BBSRC Follow-on Funding Guidance Notes

1. Background

One of the mechanisms by which BBSRC will meet its commitment to ensuring its research investments deliver impact is by supporting knowledge exchange and commercialisation. BBSRC has a responsibility to ensure the widest benefit to society and the economy through the effective application of the excellent research and capabilities in which it invests. Such application may lead to direct financial impact through commercialisation or, more commonly, through the progressing of research outcomes to deliver wider benefit in a range of different areas of society and the economy.

1.1 Aims

The Aims of Follow-on Funding (FoF) are to:

- increase and accelerate the uptake and practical application of past Research Council funded research outputs to deliver benefit and impact;
- enable researchers to further develop their understanding of potential routes to impact, including identifying opportunities, key stakeholders and enablers;
- support translation activities, including collaborative projects with business and other users;

The Call is designed to be flexible to encourage applicants to be innovative in their approach to accelerating the uptake of research by users through translational, knowledge exchange and commercialisation activities.

Applications to this Call should have a primary focus on the translation of research and / or knowledge, and the following are ineligible:

- Projects focused solely on delivering training;
- Projects which only involve / engage the academic community or between the research base and the general public;
- New research.

2. Follow-on Funding

BBSRC's FoF supports the translation of research funded by the Council into practical application, including commercialisation. The aim of the programme is to help researchers maximise the societal and economic benefits of their research. The FoF is a proof-of-concept programme to support bioscience innovation and provide funding where further work on an idea will take it through to a stage at which the route to application is clear, which may include a spin-out, licensing opportunity or the creation of a social enterprise. The programme enables researchers to conduct activities essential to preparing a robust business plan and to secure, where appropriate, further funding and support to progress the project.

The FoF aims to bridge the funding gap between BBSRC-funded research and the point at which other non-BBSRC funding becomes available. By supporting early-stage projects, it also seeks to reduce the risk for future investors. The FoF should not duplicate other sources of public and private funding.

2.1 Project scale and duration

BBSRC currently supports two types of award through the FoF programme:

- Standard FoF awards: to enable researchers with a sound understanding of the market opportunity of their intellectual assets to execute a defined programme of work up to two years in length that has clearly defined complementary technical and business plan development objectives
    - 12-24 months
    - Up to £250k 100% FEC (supported at 80%FEC)

- Super FoF awards: similar to standard awards, but providing a greater level of investment by BBSRC. The difference to a Standard FoF project is due to the higher level of requested funding, these applications are peer reviewed for further assurance before being assessed by the FoF Committee
    - 12-24 months
    - Up to £800k 100% FEC (supported at 80%FEC)

2.2 Eligibility and scope

In addition to fulfilling the standard BBSRC eligibility criteria, see BBSRC Grants Guide, projects considered through this programme must draw substantially on current or previous BBSRC supported research and enable research outputs to be further developed into practical application to deliver benefit and impact.

Proposed applications are not anticipated to extend research grant funding or to be applied research for commercial partners.

Follow-on Fund grant applications must demonstrate that the:

- project is based on a sound understanding of the market need and opportunity that the proposed product, service or technology aims to satisfy;
- proposed work programme is robust and designed to optimise the commercial and societal benefit derived from the grant;
- proposal has a substantial link to previous BBSRC funding.

2.3 Working with business and other users

Applications that are collaborations with business and other users are welcomed, particularly where support is leveraged, as cash or in-kind. Further details on working with business can be found via BBSRC Grants Guide. Detail regarding the collaboration will be required, with section 2.13 of the BBSRC Grants Guide providing further information.

Collaborative agreements must be put in place to enable all parties to better understand their roles on the grant and to clarify the IP rights (IPR) position. BBSRC does not need to see these but applicants are advised to carefully consider these arrangements and discuss and agree them where necessary with project partners in developing the grant proposal, in order to protect their best interests. University and business collaboration support tools including the Lambert toolkit can be accessed via the Intellectual Property Office. Applicants are also strongly advised to contact their Technology Transfer Office (or equivalent) for advice and support.

BBSRC will make awards on the understanding that the project partner will commit the resources to the project as described in their Letter of Support. Where such commitment cannot be fulfilled BBSRC expects that equivalent support and resources will be found in the duration of the project.

You may also wish to refer to the FoF letters of support guidance document available on the [FoF](#) [webpage](#).

