Fusion Investment Fund Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
December 2012

The following abbreviations are used throughout this document to refer to the strands: Staff Mobility & Networking (SMN), Co-Creation & Co-Production (CCCP), Study Leave (SL)

This FAQ document is divided in to the followings sections to help you:

General	
What is the purpose of the fund?	The fund exists to support a range of practical initiatives to provide pump-priming around Fusion.
Who is responsible for the fund?	Professor Matthew Bennett (PVC) is responsible for the fund on behalf of the University Executive Team (UET) and Chairs all three selection panels. Sam Furr is the fund administrator the main point of contact for any Fusion Investment Fund queries.
Is the fund open to everybody?	Yes, all strands of the fund are open to every member of academic staff at BU. There are specific requirements for some of the strands which can be found on the Fusion Investment Fund webpages . Visiting Professors/Fellows are not eligible to apply, but may be associated with applications indirectly.
What is a Principle Investigator and how is this different from a Co-Investigator	A Principle Investigator is the lead academic on a project, responsible for submitting the application and subsequently taking a lead in managing it. A Co-Investigator is another member of staff who is contributing or collaborating on a project. Where a submission is being developed by a team of individuals they will need to nominate a Principle Investigator for the purposes of managing the submission.
How long before a successful applicant can apply again to one of the strands?	Applicants can apply to the next call; there is a call in December 2012 and another in June 2013.
Do funds awarded from the FIF contribute to my Schools Research & Enterprise targets?	No, as they are internal funds not external sources. Staff should also be aware that in seeking promotion or performance increments internal grant income such as that obtained from the FIF is not viewed as favourable as income generated externally.
Have any changes been made to the	Yes the CCCP Strand agreed to reduce the minimum value of bids to £5K in the first round (July 2012) and subsequently to £2k

different strand since they first went live?	in future calls. The SL Committee recognises that in some cases it may need to make grants larger than £15k in order to support some periods of study leave. Applicants requesting larger sums should make this clear on the application form and in the case of support.

Application Process

What support is available to help me write an application?	There is one generic session on writing the perfect proposal for FIF in advance of the deadline (see the BU Research Blog for dates). Committee members are happy to be contacted for advice on making an application and can comment on eligibility. Full details of Committee members can be found on the Fusion Investment Fund webpages.
What is meant on the form by Benefits/Impacts?	This relates to the benefits or impact on BU stakeholders. These can be broadly defined as students, staff, external professions, industry and society at large. A project should be able to deliver impact or benefits across a range of different stakeholder groups but is not necessarily expected to benefit all potential stakeholders.
Do applications need to be costed at full economic cost (fEC)?	No, established staff time and overheads are **not** to be costed into proposals and as such you do not need to seek costings from RKE Operations. Established staff will need to give an estimate of the amount of their time that will be allocated to the project in their applications however. If in doubt discuss this with RKE Operations. Salary costs for new posts such a research assistants should be included.
I don't have detailed costings, does this matter?	Yes, you must have precise and detailed costing for proposals based on the minimum expenditure necessary to execute a project. If in doubt discuss this with RKE Operations and please bear in mind that basic principles of 'value for money' will apply at all times.
Do I need to justify the resources requested?	Yes, you must clearly state why expenditure or resource is required. Panels may decide to fund a project but to strike out anything in their view that is 'wasteful or unnecessary' expenditure.
Can I use a CCCP application to obtain capital investment in equipment and who will have control of that equipment?	In theory, small pieces of equipment and capital investment can be funded from this strand of the Fusion Investment Fund. However the fund is to facilitate and pump-prime activity. For example, if you wanted to invest in a new laboratory or digital editing suite, it would be more appropriate to use the fund to develop the 'prospectus' or 'pitch' for that investment to be obtained from an external source (e.g. donor or research bid) than to apply for the funds directly. Smaller piece of equipment bought as part of a project will be at the disposal of the project and under the control of the Principal Investigator during the duration of the project and subsequently managed as any other capital purchase would be within a School, that is at the disposal of all staff/students.
Do I need to provide a CV and demonstrate a track record in a particular activity?	For the SMN and CCCP strands, submission of a CV is not required. While a track record may in certain circumstances strengthen a case for support, the fund is about investing in innovation and new departures so a track record in a given area is not essential. For the SL strand applicants are requested to provide a CV alongside their application form and any letters from host institutions, where relevant.
Do I need references for applications to	No, references are only needed for a SL application.

the SMN and CCCP strands?	
On the application form, I am asked for two references. I wish to apply for the Study Leave Strand, who can I ask to be a referee?	Your line manager should be a referee as the fund needs to ensure that the impact of any study leave is managed. A second referee should be a member of your schools management team, for example Dean, Deputy Dean Research/Education or a senior Professor who is familiar with your research.
How will the references be obtained and will they remain confidential? Why are they needed?	The Fusion Investment Fund Resources Administrator (Sam Furr) will email referees following receipt of your application. References will only be seen by the Chair of the SL Panel (Professor Matthew Bennett, PVC) and used to verify the principle which underpins this funding strand namely that: 'no student or fellow staff member will be adversely disadvantaged by the study leave applied for'.
Can I make more than one successful application to the same funding strand?	You can in theory apply to every call of a particular strand and be successful; the merit of the proposal is the key.
Can I apply to a different strand of the fund at the same time and link the applications?	Yes, but please be aware that obtaining funding from one strand does not guarantee funding from another. For example, you could apply for a period of Study Leave and link this to an SMN application to provide additional support for travel for example, or to enhance scale and scope of your proposed activity.

