

HIGH VALUE BIORENEWABLES NETWORK FLEXIBLE FUND GUIDELINES FOR ENTERPRISE FELLOWSHIPS

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:
11:00, Wednesday 15 April 2020

At a glance: Enterprise Fellowships

- *Funding is for individuals at institutes eligible to receive BBSRC funding*
- *Fellowships are intended to enable progress towards commercialisation*
- *Up to £70k funding, additional in-kind or cash contributions preferred*
- *Up to one year's duration*
- *Mentor support will be provided for successful applicants*
- *Two stage evaluation process – application form review and interview of short-listed candidates*

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1. Context

The High Value Biorenewables Network (HVB) is one of six Phase II BBSRC Networks in Industrial Biotechnology and Bioenergy (BBSRC) funded for five years from January 2019.

HVB aims to:

- Promote discovery, development and application of bio-based chemicals, tools and platform technologies
- Facilitate partnership and knowledge transfer between UK academia and industry
- Provide inspirational leadership to the industrial biotechnology community in the UK and internationally

Description of the HVB Flexible Fund:

HVB's Flexible Fund provides a range of awards that support progression of research within the scope of the Network. The total fund value is £1.41M and we anticipate all funds will have been awarded by 2022. There are five types of award:

- **Proof of Concept (PoC)** – for research at TRL 1-4: industry support in terms of cash or in-kind contribution is important, and collaborative, cross-disciplinary projects are preferred. PoC projects should aim to do excellent research with impact.
- **Business Interaction Vouchers (BIV)** – these are smaller awards for a defined piece of work undertaken by an academic with an industrial partner who should co-fund the project with cash or in-kind contributions. Awards should encourage further collaboration and develop partnerships.
- **Sandpit Projects (SP)** – these are high impact, collaborative projects that respond to well-defined, industrial challenges and targets. Projects will be developed at sandpit events and should include plans for future inward investment.
- **Progression Fund (PF)** – for successful HVB projects close to impact we may invite applications to the Flexible Fund for a funded project extension to enable feasibility studies, for example, demonstration of scale-up or market analysis.
- **Enterprise Fellowships (EF)** – to enable an individual time to pursue research ideas and translate them: this can be through developing intellectual property ready for licensing or exploring spin-out companies or any other suitable mechanism to ensure the research idea is commercialised.

HVB assists its members in developing applications to the Flexible Fund. Specifically, funding calls are supported by research-driven workshops, consortium building meetings and networking and annual meetings. In addition, the Network Manager, Dr Caroline Calvert is available to discuss ideas and provide guidance on which funding source might be appropriate. However, we cannot provide advice on which partners you should use to build your consortium.

2. HVB Enterprise Fellowship awards

Enterprise Fellowships have been designed to allow a researcher to focus on a project with the objective of undertaking the work required for commercialisation. HVB does not prescribe what activities Enterprise Fellowships will fund, but it is anticipated that funds will be utilised in a manner specific to the individual research idea and its exploitation. For example, applicants may request funds to 'buy-out' of teaching commitments so they have more time to focus on commercialising their project. In addition, consumables for limited research development, a travel and meetings budget to

enable discussions with potential partners or stakeholders and funding expert advice, would all be appropriate activities to fund under an HVB Enterprise Fellowship.

Enterprise Fellowships must be undertaken within a UK HEI and at the end of the fellowship, applicants must intend to commercialise the project within the UK. All Fellows should be supported by their Technology Transfer Office (or equivalent) during their Fellowship period. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to make early contact with their colleagues in Technology Transfer to ensure they will be supported, as well as to provide input into the application form such as the intellectual property questions and the support statement.

Successful applicants will also be provided with an HVB-funded mentor for up to four days of consultancy. The mentor will assess progress and provide advice as required. HVB is happy for applicants to suggest their own mentor although we cannot guarantee that we will engage their services.

Eligible Applicants:

Applicants must be HVB members who are eligible to receive BBSRC funding (<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/grants-guide/>). HVB registration is free and simple to complete online at <https://www.highvaluebiorenewables.net/>). Post-Doctoral Research Associates may wish to apply for a Fellowship and can be named as an applicant but they need to be sponsored by someone who is eligible to receive BBSRC funding. The sponsor does not necessarily need to be the applicant's line manager but would be employed by the same HEI. There are no age restrictions for the fellowships.

