Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

2020/21 Strategic Longer and Larger grants Frontier bioscience
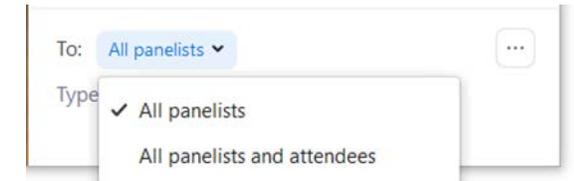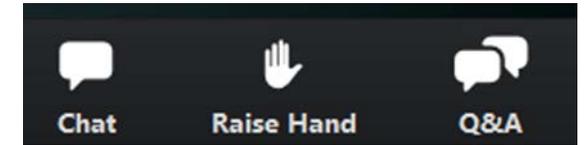
Webinar

12th May 2020, 10:00
21st May 2020, 14:00

Technical Configuration

- By default, attendees are muted and video is turned off.

- Turning off VPN may improve connectivity

- You can use the **chat** function to communicate with *all panellists*, or with *all panellists and attendees*. Please use this for any technical assistance during the webinar.
  - Bear in mind your zoom name will be visible in the chat.

- We will not be using the **raise hand** function during the presentation – please use **Q&A**

Questions

- You can submit any questions that arise as the webinar progresses via the **Q&A** function

- You can always send any questions that could not be answered, or arise later, to bbsrc.lolagrants@bbsrc.ukri.org and a team member will reply by email ASAP.

- Detailed questions about individual proposals which are unlikely to be relevant to other attendees should also be sent to the inbox.

- Questions about the Je-S system should be emailed directly to JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org
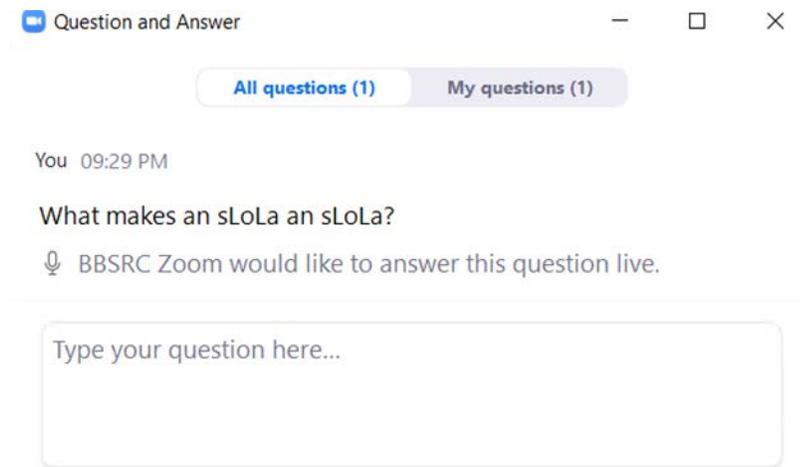
Purpose of the Webinar

- Provide an overview of the 2020-21 sLoLa call

- Highlight key expectations

- Ensure applications are appropriately targeted

Agenda

- Background

- Scope of the call

- Fit to the sLoLa scheme and eligibility

- Application and assessment process

- Q&A

BBSRC Delivery Plan

BBSRC invests in **world-class bioscience** to deliver new knowledge that will offer **solutions to major challenges** facing the world, including sustainable food production, clean growth and healthy ageing, and **drive growth in a bioeconomy** worth £220 billion.

