



**Biotechnology and
Biological Sciences
Research Council**

Industrial Biotechnology for Improving Production of Higher Value Chemicals: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When will the grants be announced?

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 May 2020 at the latest.

Are there any restrictions on project start date?

There are no specific restrictions on project start dates. We anticipate that we will be able to notify applicant by the end of May 2020. You must formally accept the Grant by completing and returning the Offer Acceptance within 10 working days of the issue of the Offer Letter. You will also need to submit the Start Confirmation within 42 (calendar) days of the Project starting. The date entered on the Start Confirmation will be the Official Start Date of the Grant. The Official Start Date may be delayed by up to 3 months from the start date shown in the Offer Letter, but the duration of the Grant will remain unchanged. The Grant may lapse if the Project is not started within 3 months of the start date in the Offer Letter. The start of the Grant may precede the start date shown in the Offer Letter but must not be earlier than the issue date of the Offer Letter itself.

What is the maximum cost that can be applied for?

The BBSRC provides 80% FEC **up to a maximum of £250,000** and the expectation is that this is met with 20% FEC from the university. Therefore, the 100% FEC and the maximum amount that can be applied for with regards to the project is up to a **maximum of £312,500**.

Can I have PDRA on my project that is already employed by the university?

Yes, you can include a PDRA on the project that is already employed by the university. Please include a CV for all named applicants on the project.

What is considered a high value chemical?

It is the responsibility of the project consortia to argue why a chemical should be considered of high value. The manufacturing of the chemicals will need to compete economically with current markets for a company to make the business case to invest in a new manufacturing process. Therefore, the value of the products will need to be able to compensate for the investment required to apply new technologies and infrastructure. The market value of a chemical will depend on the target markets: from the consultation report speciality, fine and performance chemicals are considered to fall into prices ranges of \$10/kg to \$1000's/kg but can fall as low as \$3/kg. The industrial partner(s) should be able to provide market context for the product(s) included in your project.

Can my project focus on more than one chemical product?

Yes, some processes may be relevant to more than one chemical target.

How much engineering/physical science can I include in my project?

It will be important to integrate engineering and process chemistry into the bioprocess however, the funding is provided through UKRI BBSRC and therefore, the proposal should ensure bioscience is the focus of the project.

Can I submit more than one application?

Yes. You can submit more than one project however, you should be mindful that more than one project could be funded and that you have the resources to deliver all projects that are awarded.

Can I have more than one industrial partner?

Yes. You can have more than one industrial partner. Please make sure that all industrial partners submit a letter of support outlining their involvement in the project.

Does this require a specified percentage contribution from the industrial partner i.e. 10% cash as it is for an Industrial Partnership Award? If there is a specific percentage, could you let me know whether this should be cash or in-kind contributions?

No. We are not looking for a specific percentage contribution from industry. The purpose of the industrial partner is to ensure that the project is industrially relevant and to support the translation of the research into industry. Therefore, it is not about having a specific level of contribution but about having a meaningful partnership that will support and enable the greatest impact from the research.

The contribution from the industrial partner can be cash and/or in-kind to support their active involvement in the project. Eligible in-kind contributions can include but are not limited to:

- Intellectual input to the development of a project proposal
- Salaries of the personnel working directly on the project
- Materials consumed in the course of the project
- Access to equipment
- Provision of data, software or materials
- Capital equipment purchased or constructed for the project, less its estimated value to the business at the end of the project;
- Sub-contract charges and consultancy fees and cost of equivalent services used exclusively for the research activity, bought from outside sources project management costs such as travel, office space etc. that are addition to those normally involved;
- An allowance for reasonable overheads;
- Reasonable costs associated with any losses incurred by the industry partner.

The purpose of the industrial partner is to ensure that the project is industrially relevant and to support the translation of the research into industry. Therefore, it is not about having a specific level of cash but about having a meaningful partnership that will support enable the greatest impact from the research.

The case for support should outline the industrial partner(s) contributions to the project and this should also be outlined in the Letter(s) of Support from the industrial partner(s).

Please note that access to data should be provided free of charge.

