Tools and resources development fund: call 2

Support for development of bioinformatics tools and computational approaches to the biosciences

Application deadline: 10 September 2013, 4pm Summary

Our Tools and Resources Development Fund (TRDF) aims to pump prime the next generation of tools, technologies and resources that will be required by bioscience researchers in scientific areas within our remit. It is anticipated that successful grants will not exceed £150k (ref 1) and a fast-track, light touch peer review process will operate to enable researchers to respond rapidly to emerging challenges and opportunities.

The 2013 TRDF has two calls:

- <u>Call 1</u>: proposing to fund novel technology development
- Call 2: funding bioinformatics tools and computational approaches

This page refers to call 2 only. Calls 1 and 2 will each have an indicative budget in the region of £2M, subject to the quality of the applications received.

For any enquiries please see below for full contact details.

Scope

This call intends to:

- Support small or short-duration, pump-priming (pilot) projects that enable excellent bioscience
- Encourage the development of novel software tools, technologies and computational methods for research challenges within our remit (see our strategic priorities in related links)
- Help underpin research in the wider bioscience

It is expected that applications will involve multidisciplinary approaches and it is important that they demonstrate appropriate collaborative connections, and relevance to the generation of important new biological knowledge.

It is anticipated that grants of up to £150k (ref 1) will be made. Applications for projects should be between 6 and 18 months duration, although community networks to develop standards could be supported for up to 3 years.

Different types of 'enabling' proposal are eligible for consideration under this call.

- New approaches to the analysis, modeling and interpretation of research data in the biological sciences, including development of software tools and algorithms. Of particular interest will be proposals that address challenges arising from emerging new types of data and proposals that address known problems associated with data handling (e.g. next generation sequencing, high-throughput phenotyping, the extraction of data from challenging biological images, metagenomics).
- New frameworks for the curation, sharing, and re-use/re-purposing of research data in the biological sciences, including embedding data citation mechanisms (e.g. persistent

identifiers for datasets within research workflows) and novel data management planning (DMP) implementations (e.g. integration of DMP tools within research workflows)

- Community approaches to the sharing of research data including the development of standards (this could include coordinating UK input into international standards development activities)
- Approaches designed to exploit the latest computational technology to further biological research; for example, to facilitate the use of cloud computing approaches or high performance computing architectures

Please contact us if you are unsure whether your application fits within this remit (see contacts below).

Exclusions

The following areas are excluded from this call:

- Applications which are not technology or methods focused
- Applications where the end users of the bioinformatics or computational tools will be applying the technology to a challenge outside the BBSRC remit
- Generic 'platform' informatics or computational approaches in the physical sciences
- Novel technology development, focusing on tools and instrumentation. Development of these technologies is within the scope of the first call of the TRDF (see related links)
- Applications not within the specified proposal areas or not meeting the specified expectations on project scale (including cost and duration). BBSRC reserves the right to withdraw proposals that exceed the cost and duration limits described for this call prior to assessment.

As noted above, this call is intended to support the development of bioinformatics, computational biology software or algorithm development, including data sharing. If a submitted application does not fit the remit of this call it will be rejected at an early stage. Applicants are therefore advised to contact us to discuss potential project concepts.

Eligibility

- Open to all institutions normally eligible for BBSRC managed-mode calls, which includes BBSRC approved HEIs, Research Council Institutes and Independent Research Organisations (IROs).
- Categories of eligible organisations can be found in section 2 of our grants guide (see related links).
- A list of IROs can be found in the RCUK eligibility guidance (see external links).
- Applicants must be eligible for BBSRC funding. Details of the eligibility criteria can be found in section 3 of our grants guide.

How to apply

Apply via the Je-S website (see external links) by 10 September 2013, 4pm.

Applicants should select the following from the Je-S menus:

Select Council: BBSRC

2. Select Document Type: **Standard Proposal**

3. Select Scheme: Standard

4. Select Call: TRDF2 Bioinformatics and Computation

Applicants are advised to read the FAQs and application guidance in the downloads section above.

