

Bournemouth University Research Councils Development Scheme

Outline

Research is a key strand of the University's Fusion activities. There is a challenge to increase the quality and quantity of proposals to support the achievement of the University's research and knowledge exchange ambitions. In addition, there are external factors that require our research bidding to be more competitive in an environment where success rates are decreasing, and demand management measures are put in place by funders (mainly research councils) in order to increase the quality of applications submitted.

To meet this need and following on from the success of the first and second Research Council Development Scheme (RCDS), RDS is continuing with this scheme with the next round due to start in January 2020. The RCDS is a coordinated, targeted set of activities designed to inspire and equip BU researchers to achieve greater success with Research Council funding. The scheme is part of the RDS's Research and Knowledge Exchange Development Frameworks ([RKEDF](#)) 'Research Council Funding' pathway. RDS supports funding development by offering support for individual proposals and training to increase funding-related skills and awareness.

RCDS Objectives

1. Increase awareness of the Research Councils opportunities.
2. Equip researchers with the confidence and skills to apply for the Research Councils funding in line with their career stage.
3. Fast-track the development of a portfolio of proposals by facilitating proposal writing, setting next steps and allocating support.

How the RCDS works

Due to the wide range of opportunities offered by Research Councils, the RCDS will feature a range of activities which may be generic in scope or targeted to a cohort as follows:

- E cohort – early career researchers¹ and those new to Research Councils (learning aims: first grants, fellowships, general mind-set and approach)
- M cohort – mid-career researchers and those with some Research Councils experience (learning aims: project leadership and moving up to larger grants/collaborations)
- P cohort – professorial level and those with significant Research Council experience (learning aims: high value, strategic and longer-larger funding)

The RCDS will consist of a mix of development activities:

- As a group and within targeted cohorts: training, workshops, structured proposal writing sessions and opportunities to build peer-to-peer support.
- 1:1 support for scoping/identifying funding streams and planning/starting proposals.
- Hands-on work to develop proposals through the scheme, including bid surgeries.

¹ ECR in this case is defined as someone who started their research career on or after 1 August 2014. This is the point at which they held a contract of employment of 0.2 FTE or greater, which included a primary employment function of undertaking 'research' or 'teaching and research', with any HE or other organisation, whether in the UK or overseas.

The training and development timetable for the RCDS is shown at [annex 1](#).

Each participant can also call on a total of three hours of 1:1 support from the external funding consultant throughout the scheme. In addition, three bid surgeries will be available throughout the scheme where members will be given a 45 minute slot to meet with the external funding advisor. There will be further opportunities for development available under the [RKEDF](#) which will support members of the RCDS. RDS will make cohort members aware of these. On completion of the RCDS, members of the cohort will be put in touch with an RDS Research Facilitator to assist them with taking forward applications.

Expectations

Around 10 participants will be selected for each targeted stream (30 in total). Due to the limited places and the significant opportunity that this represents, there is a strong expectation that those selected for the RCDS attend all activities and develop outline proposals. The ultimate requirement is that each participant will apply for a Research Council grant within 12 months of completing the scheme. RDS will monitor progress and provide reports to Faculties.

Those wanting to participate in this great opportunity will need to submit an expression of interest to RDS, stating:

- Why they are applying to the RCDS
- Research Council Bidding experience to date
- Which targeted cohort they consider themselves to be in: E, M or P
- Do they have a funding proposal in development? If so, provide details of the proposal

RDS will send a **membership agreement form** to potential members, where they will agree to attend the training sessions and submit proposals to the research councils. **Potential members will need to seek approval from their Head of Department and Faculty DDRPP.**

The RCDS will run on a cohort basis with the third cohort starting in January 2020 and completing the scheme after 12 months.

For any queries about the RCDS, please contact Jo Garrad, RDS Funding Development Manager or Lisa Andrews, RDS Research Facilitator.

Annex 1 Timetable

Title	Description	Audience (E/M/P)	When
Welcome, Myth busters and an Introduction to RCs and how they fund research	10am - Introduction to the scheme, expectations and institutional support. 10.30am – Myth busting workshop, led by a panel of experts, will discuss common myths and misconceptions about RCs funding. A survey will be distributed beforehand to gather members thoughts. 11am - The panel will then hold a Q&A. 12 noon – lunch 1-4pm - Introduction to the Research Councils, an overview of components of an RC proposal and key items to look for in call documents.	All	22/1/2020 10am – 4pm Lunch provided
Early career funding	This training session will cover the general principles of early career funding opportunities, to include first grants and fellowships.	E	12/2/2020 10am – 12 noon
Approaching the Case for Support and tackling the Pathways to Impact	10am - This training session will focus on the central plank of a research council proposal. 12 noon – lunch 1-3pm – This training session will focus on impact basics, impact planning and writing a 'Pathways to Impact' statement.	All	4/3/19 10am – 3pm Lunch provided
First bid writing retreats	A structured writing workshop to work on proposals based on learning from the sessions so far.	All	18/3/2020 10am-2pm Lunch provided
<i>Bid writing surgery 1:1's</i>	<i>One hour slots will be available for members to meet with the external application reviewer – by appointment only</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>1/4/2020 10am – 4pm</i>
Mock funder panels and peer review of draft proposals	This session combines training on the panel process and the opportunity to play the role of panel members. Participants will prepare by reviewing other members' draft proposals. They will bring their comments to the meeting to discuss feedback as a panel.	All	29/4/2020 10am-12pm
Second bid writing retreats	Second structured writing workshop for cohorts to work on their draft proposals taking into account the reviewer's perspective developed through the peer review session.	All	6/5/2020 10am-2pm Lunch provided
Closing session	This session will follow-on from the second bid writing retreat and will provide a roundup of key messages from the scheme, an opportunity for RDS to obtain feedback on the scheme and, most importantly, a celebration of progress and completion of the cohorts.	All (30)	6/5/2020 1 hour
<i>Bid writing surgery 1:1's</i>	<i>One hour slots will be available for members to meet with the external application reviewer – by appointment only</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>20/6/19 10am – 4pm</i>
<i>Bid writing surgery 1:1's</i>	<i>One hour slots will be available for members to meet with the external application reviewer – by appointment only</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>October TBC</i>