



20ALERT: Mid-range equipment initiative

Guidance notes

Application deadline

26th November 2020, 4pm

Summary

The 2020 ALERT call will fund mid-range equipment at a value of over £200k (inc. VAT) to enhance the capability of the UK research base in areas of science in UKRI-BBSRC's remit.

This document highlights further information to assist applicants in the preparation of applications.

Check list

Applicants should read all the call guidance and the separate 20ALERT call checklist carefully and ensure their submissions are compliant with the requirements of the call. Failure to comply with the guidance will result in the application being rejected without review.

Scope

- The majority of the user base for the equipment will be undertaking research in areas within UKRI-BBSRC remit and this is clearly evidenced in the Case for Support.
- If the expected user-base of the equipment significantly spans areas outside UKRI-BBSRC remit, upfront financial support has been secured in a proportionate way and UKRI-BBSRC has been contacted prior to submission
- The application must be for equipment and must not be a technology development or software development project.
- The application must not request more than one piece of equipment **UNLESS** you have contacted UKRI-BBSRC prior to submission e.g. for equipment that requires assembly or involves several components that constitute a single technology platform, and permission has been granted. See also point 5 below.
- The application must not exceed 12 months in duration and the grant must start by 1st August 2021 at the latest. No slippage will be allowed to this date, and grant extensions will not be allowed under any circumstances.
- The application presents evidence that the equipment would have appropriate professional/ technical support in the host institution and plans for the need for training and support of users.

- The application presents a case for multi-user and multi-project use of the equipment.

Finance

- Only costs under the 'Directly Incurred Equipment' heading are permitted. The application must not request costs for staff or other ineligible costs.
- The value of requested equipment must be **over £200k including VAT**. This value refers to the equipment costs **prior to the application of any discounts, institutional or partner contributions**, and does not include other eligible one-off costs such as initial service/ maintenance contracts.
- The funding requested on the Je-S application form (under the 'Directly Incurred Equipment' heading) should be the costs being sought from UKRI-BBSRC, net of any discounts and contributions from elsewhere (value in Column F of the Justification of Resources template). **Costs should be requested at 100%fEC.**
- The values in the Justification of Resources must match the quotes provided.
- The application should include at least 3 recent quotes (i.e. dated in the last 6 months at the time of the call closing date) for the equipment, or reasons not to include 3 quotes are clearly stated in the Cover Letter. All quotes must be provided in GBP. When quotes are not provided in GBP the conversion rate used at the time of submission must be clearly stated in the Justification of Resources.
- Details of funding offered, in-kind support, and any other collaborative activities to be conducted in support of the research, are provided where applicable.

Documentation

- The application must be submitted as a single Je-S form. This applies even if it involves two or more collaborating organisations, joint applications are not permitted.
- A list of all required documents is provided in this document

General Information

1. The capital equipment **budget for the 2020 ALERT call is envisaged to be £10M.**
2. The 2020 ALERT call will fund mid-range equipment at a value of over £200k (inc. VAT) to enhance the capability of the UK research base in areas of science in UKRI-BBSRC's remit. **For further detail please also refer to the call text and other associated call documents.**

Financial Information

3. Details of eligible and ineligible costs are provided below. All costs must be fully described and justified in the Justification of Resources (see [Justification of Resources](#) and the Cost summary table).

Eligible costs

4. The 2020 ALERT will **only** allow costs to be requested under the 'Directly Incurred Equipment' heading.

5. Costs such as initial installation or service maintenance contracts if they are one-off costs and part of the manufacturer's offer. Service maintenance contract costs should be part of the manufacturer's offer and are expected to be included in the equipment quotation.
6. Refurbishment or installation costs **may be eligible** under the scheme providing these are an **absolute requirement** for the proper functioning of the equipment (e.g. a ventilation system or cold room). These costs must be itemised in the application and fully justified. **You must contact us prior to submission if you intend to apply for these costs.**

Ineligible costs

7. The 2020 ALERT call does not support costs to undertake research or the development of new technologies or software packages.
8. Other maintenance costs apart of the costs referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6 are not eligible.
9. Support for running costs for usage of the equipment such as staff, consumables and longer term estate charges. They should be provided as host institution contribution(s) or sought on a project basis through research grant applications.
10. **Staff costs.** Commitments to staff posts for the running and maintenance of the equipment beyond the lifetime of the grant, as well as for the training of users (where applicable), should be provided in the form of host institution contribution(s).
11. Depreciation costs
12. Estate and indirect costs
13. Requests for multiple items of equipment that could be **funded individually or in clusters** on research project grants.
14. Requests for funding for equipment that is scheduled for market release **after** the call close date.