Assessment Process

Who will assess my application?	Each of the three funding strands is managed by a Committee chaired by Professor Matthew Bennett (PVC) and consists of a range of self-nominated colleagues from across BU at a range of different staff grades. The composition of each panel is as follows and all are administered by Sam Furr:

Staff Mobility and Networking Committee	Matthew Bennett (Chair), Mark Hadfield, Feng Tian, Ann Bevan, Richard Shipway, Christina Koutra, Timothy Etheridge
Study Leave Committee	Matthew Bennett (Chair), Adele Ladkin, Stuart Allan, Zulfiqar Khan, Keith Hayman, Jane Murphy, Jim Andrews, Deborah Sadd
Co-Creation and Co-Production Committee	Matthew Bennett (Chair), Anthea Innes, Holger Schutkowski, Hugh Chignell, Caroline Jackson, Heather Hartwell, Susan Horner, Richard Scullion, Hong Bui, Sarah Bate
Additional/Reserve Panel Members	Dimitrios Buhalis, Stephen Page, Jim Roach, Jan Wiener, Ann Hemingway, Karen Thompson, Simon Thompson, Fran Biley, Christos Gatzidis, Miguel Moital, Huiping Xian, Mark Brisbane.

How often do the Panel meet?	The panels meet three times for each call: 1) Prior to the deadline to confirm the assessment criteria, FAQs, committee working methods, etc.; 2) Shortly after the deadline a moderation panel meeting will be held to assess the applications and select projects to fund; and, 3) After the awards have been made to review the process.
There is no-one from my School on a panel and no subject specialist, why? Will this affect my chance of success?	The panels are academic panels and not subject specific, representative of many external funding bodies. They provide a broad assessment of applications and it is therefore imperative your proposal should be accessible to a broad readership. Panel members do not represent specific academic areas and have been instructed to disregard School/Group loyalties in making assessments.
What is the function of additional/reserve panel members?	These people will be drafted into a moderation committee meeting should it be in danger of not being quorate. For example, panel members who have submitted an application to the strand they are part of, or who have a conflict of interest (for example, a personal relationship with one of the applicants) are unable to take part in the moderation meeting.
Is the assessment process confidential?	The assessment process is confidential as are the contents of any unsuccessful proposal. Successful applications will be made available in due course advertised on the [BU Research Blog](#), unless there are reasons of confidentiality not to do so. The Panel Chair will agree this with the applicant at the time the funding is awarded.
What are the detailed assessment criteria for each strand?	All criteria are equally weighted and will be scored out of 4 [Weak, Fair, Good, Excellent].

Study Leave Assessment Criteria	
1. Quality of Proposal & Sustainability	Basic assessment of the case of support: how well written is it? Is it convincing? The principle here is that irrespective of how good an idea is it won't be funded unless the application/case is well-made, identifies novelty, is convincing and therefore competitive both within BU and beyond. The project must be sustainable beyond the life of the funding.
2. Project Viability	A project/application should meet the technical requirements as set out in the FIF Study Leave Funding Policy, primarily that no '*student or colleague should be adversely disadvantaged by the leave of absence*'. The panel will look particularly to see that letters of invitations and support are provided to show clearly that resourcing issues have been considered and managed accordingly.
3. Contribution to Fusion	The proposed period of study leave must contribute to Fusion. Proposals need not be perfectly balanced but must show a trajectory or path towards a Fusion contribution. Equally a proposal should not solely be about research, education or practice. A proposal should demonstrate alignment to School and Corporate Strategy as set out in [BU2018](#).
4. Impact or Benefits to Stakeholders	This relates to the outcomes from a period of study leave and the return on investment derived there from. In this context 'return' is defined in the broadest of terms and not necessarily solely in terms of money but across a wide range of Fusion based activity. This could also be re-phrased in terms of 'value for money'. Stakeholders are defined as: BU staff, BU students, BU community, external stakeholders and society at large. There should be a clear dissemination strategy for the

	work/learning obtained so that it can be shared by all at BU. The panel will look favourably, as evidence of commitment, on applicants who also secure or are applying for other funds to support their proposed period of study leave especially those externally sourced.
5. Value to the Individual	The panel is keen to recognise and acknowledge the importance of the award to the individual's career and the opportunities for development, progression/promotion and enhanced qualification that it will provide. This is true at all stages of the career journey.