3. How to apply

Guidance on completing the full proposal submission can be found on the Je-S Website. For any Je- S related queries, please refer to the Je-S Handbook, or contact the Je-S helpdesk:

Email:JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org

Phone: +44 (0) 1793 444164

All attachments must be completed using standard font and margin sizes. The sections of the form not mentioned below should be completed in accordance with standard practice when applying for BBSRC grants, further details can be found via the BBSRC Grants Guide. Incomplete applications may be withdrawn from consideration.

Submit your proposal through the Research Councils' Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system by **4pm on 7 October 2020**. Late applications will not be accepted.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE APPLICATION FORM

Please note that in addition to typing directly into the free text boxes on the application form, you can copy and paste text from word documents. You should ensure that you take into account any character length restrictions.

The sections of the form not mentioned below should be completed in accordance with standard practice when applying for BBSRC grants, further details can be found via the BBSRC Grants Guide.

Applicants should select the following from the Je-S menus:

1. Log in the Joint Electronic System(Je-S)
2. Select 'New document' from the functions menu
3. Select Council: 'BBSRC'
4. Select Document Type: 'Standard Proposal'
5. Select Scheme - Follow on Fund or Super Follow on Fund
6. Select Call - 20FOF2 (for Standard Follow-on Fund) or 20SFOF2 Full (for Super Follow- on Fund)
7. Click Create Document and follow the on-screen instructions to complete the form.

Applicants are required to complete the proposal *pro forma* in Je-S and the following attachments as appropriate:

- Case for Support
- Gantt Chart
- CV
- Justification of Resources
- Letters of Support – see further guidance below
- Other Documents including, where appropriate, a market assessment report

Applications should be prepared and submitted by the lead research organisation (RO), but should be co-created with input from all investigators and project partners, and should represent the proposed work of the entire consortia.

Applications should largely be completed in the normal way, following the guidance in Annex 1 and the Je-S Handbook.

3.1 Confidentiality and Disclosure

BBSRC takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the contents of applications for FoF are treated as confidential.

Applicants must ensure that the title and summary of the proposed project are worded in such a way as to protect commercially confidential or sensitive areas, as project summaries and personal data from the first page of successful applications will normally be transferred to publicly available databases. The following details will be transferred for all funded projects:

- title and project summary
- institution
- name(s) of applicant(s)
- name of any project partners
- the value of the award
- start and end dates and duration of the award

BBSRC must be notified in writing at the application stage if you do not wish personal data or information that could affect Intellectual Property Rights to be transferred to the databases.

Applicants must abide by the principles of good scientific practice.

3.2 Data Protection

Grants submitted via Je-S are done so under their Terms and Conditions.

3.3 Conditions of Award

Unless superseded by the call conditions, grants will be awarded under standard UKRI Terms and Conditions

3.4 Assessment Criteria

Proposals will be assessed by an independent panel of experts and will be assessed on the following criteria.

FoF grant applications must satisfy the following:

- The project is based on a sound understanding of the market or society needs and opportunity.
- The proposed work programme is robust and designed to optimise the economic and / or societal benefit derived from the grant.

Excellence

Excellence in this context is based upon the potential impact of the proposed translational and commercialisation activities.

This assessment will be based upon consideration of the following factors:

- Anticipated outcomes (not just outputs) and benefits
- Strength and appropriateness of user involvement
- Strength and appropriateness of host institution support
- Mechanisms for delivery of outcomes and potential impacts

Applicants should note that translation or commercialisation activities with one or multiple users are potentially equally valid. However, unless clear justification can be provided for the involvement of only a single user (particularly where multiple users would benefit), there is a risk that the proposal may be considered as contract / consultancy work rather than translation and knowledge exchange.

Contact

David Hendry
Portfolio Manager, Capability and Innovation
Email: David.Hendry@BBSRC.ukri.org

Annex 1: how to apply – further guidance

PROPOSAL/APPLICATION FORM

Objectives (4000 characters maximum, including spaces)
Provide a list of the main objectives for the project with dates which will form the basis of your milestones.

Summary (4000 characters maximum, including spaces)
Provide a summary of the proposed project.

Other Support
Details of support (excluding project partners) from organisations other than BBSRC which are relevant to this application must be given here. If there is no other support relevant to this application please tick the box.

Related Grants
BBSRC FoF projects **MUST** draw substantially on the outputs of current or previous BBSRC-funded research activity and fall within BBSRC remit. This should be explained fully in a Cover Letter.

Enter the grant reference number(s) for BBSRC / Research Council funding that underpins this application. If the underpinning grant was sponsored by BBSRC but awarded by another sponsor please add these details under Other Support.

An application will not be accepted for a project that is essentially the same as one currently under consideration for funding by a BBSRC Committee, other Research Council or any other funding body.

