

BBSRC FLEXIBLE INTERCHANGE PROGRAMME

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Flexible Interchange Programme (FLIP) has been developed to support the movement of people between different environments, vital to the exchange of knowledge, technology and skills within the bioscience sector.

FLIP will support the genuine movement of people from one environment to a different one leading to the exchange of knowledge / technology / skills for the purpose of developing bioscience research / researchers and addressing BBSRC's strategic priorities. The benefits of FLIP interchanges will be broad and varied, positively affecting the individual, their research, the organisations for whom they work, the economy, and society as a whole.

FLIP aims to:

- Enhance opportunities for the exchange of knowledge, technology and people between the research base and user communities and *vice versa* for economic and/or societal benefit;
- Facilitate the development of genuine partnerships with the aim of fostering longer-term collaborations, thereby maximising the impact of previously-funded BBSRC research;
- Allow for an expansion of the skill base of individuals, particularly in emerging, niche and vulnerable areas¹ alongside BBSRC's strategic priorities.

Each FLIP award must look to develop an area of bioscience directly related to an awarded BBSRC grant. It is likely that the majority of FLIP awards will support the movement, in either direction, of researchers between the science base and other sectors/disciplines, with clear and defined benefits for both the academic and partner organisation. BBSRC positively encourages postdoctoral researchers (as Research Co-Investigators) or non-academics (e.g. industrialists) to *initiate* a FLIP so long as an academic lead applicant can be identified.

The FLIP awards are flexible, typically supporting an interchange lasting up to 24 months and costing up to £150k in total at 80% fEC, however proposals that last longer and / or request greater costs will also be considered if properly justified. The interchange can be undertaken on a part-time, full time or intermittent basis. The award will cover a contribution to the salary of the interchanger(s), reasonable travel and subsistence and costs associated with the interchange. In all cases, evidence of a significant cash or in-kind contribution from the partner is encouraged, where appropriate.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

It is envisaged that approximately 20 awards will be supported per annum. When applying for FLIP, the proposed activities under the interchange should be clearly connected to an awarded BBSRC research grant held by the applicant and where relevant, there must be clear evidence that the interchange is aligned to one of the BBSRC's strategic priorities (see <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/priorities/priorities-index.aspx>). Applicants must clearly describe the intended outcomes of the interchange and how success would be

¹Strategically Important and Vulnerable Capabilities in UK Bioscience
http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Resources/0905_bioscience_research_skills.pdf

measured. Detailed guidance on completing the FLIP application form and attachments can be found in **FLIP Help Text.doc**

Applications should be submitted by the next application deadline (**by 4pm**) via the Je-S system.

SCOPE OF FLIP INTERCHANGES

FLIP interchanges might include, but are not limited to:

- Interchanges between academic and industrial sectors relevant to BBSRC research;
- Movement of individuals between the academic base and policy-making or charitable sectors and vice versa in order to influence current/future thinking;
- Fostering of interdisciplinary research through spending time in different scientific contexts and by integrating new techniques or methodologies e.g. expansion of mathematical and/or engineering skills by a biologist, learning a specialist methodology in an emerging area, or developing a new research method using existing infrastructure;
- Interchanges between the academic base and professional services, such as technology transfer offices, and vice versa to deliver optimal outcomes from BBSRC-funded research;
- Bringing an industrial perspective to managing and enhancing impact of BBSRC-funded research;
- Fostering of two-way partnerships between bioscientists and researchers in the physical sciences, engineering and information technology disciplines for the development of new technologies, methodologies and resources in order to yield 'new ways of working'.

Examples of activities that are outside the scope of FLIP:

- Support for research projects which do not involve any interchange and which would usually be supported through responsive or managed mode activities;
- Interchange between two biological sciences disciplines in a research environment;
- Interchanges with a specific focus on improving teaching methodologies;
- Scoping CPD training needs of a particular user community;
- Whilst FLIP interchanges with an international dimension can be considered, applicants should be aware of BBSRC's existing International Funding mechanisms²;
- Non-academics moving into a non-academic setting;
- A substitute for responsive mode funding available to support Pathways to Impact³;
- A substitute for proof of concept e.g. Follow-on Funding⁴.