"Our vision is to push back the frontiers of biology to deliver a healthy, prosperous and sustainable future."
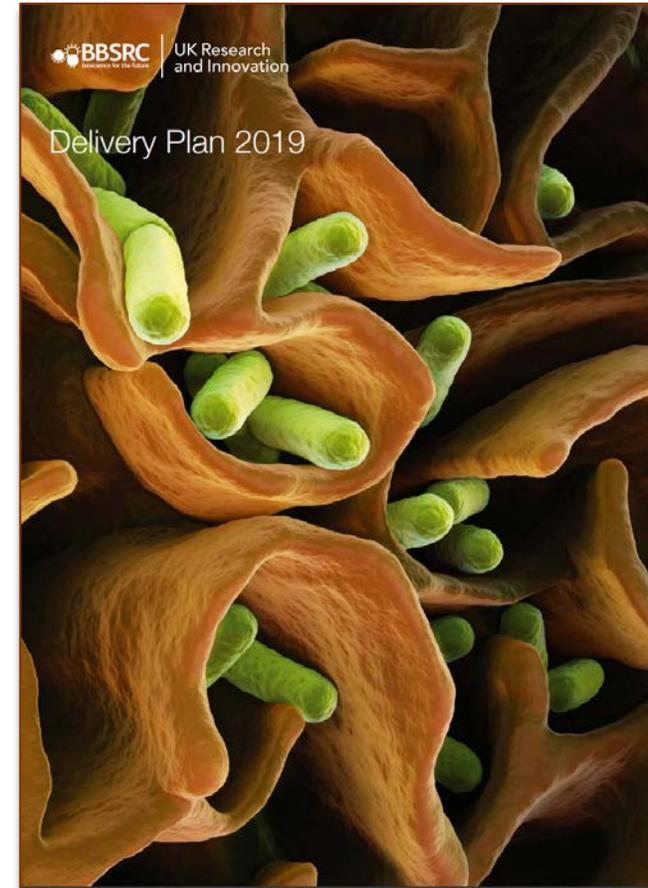
BBSRC research and innovation priorities

Advancing the frontiers of bioscience discovery

Understanding the rules of life

Transformative technologies

Tackling strategic challenges

Bioscience for sustainable agriculture and food

Bioscience for renewable resources and clean growth

Bioscience for an integrated understanding of health

Building strong foundations

People and talent

Infrastructure

Collaboration, partnerships and knowledge exchange

UKRI
Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

Advancing the frontiers of bioscience discovery

Understanding the rules of life

Promoting creative, curiosity-driven frontier bioscience to address fundamental questions in biology

Transformative Technologies

Developing the tools, technologies and approaches that enable researchers to push the boundaries of scientific discovery and stimulate innovation

UK RI Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

Frontier bioscience: some key indicators

- A significant fundamental bioscience question

- Potential to deliver a step change in understanding

- Often inter/multidisciplinary (but integration is key)

- Likely to require innovative approaches and methods

- Reach of the knowledge outputs – **broad potential importance** to bioscience beyond immediate field, but **applications not necessarily identifiable** at this stage.

UKRI Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

The 2020-21 sLoLa call

- This will be a competitive call
  - Our budget is limited (3-5 projects)

- The process is designed to identify and prioritise the most robust proposals of the highest quality at each stage
  - Conduct peer review effectively and efficiently
  - Reviewer, committee member and BBSRC office resources

- We are looking for world leading research
  - Manage time and effort for applicants

Strategic Longer and Larger grants: Frontier bioscience 2020/21
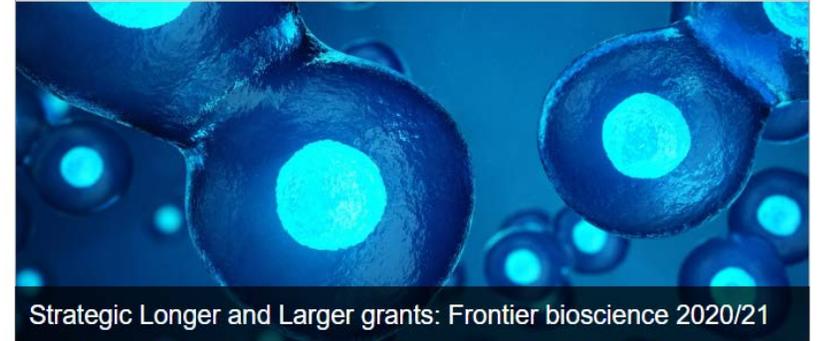
Call status: Call launch
Webinars: 12 May 2020, 10:00
             21 May 2020, 14:00
Registration deadline (mandatory): 30 July 2020, 16:00
Outline applications deadline: 10 September 2020, 16:00
Full application (invite only) deadline: (TBC)

Projects awarded in 2019

https://bbsrc.ukri.org/news/fundamental-bioscience/2019/major-new-projects-to-reveal-fundamental-rules-of-life/

Strategic Approach

- BBSRC's broader portfolio will be considered in making decisions
    - Overlaps with existing large investments
    - Proposals should be distinctive and outline how they fit within/ enhance UK bioscience

- Proposals must be within our remit

- Proposals *may* have relevance to 'Responsive Mode' priorities but **must** be focused primarily on important fundamental science advancement

What makes an sLola an sLola?

