

UoM/MRC Confidence in Concept

2020 Call, guidance and timelines

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Background

- Part of the Biomedical Catalyst for translational research by Medical Research Council (MRC) and Innovate UK
- Annual awards of £250k-£900k to universities
- Funding for proof-of-concept and feasibility studies leading to applications for follow-on funding

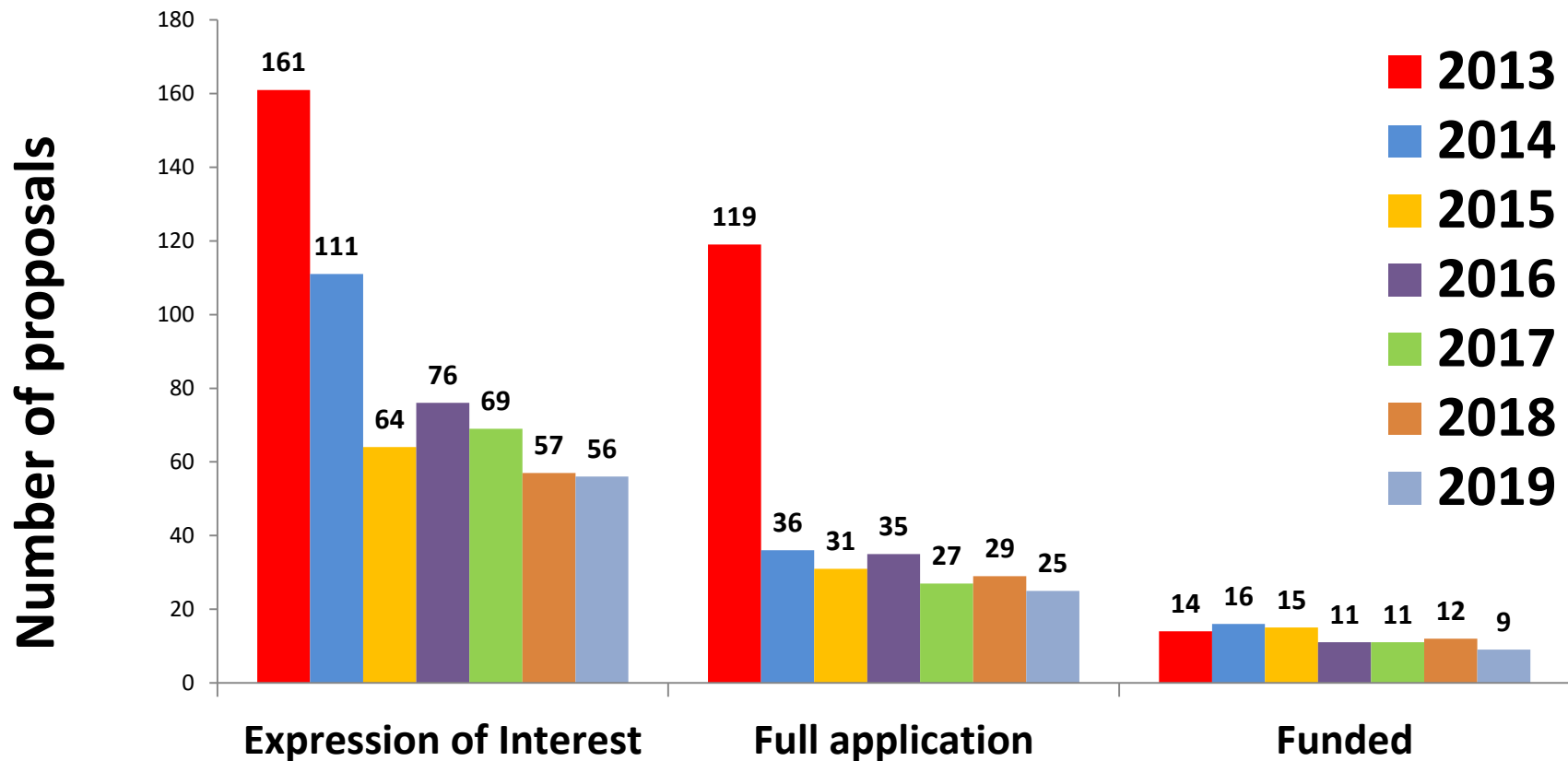
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CiC at the University of Manchester