Financial contributions from the institution and from external sources

15. Contributions from the host institution(s) and/or other external sources are welcome but are not mandatory. Institutional commitments directed towards staff posts to fulfil aspects such as running and maintenance of the equipment, as well as training of users, are encouraged, as UKRI-BBSRC is unable to support them through this call. Contributions from external sources can be in kind (such as commitments to staff posts for the running and maintenance of the equipment, or the training of users) and/or financial (such as partial financing of the equipment).
16. Any financial and/or in-kind contributions must be secured at the time of application. For each contribution a **letter of support from the contributing party should be attached to the application**, detailing the type of support to be provided. Where contributions are coming from existing awards from other funder(s), a statement from the funder agreeing to the use of funds in this way must be provided. Applications that

are dependent on the outcome of requests to other funders to secure the required funding will be rejected.

Application procedure

17. Applications may involve a single institution or two or more acting in collaboration. However, **applications involving two or more collaborating organisations must be submitted as one using a single Je-S form**. Awards will be made to the submitting research organisation, which will subsequently own the equipment. Applications that involve investigators from different institutions that are not submitted on a single form **will be rejected**.
18. **As an individual you can only lead on one submitted application**. As principle investigator (PI) on one proposal you can still be member of a consortium on a different application as long as you do not take a leading role as PI. However, as such applications will be in direct competition this is not recommended unless the applications are in very different areas. Multiple applications involving the same (or very similar) consortia members (e.g. two applications involving the same group of investigators but different lead PIs) will be rejected.
19. An institution may submit more than one application but multiple applications from an institution for similar equipment **are strongly discouraged**. Applicants are advised to consult within their institution to identify mid-range equipment that is of strategic interest across departments, as applications are expected to evidence the wider context of the institutional environment.

Required documents

20. In addition to the completed Je-S pro-forma, the application should include the following attachments:

Attachment	Maximum page length (A4)	Guidance
Application Cover Letter (mandatory)	None	Applicants Declaration of Interests will need to be added to the Application Cover Letter. https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/documents/declarationofinterests-applicants-pdf/ If 3 quotes for the equipment requested could not be included applicants should give clear reasons in the Application Cover Letter.
Case for support (mandatory)	8 pages	See below for guidance

Justification of resources (mandatory)	2 pages	Justification of Resources should be covered on no more than 2 sides of A4 using the available template. Failure to address all aspects in full may result in the application being rejected. Applicants should also take into account the information provided for completing this section on the Je-S System Help pages (https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index.htm) (see -Standard Proposals> Case for Support and Attachments)
Data management plan (mandatory)	1 page	Applicants should explain how data from the new instrument will be captured, managed and made available. The data management plan should complement the Case for Support, addressing the challenges involved in data capture and maintenance and detailing how the necessary resource and skills to support data management will be made available.
Diagrammatic work plan (mandatory)	1 page	A diagrammatic chart outlining steps to be taken to realise the acquisition/ installation of the equipment, as well as any steps that need to be taken to train users and/ or staff.
CVs (mandatory)	2 pages each	Required for all named applicants and named research staff only. CVs for key technical staff can be included where appropriate although they are not mandatory. All CVs should be collated and uploaded as a single PDF.
Letters of support for institutional support and project partners (mandatory)	None	A letter of support is required from the institution and each external project partner providing a contribution, this includes financial and/or in-kind. This must clearly state the contribution value, any conditions, and their expectations from the award. Conditions and expectations cannot be contrary to UKRI grants Terms and Conditions. All letters should be on headed paper, dated within six months of the date of submission of the application and have the signature of the named contact in the partnering organisation. All letters of support should be collated into a single PDF before uploading.

Additional letters of support (optional)	None	A maximum of 5 additional relevant letters from scientific and other collaborators may also be attached. For example, this would include expressions of interest from the wider user community. All letters of support should be collated into a single PDF before uploading .
Equipment quotations	None	Three quotations should be provided. If it is not possible to obtain three quotations, applicants must explain why in the Application Cover Letter and will need to upload blank documents to satisfy the Je-S validation requirement.
Business cases (blank document)	1 page	Items over the OJEU threshold (£138,000 incl VAT) will not need an additional business case . Applicants will need to upload a blank document to satisfy the Je-S validation requirement.

UKRI-BBSRC recommends the use of typefaces Arial, Helvetica or Verdana and a strict minimum font size of 11 must be used for the entire Case for Support, Justification of Resources and CVs (excluding text on diagrams and the use of mathematical symbols).

A minimum of single line spacing and standard character spacing must be used. Margins must not be less than 2 cm.