- The sLoLa mechanism is designed to support **complex, integrated programs of research**

- Think carefully about your **research team** and whether it is the best team to deliver the proposed program of work in a **national context**

- Must demonstrate that the work **requires** a single larger scale award to be carried out
  - Not a collection of projects that could be undertaken separately or through successive smaller awards
  - Clear synergy and interdependency between work packages
  - Complementarity of the research team and approaches being used
  - Full justification for all elements of the programme

UKRI Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

Assessment criteria

- Research excellence

- Importance and transformative potential

- Added value of funding via sLoLa grant

- Ability to deliver and leadership quality

- Management strategy

- Resources

Eligibility

- Standard BBSRC criteria apply

- No requirement for a specific number of prior BBSRC grants

- BUT we still expect significant 'critical mass' and evidence indicating the applicants 'ability to deliver' the sLoLa

- We are mindful of E&I issues and encourage you to consider this in forming your teams

- Encourage Early Career Researcher involvement, where they are adding value and with appropriate support

UKRI Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

Application process

Call registration is mandatory
Full information is on the call webpage

Call registration
- Deadline 30th July 2020 16:00 (Mandatory)
- Submit via surveymonkey or Word doc

Outlines
- Deadline 10th September 2020, 16:00
- Submit via Je-S

Full proposals
- (TBC)
- Submit via Je-S

UK RI

Biotechnology and
Biological Sciences
Research Council
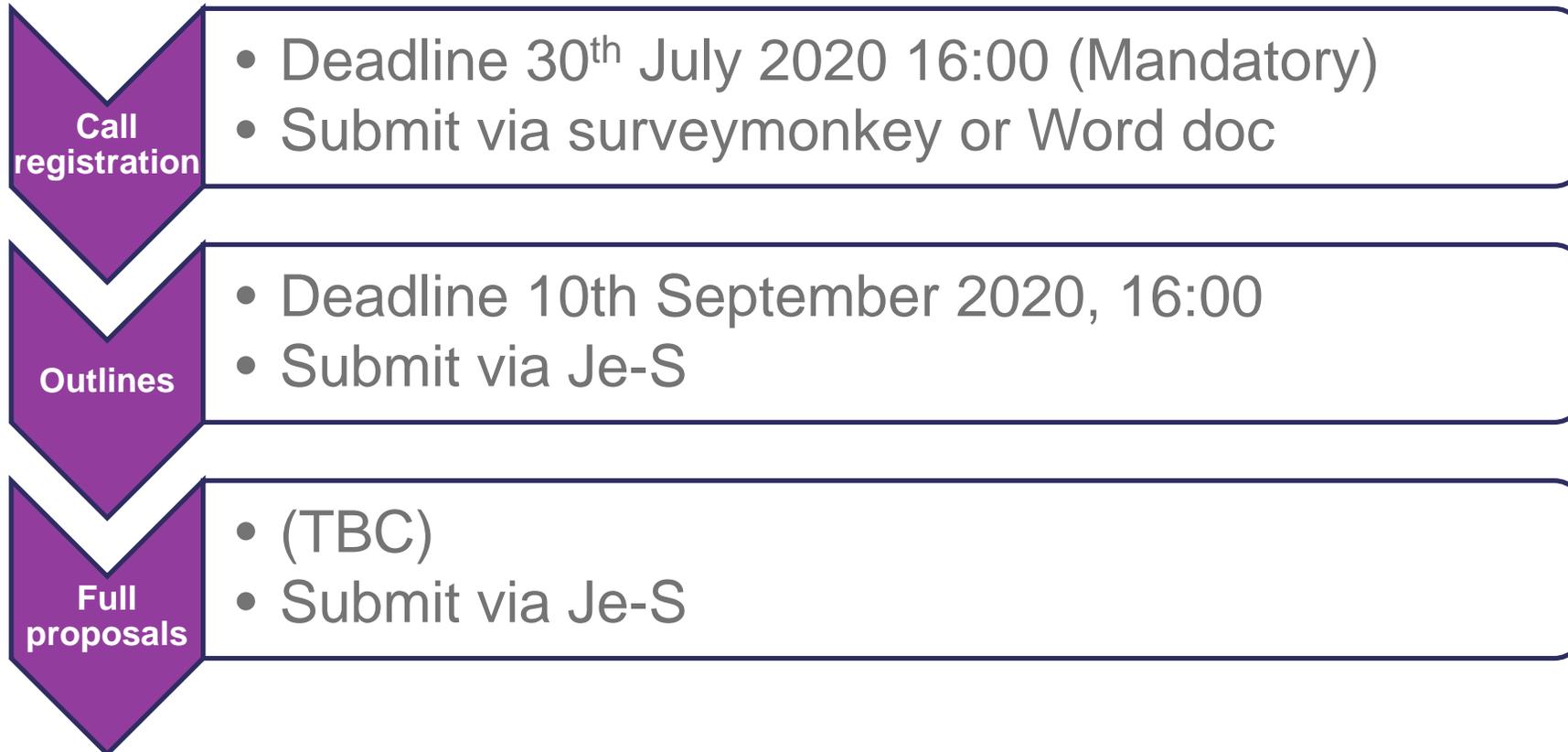
Assessment process

