

BIOCATNET BIV Guidelines: Updated 09/10/15

1. General Information

- 1.1 Business Interaction Vouchers (hereafter, BIV) are available to BIOCATNET members. These are intended to fund (on a matched contribution basis) short collaborative projects in order to encourage and support collaborations between BIOCATNET academic and industrial members.
- 1.2 BBSRC NIBB Business Interaction Vouchers are to be used to encourage and support collaboration between academic partners and industrial partners within the BBSRC NIBB framework. The collaboration can be any defined piece of work by the academic partner for the industrial partner. These vouchers are intended to help resource small confidence-building measures between an academic partner and an industrial based partner that are likely to lead to outcomes of i) a longer-term relationship, ii) improved interaction, iii) new research technology transfer projects.
- 1.3 A Business Interaction Voucher project should not exceed 6 months and a maximum value of £10,000 (inclusive of VAT), matched in cash or kind to at least equivalent value by the industrial partner. Awards will be made at two levels: either £5,000 or £10,000.
- 1.4 In order to maximise the value of the award and the outcomes of the collaborative measures, Business Interaction Vouchers are intended to support only direct costs incurred by the eligible partner during the project. Estates and Indirect costs will not be eligible for BIOCATNET support, and should be supported by the awarded institution or the industrial partner.
- 1.5 Scope of the Network – BIOCATNET BIV projects must fall into one of the following categories. BIOCATNET will release targeted calls under these general schemes.
 - 1.5.1 Biocatalyst discovery and screening
 - 1.5.2 Biocatalyst development and optimisation
 - 1.5.3 Biocatalyst scale-up

2. Funding eligibility

- 2.1 All applicants, whether eligible to receive funding or not, must be registered Members of BIOCATNET. Membership of BIOCATNET is by approval of the Network Management Board, subject to registration of an individual or organization on the BIOCATNET member database after completion of a valid Membership Application Form.
- 2.2 This funding is provided to help resource and build relationships between an academic partner (as named on the application form) and an industrial partner (as named on the application form) only. Academic and industrial partners applying after 09/10/15 may only jointly receive a single voucher. No further vouchers will be awarded for applications which jointly name the same individuals. Those individuals are free to apply for further vouchers with new project partners.

- 2.3 Recipients of £5,000 vouchers awarded prior to 09/10/15 may be eligible for a second £5,000 voucher to continue collaborative research initiated using the first voucher, subject to successful application. The second application must clearly state that it is linked to the earlier successful application and provide sufficient justification for the receipt of further BIV funding, in particular describing why other funding sources are not suitable for the continued work.
- 2.4 Funding will be provided only to organisations and individuals belonging to such organisations who are eligible to receive BBSRC funding (see BBSRC [Grants guide](#) for further details). Industrial contributions, in cash or in kind, should be at least of equivalent value.
- 2.5 BBSRC NIBB Business Interaction Vouchers may be considered *de minimis* aid. Applicants will provide affirmation on the application form that they understand the relevant regulations, and that they will not be in breach of *de minimis* aid rules by accepting the Innovation voucher. For further information see <https://www.gov.uk/state-aid>.

3. Funding calls

- 3.1 An open call for BIV proposals will be issued over the lifetime of the Network. Due to the open nature of the call applications received by BIOCATNET will be reviewed on a monthly basis.
- 3.2 The call will be publicized at BIOCATNET Events, and advertised via biocatnet.com and the usual BIOCATNET dissemination routes.

4. Application and Evaluation process and identification of conflicts of interest

- 4.1 The funding call will be published via the BIOCATNET website (biocatnet.com). Applicants should request an application form along with all guidance documents from the Network Manager, via email (biocatnet@manchester.ac.uk). Applicants will receive a unique identification number, which should be quoted in all correspondence.
- 4.2 Completed application forms will be submitted in pdf format to Network Managers. The Network Managers will acknowledge receipt of completed application forms within 3 working days of receipt, and will hold all applications in confidence.
- 4.3 The applications will be initially reviewed by the Network Managers at the end of each month, who will categorise the applications into the relevant subthemes for review purpose; reject with feedback any ineligible or incomplete application forms; identify conflicts of interest.
- 4.4 The applications will then be reviewed by at least three additional MB members on a monthly basis. The academic and industrial lead of the subtheme in question and the Network Director/Co-Director. Additional members of the management board may be

brought in to assist in the review of applications that are outside the primary expertise of the Network Director/Co-Director and subtheme leaders.

4.5 Scoring Criteria

4.5.1 Applicants must complete all sections of the application form. Failure to comply will result in the application being rejected by the Network Managers, feedback explaining the reason for rejection will be provided to the applicants.

