

NERC IAA Relationship Incubator Scheme Guidance Notes for Applicants

Purpose of the Relationship Incubator Scheme

Engaging with businesses and business communities to sow the seeds of new collaboration and more strategic engagement

The Relationship Incubator Scheme aims to overcome the ‘market understanding – technology awareness’ and relationship barriers by supporting the secondment-out of academics to user organisation(s) to explore the application and exploitation opportunities for their NERC research, or enabling the secondment-in of users to explore opportunities offered by an identified range of NERC research. It is expected that a Relationship Incubator project will be part-time, though each case will be considered on its merits. The maximum duration of an Relationship Incubator project will be up to 12 months.

The aims of the scheme are:

- To encourage the transfer to external organisations of knowledge gained through University NERC-funded research
- To enhance the external links of the researcher, research group or school
- To provide the secondee with experience of working in an industrial environment (or with experience of working in an academic environment, where this is a secondment-in).

Eligibility

Applications are only permitted for projects focused on the exploitation / application of knowledge or technology generated through NERC-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; Borough or City Councils; Schools or Local Education Authorities. If you have any queries regarding user organisation eligibility, please contact the KE team.

Funding Arrangements

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

The Knowledge Exchange Team 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 taken into account.

Spend Completion Date

The NERC IAA award to the University ends on 31 March 2013 and no extensions will be permitted. Therefore all IAA project spend must be completed by this date.

Costing and eligible costs

Relationship incubators are expected to be costed on a full Economic Costing basis. The NERC IAA will provide funding at up to 80% of the total project costs.

Eligible costs include:

- Directly Incurred:** staff costs (including indirect costs and estates), equipment and consumables (maximum £1.5k), travel and subsistence (maximum £1k), training and development (maximum £1k) and in some cases (for example where market research is to be commissioned), the fees of an external supplier
- Directly Allocated:** maximum PI time 10% (including indirect costs and estates)

As these projects tend to be at an early stage, a direct (invoiceable) company contribution is not mandatory. The maximum IAA grant contribution will be £10k.

Secondments in

Where the secondment is a secondment-in of a member of staff from a user organisation, the user organisation will be expected to cover the staff costs of their employee. Eligible costs for the IAA funds will be those such as provision of office and lab space for the secondee; staff time of University employees allocated to support the secondment.

Secondments out

Where the secondment is a secondment-out of a member of University staff, eligible costs for the IAA funds will include secondee staff costs (including between 50% - 100% indirect costs and estates), travel and subsistence (up to £1k) and small budgets for equipment and consumables (up to £1.5k).

- pFACT costing report:** NERC 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 the project, in the eligible cost headings outlined above. These should include all staff costs, estates, indirect 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, provision of consumables.

Application Submission

Completed applications should be submitted to: NERC IAA
Knowledge Exchange Team
University of Manchester
B13 Sackville Building
Manchester M13 9PL
Email: ke@manchester.ac.uk

Electronic submissions are acceptable for application deadline purposes but a signed paper application should follow (signed and dated by all partners) no later than two days after the submission date. A Research Proposal Approval form (together with a copy of the pFACT costing report), signed and authorised by your School, should be submitted with the application to confirm that the proposal is supported by your School and is in line with School policy for the costing of collaborative research projects.