

# Release the potential of your research

BBSRC has a range of schemes aimed at researchers wanting to bridge the gap between basic science and its commercialisation. BBSRC's programmes provide skills, networks and time to enable a new idea to reach its highest potential.

## There are two types of follow-on Funding

### Follow-on Funding Pathfinder

Enables potential applicants to secure small amounts of funding to carry out activities which will help to develop a clearer understanding of the commercial potential of the outputs of a research grant and assist with the development of a full Follow-on Funding application. Examples of this might include:

- o Commissioning expert advice from sector specialists on the best commercial development strategy for a business idea
- o Completing a market assessment to determine likely potential, competition and opportunities
- o IP searches – in particular freedom to operate (but not to support patent filing costs)
- o Development of contacts with potential licensees or other interested parties.
- o Milestone 1 achievement – if the first milestone of the work is particularly risky and the success of the entire project depends upon this, funds can be sought to support this first milestone.

#### Information:

- Maximum duration of 6 months
- Applications will be in the region of £7-10k (fEC)
- Projects must start within 60 days from submission of an application.

### Follow-on Funding

In order to reflect the commercial goals of a project, there are two different levels of funding available through Follow-on Funding. Both provide financial support at the very early or pre-seed stage of turning research outputs into a commercial proposition and enables activities essential to preparing a robust business plan and securing further funding to progress commercially. Examples of this might include:

- o Undertaking further scientific and technical development of an idea
- o Improving an IP position through, for example, supporting further work to exemplify or broaden patent claims
- o Gaining further information about the market for the new products or process
- o Identifying potential licensees or opportunities for joint ventures

#### Standard:

- 12 months in duration.
- Funding >£250k

## Eligibility for all Follow-on Funding

To be eligible applicants must be employed by a UK university or a BBSRC-strategically funded institute and hold a permanent academic post and have or have had BBSRC grant funding, with relevance to the application.

### Super:

- 12-24 months in duration
- Projects will be valued between £0.25-1M per annum
- Due to the size of the awards applicants may submit an outline application and receive feedback from the Assessment Panel on the proposed project.
- Access to a mentor

## CASE STUDY

### DR RYAN DONNELLY

Dr Donnelly and his team in the School of Pharmacy at Queen's University Belfast have used BBSRC funding to develop a novel vaccine delivery system with great industrial potential. The group have created novel polymers for microneedles that dissolve in the skin, making them safer than traditional metal needles. When the microneedles enter the skin, they absorb skin interstitial fluid and swell, which allows controlled administration of the drug from an attached transdermal patch. This facilitates administration of greater doses of drug over a longer period of time. The team has demonstrated the capabilities of the hydrogel microneedles to deliver a wide range of therapeutically-useful drugs. As well as investigating peptide and protein delivery using their polymer systems, they also used the BBSRC follow-on funding to perform in vitro and in vivo safety evaluations with a view to taking the technology forward to commercialisation. Donnelly said "Success with the BBSRC funding has allowed us to protect our work through an international patent application.[...] We also have two industrial development contracts running to develop the microneedles as a commercial product. All of this was made possible by the work we did during the tenure of the BBSRC grants." Thanks to the BBSRC follow-on funding, the team moved onto securing further funding from other agencies to develop the medical application of the technology.



### Follow-on fund

Mary McDonagh [mary.mcdonagh@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:mary.mcdonagh@bbsrc.ac.uk) or Adam Bowen [adam.bowen@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:adam.bowen@bbsrc.ac.uk)  
visit the website: <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/commercialisation/follow-on.aspx>

Designed to encourage the development of a new business, building on previously funded BBSRC research, around a technological idea developed by the fellow. Enterprise Fellowships are Funded by BBSRC and delivered by the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

## Eligibility for Enterprise Fellowships

Academic and research staff and postgraduates with relevant experience are eligible to apply if employed by a UK university or a BBSRC-strategically funded institute.

### Information:

- A year's salary to provide time to develop a full business plan and seek investment.
- Access to mentors, business experts and professional advisors.
- Business training to help develop the required skills.

## CASE STUDY

### DR ANDREW ALMOND – CONFORMETRIX

Dr Almond's unique technology, to determine the dynamic 3D shapes of drug molecules, is the culmination of a large body of work produced during a BBSRC David Phillips Fellowship. Within the space of 3 years, Dr Almond's research has gone from laboratory concept to the edge of commercial reality, which promises to have a substantial contribution to drug discovery and, ultimately, patient health.

His research group's discovery of the flexible 3D molecular shape of hyaluronan quickly led to a UK patent and the all-important 'proof of concept' that their new methodology could be generalised to any small flexible molecules, such as antibiotics and hormones. With the support of two Follow on Fund awards and a BBSRC/RSE Enterprise Fellowship, Dr Almond has made rapid progress towards commercialisation and, with his colleague Dr Charles Blundell, formed the spin out company Conformetrix to exploit the technology. They went on to raise seed funding from Aquarius Equity Partners.

Most recently Conformetrix and AstraZeneca have signed a research collaboration agreement under which Conformetrix's proprietary NMR-based technology will be applied across AstraZeneca's pre-clinical therapeutic pipeline to enhance lead discovery and hit identification



### Enterprise Fellowships

Alex Chaix [alex.chaix@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:alex.chaix@bbsrc.ac.uk) or Faith Smith [faith.smith@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:faith.smith@bbsrc.ac.uk)

or visit the website: <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/commercialisation/enterprise-fellowships.aspx>