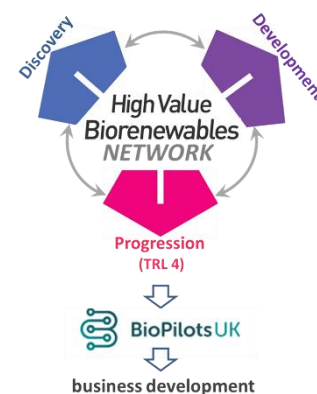
Please note: any applicants who receives HVB Flexible funds to support staff costs would not be eligible to receive support under the BBSRC *New Investigator* scheme.

Scope for HVB Funding:

All projects must be in scope of the HVB Network:

HVB focuses on the discovery, development and utilisation of high value, low volume bio-based chemicals, tools and platform technologies. HVB embraces a broad scope of biorenewable feedstocks to support innovation in new and existing products across a range of industry sectors. Applications which have algae as the biological feedstock for a high value biorenewable can be considered by HVB; if such applications are recommended for funding, Algae-UK would be notified of the funding intention.

HVB promotes excellent industrial biotechnology research with a strong influence of translational research bridging the gap to application, enabling work to progress to Technology Readiness Levels 3-4 where it connects with the capabilities of BioPilotsUK or another translational or business development activity.



In addition, all projects must be relevant to industrial biotechnology (IB) as defined by the BBSRC:

IB is a set of cross-disciplinary technologies that use biological resources for producing and processing materials and chemicals for non-food applications. The resources include plants, algae, marine life, fungi and micro-organisms. The feedstocks include renewable materials such as crop residue, animal wastes, food and municipal wastes and perennial biomass.

BBSRC has included the production of anti-microbial compounds and biopharmaceuticals in IB too (see <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/priorities/ibb-industrial-biotechnology/>).

Projects that focus on producing or testing animal feed are not within scope, nor are projects focussing on a single human disease or projects that simply use plant or biological extracts.

If you want to check the scope of your project - submit your public summary to the Network Manager at least three weeks before the advertised closing date.

Finances:

The maximum financial support that can be requested is £70,000 at 100% Full Economic Cost (FEC; i.e. £56,000 at 80% FEC). Any award will be paid in arrears. No more than 20% of costs may be subcontracted, however, facility access charges may be included. Equipment is not an eligible cost.

In-kind and cash contributions to the Fellowship project are strongly encouraged. These costs can come from a range of sources including the host institution (the 20% contribution to the FEC cost does not count as a contribution), industrial sponsors and other awards.

Enterprise Fellowships cannot be used to subsidise student grants, all staff employed on a Fellowship award will hold an employment contract from the host institution. If a PhD student wishes to apply for an Enterprise Fellowship, their thesis must have been submitted before the Fellowship commences.

3. Enterprise Fellowship application process

Completing the application form:

The applicant should complete the **application form** available at <https://www.highvaluebiorenewables.net/funding/>.

The application form requests the following information:

1. Title of Enterprise Fellowship

This title may be used by HVB for promotional purposes.

2. Applicant's/ Host Institution's details:

Name, position, university/ institute, e-mail and telephone. If the applicant is not eligible to receive BBSRC funding, the sponsor's details should also be supplied.

Details of a contact in the Research/ Finance office for questions regarding finances.

Details of the Technology Transfer Office contact person who will support your application and provide a statement (see section 6)

3. Executive summary of the Fellowship Idea, Industrial Biotechnology Scope

*The section should summarise your proposal in a way that can be understood by the general public and should not contain confidential or proprietary information. This section should clearly state **how the proposal fits within an industrial biotechnology context**; BBSRC will use this information to check that the proposal fits within their criteria for NIBB funding. The title, your details and the executive summary will be circulated to the Review Panel in advance of their receipt of your full proposal to ensure that no conflict of interest exists for panel members. If your application is successful and your award is funded, your title, applicant details and public summary will be made publically available on the HVB Network website and may be used for public dissemination by BBSRC.*

4. Fellowship dates

Please give a reasonable estimate of start date – allowing time for awards to be made and any necessary paperwork to be completed. Fellowships must start no later than six months after the award of the grant. The maximum project duration for a Fellowship is twelve months.

