

UKRI IAA Advance Fund Scheme

Guide for Applicants

About IAA Advance Fund

Flexible support for translation of university research within external organisations for commercial or societal benefit

The Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) Advance scheme provides flexible support for translational research projects between The University of Manchester and external organisations that focus on the commercialisation and/or development and adoption of university research. The scheme is not limited to secondments, but encourages career development for the researcher through commercial and sector exposure within the partner organisation.

The aims of the scheme are:

To support the development of the evidential base required to enable the University or user organisations to commit to application/exploitation.

- To encourage the transfer of knowledge, skills and expertise between academia and external businesses/organisations
- To enhance the external links of the academic, researcher, research group or department and build long lasting relationships with external stakeholders
- To provide the researcher with experience and knowledge of working within a non-academic environment

Funding for Advance Fund projects is available via the AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, and STFC IAA's. We encourage you to apply for co-funding where appropriate for multidisciplinary projects.

About Your Project

Eligibility:

- IAA projects are no longer required to be directly related to previous funded research, but must fall within the remit of the relevant Research Council(s): [AHRC](#), [BBSRC](#), [EPSRC](#), [ESRC](#), [MRC](#) or [STFC](#)
- We welcome applications from early career academics. Fellows may be eligible to apply as PI, please check with your Research Services Team.
- PDRAs are expected to spend a minimum of 50% of the overall project length working with the project partner. Where this is not possible, projects must demonstrate sufficient engagement to support commercialisation and/or translational development and adoption, whilst also providing an external learning opportunity for the PDRA.
- Eligible partner organisations:
 - UK-based businesses, or UK sites of international businesses
 - UK charities
 - 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)

Contact the [Knowledge Exchange Partnerships team](#) if you have any queries about eligibility

Secondment Direction (where applicable): IAA Advance secondments can be inward (an employee of the external partner seconded to the University of Manchester) and/or outward (a University of Manchester researcher seconded to the partner organisation), providing the secondment supports the commercialisation and/or translational development and adoption of University of Manchester research. Secondtees will maintain the terms and conditions (including annual leave) of their own organisation.

Duration: IAA Advance Fund projects will typically run for 12 months in duration and can be full-time or part-time, though each case will be considered on its merits.

Funding Criteria: The partner organisation must contribute actively to the project through the provision of direct and in-kind resources (including finance, facilities, equipment, consumables and technical expertise). You are expected to negotiate a deal which minimises the support necessary from the IAA, and considers the value to the University and partner.

Dates: IAA awards to the University end on 31 March 2027 and no extensions will be permitted. All IAA project spend must be completed by this date. **Project Costs after IAA deadline cannot be covered by the IAA and must be covered by the partner organisation.**

About Your Application

Completing the Application Form via **Flexigrant®**:

The Knowledge Exchange Partnerships team can provide active support for your submission. You are strongly advised to [contact us](#) for support before applying, and at least 1 month before the call.

The Advance Fund is now administered via the **University of Manchester's Flexigrant® portal**. Access further scheme details and start your [Advance Fund application on Flexigrant®](#). You will need to create an account if you haven't used this portal before – you will be prompted to do so on the portal.

- Word limits are strictly applied. If you exceed a section limit, your application may be rejected.
- Applications are anonymised for assessment. **Please include the names of academic project partners on the third page and signature page only.** Use the terms "PI", "Co-I" or "PDRA" throughout the rest of the application. Do not include hyperlinks to sites where you may be identified, such as grant awards and research profiles.
- Remember to write your proposal for a non-specialist audience. For specific guidance on completing the different sections of the form, please refer to the [IAA Handbook](#).

Costing:

Eligible Costs: Advance Fund projects are expected to be costed on a full Economic Costing (fEC) basis. IAA funding can be used to cover the following:

Cost Type	Allowable Costs
Directly Incurred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDRA costs • Equipment and Consumables (max. £10K each, with justification) • Travel and Subsistence (max. £5K, with justification) • PDRA training and development (max. £2K, with justification) • Other costs as required, subject to approval from KEP team, with justification
Directly Allocated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigator time (minimum 5%, maximum 20%) • Technician time (maximum 30%, with justification)

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

Project cost headings that require justification must be included within the budget page at the point of submission. If costs are included without justification, justification will be requested as part of a conditional approval, or removed during the grant offer/award process.

Term	Description
BlackDackel Costing Report:	The PI and any Co-I's must be named on the costing. Select appropriate research council as 'funder' and use the ' Standard Template 100% FEC '. The UoM IAA Award is awarded without UKRI Indexation, therefore this template will ensure inflation costs are included, and will not be double counted
Total Project Costs:	The costs directly associated with the project, in the eligible cost headings (above). These include all staff costs, estates, indirect costs, technician IS, travel and subsistence, and consumables
Partner Contributions:	The direct (invoiceable) partner contributions to the total project
In-Kind Costs:	These may include the partner's staff time, access to equipment, provision of consumables, explained within a supporting letter.

For inward secondments, the IAA funds may be used to support reasonable University of Manchester support costs, e.g. academic or PDRA time, equipment access and consumables (purchased through the University). The external partner is expected to fund the secondee's salary and make a direct and in-kind financial contribution to the project.

A direct (invoiceable) partner contribution is mandatory. The University's IAA panel will consider cases where there is justification for a reduced/no direct contribution. **The maximum contribution from the IAA Advance Fund scheme is £60K towards the project costs.**

Assessment

Applications will be anonymised and assessed by the University's IAA Knowledge Exchange Schemes Panel. Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

1. Potential for impact
2. Quality of the work plan
3. Demonstrable potential for follow-on activity
4. Value for money
5. The nature of the secondment (if applicable) - ideally, the secondee should be based at the partner organisation and well supported

The panel will consider:

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

Submitting Your Application

Contact the [Knowledge Exchange Partnerships Team](#) at least one month prior to submitting your application.

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

Completed applications are submitted via email to: kepartnerships@manchester.ac.uk

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Manchester aims to have an inclusive environment for all staff and students, by identifying and removing barriers in our practices. As part of UKRI's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion initiative, completing the monitoring form will help us to achieve this, and also help us to meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010. While it is voluntary to disclose this information, doing so will enable us to better understand the composition of our workforce/student body and examine our practices fully. The ED&I survey is anonymous and can be accessed on the following link: [IAA Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Survey](#)

Data we want to capture includes Gender, Age range, Ethnicity, Disability Status and Sexual orientation. Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence, and all data disclosed will comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. All data is handled in accordance with University Policy and more details can be seen [here](#).

To find out more about the work The University of Manchester is doing to meet the requirements of the Equality Act, please contact equalityanddiversity@manchester.ac.uk or visit the [equality and diversity pages on Staffnet](#).

Application Checklist

- ✓ Signed Application Form in PDF format

- ✓ Signed letter of support from the collaborating partner, confirming their direct and in-kind contribution
- ✓ Evidence of approval authorised by your Head of Department (e.g. a screenshot of the approval on PURE), to confirm that the proposal is supported by your Department and is in line with Department policy for the costing of collaborative research projects
- ✓ fEC BlackDackel Costing
- ✓ We strongly encourage you to complete the [research risk profiler tool](#)
- ✓ Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Survey

Further Information

[FAQs](#)

[IAA Handbook](#)