

Introduction

The University operates a central Research Development Fund (RDF) (officially launched in August 2011) with the aim of strengthening BU's research culture by providing selective support to research initiatives considered to be of strategic importance to BU. There are two strands to the RDF: i) Small Grants Scheme (up to £2k per application); and ii) Large Collaborative Grants Scheme (up to £25k per annum, must include two or more Schools). It is envisaged that each year up to 20 small grants will be awarded and one large collaborative grant.

The fund is available for use by any BU academic staff member (normally restricted to academics based in Schools).

The RDF is sponsored by the PVC (Research, Enterprise and Internationalisation) and managed by the Research Development Unit (RDU). The decision-making body will be the University Research and Enterprise Forum (UREF). Appeals should be made to the PVC (Research, Enterprise and Internationalisation).

RDF – Large Collaborative Grants Scheme

Following the first round of RDF Large Grant Scheme Funding in December 2011 there are still funds available so a second round has been announced with a closing date of 17 February 2012.

Academic staff wishing to apply must submit an application form (available from the BU Research Blog) to the PVC (Research, Enterprise and Internationalisation) via the RDU by the scheme deadline:

- 17 February (2nd Round - 2012 only)

There will normally be one award made per annum, however, the UREF reserves the right to award more or less per annum depending on the number, quality and value of applications.

Applicants will be informed of the decision by the RDU, usually within four weeks of the deadline.

The RDF – Large Collaborative Grants Scheme aims to provide funding for the development of large-scale, complex, inter/multi-disciplinary collaborative research activities leading to external funding. Applications must involve academic staff from at least two BU Schools. Priority will be given to those that meet the following criteria:

- In line with BU's emerging Research Themes
- Include external organizations (particularly SMEs and/or international organizations)
- In line with the strategic priorities of major funding bodies (such as the UK research councils, European Commission, etc)
- Clearly beneficial to BU's submission to REF2014

Projects must have clear, tangible deliverables and it must be explicit how it will lead directly to future proposals for research funding.

Examples of costs that can be included are:

- Pilot projects
- Pump-priming

- Meeting expenses
- Travel to proposed collaborators
- Attendance at external networking events with the aim of expanding the network
- Preparation of specialist material or data
- Short-term Research Assistant support or replacement teaching
- Consumables and equipment (providing it is clear these would not normally be purchased by the School)
- Fees for external proposal support and review (such as GrantCraft)

Projects must be complete by July of the current academic year. Awards made will be up to £25k per application and will only cover direct costs (i.e. overheads and established staff costs will not be reimbursed). Applications need to include a precise breakdown of costs calculated using full economic costing (fEC) – this will be calculated by the CRE Operations team. No applications for retrospective funding will be considered.

Payments will be made in accordance with current BU financial regulations. Awards will be administered by the RDU in conjunction with the relevant Schools.

Projects should aim to start from mid-March of the current academic year and must be complete by July.

All expenditure must be committed in the current academic year; it will not be possible to carry funding forward into the next academic year.

Successful applicants will be required to submit a detailed end of award report (using the form available from the BU Research Blog) to the PVC (Research, Enterprise and Internationalisation) within 8 weeks of the end of the award. The end of award report must include the final expenditure against the original budget. The end of award report will be made available to the UREF to help determine future rounds of the RDF – Large Collaborative Grants Scheme. Failure to provide a report will debar award holders from applying for future grants. The RDU will contact award holders one year from the submission of the end of award report for an update on research activity.

Appeals should be made to the PVC (Research, Enterprise and Internationalisation) via the RDU.

All of the forms and further information on the scheme is available from the BU Research Blog.

The process map is available in Annex 2.