

NERC IAA Concept and Feasibility Study Scheme Guidance Notes for Applicants

Purpose of the Concept and Feasibility Study Scheme

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

NERC research can remain unexploited because a greater evidential base is required before companies or academics are able to commit to its further development 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 NERC-funded research.

Eligible user-organisations are: UK-based businesses (or UK sites of international businesses); UK-based 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 31st March 2015 and no extensions will be permitted. Therefore all IAA project spend must be completed by this date.

Costing and eligible costs

Concept and Feasibility Studies 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)

Directly Allocated: maximum PI time 10% (including indirect costs and estates)

The maximum IAA grant contribution will be £30k.

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

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. 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 NERC Impact Acceleration Account can be found at www.manchester.ac.uk/business/ke/