

## Project team

### **1. Are cross-institutional and cross-departmental bids welcome?**

Yes. Applicants are asked to note though, that both outline and full stage submissions must be made on single JeS form with one Research Organisation identified as the lead. This Research Organisation will be responsible for the management of the award.

Applicants should consider the management approach and how this will support the effective working of the team and successful delivery of the outcomes.

### **2. What team size might be acceptable?**

The team size and number of research organisations should be appropriate for the delivery of the project – there are no limits on the number of staff. Clear roles for all applicants must be identified within the proposal.

### **3. What do you envisage the contribution of an early-career researcher can be? Could their presence be detrimental to the proposal?**

The contribution of people on the project should be determined by the need for their expertise, skills, and knowledge. There are no restrictions on career stage and standard BBSRC eligibility criteria apply (Section 3 of the BBSRC Grants Guide).

We expect Principal and Co-Investigators to demonstrate that they have the capability to successfully manage and deliver a programme of work of the proposed scale and complexity. This does not preclude involvement of early career researchers within the co-investigator team.

### **4. Can additional Co-Investigators be added after the registration or outline stage?**

Yes, provided they meet BBSRC's eligibility requirements. We recommend notifying BBSRC of such changes before submission. Major revisions to the scope of the project between outline and full stage are not permitted, unless in response to feedback.

### **5. Is there a minimum requirement for Principal Investigator time?**

We do not set a minimum requirement for Principal Investigator time committed to the project. However, it should be appropriate to the delivery of the project and be clearly justified within the text.

### **6. What is an appropriate track record and critical mass?**

The sLoLa teams will be assessed for their suitability to deliver the project. We have not set specific requirements in terms of prior funding but expect a relevant track record of competitively awarded prior support within the team, as well as evidence of relevant research expertise and outcomes from all members of the team. There is no requirement for the PI to have held a sLoLa- scale award previously but they would be expected to be able to evidence that they have the necessary leadership and management skills to lead the project. There is no longer a requirement for a set number of prior BBSRC-funded awards from the PI.

## Eligibility

### 7. Are international partners allowed?

No. Standard BBSRC eligibility criteria apply, as described in Section 3 of the BBSRC Grants Guide. For information about project partners and collaborators, refer to the BBSRC Grants Guide.

### 8. 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.

### 9. Can PhD studentships be included as part of a proposal?

No. Studentships and/or student resource may not be requested, or included, on BBSRC research grant proposals, including sLoLas. BBSRC studentships are only available through application to the various BBSRC training award schemes. Further information is available on the BBSRC website ([bbsrc.ukri.org/skills/](http://bbsrc.ukri.org/skills/)).

### 10. What is the definition of early career in the context of sLoLa?

BBSRC does not apply a strict definition of ECR in the context of the sLoLa call and there are no eligibility criteria applied in relation to ECR involvement, other than BBSRC's standard eligibility criteria.

### 11. Can we include researcher co-investigators to these proposals?

Yes, this is permitted. Researcher co-investigators do not need to be included in the call registration stage. Information on research co-investigators is available in BBSRC's grants guide, section 3.11.

### 12. Can UKRI Future Leader Fellows be part of the team of applicants (while continuing their fellowship)?

UKRI Future Leader Fellows can be on the team of applicants but they must refer to the terms and conditions of their award for the time commitment they can give to other projects. We recommend you contact BBSRC's Fellowships Team if further information is required [postdoc.fellowships@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:postdoc.fellowships@bbsrc.ukri.org)

### 13. If a PI from a previous sLoLa round is successful can they be a Col on a new proposal?

As outlined in the call text, restrictions on eligibility apply to investigators only being eligible as PI on a single sLoLa. Investigators may be co-investigators on other sLoLa projects provided they are able to make the necessary time commitment.

## Call Registration

### 14. Does the PI or the institution submit the registration?

While either the PI or Institution can submit a registration, we expect that the PI should engage with their university office and any sift or prioritisation process that is in place at their Research Organisation **at all stages** of the application process.

BBSRC will notify the designated university contacts of every registration submitted at the same time as

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confirming to the Principal Investigator. This will enable universities to have a clear picture of registrations from their Research Organisation.

### **15. Can a previously unsuccessful proposal from a sLoLa or other call be resubmitted for the current call?**

Identical resubmissions are not permitted. Please email the sLoLa team if you have questions related to a previously unsuccessful outline or full stage proposal prior to submission.

### **16. Will small changes be allowable post-registration? For example, addition of co- investigators when additional expertise is deemed necessary during the development of the proposal?**

Yes. At the registration stage, only information about the anticipated team is required.

