



BBSRC School Regional Champion 2013/15

Introduction

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) announce a small grants scheme to support regional school engagement activities that run for a two year period.

The closing date for receipt of applications is by 12pm on 18th January 2013. Applications will be judged by an independent panel. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application by the 1st February 2013.

Please read the terms and conditions before completing an application. All applications must be signed to show that they fulfil the eligibility criteria and that the applicant agrees to abide by the conditions of the award.

Aims

Researchers in regions of the UK receiving BBSRC investment are supported to undertake public engagement (with a focus on secondary schools) around BBSRC's strategic priorities through a School Regional Champion (SRC).

A network of school regional champions will develop and share best practice, tools and activities.

Objectives

- To enable and encourage researchers to take part in public engagement and dialogue with secondary schools and young people between the ages of 11 and 19.
- To enable young people, teachers and educational professionals to access researchers and engage in dialogue.
- To raise awareness amongst young people, teachers and educational professionals of bioscience research and its applications.
- To inform, inspire and enthuse young people about science and the research funded by BBSRC.
- To provide opportunities for researchers to communicate their research or strategic research science and listen to new perspectives about their work.
- To share activities and tools developed by individual champions and make freely available online (full recognition will be given to those involved, the BBSRC Inspiring Young Scientists Coordinator [IYSC] can provide support to facilitate this).

The primary objectives of activities carried by SRCs should be consistent with those listed above. Whilst we realise that a secondary outcome of engagement activities will often be to promote higher education and particular institutions this should not be a primary objective of the activity and we will not fund applications where this appears to be the case.

Remit

The public engagement work of the champions should be focused on secondary schools, though other adult audiences may also be appropriate, in discussion with the IYSC.

The focus of the activity must either be directly related to the BBSRC grant referenced in the application to become a champion or relevant to BBSRC strategic priorities:

- Food security
- Bioenergy and industrial biotechnology
- Basic bioscience underpinning health

Eligibility

The SRC competitive award scheme is open to applicants either:

- Undertaking research on a BBSRC-funded project
- Based at a BBSRC-sponsored institute (BI, IBERS, IAH, IFR, JIC, Roslin, RRes, TGAC)

The awards provide funding to enable practising researchers to carry out public engagement activities with secondary schools or young people.

Collaborations between HEIs, BBSRC Institutes and Centres of strategic funding are encouraged. Collaborations with community and special interest groups, with science communicators, through partnerships with learned societies, festivals, museums, libraries or interactive science centres are also welcome. In these cases there must be a significant contribution from the SRC. We also welcome applications resulting from collaborations between researchers funded by different Research Councils.

Criteria

Applications are for activities that may be undertaken at any time from February 2013 to end of March 2015.

We encourage applications that focus on:

- Dialogue with hard-to-reach groups, such as ethnic minorities, inner city communities or those with special needs

An independent expert panel including professional science communicators, policy makers and educationalists will judge the applications. The list of panel members is published on the School Regional Champions webpage. **Important:** Do not contact members of the judging panel in respect to your application. All queries should be directed to the BBSRC IYSC – Tristan Bunn.

All applications will be judged against the following criteria and should demonstrate:

- Consistency with the objectives of the scheme.
- Interactive events as opposed to displays or presentations.
- Experience in school outreach.
- Involvement in strategic research priority areas.
- Established programme of school engagement to ensure delivery of the scheme objectives.

Should there be more than 13 applications for SRCs that are all considered worthy of funding allocation the panel will take into consideration the following;

- Regional location
 - Each region should be represented by at least one SRC.
 - Applications shall be assessed against other applications from the same region.
 - No region shall have more than 5 SRCs.
 - Regions in receipt of significant BBSRC investment may qualify for a greater number of SRCs e.g East of England.
- Awareness of public concerns and aspirations.
- Opportunity for dialogue with the audience.
- Relevance to the target audience.
- Accessibility by the target audience (including consideration of levels of language etc).
- Exploration of underlying concepts and issues, rather than information provision.
- An innovative approach to engaging underrepresented groups.
- Realistic evaluation commensurate to the project.
- Realistic assessment of practical issues such as copyright, insurance and Health and Safety issues.

Applications must be written in clear and concise plain English, with a minimum of scientific or technical vocabulary.

Funding is not intended to be used for purchase of general apparatus, including computers, cameras etc, unless it is shown to be essential and specific for the delivery of SRC activities.

Funds should not be used to pay for research staff time or use of research facilities; however funds may cover exceptional costs such as consumables used etc.