Case for support

The following aspects should be covered on **no more than 8 sides of A4**. **All requirements must be addressed in full**, using the headings/ sub-headings provided in the template.

Part 1- Equipment suitability and institutional environment

Case for the proposed equipment:

Briefly describe the rationale for the selection of equipment and research benefits that will be gained from it.

Previous track record of the applicant(s)

Including a demonstration of excellence in UKRI-BBSRC relevant research for the entire research team. This should be set in the context of the equipment being requested and its intended use. This may be demonstrated through a strong track record of research council funding or other suitable measures. The inclusion of experience directly relevant to this call, e.g. a track record in managing facilities, is strongly encouraged.

Institutional environment

Including the following aspects:

- Summary of existing facilities in the institution(s), including details of related/ complementary equipment (existing or where confirmation of purchase is provided) and technical support.
- Summary of existing facilities elsewhere, including reasons why they cannot be utilised and identification of similar instruments overseas or in industry with which collaborations might be made.
- Supporting environment, including housing, laboratory space, and technical support to be made available in support of the equipment.
- Clear and specific plans for maintenance and long term support of the equipment.

Support for Research Technical Professionals

Arrangements for professional development of technical staff, including appropriate plans to ensure support and career development for staff involved in managing and supporting equipment. Applicants should detail how staff roles will support the equipment and detail how these staff members will be supported in their careers.

Please refer to the [UK Research and Innovation statement of expectations for technology/skills specialists](#) and UKRI-BBSRC's website <https://UKRI-BBSRC.ukri.org/skills/developing-careers/research-technicians-technology-skills-specialists/> and the Technician Commitment <https://www.ukri.org/news/technicians-receive-support-from-the-uks-largest-research-funder1/>.

Contributions from host institutions, external project partner(s) or funders

Provide details of funding offered, in-kind support, and any other collaborative activities to be conducted in support of the research, where applicable. Host institution contributions can include contribution towards the equipment, services costs and staff time to run and maintain the equipment.

Part 2- Proposed research and wider benefits

Detailed plan of research

This should include a description of the projects that will be supported by the equipment with sufficient experimental detail to allow the Panel to assess the quality of the science, including preliminary results where possible. Consideration should be given to any ethical and societal issues relating to research using the equipment. State any relevance to the [UKRI-BBSRC Delivery Plan](#) and [UKRI-BBSRC strategic priorities](#).

Contribution to the physical research infrastructure

Including:

- How the equipment will improve or complement the existing facilities in the department(s) or institution(s).
- How the equipment will contribute to the research infrastructure of the Institution and beyond (short and long term).
- Whether the equipment will be used for multidisciplinary purposes.
- How the equipment can contribute to training activities.
- If computing equipment is requested alongside instrumentation, why there is a need for enhanced data analysis/management with the associated purchase of the data-generating platform.

Benefits to a wider user community

Describe how the equipment will benefit a broader UK user community and how this will be delivered, including how any access by external collaborators (including industry), will be managed.

Post Award

21. UKRI-BBSRC will decide the final funding value of each grant. This decision is final.
22. Following the decision, successful applicants must seek value for money in their choice of equipment, through competitive tender where appropriate. Applicants whose external support takes the form of a supplier's discount are reminded that there may be a procurement risk in seeking discounts from a specific supplier prior to a full tendering process. Where applicable, they are advised to discuss the management of any such risk with their institution procurement staff before submitting the bid.
23. There can be **no purchase of equipment prior to a grant being formally announced and the offer letter being received**, even if this is at the applicant's

own financial risk. This will result in withdrawal of the grant. Expenditure may be incurred prior to the start of the grant and be subsequently charged to the grant, provided that it does not precede the date of the offer letter.

24. Managing VAT exceptions on equipment is the responsibility of the Research Organisation.
25. Applicants and institutions are reminded that it is their responsibility to comply with all relevant national and EU legislation, and the institution's own financial policy and procedures regarding the procurement of equipment. Accepted procurement best practice in the higher education sector must be observed. For all equipment and services where the contract value is greater than £25,000, professionally qualified procurement staff must be consulted before the procurement process begins and applicants are advised to consult with their local purchasing office.
26. A sample of successful applications may be audited.

Useful links

See our full [terms and conditions](#) on the UKRI website.

See our [grants guide](#) for further information.

Log into [Je-S](#)

Contact [Je-S Helpdesk](#)

Contact

Please provide as much information as possible in your email to ensure a rapid response. For call-specific queries please email: bbsrcalert@bbsrc.ac.uk

For Je-S system queries please email: jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org