Fostering bilateral and multilateral research ecosystems in Engineering Biology pump priming scheme

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Frequently Asked Questions will be regularly updated to ensure transparency. Please check back regularly or get in touch with us at uk-grants-eb@international.ac.uk. if you can't find the answer to your question

APPLICATION

1. **Q: I'm having trouble viewing the online application form**

   A: The application form has been created on UUKi's grant management platform, Good Grants. To view this in the platform and apply, you will need to register as a user. You can download a read-only version of the application on the call webpage. If you are having trouble viewing this, please email the UUKi Partnerships Team: uk-grants-eb@international.ac.uk.

2. **Q: Who should submit the application and who is the responsible signatory?**

   A: The Lead Applicant, namely the person who will be most closely involved with the delivery of the proposed project at the UK higher education institution (HEI), should complete and submit the application form. However, please note that the Lead Applicant must obtain the appropriate level of institutional sign-off (this will depend on the UK HEI's internal approval processes) and name them in your application form. This institutional sign-off contact will be invited to review and approve your application in Good Grants. They must approve your application before the submission deadline.

3. **Q: Will there be a second call for proposals?**

   A: No, there is no planned second round for the pump priming scheme. However, a call for proposals for a researcher mobility scheme between the UK and either Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands or Sweden is expected to be launched in January 2027.

4. **Q: When will I receive the Terms and Conditions for the scheme?**

   A: You will receive an Offer of award letter (which includes Terms and Conditions) if your application is successful. This must be reviewed and signed before any activity can begin.

5. **Q: Do I need to confirm the details of the individual researchers planning to be included in the scheme as part of my application?**

   A: You need to provide the Name, Role, and a very brief explanation of the role of staff connected to the funded project in the application form.

ELIGIBLE PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

1. **Q: Is there a list of eligible / recognised partner organisations? Are there any that are out of scope?**

   A: The partner organisation must be based in either Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands or Sweden and be eligible to bid for Horizon Europe funding.

   Applications are open to UK HEIs to apply with existing, recently-established, or dormant partners that are academic institutions, organisations or companies in either Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands or Sweden.

2. **Q: Are there set criteria for what would constitute a 'partner organisation', i.e. does there need to be a formal agreement in place (e.g. MoU)?**

   A: Having a formal agreement in place is not necessary but a certain level of prior relationship between the Lead Applicant at the UK HEI and the counterpart at the partner organisation is required. In the context of recently-established partnerships, these would be those where the work is in its formative stages, and conversations about a project idea have taken place. It is for institutions to determine what constitutes a 'partner' for their institution and purposes, and therefore which of their Danish, German, Dutch or Swedish partnership(s) they would want to further develop through the use of the funding. Lead Applicants are, however, encouraged to take note of the selection criteria (Strategic Partnership Fit, Project Fit, Deliverability and Horizon Europe alignment), when considering which organisations to engage with through this scheme. For example, you will need to showcase as part of the application form how this funding will help increase the activity in the short-term and how this funding will contribute to longer term partner activity and engagements (see selection criteria 'Strategic Partnership fit').

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

1. **Q: Who is responsible for arranging travel and accommodation?**

   A: The Lead UK HEI will be the award holder and will be responsible for administering the funding in accordance with the Offer of award letter (which includes Terms and Conditions); this includes arranging travel and accommodation.

   UUKi would strongly advise flexible tickets being purchased as if arrangements need to be amended for any reason (including those due to unforeseen circumstances) then no further funding will be granted to replace the lost costs. Receipts should be kept in case of any future programme audit by BIST.

2. **Q: Will the researchers and research related staff travelling need a visa? Which process should I follow?**

   A: The Lead Applicant at the UK HEI will take responsibility for ensuring that all appropriate visa and immigration requirements are fully complied with. If researchers and research related staff require a visa to travel to Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands or Sweden, the UK HEI will ensure that they meet all relevant immigration requirements.

   If you have any particular concerns about visas or entry into your partner country, you should contact the relevant embassies. The international office at your partner organisation may also be able to advise.

3. **Q: Who is responsible for arranging insurance for any travel in the case that the application is successful?**

   A: Lead Applicants need to ensure that their UK HEI and partner have adequate insurance as appropriate as UUKi cannot take responsibility for any issues which may arise while travelling during the activity period. Lead Applicants will accept full responsibility for all aspects of the mobility and ensure appropriate insurance for any risks associated with taking part in travelling abroad, including all unexpected and uncontrollable events. UUKi will not be liable for the consequences of any such risks, or any costs incurred.

4. **Q: What is covered under travel costs?**

   A: You can claim for standard class/economy rail and flight fares. Travel via any other class will not be covered.

RESEARCHERS

1. **Q: How are the costs allocated?**

   A: Proposals should be for up to a maximum of £20,000. UUKi expects to make around 30 awards altogether, but this is highly dependent on the number of applications and the amount of funding requested. Costs beyond this limit are not covered.

2. **Q: Could we cover the costs of other researchers not from our partner country?**

   A: We recognise that Horizon Europe involves multilateral partnership building, however, the main objective of the pump priming funding is to advance bilateral research partnerships. Where partners from any other of the other eligible countries (Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands or Sweden) participate, costs relating to this can be covered. However, you must be able to show that the main objective of your project remains advancing bilateral partnerships with your main partner and inclusion of a third country is strictly with the aim of building a consortia.