Application Process

Application forms can be downloaded as a word document from http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/society/funding/school_regional_champions.html

The Research Councils UK schools policy, vision and aims are available at <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/scisoc/SchoolsPolicyfactsheet.pdf> or as a hard copy on request.

A guide to engaging young people with cutting edge research is available from RCUK at <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/scisoc/SchoolsPolicy.pdf> or as a hard copy on request.

RCUK is a signatory to the Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research available at <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/per/Pages/Concordat.aspx>

Applicants wishing to discuss their application can telephone Tristan Bunn on 01603 255017.

Completed applications should be emailed, stating 'Application for BBSRC School Regional Champion' in the subject box, to Tristan.Bunn@bbsrc.ac.uk.

Institutions and BBSRC research centres can only have one SRC appointed.

The closing date for receipt of applications is 18th January 2013.
All applications must be received by 12pm.

Appointment of School Regional Champions

There will be a total of 25 SRCs at any one time. Should there remain unfilled positions following the first round of appointments BBSRC reserve the right to reopen applications and actively seek SRCs to fulfill the aims and objectives of the scheme across the UK. Further application and resubmission rounds will be held until all 25 SRC positions have been filled. Previously unsuccessful applicants will be eligible to reapply. Successful applicants will be notified within 2 weeks of the subsequent closing date(s).

School Regional Champions will be appointed for a period of 2 years and receive £800 per annum funding to carry out their activities. Should an SRC resign their appointment they may recommend another suitable individual to continue in the role of SRC at their institution or centre subject to the approval of the IYSC. If no replacement is recommended the position will remain vacant until the beginning of the next financial year when applications will be reopened.

Appointed SRCs must be willing to have their contact details made available on the BBSRC website and to BBSRC grant holders. School Regional Champion contact details will be publicly announced on the BBSRC website following notification of a successful award.

Additional funds will be provided to SRCs to attend an annual meeting and, where possible, attendance would be strongly encouraged.

Payments

Payments for 2013-2014 will be made by BACS to the awardees institution on receipt of a signed 'School Regional Champion' form, preferably by mid February 2013. **Payments for 2014-2015 will be made following the annual meeting and once the first year reports have been received.** Cheques cannot be issued.

Successful applicants will be provided with support materials by the IYSC, practical information and advice on engaging with schools and maximising the effectiveness of activities will be provided by personal communication with the IYSC as required.

SRCs must submit a final report by 31st March 2013, using the standard form which will be provided (part of which will be made publicly available on the website).

Conditions of Award

Please read the following conditions of award. Postal applications must be signed to demonstrate agreement to abide by the conditions of award.

Section 1- Funding:

- Awards will be paid to the institution that employs the applicant.
- Institutions must ensure that the funds awarded are used to support the project as approved by the BBSRC.
- Awards are cash limited, i.e. they will not be supplemented during the course of the award.
- Awards will have a completion date of the 31st March 2013. Any expenditure incurred after the completion date will not be met by BBSRC.
- A statement of expenditure, signed by the recipient of the award, must be submitted by 30th April 2013.
- Institutions must confirm acceptance of the above conditions before BBSRC release any award funds.

Section 2- Acknowledgement and Copyright:

- Written materials produced and published through the award are the copyright of the applicant's institution. BBSRC retains the right to use written materials produced through the award in their own Science and Society activities on the understanding that BBSRC will notify applicants of intended use. A copy of all written and published material must be submitted to BBSRC.
- BBSRC must be acknowledged in all promotional activities associated with the resource or activity being developed, and on resource materials.
- Materials produced and activities developed through the award may not be sold for profit.
- Any future commercial use must be with the approval of BBSRC.

Section 3- Reporting:

Successful applicants are required to submit to BBSRC:

- A first year interim report following the annual general meeting.
- 500 word final report by 30th April 2013, a section of which may be made publicly available on the web (a proforma form will be provided).
- Evaluation of activities and a brief evaluation report.
- Full breakdown of expenditure (any unused funds must be returned to BBSRC from the first payment and second payments will be adjusted to reflect the actual project spend).

Public Engagement Guidelines

The Research Councils UK publication 'Dialogue with the public: Practical guidelines' might be helpful for developing activities. This is available at www.rcuk.ac.uk/sis/pubdia or as a hard copy on request.

The publication 'Evaluation: Practical Guidelines' is also recommended reading (<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/policy/Pages/Evaluation.aspx>).