² International Funding <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/internationalfunding/international-funding-index.aspx>

³ RCUK Pathways to Impact <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/kei/impacts/Pages/home.aspx>

⁴ Follow-on Funding <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/commercialisation/commercialisation-index.aspx>

ADDITIONAL CALL INFORMATION

GUIDELINES FOR CALL

- The objectives of the interchange proposed must fit within the scope of FLIP.
- Funding is available for projects that are typically up to 24 months in duration and up to the value of £150k in total at 80% fEC (larger and longer if justified).
- It is envisaged that approximately 20 awards will be supported per annum.

ELIGIBILITY

Each FLIP proposal must have only one lead academic applicant, and the FLIP proposal must be connected to an awarded BBSRC research grant where the applicant was listed on the proposal as one of the investigators. Post Doctoral Research Assistant (PDRA) staff are not eligible to apply for a FLIP award, but are strongly encouraged to initiate and contribute to the FLIP proposal as Researcher Co-Investigator.

The applicant for a FLIP award must satisfy the standard BBSRC eligibility criteria as laid out in section 3 of the BBSRC Grants Guide (<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/grants-guide.aspx>). The applicant must be a named investigator on the awarded BBSRC research grant connected to the proposed interchange.

The Researcher Co-Investigator for a FLIP award must satisfy the standard BBSRC criteria as laid out in section 3 of the BBSRC Grants Guide (<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/grants-guide.aspx>). A Post Doctoral Research Assistant who is not eligible to be the applicant in their own right (as described above), but who has made a substantial, recognised contribution to the formulation and development of the FLIP, and who will be engaged in the ensuing interchange may, with the approval of the lead applicant, be named as the “Researcher Co-Investigator” in the application. This title will be recorded and included in published information.

A “Researcher Co-Investigator” will be:

- Named as (one of) the interchangers on the proposed research project,
- Identified in the application as a key contributor to the project,
- Employed on the project by and based at, the institutions of either the applicant or any partner(s).

The interchanger(s) should be qualified to PhD level or have an equivalent experience level to undertake the proposed research. Upon commencement of the FLIP award the interchanger(s) must be employed by one of the organisations participating in the FLIP award. Although the applicant must be employed at an organisation eligible to receive BBSRC research grant funding, the interchanger(s) may be employed by a research organisation, UK industry, policy making or charitable organisation. The interchanger(s) need not necessarily demonstrate connectivity to the related BBSRC research grant. **FLIP does not support students.**

Applicants based at a Scottish Main Research Provider (MRP) are not eligible to apply for a FLIP award. However, as an exception an MRP can be listed as a non-academic partner in a FLIP proposal if the MRP is the sole suitable non-academic partner available, and provided all criteria of the FLIP scheme are fully addressed. Applicants proposing to involve an MRP non-academic partner must contact BBSRC in advance of commencing work on the application.

BBSRC is committed to eliminating unjustified discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations across and between equality groups. BBSRC welcomes applications from all sections of the community and does not discriminate on the grounds of gender, disability, age, race/ethnicity, religion or philosophical belief or sexual orientation. BBSRC has published Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes which are available on the BBSRC website.

ASSESSMENT

FLIP proposals will be assessed by the Committee E and will not be externally reviewed. Following assessment, interviews (if required) will be held at, or in advance of the next Committee E meeting. The decision to fund proposals will be announced subsequently (dates on the FLIP webpage are for guidance only and may be subject to change).

Committee E will assess all FLIP applications against the aims of the scheme, alongside value for money and “added value”, and use the following assessment criteria:

Number	Criterion
1.	Connectivity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the proposed interchange is connected to BBSRC-funded research conducted by the applicant.
2.	Aims of the scheme , including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which the proposal addresses the aims of the FLIP scheme
3.	Benefits to individuals , including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • career development opportunities • acquisition of new skills and knowledge • mechanisms of how benefits will be obtained and how these will be applied to development of future activities • development of leadership potential
4.	Individuals involved , and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their background, experience and skills relevant for the interchange • how these will be enhanced by the interchange
5.	Benefits to partner organisations , including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benefits accrued • mechanisms to ensure such benefits are embedded • catalysis of culture change
6.	The ‘added value’ , describing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the objectives of the interchange could not be achieved through any other mechanism • how, without the interchange, there would be a lost opportunity
7.	Vision , including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ambition and risk management • what success will look like • how success will be measured • if appropriate, SMART objectives (Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Realistic and Time bound)
8.	Commitment and contribution by partner organisations, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for a strong and successful interchange • a significant cash or in-kind contribution
9.	Value for money , including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rationale for the proposed use of resources • benefits to individuals and partner organisations • details of any cash or in-kind contributions • details of any leveraged funding
10.	Strategic fit of the interchange proposed to BBSRC's Strategic Plan

