

2022 Bioinformatics and Biological Resources Fund – Assessment Criteria



Biotechnology and
Biological Sciences
Research Council

For each proposal, Panel members will consider each of the following criteria, and decide on a single quality score.

Assessment Criteria	Description
Scientific excellence and strategic relevance of the resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the resource meets the highest international standards of current resource provision in its field. High performance against this factor will indicate a project of the highest standard, competitive with the best activity anywhere in the world. • It is expected that, except in the most unusual circumstances (which should be clearly explained) any proposal that goes on to be funded will be at least competitive with other comparable work internationally and, unless the overall score is moderated by other competitiveness factors, will be well above this standard. • The proposed resource should be either unique or complementary to similar existing resources. The proposal itself does not need to demonstrate uniqueness if it is solely to maintain an existing (unique) resource of the highest international excellence. • The extent to which the proposal addresses the research and policy priority areas of BBSRC as outlined in the recently published BBSRC Strategic Delivery Plan.
Fit to the scope of the call	<p>The extent to which the proposal is focussed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment and maintenance of a new and innovative resource that will be beneficial to a broader BBSRC user base. While support for resources through the BBR Fund are intended to mainly benefit UK researchers, it is recognised that internationally leading resources will also have significant portions of their user base outside of the UK. Resources with a significant impact and demand from the available potential users within

	<p>the UK research base fit the scope of the opportunity better than resources that serve a broad international community in which the UK has a relatively small user base.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maturation and subsequent maintenance of a project-based resource into a community-based one. • Further enhancement and/or essential maintenance of an existing community resource, with well-established access mechanisms. Further enhancement may be to increase its relevance to a broader BBSRC user community, e.g. enhancing utility by enabling the resource to meet FAIR principles. Essential maintenance of a high performing international excellent resource is within the scope of the call. • The association and/or integration of distinct resources, that will enhance their utility and create an upgraded resource with a greater value than the sum of the parts.
<p>Potential for economic and social impact beyond the academic community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the output(s) from the proposed resource will contribute knowledge that show direct potential for economic return or societal benefits to the UK. • Proposals are expected to demonstrate clear plans with recorded milestones and timelines for the associated activities to develop economic, commercial and societal impacts. • Methods of engagement and measures of success should be outlined including how these will be regularly reviewed throughout the project.
<p>Cost effectiveness, particularly considerations for long-term sustainability beyond BSBRC funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the resources requested, relative to the anticipated scientific gains, represents a high impact investment of BBSRC funds. • Consideration for the long-term sustainability options for the resource beyond BBSRC needs to be outlined for all resources. The level of support the resource is projected to require for expected maintenance and/or subsequent maturation/enhancement activities should be considered.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing resources in particular need to show clear consideration of feasible models of cost recovery to support at least part of the resource. 	
	New Resources	Existing Resources
<p>Quality of the overall arrangements for resource management, advisory functions, as well as user access and engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal should outline the management plans for the resource. This should include the project management and advisory structures. The team should possess the appropriate combination of skills, expertise and experience to deliver the resource described. The extent to which the promise of the proposed approach aligns with the acquisition of data/materials needed to create the resource. Suitable plans for user access arrangements should be described. Any arrangements described for non-academic researchers should be considered carefully, where relevant. In any case, academic researchers should be the primary beneficiaries of a resource. Plans for continued community engagement, uptake and development of the resource should be discussed, including specific strategies to build user engagement necessary to realise the aims of the resource. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal should include management plans for the resource including any proposed changes in line with the proposed maintenance and enhancement of the resources as appropriate. This should include the project management and advisory structures. Consideration as to whether the existing advisory structure is still fit for purpose should be demonstrated, taking into account resource evolution. The team should possess the appropriate combination of skills, expertise and experience to deliver the resource described and demonstrate effective management of the existing resource. The extent to which the approach to the acquisition of data/materials needed to enhance or maintain the resource should be discussed. Previous and future user access arrangements should be documented. Any arrangements described for non-academic researchers should be considered carefully, where relevant. In any case, academic researchers should be the

		<p>primary beneficiaries of a resource.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence and forward looking plans for continued community engagement, uptake and enhancement of the resource should be discussed. • Plans for continued community engagement, uptake and development of the resource should be discussed, including specific strategies to build user engagement necessary to realise the aims of the resource. Evidence of user engagement and feedback that has been incorporated into the planned work would be of value to proposals.
<p>Need / demand and potential benefit to the UK academic research community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal should provide evidence of potential need and/or demand for the proposed resource by UK academic researchers working on problems largely within BBSRC remit. New resources may demonstrate evidence of need/demand through letters of support from members of the scientific community the resource is designed to serve, or through active engagement with their broader community through meetings, data gathering or pilot projects. Particularly proposals for new resources should have consulted their prospective community prior to application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal should provide evidence of ongoing need and/or demand for the proposed resource by UK academic researchers working on problems largely within BBSRC remit. Existing resources should demonstrate evidence to an appropriate level of usage by the research community the resource is designed to serve, including whether the resource has achieved the level of engagement it originally anticipated, and consideration is given how the additional investment would change this.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals are expected to demonstrate potential benefits to the bioscience research community of the resource in question, and the high-quality science they will underpin. In addition to the Case for Support, it is expected that any letters of support from potential users will explain clearly how the proposed resource will impact and benefit their research and the research of the wider scientific community they belong to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals for maintenance of existing resources should provide evidence of why the resource will continue to benefit the research community in its current form, relative to emerging new scientific discoveries within its community. It should be clear what steps have been taken to ensure the resource remains “state-of-the-art”, not just in technical aspects but also with respect to accessibility, development of staff, etc. Proposals are expected to outline evidence for the benefits to the bioscience research community of the resource in question, and the high-quality science they have supported and will continue to underpin. In addition to the Case for Support, it is expected that any letters of support from previous users and potential new users will explain clearly how the resource impacts and benefits their research and research by the wider scientific community they belong to and where applicable how proposed enhancements of the resource will benefit their research.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relative importance of a resource to a particular community should be considered, whilst the overall size of the community served by a particular resource should not be seen as the sole indicator for potential or demonstrated impact. For example, particular resources that impact a relatively small number of researchers but encompasses the majority of potential users and has a significant benefit to that research community should be encouraged. 	