When submitting applicants will be asked to provide reviewer suggestions. However, this call does not operate with peer-review and is assessed through a single stage, fast-track panel assessment process. To satisfy Je-S validation requirements we advise applicants to input 'dummy' reviewer suggestions in this area of the form. 'Dummy' reviewer suggestions will not be utilised in any way.

Fast-track, light touch assessment

We reserve the right to reject applications, without reference to peer review, which are deemed to fall outside the remit and scope (including financial scope) of this call. We strongly advise applicants to contact the research councils if they are unsure whether their application would be suitable for the call.

Applications that fit the remit of the call will then be assessed through a single stage, fast-track panel assessment process so that the high-risk exploratory ideas and novel technologies can be rapidly tested and/or challenged. The streamlined nature of the assessment will use a broadly-based, multi-disciplinary panel with appropriate expertise.

Important notes:

- Applications will be assessed only by the expert panel
- Written reports from additional referees will **not** be obtained
- The panel will evaluate the applications against the criteria for assessment (see below) and provide the funders with a recommended rank-ordered list of proposals based on the details contained within the case for support
- Applicants should ensure that sufficient details of their expertise and track record, proposed
 project, approaches and methods are provided within the case for support to enable
 the application to be assessed by scientists with relevant but not necessarily specialist expertise
- Feedback will be provided to all unsuccessful applicants within three months of being notified of the panel's decision

Peer review

The Expert Panel will be composed of representatives from our core committee and pool membership, plus any additional members with expertise that covers scientific areas as required by the nature of the submissions.

Criteria for assessment

The assessment of proposals will reflect the scope of the fund and will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Scientific excellence
- Timeliness and promise

- Strategic relevance
- Economic and social impact
- Industrial and stakeholder relevance
- Value for money
- Staff training potential

In addition, assessors will be asked to take into account the scope as set out above, including the potential utility and novelty of the proposed tool/technology.

Complementary funding mechanisms

Call 2 of the TRDF is one of a number of recurring BBSRC funding streams that support research into bioinformatics and other computational approaches to the biosciences.

Potential applicants are advised of the following alternative schemes that may be suitable for projects meeting the scientific criteria of the TRDF but exceeding the cost and/or duration limitations of TRDF projects:

- Responsive mode grants (see related links) are awarded in response to unsolicited research applications in any area relevant to BBSRC's mission. Research projects funded under responsive mode, including technology development projects, are awarded no more than £2M FEC and can last up to 5 years. There are three annual responsive mode calls and applications are assessed by the appropriate BBSRC Research Committee (see related links).
- Bioinformatics and Biological Resources (BBR) fund (see related links) has an annual call
 that is designed to provide support for the establishment, maintenance and enhancement of
 resources (e.g. databases, software suites). The fund has an annual budget of approximately £6M
 and projects can last up to five years
- Strategic Longer and Larger (sLoLa) grants (see related links). These are integrated research projects with high strategic relevance that require long timescales, extensive resources and/or multidisciplinary approaches. The sLoLa scheme has an annual call for grants requesting over £2M FEC project value and lasting up to five years.

The TRDF is a small grants scheme and is not suitable for applications where the cost to us is greater than £150K. Applicants are strongly advised to resource projects appropriately to achieve the proposed objectives, and to justify these costs. For projects where the resource required exceeds £150k, or the duration of the project exceeds the maximum permitted duration, applicants are advised to contact us for guidance (see contact details below).

Awarded grants

Grants arising from previous TRDF calls can be viewed on our previous call pages and our advanced grants search page (see related links).

Reference

1. This figure refers to the BBSRC contribution to the project, i.e. 80% of the full economic cost.

Related links

2013: Tools and resources development fund: call 1

- 2012: Tools and resources development fund: call 1
- 2012: Tools and resources development fund: call 2
- 2012: Bioinformatics and biological resources fund
- Strategic longer and larger grants (sLoLaS)
- Application deadlines
- Strategic priorities
- Research Committees
- Advanced grants search
- Grants guide

External links

BBSRC is not responsible for the content of external websites

- RCUK (eligibility for Research Council funding announcement)
- Je-S system

Contact

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