

FAQ Interdisciplinary Research Grants

Can management board and ECR management board members apply for funding?

Yes, management board members can be the named PI if the grant is led by an ECR on a fixed term contract. ECR-MB members are eligible to apply for funding.

Who can serve as a PI?

These grants are intended to support researchers in exploring new ideas. The application PI must be on an open-ended contract; however, we anticipate that in some scenarios a named ECR (potentially on a fixed term contract) is leading the day-to-day management of the project.

If your contract is due to end before the award is made, you should discuss the available options with your institution's research office. The grant provides up to £10,000 at 80% fEC, so it is unlikely to cover 100% of a researcher's salary as well as project consumables. In line with standard UKRI funding rules, at least 20% of the project costs must be covered by the host organisation.

When will award letters be issued?

Award letters for successful applicants are expected to be issued in mid to late September 2026.

When must funded projects start and finish?

Projects must begin within 1 to 3 months of the award letter being issued and may run for a maximum of 12 months.

For example, if an award letter is issued on 21 September 2026, the project must start between 21 October and 21 December 2026. Depending on the actual start date, the project would then need to be completed between 21 October and 21 December 2027.

Is the £10,000 funding available for multi-year projects?

No. Round 1 funding is capped at £10,000 per project and is intended for a single project with a maximum duration of 12 months.

Are there any restrictions on how the budget can be allocated between staff costs and direct costs?

No. The grant may be used to cover staff costs, consumables, or a combination of both. Applicants should allocate funds according to the needs of the proposed project.

Applications will be assessed on their feasibility and ability to deliver the proposed outcomes. Therefore, budgets that include only staff time or only consumables may be difficult to justify. Applicants are encouraged to discuss the most appropriate use of funds with their finance or research office.

Can NUCNet provide seeds for projects?

No. Sourcing and supplying seeds is the responsibility of the project team.

Can a PI submit more than one application?

A PI may only lead one application per funding call. However, an individual may be named as a collaborator or co-investigator on multiple applications.

Who should sign the lead institution's letter of support?

The letter of support should be signed by someone with the authority to accept the award terms and conditions on behalf of the organisation. This could be a representative from the research office, a Head of School, or another authorised signatory.

Will funded projects be subject to standard BBSRC terms and conditions?

Yes. Successful projects will be funded under the [UKRI/BBSRC Terms and Conditions for Research Grants](#), which apply to all organisations involved in the project, including collaborators.

Any award-specific terms and conditions will be detailed in the award letter issued to successful applicants.

Can companies apply for funding?



Website: <https://novelcropnetwork.ac.uk/> Email: novelcropnet@soton.ac.uk



Projects are expected to be led by an eligible academic institution. Industry partners are welcome to participate as collaborators.

Will there be future funding rounds?

Yes. This is the first funding call. A second funding round is planned for 2027.

Can NUCNet help researchers find collaborators?

Yes. NUCNet is keen to help connect researchers and partners with aligned interests and expertise.

Can the 20% fEC funding contribution from the project host institution be in-kind?

No. UKRI research councils' rules require the host institution to find the remaining 20% from its own resources.

If you are looking for collaborators, please contact the Network Manager at novelcropnet@soton.ac.uk and if we have the permission of relevant members to share their details, we will do this.



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