Co-Creation & Co-Production Criteria	
1. Quality of Proposal	Basic assessment of the case of support: how well written is it? Is it convincing? The principle here is that irrespective of how good an idea is it won't be funded unless the application/case is well-made, identifies novelty, is convincing and therefore competitive both within BU and beyond.
2. Contribution to Fusion	How will the proposed project drive co-creation/production within/between BU Stakeholders? Stakeholders are defined as: BU Staff, BU Students, the BU Community, External/Professional Stakeholders and Society at Large. Proposals need not be perfectly balanced but show a trajectory/path towards a Fusion contribution. Equally they should not solely be about research, education or practice. Projects that help drive inter-disciplinary collaboration across BU and beyond will be favoured. A proposal should demonstrate alignment to School and Corporate Strategy as set out in BU2018.
3. Impact or Benefits to Stakeholders	This refers to the outcomes from project and the return on investment. In this context 'return' is defined in the broadest of terms and not necessarily solely in terms of money, but it could be equally expressed in terms of 'value'. There should be a clear dissemination strategy for the work/learning obtained so that it can be shared by several stakeholder groups. Plans for communication about the project outside BU will also be viewed favourably.
4. Innovation & Sustainability	The fund is looking to invest in innovative and novel ideas which have the potential to have a large impact on BU Stakeholders. Proposals by new academics will be viewed favourable by the panel. The fund is about 'pump-priming' or 'facilitating' so sustainability beyond the life-time of the project is an important element. What funds, opportunities, and follow-on initiatives will the project/investment unlock or lead to? Projects that have a clear set of auditable deliverables and future outcomes which can be tracked will be favoured over those that don't and do not set out a clear set of deliverables. The project must be sustainable beyond the life of the funding.
5. Feasibility	Is the project deliverable and can the outcomes be achieved within the requested resource envelope and the timescales set out in the proposal? In the spirit of 'pump-priming' how will the

		project leaver additional resources to help deliver the project? Is the project contingent on those resources?

Staff Mobility & Networking Criteria	
1. Quality of Proposal	Basic assessment of the case of support: how well written is it? Is it convincing? The principle here is that irrespective of how good an idea is it won't be funded unless the application/case is well-made, identifies novelty, is convincing and therefore competitive both within BU and beyond.
2. Proposal Content	The assessment panel are looking particularly for proposals which deliver two or more of the following: research/educational/practice collaborations; international partnerships around research, education and staff/student exchange; drive international recruitment and internationalisation; enhance international student experience; and provide training or enterprise opportunities. Projects that drive cross-BU collaboration and inter-disciplinary activity will be actively favoured.
3. Contribution to Fusion	How will the proposed project drive co-creation/production within/between BU Stakeholders? Stakeholders are defined as: BU Staff, BU Students, the BU Community, External/Professional Stakeholders and Society at Large. Proposals need not be perfectly balanced but show a trajectory/path towards a Fusion contribution. Equally they should not solely be about research, education or practice. Projects that help drive inter-disciplinary collaboration across BU and beyond will be favoured. A proposal should demonstrate alignment to School and Corporate Strategy as set out in BU2018.
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Feedback & Reporting Process

How will I find out the outcome of my submission?	You will receive an email from Professor Matthew Bennett (PVC) normally within six weeks of the submission date. For the SMN and CCCP strands there are three possible outcomes: (1) grant awarded; (2) grant not awarded, but re-submission to a later or different call is encouraged; and (3) grant not awarded and re-submission of the current proposal is not encouraged. In the case of the SL strand there are four possible outcomes: (1) study leave grant awarded; (2) study leave grant awarded subject to clarification of key points/arrangement; (3) study leave grant not award, but re-submission to a later call is encouraged; and (4) study leave grant not awarded and re-submission of the current proposal is not encouraged without a major re-think.
What sort of feedback will I receive?	In the formal result letter you will receive the Panel's assessment of your application against the criteria and some basic Panel comments. Each Panel has nominated members, to provide oral feedback if requested. Their contact details will be provided in the result letter and it is up to the applicant to make an appointment with one of the named contacts to receive oral feedback in person. Detailed written feedback will not be provided.
Can I appeal a decision?	Yes, there is an appeals process, but to be clear grounds for appeal are based on the fact that due process has not been followed or that there is substantive and demonstrable evidence that your application did not receive a fair hearing. Appeals that simply challenge the opinion of the panel will not be allowed; material irregularity or evidence of prejudice/inequality are the only grounds. Appeals should be made to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Tim McIntyre-Bhatty via the Resources Administrator (FIF) Sam Furr within four weeks of the date of the result letter.

Project Management Process

How will the funds be administered?	Payments will be made in accordance with current BU financial regulations. RKEO will set up an activity code for the project and the School will be responsible for administering the expenditure using this code.
How will funds be managed if there are more than one School involved?	The Principal Investigator's School will be provided with the funds and the Director of Operations for that School will transfer the relevant funds if necessary to other Schools involved.
Will there be an end of award report?	Recipients of funds are expected to complete an end of award report within one month of the end of a funded project. They are also expected to provide material for use on the Staff Intranet, BU Research Blog and BU's external website, for example video/podcasts, images, text, etc. Outputs produced by projects will be monitored bi-annually for three years after the project end.