BACKGROUND & SCHEME OVERVIEW

These notes cover BBSRC Responsive Mode grant applications (incorporating the New Investigator Scheme) and are intended to supplement the in-depth information provided by the BBSRC.

Responsive Mode grant applications are intended for the scientific community to drive the direction of research. Applicants are invited to submit proposals within the BBSRC remit\(^1\) at any time and will be assessed by one of BBSRC’s Research Committees\(^2\) under the following scheme headings;

- Research Committee A – animal disease, health and welfare
- Research Committee B – plants, microbes, food and sustainability
- Research Committee C – genes, development and STEM approaches to biology
- Research Committee D – molecules, cells and industrial biotechnology

It is strongly recommended that applicants read through their Strategic plan and their Delivery Plan to ensure the proposed research is in line with BBSRC’s overall research portfolio and aims.

- BBSRC Strategic Plan - https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/news/planning/strategy/

PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

Responsive Mode applications are open throughout the year and will be assessed at one of three Research Committee Meetings within the year. Deadlines for these meetings can be found here\(^3\).

It is highly recommended that applicants read through BBSRC’s Grants Guide for details of applicant eligibility, and BBSRC’s Application Guidance, Responsive Mode Priorities and Reviewer Guidance to ensure that your application is tailored appropriately.

- Application guidance - http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/
- Responsive mode priorities - http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/grants/priorities/
- Reviewer guidance - https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/documents/guidance-notes-for-reviewers-pdf/

Applicants should contact their department(s) in advance to discuss their application, generate an accurate costing using the X5\(^1\) and provide support where necessary.

Once your application has been finalised, the department will send it through to Research Services for review and submission to the funder. Note that Research Services requires five working days before the funder deadline, applicants should discuss an appropriate departmental deadline with their Department Facilitator to meet this deadline.

\(^1\)X5 is the University’s research costing and pricing tool, which enables accurate costs to be prepared for any research project.

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\(^2\)BBSRC’s Research Committees

\(^3\)Here
BBSRC Responsive Mode grant applications will involve submitting the following documents,

**Joint Electronic Submissions system (Je-S) application form**
- Applications to Research Councils must be submitted via Je-S. Applicants should register for a Je-S account and/or check that they are confident they know the login details.
- Guidance on using the system can be found on the [Je-S Helpdesk](#).

**Case for Support, includes Track Record (CfS)**
- [https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/case-support-track-record/](https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/case-support-track-record/)
- The track record should include the each applicant’s expertise, where they have significant impacts in a scientific field, appropriate grants and awards, positions on national and international boards/committees. Include the term/year where appropriate.
- The core of this document should briefly state the current/future challenges within your research field and highlight your overall research proposal vision.
- Use bold statements such as “Our ambition is to...” or “We aim to address...” to attract the reader to the ambitious intention of your proposal.
- Address why or how will your research is timely, ambitious and transformative.
- Describe your methodologies, how it is novel and why it champions other methods.
- Include how the project will be managed and the metrics that will be used to direct your research.
- **Do not** adjust the font size of your references, they should be a minimum of size 11pt. This is a common reason applications are rejected or returned.
- Peer reviewers are advised to base their assessment solely on the information contained within the application and are instructed not to access external links. **BBSRC reserves the right to withdraw proposals that contain links to additional information which extends the Case for Support.**

**Pathways to Impact (PtI)**
- [https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/pathways-impact/](https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/pathways-impact/)
- The most common mistake with this document is that applicants list what/where the research will have an impact. The PtI should not be a list.
- The PtI document should consider how and who your research will influence in the short, middle and long term.
- What is your strategy to ensure you get the greatest value for money from any funds awarded?
- Will it change academia, industry, social behaviours/policy and the environment?
- What route will these changes take and are there secondary and tertiary effects?
- Are your impact plans reasonable with the resources you have?
- Are they achievable within the proposed time and is the order of your impacts reasonable?
- How will you ensure that data from the research will be managed/disseminated, such that data becomes information, and information becomes knowledge for maximum impact?

**Justification of Resources (JoR)**
- [https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/justification-resources/](https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/justification-resources/)
- A common mistake in the Justification of resources is listing the resources that are required for a grant. You must **fully justify** all costs (except estates, indirect costs, and Infrastructure Technicians) by explaining why each cost is needed.
- Give examples of the conferences you wish to attend and why these are most relevant to the project.
• Have you fully calculated the costs of impact activities?
• Has the travel and subsistence of board members etc. been calculated correctly?

**Equipment**
- Individual items of equipment valued under £10,000 (incl. VAT) should be included under “other DI costs” and will be funded at 80%.
- Individual items of equipment valued between £10,000 and £134,011 (incl. VAT) will only be funded at 50%. **Make sure that the equipment is fully justified in the JoR.**
- Individual items of equipment costing more than £134,011 (incl. VAT) will only be funded at 50%. **A two page business case will be required which is uploaded as an attachment to the proposal.** Research Services can advise on sources of matched funding as required.
- For full equipment details see: RCUK Guidance.

**Data Management Plan (DMP)**
- [https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/data-management/](https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/data-management/)
- The MRC’s Data Management Plan Template has the appropriate questions you should be thinking about when writing any Data Management Plan.
- The DMP should demonstrate how the applicant has considered data quality, security, confidentiality and information-related risks.
- A well written DMP identifies how data will be managed and disseminated for maximum impact.