3. **Q: Is there a maximum number of researchers that can be funded as part of the scheme?**

   A: There is no cap on the number of researchers that can be included in a bid. It is therefore up to institutions to determine the activities that can feasibly be delivered within the time available, and that will most likely achieve the desired outcome/impact. UUKi will be looking to award a diverse range of institution types/models as part of this scheme so institutions are expected to prioritise applications that are most closely aligned to the call's objectives. We also encourage diversity within project teams, including researchers at different career stages, with meaningful involvement of early career researchers to strengthen skills development, networks, and future research capacity.

4. **Q: Must researchers and research related staff be employed permanently by the UK HEI applying?**

   A: Researchers should be employed at the Lead Applicant's UK HEI throughout the duration of the project. This may be on a permanent or other contractual basis, but must cover the full

funding period. Please note that salaries of the Lead Applicant and other permanent members of staff are not eligible expenses of the grant.

5. **Q. Which activity is in scope as part of the pump priming scheme; are there any activities that are out of scope?**

   A: Any activity that is undertaken should aim to respond to the objectives set out for the scheme which is to support the development of new, recently-established or dormant partnerships between the UK and either Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands or Sweden as they relate to research and/or innovation, with an end goal of submitting a Horizon Europe application building on the pump priming activities.

   Activities may include but are not limited to feasibility studies, project development workshops, application advice and training, partnership building, resource to develop an application for Horizon Europe participation.

   Due to the short timeframe by which projects need to be completed, such studies cannot involve lengthy processes for orders and/or approval (i.e., do not require consumables, do not require ethics for human subjects etc). Where studies require ethics approval, they must have already obtained necessary approvals according to institutional processes.

6. **Q: If we are the Lead applicant, are we expected to be the Project Coordinator on the upcoming Horizon calls?**

   A: The Lead Applicant from the UK HEI is expected to take the lead on the project and devote a set amount of their working hours to delivering this project. This should be in collaboration with either a Danish, German, Dutch or Swedish partner, and it is for the Lead Applicant at the UK HEI to lead the project and initiate the contact/ensure cohesiveness of the partnership and the project's work. In relation to the Horizon Europe application process that would follow this funding, it is up to the project team themselves to determine how best to structure the governance of their bid, in accordance with Horizon Europe eligibility criteria.

PAYMENTS

1. **Q: Will the payment be made to the Lead HEI or to the researcher or research related staff directly?**

A: Award funding will be transferred to the Lead UK HEI, who will make local arrangements with their researchers and research related staff for administering and managing the funding. The UK HEI will be required to raise one invoice after approval of the final project report and budget. The invoice must be issued on or before 31 March 2027.

2. **Q: Will the UK HEI be expected to continue to pay the researchers their regular salary?**

   A: Yes. The funding is designed to support an activity run through a UK HEI and its partner. Salary costs for permanent staff are not eligible to funded through this scheme.

3. **Q. When do I need to spend the funds by?**
   A. All funds need to be spent by 15 March 2027.

REPORTING

1. **Q: How often will I need to submit reports and invoices to UUKi and what accompanying documentation is needed?**

   A: The UK HEI that receives the funding will be responsible for submitting a report to confirm that activities have taken place. You will have to submit a light-touch interim report by 15 February 2027. A final report will be required by 15 March 2027, after the project has been completed. Both reports will be available on our grant management platform and will have to be completed and submitted via the platform.

   In order to track impact of the funding, we will reach out again six months and 12 months after the project end date to check on progress of your funding applications.

2. **Q: Do receipts have to be provided alongside the budget template to show proof of spend?**

   A: We do not require you to provide receipts as proof of spend. However, in the event of an audit we will require this, so please do keep them securely stored should we ask you to provide them. We also encourage you to check with your institution what is required internally for them to sign off on your spend.

3. **Q: What is the responsibility of the partner organisation?**

A: There is no set requirement for the partner organisation to submit separate reports, but they will be expected to input into the reporting carried out by the Lead UK HEI as and when necessary to contribute to the project outcomes.

3. **Q: Is there anything to consider/ be aware of in order to satisfy the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion requirements as part of my application?**

   A: Please follow the guidance set out in the application form. To help with addressing EDI (including gender) please refer to this Gender Equality Framework.

4. **Q. What are the Trusted Research principles that I need to be aware of?**

   A. Trusted Research is advice and guidance published jointly by NPSA and the NCSC which supports the integrity of the system of international research collaboration. Designed in partnership with the sector, it provides guidance to researchers, university staff and funding organisations to help keep sensitive research and intellectual property secure from theft, misuse or exploitation. You should be familiar with the principles and frameworks, which can be found using this website.

   Applicants are responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable legislation, regulatory requirements and institutional policies relevant to the proposed activity. This includes engagement with relevant processes at your university to ensure due diligence is undertaken and risk mitigations have been put in place.

   Applicants should consider whether their project involves:

   - Transfers of export-controlled data, technology, know-how or biological resources to partners outside of the UK
   - Research in the 17 sensitive areas of the economy under the National Security and Investment Act
   - Recruiting or moving researchers or postgraduate research students into a role in a technology-related field requiring an Academic Technology Approval Scheme certificate
   - Arrangements under which you may be at direction of a foreign power, as defined by the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme
   - Other sensitive or dual-use research

   Applicants are also encouraged to review:

   - UK strategic export controls - GOV.UK
   - National Security and Investment Act guidance

- Academic Technology Approval Scheme guidance
- Foreign Influence Registration Scheme guidance
- UUK guidance on managing risks in international research and innovation

For further information, applicants should seek guidance from their university research office. As part of the application process, applicants will also be required to confirm that they have followed their institution's relevant research security policies, procedures and approval processes prior to submission.