Details of what happens at each stage are in the call guidance document

Call registration
- BBSRC Office
- Feedback on fit to sLoLa call requirements

Outlines
- Strategic LoLa Committee (SLC)
- Shortlisted proposals invited to full stage

Full proposals
- Responsive Mode Committees
- Invitation to interview by SLC if highly rated

UK RI
Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

Call registration

- We are using the call **registration** to:
  - Ensure all potential outlines are appropriate to the call
  - Provide an early indication of the level of demand overall and from individual Research Organisations
  - Encourage institutional conversations/ prioritisation at an early stage

- There is scope to adjust objectives/ teams *after* registering, provided the overall focus is broadly the same

- If the registration process indicates we may be overwhelmed by demand or an individual HEI appears likely to submit large numbers of outlines, we will ask you to prioritise (this will occur <u>after</u> the registration deadline)

Call registration

- Two ways to send registrations (choose *one*):
  - Surveymonkey: https://www.research.net/r/2020BBSRCsLoLa_Registration
  - Word proforma: https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/2020-21-ukri-bbsrc-slola-registration-survey/

- We aim to confirm receipt of each registration within a week. Feedback to be provided as soon as possible thereafter

- The registration period has been extended this year to accommodate for the current circumstances. It remains in your interest to register well before the deadline, so any feedback can inform preparation of your outline

- We aim to filter out proposals that are non-responsive to the call or ineligible in the feedback. We cannot provide any other indication of the competitiveness of proposals

UKRI Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

Deadline: 30th July 2020

Outlines

- Pay attention to recommended length of content for each section in the **6 page Case for Support**.
  - Science case is important but don't neglect other criteria.
  - Refer to Guidance to applicants for the criteria evaluated at the Outline Stage.

- Only **indicative costs** are required by UKRI-BBSRC at this stage. ROs are therefore advised to take a pragmatic approach to costings.

- Will be assessed solely by the **SLC** (no postal peer review)

- Assessment in Autumn 2020, date TBC

Deadline: 10th September 2020

Biotechnology and
Biological Sciences
Research Council

Outlines

- Be realistic. This is going to be a competitive call funding at most ~ 5 awards.

- Research organisations should bear in mind the level of competition **nationally** and that we are looking for **world class bioscience**

- Investigators can be involved in more than one proposal but PIs can only hold one sLoLa at any time

- We expect a small number of submissions that genuinely meet **all** the assessment criteria to an excellent/ exceptional level to move to the full stage of assessment, following the SLC meeting

- Feedback will be provided

UKRI Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

Full Stage

- More detailed Case for Support plus other documentation, expanding substantially on the information provided at the Outline stage

- Two assessment stages:

  o **Full proposal** assessed by **Responsive Mode Research Committees**, including full postal peer review.

  o **Interview** by **SLC** for those teams whose projects are recommended by the Committees

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

Deadline: **TBC**

Summary

- Read the documents and formal eligibility requirements carefully

- Do not submit speculative/ premature outline proposals

- Address all aspects of the assessment criteria and fully address the call scope

- Ensure you communicate your proposal clearly, for both subject specialists and more general scientific audience

- Collaborative teams need to be able to demonstrate full synergy and ability to work together effectively

- **If in doubt, please contact us for advice: bbsrc.lolagrants@bbsrc.ukri.org**