5. Fellowship details

Your application should provide specific information to the following questions:

- 5.1 *Applicant's statement: a 500 word statement that responds to the following questions:*
What is your motivation for applying for a Fellowship?
Outline your knowledge, experience and personal attributes that demonstrate your potential to make your fellowship successful.
How would an HVB Enterprise Fellowship benefit your career?
- 5.2 *Fellowship plan: 750 words on what you plan to do and the research and technology that underpins your idea. Complete the deliverables/ tasks table – you may add as many lines as needed. Describe the enterprise environment of your host institution. Where will you be located during your fellowship – for example, business incubator spaces etc.*
- 5.3 *Description of potential markets: 300 words to describe markets and how you will access them and what your competitive advantage is.*
- 5.4 *Partnerships: 200 words – describe who else you need to work with and what role they will play. Are these well-established partnerships or are they developing? Do you have or will you need collaboration agreements?*
- 5.5 *Benefits and impacts: 200 words – what impact do you expect from a Fellowship and how will you evaluate this?*
- 5.6 *Social and ethical implications – please describe how you will address them*
- 5.7 *Use of animals and what controls are in place*
- 5.8 *Intellectual Property – please answer the questions on patents, access to intellectual property rights and provide any other relevant details including freedom to operate searches – you should seek advice from your Technology Transfer office for this section.*

6. Host Institution - Commercialisation Support

Please ensure you speak to your Technology Transfer Office at least six weeks before submitting an application – this will ensure that the intellectual property position can be defined (see 5.8 above). This section should be completed by the Technology Transfer Office contact named in question 2.

7. Project finances

Complete the table on the form – detailing costs at 100% FEC and 80% FEC. All awards will be made at 80% FEC with the host University responsible for providing the 20% contribution. Write a short justification of costs in the box below.

No more than 20% of costs may be subcontracted, however, facility access charges may be included. Equipment purchase is not an eligible cost.

In-kind or matched contribution: *Applicants are strongly encouraged to seek additional contributions from their host institution or other funding sources including industrial sponsors. The contribution can be made in cash or in kind but the value of the contribution must be given as a breakdown using appropriate headings, for example, staff time (e.g. number of days at a given daily rate), consumables, equipment use/hire and travel. Additional headings and narrative text can be used as required to fully describe Project costs.*

Do not submit a pdf of the application form – we need a Word format to enable simple processing of the information for reviewers and the BBSRC reports.

Additional documents:

In addition to completing the application form, two additional documents are required:

- i) A letter of support from the lead applicant's University confirming acceptance of the 80% FEC rate and that the applicant (or the sponsor where applicable) is eligible to receive BBSRC funding is required. Please do ensure your letter of support covers both these

aspects, failure to do so will prevent your application from being reviewed. This may be submitted as a pdf.

- ii) A two page CV of the Fellowship applicant.

Do not submit any other documents.

Submission of applications:

Applications must be submitted by email for the attention of Caroline Calvert to hvb-network@york.ac.uk.

For further information about HVB Flexible Funds, please contact Network Manager, Dr Caroline Calvert (caroline.calvert@york.ac.uk).

Application deadline: 11:00, Wednesday 15 April 2020 (applications submitted after this time will not be evaluated).

4. Evaluation process

The Review Panel for Enterprise Fellowships will usually comprise a minimum of two representatives from the Executive Group (EG) and three representatives from the Management Board (MB). Each application will be reviewed by a minimum of three representatives from the EG/MB Leadership Team. The evaluation process is a two stage process:

- 1) All eligible application forms are reviewed and a short-list is agreed. HVB will circulate details of applicants together with the executive summary to the reviewers, who are required to declare any conflicts of interest before they are given sight of the full application. The full application will then be circulated to non-conflicted reviewers for evaluation against the assessment criteria:
 - Relevance of the application to BBSRC's definition of IB and HVB scope
 - Quality and innovative value of idea proposed, intellectual property landscape
 - Probability of commercialisation plans being realised during the fellowship – evaluation of the project plan and contingencies
 - Overall value for money of the project including cash or in-kind contribution from host institution or other partners/ sourcesApplications will be discussed at a review meeting and a short-list for interview will be developed.
- 2) Short-listed applicants (the intended fellowship holder) are interviewed. Short-listed applicants will be interviewed by representatives from the Review Panel to determine suitability of the applicant for a Fellowship. Applicants will be asked to deliver a short 'investment pitch' to promote their idea. Criteria to be assessed by interview:
 - Motivation
 - Entrepreneurship and commercial awareness
 - Communication skills
 - Project planning skills

Any application recommended for funding by the Review Panel will be subject to formal approval by BBSRC before the award can be made.