- Eight rounds of funding since 2013
- Internal UoM CiC8 call for 2020 is now open
- We have secured between £500k and £750k of MRC funding per round; additional resources by the University
- In recent years:
 - Therapeutics and Diagnostics call themes
 - Digital health; Advanced/biomaterials in medicine
 - Devices included in the above
- Supported so far 89 translational research projects
- Funding typically £40-75k (directly incurred) over 6-12 months

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Success rates for previous calls at UoM



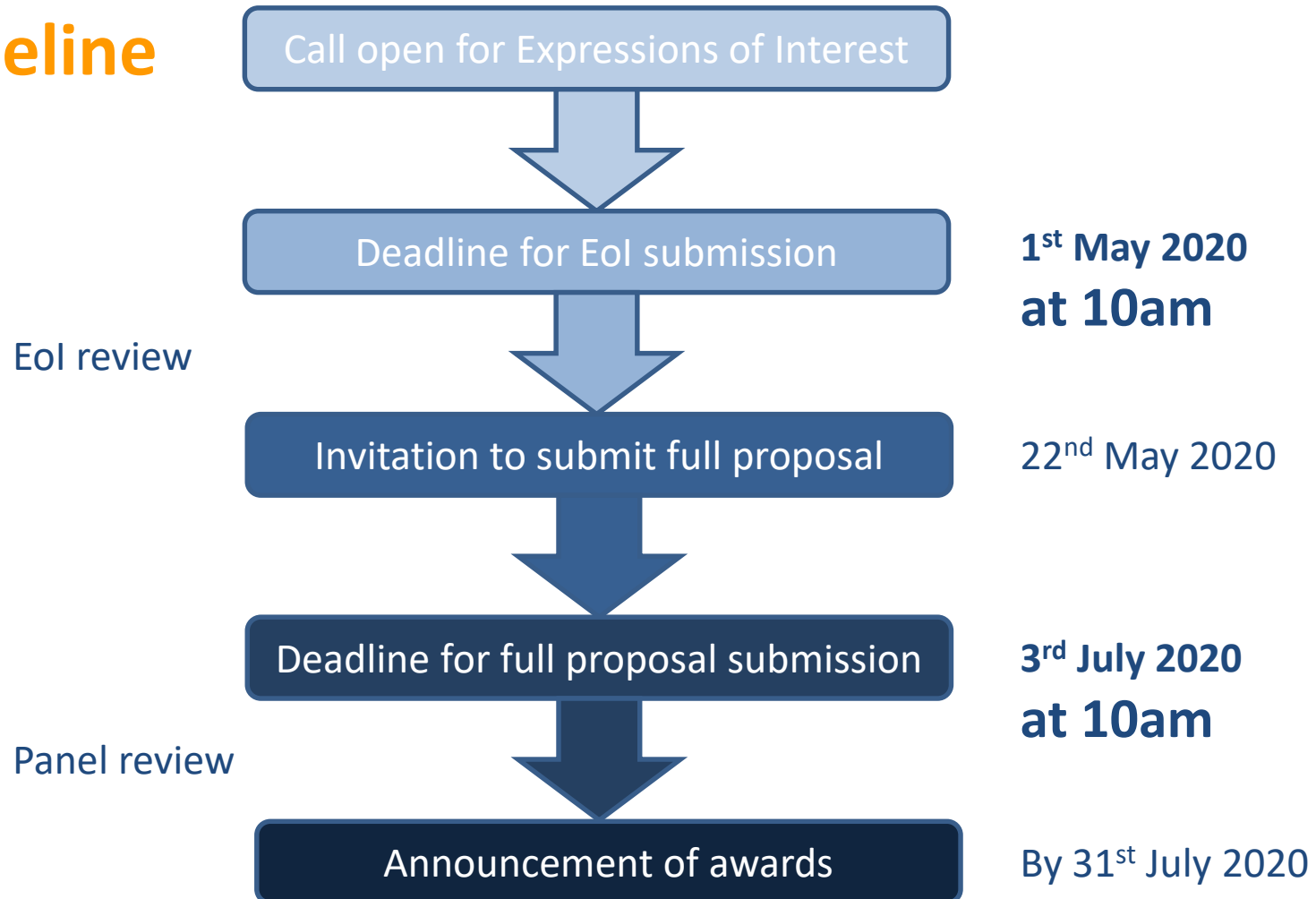
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Overview of 2020 call

