

2019 Bioinformatics and Biological Resources Fund – Frequently Asked Questions

1. My proposal involves partners from multiple institutions. Should I submit a single application or joint applications from multiple institutions?

Either approach is acceptable.

2. What is the scale of resources that can be requested?

Total requested costs should not exceed £2M (100% FEC value). Funding is available for up to 5 years.

3. How can I demonstrate community need / demand for my resource?

Letters of support demonstrating community need are mandatory, at the time of submission, and proposals submitted without these letters will be rejected prior to assessment.

Letters demonstrating community need should give an indication of community demand for the resource in question, demonstrating the breadth of research relevant to BBSRCs remit that the resource would underpin, and be representative of the utility of the resource to the research community it will serve. Other indicators might include:

- Usage statistics for existing resources
- Feedback from user surveys
- Evidence of user engagement/consultation in the development of the project objectives
- Estimated number of researchers who might engage with the new resource
- Growth of relevant public datasets in repositories (either public or private)

A maximum of 10 letters of support demonstrating community demand should be provided.

4. Why is there a limit on the number of letters of support demonstrating need?

The BBR Fund Panel has frequently commented that it is the content of the letters provided, rather than the sheer number, which demonstrates the value of a proposed resource to the UK bioscience research community. Applicants should submit a representative selection of letters that demonstrate the breadth of the research their resource will enable and comment on the value of the work proposed to the research community.

Carefully chosen letters containing relevant evidence of the requirement/ benefit to be gained, are of greater value than large numbers of letters.

5. I wish to develop a resource with both biological and bioinformatics components, is this allowed?

Yes.

6. Does the BBR Fund support genome sequencing projects?

Genome sequencing projects are not supported by the fund. Sequencing may be performed where this is needed in order to establish a particular resource; for example, the sequencing of gene libraries.

7. Is it possible to apply for continuation funding of an existing resource previously funded under the BBR Fund?

Requests to support existing resources, which were funded previously through BBR or alternative funding sources, are permitted under this call provided a number of key points are addressed in the proposal:

- Project focus is on further development and/or essential maintenance to safeguard functionality of the resource
- Ongoing UK bioscience community need is established, evidenced by usage data included in the proposal – with parties providing letters of support encouraged to include similar supporting data where appropriate. Some examples data types include:
 - Access requests from independent users/ sites
 - Citations or acknowledgements
 - Other public resources providing links to the resource
 - New major acquisitions captured by the resource
- Does the facility continue to support a growing field of bioscience, what is the anticipated growth and does the proposal adequately accommodate this?
- Evidence is provided as to whether the resource has achieved the level of engagement it originally anticipated, and consideration is given how the additional investment would change this.
- Consideration of the long-term sustainability of the resource beyond BBSRC funding, as well as the true cost of running and maintaining the resource in question. The proposal should include:
 - Cost recovery plans, where appropriate, or an explanation why not if not viable
 - Details for alternative support plans, aside from BBSRC funding
 - Clear arguments as to why BBSRC should support the resource now, if other cost recovery and support plans are deemed unsuitable

8. I previously submitted a grant application that was unsuccessful. Can I submit the proposal to the BBR Fund?

Any proposal related to a previously unsuccessful grant application must comply with BBSRC's resubmission policy (see [BBSRC Grants Guide](#)). Applicants are advised to contact the office prior to submitting an application if they are concerned that their project may be considered a resubmission. Applications that are deemed to constitute uninvited resubmissions will be rejected prior to assessment.

9. My proposal has relevance to other Research Council's scientific remit. Will it be suitable for the BBR Fund?

The main focus of the proposed resource should be the support of bioscience research, but resources with broader applicability will be considered. Resources with a main focus outside of BBSRC remit will be rejected prior to assessment. Applicants needing further guidance on the suitability of a proposal for the BBR Fund are strongly advised to contact the office prior to submission (bbr.fund@bbsrc.ukri.org).

10. What is the membership of the assessment panel?

Overall assessment will be conducted by a panel of experts covering scientific, managerial, technical and user aspects of resource provision. The 2019 panel will be published once the assessment is concluded.

11. When is the outcome of the call likely to be known?

We are unable to give a precise date by which outcomes will be announced, but it is anticipated that we will be able to notify applicants by the end of April 2020.

September 2019