4.5.2 Any application that scores less than 60% for any of the sections will be rejected with feedback. Scoring is as follows.

4.5.3 **Project Summary (scored out of 20 points)** – Applicants should describe:

4.5.3.1 The relevant IB challenges that the project seeks to address and how the project will accomplish this.

4.5.3.2 What is innovative about the proposed project and where relevant outline any prior experimental/technical evidence and explain how the previous results bridge to the proposed study.

4.5.4 **Partner Details (scored out of 10 points)** – Applicants are to provide details on any partner organisation within the project. Explain the nature of the consortium and how this adds value to the application. Also, for any industrial partners please provide details of their financial contribution to the project.

4.6 **Conflicts of Interest** – Applicants must declare any potential conflicts of interest with members of the Management Board; the list of current MB members is available either upon request to the Network Manager or via biocatnet.com. Members of the Management Board reviewing applications will similarly declare conflicts of interest to the Network Managers upon receipt of a BIV application before reading the proposal.

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)

4.6.1 Conflicts of interest will be documented by the Network Managers and resolved as follows:

4.6.1.1 The identified member of the management board will not be allowed to review the application in question, during any review of said application the

identified MB member may be asked to step out of the room during any face to face review/not be included in any communication of the application form via any form of electronic distribution

4.6.1.2 As the KTN is not eligible to apply for BIV funding BIOCATNET will employ impartial review by the Yvonne Armitage of the KTN who has indicated that she is willing to review specific applications where the conflict of interest cannot be resolved by implementing 4.6.1.1.

4.6.2 Members of the MB review panel will not be allowed to review their own applications, additionally members from the same institution as the applicant will not be allowed to review the application. In this case Yvonne Armitage will be asked to review the application along with any remaining neutral MB members.

4.7 Applicants will be informed on the outcome of their application in a timely manner.

4.8 Funds will be allocated upon signature of the project agreement (contract). This contract will consist of: i) description of work (the application form), and ii) signature by the awarded institution of the grant offer letter issued by The University of Manchester on behalf of BIOCATNET.

4.9 Subject to the written approval of the Network Manager, the start of the grant may be delayed by up to 3 months from the start date shown in the offer letter, the duration of the grant remaining unchanged. The grant may lapse if it is not started within this period. The start of the grant may precede the start date shown in the offer letter, but must not be earlier than the date of the offer letter itself.

4.10 The final ranked list of applications will be approved and signed off by the Director/Co-Director, the Chair of the Management Board and the Network Managers.

4.11 BIOCATNET has provisions for bringing in external consultants, should the need arise BIOCATNET may ask for external review of applications if there is not the necessary expertise within the pool of internal reviewers/management board members.

5. Monitoring, Reporting and Payment of awards

5.1 The Network Managers will act as monitoring officers for all BIV projects and may request a meeting to review progress during the lifetime of the project.

5.2 All projects will be required to submit a report to the Network Managers no later than 2 calendar months after completion of the project. These reports must include: a financial summary from the awarded institution to indicate the actual incurred costs to the project; a public summary of outcomes of the project; a plan for exploitation and dissemination of the knowledge, including further funding. Subject to satisfactory completion, the final reports will be agreed and signed off by the Network Managers and Director or Co-director.

- 5.3 Payment of funds will be made in arrears and only upon completion of all reporting requirements imposed by BIOCATNET and the BBSRC.

6. Data protection regulations

- 6.1 Copies of proposals will be made available to the BIOCATNET management board, unless there is an identified conflict of interest (see 4.6). All information submitted in the application form will only be used for the purpose of reviewing said application.
- 6.2 BIOCATNET management board members will be required to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) before they are allowed to review BIV proposals.
- 6.3 Successful applicants are requested to provide a non-confidential abstract of their proposal which will be made publically available according to the [BBSRC's Data Sharing Policy](#), including via the Website (biocatnet.com) and the BBSRC.
- 6.4 BIOCATNET and the BBSRC may make publically available, alongside the non-confidential abstract, the PI and Institution/Organisation, identity of Industrial partners, the amount of the award, and the length of the project. Any other information divulged in the application form will be treated strictly confidentially by BIOCATNET, unless publically disclosed by the applicant.
- 6.5 Unsuccessful applications will be treated with strictest confidence by BIOCATNET.
- 6.6 Projects will abide by the BBSRC's Data Sharing Policy.
- 6.7 To facilitate dissemination of network activities BIOCATNET may invite project partners to present their results at future network events.