

EPSRC IAA Proof of Concept Scheme Guidance Notes for Applicants

Purpose of the Proof of Concept Scheme

Support for the very early stage of transforming research outputs into commercial opportunities

EPSRC research can remain unexploited because a greater evidential base is required before companies or academics are able to commit to its further progress and application. Therefore, funding is available to support the development of an early evaluation prototype or 'demonstrator', initial trials in a particular field, or 'scoping exercises'. Such activities demonstrate the potential of the research and/or the 'commercial capability' of the academics involved.

The aims of the scheme are:

- To support the development of the evidential based required to enable the University or user organisations to commit to application/exploitation.
- To enable the University and user-organisations to develop the necessary relationships that will deliver successful exploitation/application.
- To enable partners to plan longer term projects

Eligibility

Applications are only permitted for projects focused on the exploitation / application of knowledge or technology generated through EPSRC-funded research.

Eligible user organisations are UK-based businesses (or UK sites of international businesses), UK charities, and UK public sector organisations such as the NHS. Non-UK based businesses may be eligible where there is demonstrable evidence of the intention for inward investment during or beyond the lifetime of the project (e.g. establishing a UK site, job creation). If you have any queries regarding user organisation eligibility, please contact the Knowledge Exchange Team.

Funding Arrangements

Funding is intended for those projects where a company will contribute actively to the project through the direct provision of resources (including finance, facilities, equipment, consumables and technical expertise).

The IAA Knowledge Exchange Schemes Panel expects University staff to negotiate with the partner organisation a deal which minimises the support necessary from the IAA. The value to the partner and the University (in generating research publications, ongoing collaborations, IP etc.) must be considered.

Spend Completion Date

The EPSRC IAA award to the University ends on 31st March 2021 and no extensions will be permitted. Therefore, all IAA project spend must be completed by this date.

Completing the application form

The Knowledge Exchange Team provide active support for the development of EPSRC IAA submissions. Prior to submitting an application, academics are strongly advised to contact a member of the KE Team for support, and at least 1 month before the call closing date.

Section word limits are strict, and should not be exceeded. If section word limits are surpassed by more than 10%, the application will be automatically rejected.

Costing and eligible costs

Proof of Concept projects are expected to be costed on a full Economic Costing basis. EPSRC IAA funding can be used to cover the following:

- Directly Incurred:** PDRA staff costs
Equipment and Consumables (maximum £10k)
Travel and subsistence (maximum £5k),
PDRA training and development (maximum £2k)
Other costs as required (subject to approval from KE Team)
- Directly Allocated:** Investigator time (maximum 20%)
Technician time (maximum 30%)

All Estates, Technician IS and Indirect costs are ineligible, and must be allocated as Department Sustainability.

A direct (invoiceable) company contribution is mandatory and is expected to be a minimum of 20% of the IAA grant requested, although the University's IAA Knowledge Exchange Schemes Panel will consider cases where there is clear justification for reduced / no direct contribution. The maximum IAA grant contribution will be £25k.

pFACT costing report: EPSRC should be selected as the 'funder' with 100% fECd income template. This will ensure that inflation costs are included. To produce a "submission report" please use 'submission reports' 'project proposal details' and select 'income template rules'.

Total Project Costs: These are those costs directly associated with project, in the eligible cost headings outlined above. These should include all staff costs, estates, indirect costs, technician IS, 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, provision of consumables.

Assessment of applications

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

Assessment will consider:

- The benefits to the partner, the university, and the staff involved
- The likelihood that the project plans will deliver the expected outputs and benefits
- The contribution the University is expected to make relative to the partner (gearing)

Application Submission

Please note that applications will be evaluated by the IAA team for content and eligibility before being sent to the IAA KE Schemes Panel for consideration. **You are strongly advised to contact a member of the KE team (0161 306 6812), for advice and guidance at least one month prior to submitting your application:**

KE Team

Caroline Stanton
Tel: 0161 306 6814

Knowledge Exchange Manager
Email: Caroline.Stanton@manchester.ac.uk

Mark Godber
Tel: 0161 306 6813

Knowledge Exchange Manager
Email: Mark.Godber@manchester.ac.uk

All projects should be costed (fEC) and input onto the Research Management System (RMS) by your Department Research Support Hub, prior to completion of the IAA application.

Completed applications should be submitted to:

EPSRC IAA
Knowledge Exchange Team
University of Manchester
B16 Sackville Street Building
Sackville Street
Manchester M13 9PL
Email: ke@manchester.ac.uk

Signed electronic submissions are acceptable, in PDF format. A Research Proposal Approval form (together with a copy of the pFACT costing report), signed and authorised by your Department, should be submitted with the application to confirm that the proposal is supported by your Department and is in line with Department policy for the costing of collaborative research projects. A signed letter of support from the collaborating partner should also be submitted with the application documents to confirm the company contribution.

Further information regarding the EPSRC Impact Acceleration Account can be found at <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/collaborate/business-engagement/knowledge-exchange/collaboration-funding/epsrc/>