MONITORING

Reporting of the FLIP outcomes will be required at the end of the interchange. Further details will be provided.

SPECIAL CALL CONDITIONS

FLIP awards are subject to standard BBSRC Research Grant Terms and Conditions as laid out in the BBSRC Grants Guide (<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/grants-guide.aspx>) and awarded under standard Research Council Terms and Conditions (<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidelines/research-grants-terms-conditions.pdf>) with the following addition:

- Interchangers and organisations that are not eligible to apply for BBSRC funding will be able to claim justified and reasonable costs associated with the interchange. BBSRC will not support T&S for non-academic partners unless they are identified on the application as an interchanger and all costs fully justified. The peer review process will then recommend whether this represents Value for Money and is indeed fully justified.

The payment of such funds will be made in the first instance to the applicant's organisation and it is the responsibility of both the applicant and the partner to agree terms and conditions for management of the interchange and the reimbursement of costs where appropriate.

Estates and indirect costs cannot be claimed by non-academic partners. In addition, estates costs cannot be claimed for academic interchangers spending in excess of six months in industry during the project as detailed in Section 5.42 of BBSRC Grants Guide http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidelines/grants_guide.pdf. No reduction should be made for shorter term absence.

The interchange activity must not have been detailed on an existing research grant and cannot be costed against a future research grant. Since a FLIP award is not directly equivalent to a standard BBSRC Research Grant, it does not confer eligibility for future BBSRC funding. In addition, a FLIP award cannot be considered towards eligibility for a Strategic Longer Larger (sLoLa) Grant application.

Exploitation and Impact

- Any intellectual property arising from a FLIP award will be subject to standard BBSRC conditions (www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/awardholders).
- Where the award is associated with more than one research organisation and/or other project partners, the basis of collaboration between the organisations, including ownership of intellectual property and rights to exploitation, is expected to be set out in a formal collaboration agreement, if appropriate. It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to put such an agreement in place before the research begins. The terms of collaboration agreements must not conflict with the Research Councils' terms and conditions.

CONTACTS

For eligibility, application process, deadlines and outcomes of FLIP application

Email: FLIP@bbsrc.ac.uk

DEFINITIONS

The sole **applicant** on a FLIP proposal will be an academic at an eligible RO, and be a named investigator on an awarded BBSRC research grant connected to the FLIP application. The *applicant* must satisfy the standard BBSRC eligibility criteria as laid out in the BBSRC Grants Guide (<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/grants-guide.aspx>). Applicants based at a Scottish Main Research Provider (MRP) are not eligible to apply for a FLIP award.

The Researcher Co-Investigator on a FLIP proposal will be a Post Doctoral Research Assistant who has made a substantial, recognised contribution to the formulation and development of the FLIP and will be engaged in the ensuing interchange.

FLIP **interchanger(s)** will be the individuals who will move between different sectors/disciplines to deliver FLIP objectives. Unlike the *applicant*, the *interchanger* does not need to be connected to the related BBSRC research grant, but the *applicant* can also act as an *interchanger*. There can be one or more *interchangers* for each FLIP application, and *interchangers* should be qualified to PhD level or have an equivalent experience level to undertake the proposed research. Upon commencement of the FLIP award the *interchanger* must be employed by one of the partnering organisations participating in the FLIP award, which can be an eligible research organisation, UK industry, policy making or charitable organisation. **FLIP does not support students.**

FLIP **partner(s)** can be academic and/or non-academic organisations, that will participate and support the interchange with cash or in kind support. Each *partner* will have a lead member of staff responsible for the interchange; the *applicant* will be the academic lead.