- Projects should be ~6-12 months duration and max £75k (directly incurred)
- General call but with focus on 4 areas:
 - **Development of diagnostics through biomarker development and validation across a range of diseases.**
 - **Identification and validation of new therapeutic approaches for disease-relevant pathways in preclinical models and early phase clinical studies**
 - **Utilisation of digital healthcare technologies**
 - **Advanced/biomaterials in medicine**
- Includes medical device development, underpinning technologies and methodology development
- Focus on specific disease or patient population

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Timeline



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What is needed for the Eol submission?

- Complete a 2-page Expression of Interest (Eol) proforma
- The proforma is on p. 3 of the CiC2020 call guideline
- NO COSTINGS ARE REQUIRED – only an estimate of the costs
- We fund 100% directly incurred research costs; typical awards £50k - £75k; max award is £75k
- Non-eligible costs: overheads, conference attendance, studentships, IP protection and industrial partner costs
- Sub-contracted research work can be included (e.g. lab work)
- NO SIGNATURES OR AUTHORISATIONS are required
- Eol proposal submission via email to sft@manchester.ac.uk by **10am on Friday 1st May**

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Guidance for applicants

- Funding is to assess viability of an approach before applying for more substantive translational funding (e.g. MRC DPFS)
- Funding is not for complete projects but is for key experiments to overcome a hurdle in the research
- Academic-industry interactions are encouraged
- Cross-faculty collaborations welcome
- Investigators are advised to seek clinician input on medical aspects of the project (e.g. unmet medical need)

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Key factors for a competitive proposal

- Clear unmet medical need in a defined patient population
- Novel and compelling scientific hypothesis
- Proposal clearly describes the “killer experiments” that are required before applying for further funding
- “Line of sight” for how translational research could be progressed to patients
- Innovative approach differentiated from other approaches in development translating into clear patient benefit – competitive advantage
- Clear strategy for follow-on funding

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Common pitfalls of proposals

- Project too early for CiC
- Investigative studies without a clear path to patients
- Lack of detail on the developmental pathway to the intended end product such as a medical device
- Approaches that have been tried and tested before
- Lack of novelty and/or differentiation from other approaches in development – i.e. lack of competitive advantage
- Approaches that are unlikely to be adopted into clinical practice e.g. high cost, potential safety risks

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Good to know: we often experience delays with CiC project start and progress

- Issues with external partners/providers
- Getting right people into posts
- Issues with sub-contracts and job contracts
- Patient/participant recruitment
- Mandatory approvals and licences
- Methodological issues – when things don't go to plan

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Be prepared to:

- Plan your project milestones and outputs
- Draw a realistic time plan
- Allow time for mandatory approvals and setting up contracts
- Let CiC programme team know if you experience problems – we may be able to help
- Provide an interim report, a final report, and regular updates from start until 5 years after your project has been completed

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Additional support available

- Strategic Funding Team

Anu Suokas anu.suokas@manchester.ac.uk

- CiC Academic Lead

Sam Butterworth sam.butterworth@manchester.ac.uk

- [Business Engagement](#)

Effa-Bassey Ettah, Cristina Melero, Dan Morley, Simone Wilkes

- [UMI3 > Manchester Innovation Factory](#)

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Contacts

For advice about proposals and submission process:

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For advice about the submissions process:

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