Unless specifically invited, or if prior approval from the BBSRC Office has been obtained, proposals that have already been considered by another Research Council or funding body will not be accepted.

(Please note: Technical summary, Academic beneficiaries and Impact summary sections are N/A) Further information is available in the BBSRC Grants Guide.

ATTACHMENTS

CASE FOR SUPPORT (Maximum 8 sides of A4)
References should be included within the 8-page limit of the description of the project and should not be submitted as an additional document(s) or annex.
Please follow the font and margin guidelines found in the Je-S website – Standard Proposals – Case for Support.

Section 1. Previous Research and Innovation Track Record
- Provide a summary of the results and conclusions of your recent work in the area which is covered by the FoF proposal. Include reference to both BBSRC-funded and non- BBSRC funded work. Details of past collaborative work with industry and / or with other users should be given.
- Provide information about previous work which has achieved significant social or economic impact.
- Outline the specific expertise available for the translation activities at the host organisation and that of any associated organisations.
- Any existing relationships with the proposed project partners should also be mentioned.

Section 2. Project Plan

Briefly introduce the proposed idea, providing a description of the proposed work, why the work is needed and how beneficiaries and users will benefit from the outcomes of the work.

Give details of the key milestones and target dates for the proposed project. Give a clear definition (through a Gantt chart- maximum 1 side of A4, separate from the case for support document) of which elements of the proposed work programme will be conducted by the project partners, project team etc.

You must include a Gantt chart or similar to illustrate the project plan (please see below).

Section 3. User engagement and business development plan

Provide details of your planned engagement with the potential users, stakeholders and beneficiaries of the innovation, including how you anticipate it delivering impact (spin-out, license, social enterprise etc). Within this section you should include:

- Potential societal and economic benefits;
- The market need and its potential size;
- The nature of the competition;
- Any gaps in market knowledge to be addressed through the FoF.

Section 4. Intellectual assets and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) position

Give details of the IPR position and strategy, including any freedom to operate issues etc. You must include detail of the background IPR, highlighting any potential conflicts of interest and the associated management and mitigation strategy. Input from potential users must be identified.

At the time of application, or during any subsequent FoF grant, BBSRC would not anticipate any business to have exclusive rights to the assets and IP arising from the FoF project.

You may also wish to refer to the FoF letters of support guidance document available on the [FoF](#) [webpage](#).

Section 5. Technical development plan

Describe the technical development and translation activities that are required to progress the innovation towards impact, including your strategy for managing and mitigating risks. This section should provide background and context of the current status of your innovation.

Section 6. Technology Transfer Office representative or equivalent assigned to the project

Provide details of your nominated Technology Transfer Office (or equivalent) representative. Their role will be to ensure (alongside the PI) the project effectively progresses towards its objectives and milestones. They will also be expected to be involved in any reporting requirements.

GANTT CHART - (Maximum 1 side of A4) (to be uploaded as Work Plan)

Provide a Gantt chart, or similar, to illustrate the project plan.

CVs - (Maximum 2 sides of A4 per person)

A CV must be submitted for each named applicant(s).

JUSTIFICATION OF RESOURCES - (Maximum 2 sides of A4)

It is mandatory to include a justification for the resources that have been requested; guidance can be found HERE. In particular, where aspects of the project are being outsourced, then further details should be provided of the work, including any associated tendering process.

TTO LETTER OF SUPPORT

A statement of support must be included from the Technology Transfer Office (TTO or equivalent) detailing why the proposed work is needed. They should include details of any matched funding they will provide to support the activity and any additional support that might add value to the work. The Committee will be looking for a strong statement of commitment from the TTO in the host institution taking the project forward.

The TTO support letter must also detail any relationships with academic, industrial or other partners relevant to the project.

PROJECT PARTNER LETTER OF SUPPORT

A letter of support from each project partner named in the application must be included, confirming their support for the proposed project and confirming any financial or in-kind contributions to be made.

LETTER OF SUPPORT

A letter of support may be included from other potential users that may not be directly involved in the project itself but provide additional evidence of support for the proposed work.

You may also wish to refer to the FoF letters of support guidance document available on the FoF webpage.

OTHER DOCUMENTS:

Other permissible supporting documents may include summary documents of the following: Patent Filings; Freedom to Operate reports; Market Research reports of direct relevance to the application.

Other permissible documents may include a data management plan that clearly details how you will comply with BBSRC's published Data Sharing Policy. The policy, and detailed guidance notes, can be viewed at: https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/data-sharing-policy-pdf/ (up to 1 side of A4)