed. However, previous publications or finished collaborations are not considered a conflict of interest.

Including your SAB in your sLoLa application

Letters of support

We don't need letters of support for SAB members. Please include SAB members details in the 'Management strategy' and 'Scientific advisory board (SAB) members' sections as stated on the funding opportunity call page.

Travel costs

SAB members travel costs fall under project-related cost and can therefore be requested as part of your application so long as the costs are justified. This request will be subject to peer review assessment during the assessment process.

Changing SAB membership

The SAB membership can be changed during the course of the project. Please contact the office (bbsrc.lolagrants@bbsrc.ukri.org) to let them know about the change (removal, replacement or recruitment of additional members).