**Diagrammatic Workplan**
- [https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/diagrammatic-workplan/](https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/diagrammatic-workplan/)

**Proposal Cover Letter**

**CVs**
- Only required for all named applications and named research staff.

**Other Optional Attachments where appropriate.**
- **Project Partner letters**
  - In kind contributions, whether in cash or otherwise, should be valued (e.g.; the estimated cost of data). This should be clearly started in the letter.
  - Avoid asking Project Partners to use a copied and pasted template.
- **Letters of Support**
  - Only those which are directly relevant to the proposal should be included, e.g.; from supporting institutions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Information</th>
<th>Max. Page Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eligibility</strong></td>
<td>• Must be contracted to an eligible UK institution.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Resident in the UK for the duration of the project.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Further details can be found in section 3 of the Grants Guidance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget</strong></td>
<td>• Discussed with relevant Departmental Administrator(s) and X5 costing obtained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Check that Je-S form Finance section matches the X5 Costing/JoR.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start Date</strong></td>
<td>• For example, if the committee meets in May to review applications, so the start date should not be earlier than 1st October 2018.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attachments</strong></td>
<td>• Font used MUST be Arial min. size 11, or other sans serif typeface of equivalent size.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minimum of single line and standard character spacing must be used with min. 2cm margins.</td>
<td>See below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Case for Support (CfS) and Track Record</strong></td>
<td>• Track record (up to 2 pages)</td>
<td>Total = 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Case for Support (use remainder up to the 8 page limit) to include Background, Programme and methodology and References.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pathways to Impact</strong></td>
<td>• Must not simply repeat the Impact Summary and must be project specific with clear deliverables.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Justification of Resources (JoR)</strong></td>
<td>• Check that the costs match those in the Je-S form and X5.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Management Plan</strong></td>
<td>• Oxford-specific DMP guidance</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• BBSRC Data Sharing Policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diagrammatic Workplan</strong></td>
<td>• Used to visualise the project by representing timelines and milestones. This CANNOT be used to extend scientific case content</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proposal Cover Letter</strong></td>
<td>• Mandatory on all schemes except Outlines</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Applicants Declarations of Interests are required to be added to the Proposal Cover Letter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CV(s)</strong></td>
<td>• Required for all named applicants and named research staff (not required for named technicians).</td>
<td>2 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Optional Attachments (may be required for some schemes/calls)</strong></td>
<td>• Project Partner Letters (where applicable), applicants must ensure that their BBSRC industrial liaison officer (with responsibility for collaborative arrangements) receives a copy of the completed proposal form.</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Letters of Support (where applicable)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Facility form (where applicable)</td>
<td>Use BBSRC form</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Business Case (where applicable)</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Equipment Quotations (where applicable)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interim report (for current BBSRC grant holders).</td>
<td>Guidance dependent</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Head of Department Statement if appropriate (for example to confirm applicant’s eligibility or show strong support for the grant application)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD COSTING

X5 Costing

- Ensure that the most up-to-date X5 rate files are used.
- Ensure that the External Collaborator tab has been completed where necessary. If funds will be transferred out please select “funds paid via ‘University’”. If the collaborators have their own Je-S form, please select “funds paid via ‘Funder’”.
- Ensure that costings, especially those with multiple departments, are fully approved when details are supplied to Research Services.
- If an application is ODA-applicable, ensure the X5 has the appropriate countries tagged within the costing.

Other

- Where the proposal includes collaborators and their costs are on Oxford’s Je-S form, please ensure that written evidence from the collaborators’ institution is provided to Research Services stating the value of the costs associated with each collaborator’s contribution.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

BBSRC request that applicants do not contact them after a Research Committee meeting. The BBSRC operate a strict policy not to provide this information prior to a final funding decision made by the Research Committee Chairs. Applicants will be formally contacted after the final funding decision shortly after the Research Committee Chairs meeting (held approximately one month after Research Committee meeting).

For details of successful applicants search awarded grants on the BBSRC website.¹⁰

USEFUL INFORMATION

The New Investigator Scheme is designed to support newly appointed university lecturers, researchers and fellows. Those applying via this category of Responsive Mode must not have received competitive research funding from a funder as the Principal Investigator. The Committees assessing these applications will put greater emphasis on the research potential, as opposed to the track record of the applicant.

If in any doubt, regarding either the applicant’s eligibility status or whether the proposal fits within the BBSRC’s remit, contact: eligibility@bbsrc.ac.uk and remit@bbsrc.ac.uk

Useful links

- BBSRC’s Policies and Standards - https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/about/policies-standards/
- Animal Use in Research - https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/animal-use-in-research/

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¹ https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/research/
² https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/about/governance-structure/committees/
³ https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/deadlines/
⁴ https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index.htm
⁵ http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/publications/equipment-guidance-pdf/
⁷ https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/documents/grants-guide/
⁸ http://researchdata.ox.ac.uk/funder-requirements/
⁹ https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/documents/data-sharing-policy-pdf/
¹⁰ https://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/research/grants/grants/AdvancedSearch.aspx?q=modify