5. Notification of Review Outcome

Applicants will be notified of if they have been called to interview by the beginning of May 2020.

Interviews will be held in May 2020.

Whilst Skype interviews are possible, it is expected that applicants will make every effort to attend in person. Assistance with travel to interview will be provided by HVB.

If the BBSRC agrees that an award may be made, the applicant will be notified by HVB.

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed promptly and the Network Manager may pass on specific feedback if the reviewers make this available. If a future funding round is held, reapplication is permissible.

6. Post-award administration

Confirmation of award:

The Network will send an award letter to the applicant which summarises the terms and conditions of the award and explains the transfer of funds. If there are any partnerships that are key to the Fellowship, a signed partnership agreement should be negotiated before the project start date. The Network does not take responsibility for negotiations between partners, nor do we require copies or evidence of the agreement.

Awards are conditional upon the Project starting within 6 months of the date on the offer letter and the actual start date must be confirmed by email to the Network. Funds must be spent as detailed on the application; virement of funds between cost headings will not be permitted.

Reporting and payment:

The Applicant will provide regular updates on progress against deliverables via a short online form (this report will be derived from the application's deliverables table). This form will be reviewed by the HVB Manager and an HVB appointed Fellowships Advisor, advice and feedback will be given if necessary. At the end of the project, the Applicant will complete a short final report form and an expenditure statement and provide an invoice from their Finance Department- all three documents need to be sent **in one single email** to: **hvb-network@york.ac.uk**. There is no alternative to this reporting process, and part-claims will be returned until all the required documents are presented together.

Final project reports are checked by the Network Manager and approved by the EG; summaries of the reports are provided to the Management Board. HVB does not require receipts to be submitted but these must be kept by the host institution as they may be required for possible future audits. The grantee's host institution must follow their standard procedures for financial accounts. It should be noted that funds are paid by the BBSRC to the University of York in quarterly arrears, therefore invoices could take up to six months to pay.

7. Data protection and usage

Copies of proposals are made available to the HVB reviewers, who use information provided in processing the application, the award of any consequential grant, and for the payment, maintenance and review of the funds. If an application is funded, the HVB Network will upload details of the award to the HVB secure area of the BBSRC Extranet and will publish the names of Project partners, Project title and Project public summary on the Network website.

BBSRC use this information for research related activities, including but not limited to, transfer of funds, statistical analysis in relation to evaluation of the BBSRC NIBB, study of trends and policy and strategy studies.

To meet the Research Councils' obligations for public accountability and the dissemination of information, details of successful Flexible Fund awards may also be made available on the Research Councils' websites and other publicly available databases, and in reports, documents and mailing lists.

8. Conflict of interest guidance

Reviewers: In cases of conflict of interest for reviewers, there are specific systems in place to safeguard the review process. Any reviewer with a conflict of interest will declare it and will not participate in the review of that application and during the review panel they will leave the room. They may be present for the final discussion of the ranked list (unless they are a named applicant on the application).

In addition, reviewers may declare a conflict of interest if they consider the area of research to be too close to their own research. In this case, they may recuse themselves from review and all discussions of the project.

Examples of a conflict of interest include:

- Employed by the same institution as the applicant(s)
- Actively involved in research collaborations with the applicants(s)
- Working closely with the applicant(s), for example as a co-author or PhD Supervisor, or has worked closely in the last 4 years
- Holding a current position on the governing body of or an honorary position within the institution(s) of the applicant(s)
- In receipt of personal remuneration in excess of £5,000 per annum from the applicant's organisation
- Personal/family relationship with the applicant(s)

Applicants: Applicants need to declare any conflicts of interest with any company named in the application. This information should be added to the application form under Section 7, Financial Information.