

Key points agreed by the BBSRC Tools and Resources Advisory Panel following the research community consultation on bioinformatics and biological resources.

- **Overview:** The bioscience community agreed that a clear funding route is needed to support the resource infrastructure on which modern biological science depends.
- **Use of funds:** Funding should be used to support new resources in addition to strategically important developments of established resources.
- **New mechanism:** Where possible, applications for resources should be assessed against each other rather than in competition with research project grants. A separate, transparent mechanism for evaluating resource applications would be desirable.
- **Sustainability:** The key component of 'more sustainable' support is longer term funding to provide a stable environment for the resource to be developed and maintained. Another important aspect is provision of a regular opportunity to apply for funding.
- **Priorities:** Funding should be focused on resources of strategic importance to BBSRC and around UK strengths in biology including specific organisms.
- **Gaps:**
 - Some resources will need to make the shift from project- to community-based resource.
 - Pump-priming funding and longer term support.
 - Adding new functionality to existing resources to meet changing requirements, curation, and interoperability/interfaces resources.
- **Management:** Resources should be well managed and have proper quality control and quality assurance policies. The resource should allow community access.
- **Monitoring:** Regular assessment of the resource throughout the lifetime of funding.
- **Interactions:** Resources thrive best when they exist alongside, and are informed by, active user research groups.
- **Research:** Research undertaken by the resource should be technology oriented and focused on development of resource features and components to effectively respond to user need.
- **Long-term options analysis:** At an early opportunity, consideration should be given to alternative funding models and/or sunseting arrangements should the resource fail to receive continued support.
- **Staff:** In many cases, postdoctoral research assistants will not provide the technical support that is required to manage these resources. Project officers, experimental officers, computer officers and curators could form the majority of staff effort.

International: BBSRC activity in this area could provide an important contribution to the global effort in resource provision.