

BBSRC Impact Acceleration Account

Concept and Feasibility Fund

Extended Deadline 12 noon 17th July 2019

Guidance Notes for Applicants

Purpose of Concept and Feasibility Fund

To establish the validity of a concept or technology for exploitation or translational development in collaboration with industry/an external organisation

The Concept and Feasibility scheme is targeted at academics with early stage research that require financial support in making the first steps on the translational pathway.

The research must link with BBSRC funded research projects, with proposals providing the confidence and feasibility necessary to drive an approach or technology through to commercialization and/or to the point where other forms of translational funding are available.

Applications must include collaborations with an industry/external partner organisation who can offer a potential pathway to impact.

Activities may include (but are not limited to):

- Prototype evaluation
- Proof-of-concept studies
- Pump priming of initial trials
- Scoping exercises

The maximum duration of a project is 12 months. The maximum IAA grant contribution will be £20k, up to £25k for exceptional applications. *Please be aware the IAA contribution will cover direct and directly allocated costs, with indirect costs and estates costs covered by the PI's School/Institution.*

The aims of the scheme are:

- To validate the feasibility of early-stage, novel concepts or technologies emerging from BBSRC-linked research
- To propel early-stage research into a competitive and confident position for commercialisation or application to further translational funding schemes
- To form and cement relationships with collaborative partner organisations

Anticipated outcomes:

- An increase in the number of projects linked to the BBSRC research portfolio that have been feasibility tested and are ready to progress further in the translational pathway (e.g. commercialisation, pre-clinical trials, further funding)

- Increased applications and success rates in downstream funding schemes (e.g. BBSRC Industry Partnership award, MRC Developmental Pathway Scheme, Innovate UK).
- An increase in knowledge exchange and formation of substantive partnerships with industry/user organisations

Submitted projects will be assessed by the BBSRC IAA review panel, which is comprised of business engagement specialists, academics and external industry experts from diverse scientific backgrounds. **It is therefore essential that applications are written for a non-specialist audience.**

Projects from early-career researchers and those building new collaborations with external organisations are strongly encouraged.

Eligibility

Applications are only permitted for projects that focus on the translation of knowledge or technology that links to research previously funded by BBSRC. It is understood that multiple funders may have been involved in a body of research, but there must be a demonstrable connection with funding previously awarded by the BBSRC.

Please ensure an NDA is in place before disclosing any unpublished research to industry partners.

If you have any queries regarding user organisation eligibility, please contact Kate Meade (kate.a.meade@manchester.ac.uk).

Funding Arrangements

Funding is intended for those projects where a company/collaborator will contribute to the project either through direct financial contribution and/or the provision of in-kind resources (including, facilities, equipment, consumables and technical expertise). Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to secure such support in order to form a competitive proposal.

Industry partners will be expected to provide a letter of support with clarity on the next step should the project be successful, as well as outlining any financial and in-kind contribution to the project.

The BBSRC IAA panel expects University staff to negotiate with the partner organisation a deal which minimises the support necessary from the BBSRC IAA fund. The value to the partner and the University (in generating research publications, ongoing collaborations, IP etc.) must be taken into account.

Spend Completion Date

Maximum project period is 12 months. The project period runs from 1st September 2019 – 31st August 2020. All project expenditure must be completed by the end date stated in the application form. Any unspent funds will be returned to the Business Engagement Team for reallocation.

Costing & Eligible Costs

Concept and Feasibility studies are expected to be costed on a full Economic Costing basis. The BBSRC will provide funding for directly incurred and directly allocated costs. **Indirect costs will be covered by the PI's School/Institution.**

All costs must be entered into a Project Budget Sheet to accompany the application. The Project Budget Sheet must not be shared with collaborating parties.

Eligible costs include:

Directly Incurred: staff costs
Equipment and consumables
Travel and subsistence
Training and development

Directly Allocated: PI time

BBSRC IAA projects are exempt from the minimum PI contribution of 20%

The maximum IAA contribution will be £20K, up to £25K for exceptional applications.

Project Budget: Project costs must be discussed with RSMs and entered into the budget page of the application form.

Total Project Costs: These are those costs directly associated with the project, in the eligible cost headings outlined above. These should include all staff costs, travel and subsistence and consumables.

Company Contributions: These are the direct (invoiceable) company contributions to the total project.

In-kind Costs: These may include staff time, access to equipment or facilities, provision of consumables.

Assessment of applications

Applications will be assessed by the University's BBSRC IAA panel. Applicants should remember to write their proposals for a non-specialist audience.

Assessment will take into account:

- The benefits to the partner, the University, and the staff involved
- The likelihood that the project plans will deliver the expected concept validation, outputs and benefits
- Quality and quantity of the knowledge gained
- The level and quality of collaboration with the external organisation
- The potential for outputs to support further translational development through routes such as follow-on funding or external investment/collaborations
- The potential for the project to support further collaboration with external organisations beyond the project timespan.

Application Submission

The deadline for submissions is **12 noon on 17th July 2019.**

Please note that applications will be evaluated by the BE team for content and eligibility before being sent to the IAA Panel for consideration. **You are strongly advised to contact Kate Meade, for advice and guidance at least one month prior to submitting your application:**

Kate Meade
0161 306 5418

Business Engagement Officer
kate.a.meade@manchester.ac.uk

Once signed by Head of School/Division and collaborating company (ies), completed applications should be submitted with the project budget sheet and letter(s) of support.

Letters of support must outline any financial and in-kind contribution and provide details of next steps for collaboration should the project be successful, as well as outlining any financial and in-kind contribution to the project.

Electronic submissions are acceptable for application deadline purposes but a signed paper application and letter(s) of support should follow (signed and dated by all partners) no later than seven days after the deadline date.