If you have other in-kind contributions in mind but are not clear whether they meet BBSRCs guidelines, the office will be happy to discuss them with you. It is expected that industrial partner justifies the value attributed to the in-kind contributions in their letter of support and/or that these are discussed in the Justification of Resources document.

Will higher contributions from industry get higher marks?

The industrial contribution to the project should be appropriate to ensure the appropriate level of industrial engagement and relevance of the project. The Panel will assess applications on their industrial relevance, impact and value for money as well as scientific excellence. We would expect to see a range of industrial contributions depending on the stage the research is at, but it should be appropriate to support the translation of research towards and progress it up the TRLs.

Will having a large company on a project be scored higher than a collaboration with an SME?

No. We recognise that the industrial community has a high number of SMEs and we want to encourage engagement with SMEs. The industrial contribution to the project and the project timescales has been designed to allow SMEs to more easily engage on academic led research projects. The industrial partner(s) should be relevant to the research project.

Should we cost in-kind contributions to the grant?

Yes. It is helpful for UKRI-BBSRC to understand how much leverage from industry this funding has achieved. Therefore, please provide costs of your in-kind contributions and add these onto the JeS form. Guidance on costing in-kind contributions can be found on page 12 of the [BBSRC Grants Guide](#). The value of the 'in-kind' contribution should be justified as the Panel will be asked to comment on value for money provided by the 'in-kind' contribution.

Can I collaborate with an international company?

This call will follow the standard UKRI-BBSRC eligibility rules as set out in the [BBSRC Grants guide](#) following the guidance for our [Industrial Partnership Awards and LINK grants](#): BBSRC supports science carried out by academic researchers in partnership with UK industry with the primary aim to benefit the UK research base and UK economy. Therefore, the collaborating companies should have an R&D or manufacturing site in the UK. However, where a suitable company cannot be found in the UK, an overseas company may be used. Such collaborations are judged on a case by case basis and clear justification for partnering with an international company must be provided.

If investigators are partly based abroad, but have positions at UK HEIs, are they eligible?

Yes. If they meet the criteria (including the requirement for residency) as described in Section 3 of the [BBSRC Grants Guide](#).

When do I have to have my collaboration agreement in place?

A collaboration agreement should be put in place between all partners before research commences, in line with UKRI Research Grant Terms and Conditions.

What is the expected composition of the HVC Funding Call Panel?

The HVC Funding Call Panel will comprise representatives of the industrial and academic, national and European community.

Are all assessment criteria weighted equally?

Proposals will need to meet all the assessment criteria to a high level to be competitive.

Are international subcontracts allowable?

BBSRC considers eligible institutions to be best placed to determine how their work is undertaken. In the case of a grant proposal, if this involves sub-contracting aspects of the work to non-eligible institutions, for example due to the lack of appropriate expertise in eligible institutions, this is acceptable. See Section 2.51–2.53 of the [BBSRC Grants Guide](#) for further information about sub-contracting.

How will the letters of support be used?

Letters of support will be reviewed by BBSRC internally and by the Panel assessing the proposal. The Panel will review information around the value and nature of the collaboration in achieving the aims of the proposed project as part of their overall assessment of the project. BBSRC will consider the appropriateness of the contributions, responsibilities of collaborators against the requirements for the HVC Funding Call and the agreed routes for dissemination of emerging results and management of intellectual assets and/or intellectual property. Where necessary, changes may be requested.

BBSRC expects the collaboration agreement to address the points outlined in the technology transfer office letter. However, many guides and model agreements exist to facilitate these sometimes-difficult negotiations. BBSRC encourage the use of the Lambert tool kit for collaborative research (<http://www.ipo.gov.uk/lambert>). Please refer to UKRI fEC grants terms and conditions section RGC 20 for further details.

Where should I include company partners in the application?

Company partners in the proposal should be included within the Project Partners section along with the contribution they are providing.

Where can I include the breakdown of my industry contribution?

You should use the Justification of Resources to describe the breakdown of the industry contribution. In addition, it is advised that you describe the nature of the collaboration for the lifetime of the grant, throughout your application, within the Letter of Support from the project partner and in the pathways to impact.