### **17. Is it worth applicants contacting BBSRC before registration to talk through their proposal?**

Please email the call inbox [bbsrc.lolagrants@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:bbsrc.lolagrants@bbsrc.ukri.org) with your questions in the first instance. Where necessary, we would be happy to arrange to speak with applicants.

## Scope

### **18. Would proposals that build on previous large investments (which are no longer active) be permitted or disadvantaged, due to similarity with previously funded work?**

We expect proposals to make a distinctive major contribution to the BBSRC portfolio in the context of current and/or previous investments, where relevant. Providing it is appropriately recognised and justified, work that builds on previously funded programmes will not be disadvantaged. Proposals developed from prior large investments should be able to demonstrate that they will deliver an appropriately transformational step change in meeting the aims of the sLoLa scheme.

### **19. Are bids expected to contain a significant outreach element to confer impact?**

A range of actions to ensure impact is realised should be considered for all proposals, appropriate to the nature of the proposed work. We recognise there are many forms of impact and that these can be delivered through a range of measures, though the scope of the call means projects are unlikely to be directly translational. BBSRC's updated guidance on impact is available at <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/update-impact-in-ukri-bbsrc-grant-applications/>

## Resources and budget

### **20. Can one request large equipment (above OJEU limit) on a sLoLa?**

Equipment may be sought as part of a sLoLa proposal, where the items of equipment requested are necessary for the successful delivery of the proposed research. Items of multiple-use equipment (i.e. where the equipment is necessary for the pursuit of the proposed research, but will not be fully occupied on it) may also be sought. The proposal must set out the other proposed uses and explain the overall benefit to BBSRC science of the equipment investment being sought.

Applicants should refer to the guidance on equipment in Section 5 of the BBSRC Grants Guide for detailed information.

**21. Do you expect institutional commitment / financial contribution on sLoLa?**

Our normal FEC rules apply to the sLoLa scheme. There is **no requirement** for a financial contribution from the institution. At the full stage, a letter of support from the Head of Department is required confirming any relevant institutional support.

**22. Is there an upper limit for individual proposals?**

Proposals must be over £2 million (100% FEC project value) and can be up to five years in duration. We anticipate awarding 3-5 sLoLa grants in the 2018/19 call and the indicative total budget is £16M. No limit is specified for the value of individual proposals, though resources and justification for the project to be delivered via a single sLoLa award form part of the assessment criteria.

**23. Will the budget allocated to the individual committees for the RM selection round be influenced by the possibility to have sLoLas in that round?**

The indicative budget for the sLoLa call is in addition to the budget allocation for standard responsive mode proposals.

**24. Are international co-applicants allowed?**

No. Standard BBSRC eligibility criteria apply, as described in Section 3 of the BBSRC Grants Guide.

**25. Are sub-contracts or project partners allowed?**

Yes, our standard rules apply. 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 of the BBSRC Grants guide for further information about sub-contracting.

**26. What financial information is required at the registration stage?**

No financial information is required at the registration stage.

**27. What steps will be taken to ensure that the RM committees have the expertise to assess fundamental (frontier) bioscience?**

Each Research Committee has a core membership that is complemented by additional members drawn from the Pool of Experts. This ensures the appropriate expertise is available to assess the proposals received.

**28. Timing between registration and outline is rather short, how quickly will feedback be given?**

Feedback on proposals will be given as soon as possible after you have registered. Therefore, the sooner you can register, the quicker we can get feedback to you. Our ability to respond will be dependent on the quantity of proposals that we receive. However, we will aim to get back to all applicants within seven working days of registration.

**29. What is the expected composition of the Strategic LoLa Committee (SLC)? Are members selected from Responsive Mode panels?**

The SLC in 2018 was composed of two members of BBSRC Council who acted as Chairs, the Chairs of our Responsive Mode Research Committees, and experts that included members of our pool of experts. We anticipate that the 2019 SLC will have a similar composition tailored to the submissions received to the 2019-20 call.

**30. Are all assessment criteria weighted equally?**

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

**31. Who attends the interview?**

The interview is attended by the Principal Investigator and up to two Co-Investigators.

**32. How important are the interviews to the decision-making process?**

Interviews form the final stage of assessment by the SLC. The SLC will consider all aspects of the full stage of assessment, including documentation and the RM Committee assessment as well as additional information from the interview in making its funding recommendation to BBSRC.

**33. What feedback is given to applicants during the call process?**

Feedback is provided at registration, outline and full stages (see call guidance document).

**34. When will the NEXT one be if one decides the big idea is a bit too premature?**

Future calls are subject to confirmation but will likely have a similar timetable. While the scope for a future call may remain in Frontier Bioscience, it will be subject to review and will incorporate learning from previous sLoLa calls.