**BU Prestigious Research Funders Scheme**

**1. Purpose of the scheme**

This scheme provides internal investment for additional research staff/students on applications for externally-funded research projects. The aim is to:

* demonstrate at the application stage BU’s commitment to supporting research undertaken with prestigious research funders;
* build research capacity and capability in areas of strategic importance;
* enhance the sustainability of the University’s research culture and environment;
* recognise and reward the research grant successes of academic staff.

The University aims to continue to increase the amount of research funding awarded by prestigious research funders. Between 2011-12 and 2015-16, BU’s combined research income from the UK research councils, Royal Society, British Academy and the EU government increased by 72% (from £1.27m to £2.19m). To continue to support successful bidding to prestigious research funders, BU has introduced this scheme to offer internal funding at the application stage to cover the costs of postdoctoral research staff and/or PGR studentships for when academic staff are awarded projects from prestigious research funders.

Prestigious funders defined in the context of this scheme are: the seven [UK research councils](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/areas/)[[1]](#footnote-1), [Wellcome Trust](https://wellcome.ac.uk/funding), [Leverhulme Trust](https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/funding/grant-funding), [British Academy](https://www.britac.ac.uk/funding-opportunities), [Royal Society](https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/), [NIHR](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/funding-and-support/) and [EU Horizon 2020](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/index.html) (includes European Research Council).

**2. Scheme pathways**

There are two pathways: i) PGR studentships; and ii) postdoctoral research staff. Each of these, and the relevant procedures, are set out in this document.

***2.1 Pathway 1: PGR studentships***

This pathway provides for a small number of BU funded PGR studentships to be linked to projects[[2]](#footnote-2) that are externally funded by prestigious funders. There are two routes:

1A: Prestigious research funders – academic staff applying to prestigious funders are eligible to request a PGR student if their project has an anticipated income of ≥£100K.[[3]](#footnote-3),11

1B: Other research funders – academic staff applying to other research funders are eligible to request a PGR student if their project has an anticipated income of ≥£350K, or ≥£100K for ECRs.[[4]](#footnote-4),[[5]](#footnote-5),[[6]](#footnote-6)

Academic staff submitting bids of this size to research funders are eligible for internal funding for PGR costs to be included in their application. The [RKEO Funding Development Officers](http://blogs.bournemouth.ac.uk/research/contact/funding-development-team/) (FDO) will advise all eligible applicants of this opportunity when academic staff have identified the external funder and anticipated income on an intention to bid form.

***2.2 Pathway 2: Postdoctoral research staff***

This pathway provides BU funding for postdoctoral research staff (BU NSS grade 6) linked to projects[[7]](#footnote-7) that are externally funded by prestigious funders. This is only open to larger (anticipated income of ≥£350k[[8]](#footnote-8), or ≥£100k for ECRs[[9]](#footnote-9),[[10]](#footnote-10),[[11]](#footnote-11)) applications for research funding to prestigious funders. Academic staff submitting bids of this size to prestigious research funders are eligible for internal funding for staff costs to be included in their application. The [RKEO Funding Development Officers](http://blogs.bournemouth.ac.uk/research/contact/funding-development-team/) (FDO) will advise all eligible applicants of this opportunity when academic staff have identified the external funder and anticipated income on an intention to bid form. The FDOs will provide costings for the whole application and can advise on the suitable duration of a postdoctoral researcher to include within the application; normally this will be a 1 FTE post for the duration of the project.

***2.3 Including BU funding within an application***

Applications for external funding must include details of the BU funding (for both PGR studentships and/or postdoctoral research staff) in the case for support document. In addition, if a justification of resources document and/or an institutional letter of support, then details of the BU funding must also be included in these. This will demonstrate BU’s commitment to the research project. If there is no capacity to include the BU funding within any documentation then the funding opportunity is not suitable for this scheme (such as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs)).

Retrospective requests (i.e. an awarded decision has been made) will not be considered.

**3. Source of internal funding**

For both pathways, the costs will be covered from the external recurrent research grant that BU receives from Research England. These costs must be underwritten by the Faculty so that, in the event that this external funding significantly reduces or ceases, the costs will be subsumed by the Faculty. The Executive Dean (or his/her authorised representative) will need to consent to this as part of the APF approval process. Applications that are unsuccessful in obtaining external funding will have the offer withdrawn.

All expenditure for the postdoctoral researcher must take place by the end date of the externally funded project; expenditure after this time will be ineligible, unless agreed exceptionally at the time of applying. If a BU-funded studentship has a longer duration than the externally funded grant that they are appointed to, this will continue to be funded centrally.

**4. Internal reporting**

All successful applications will be required to submit to RKEO a report describing the outcomes and impact of the support. This should include publications, activities within the Faculty and across BU, and details of further applications for research funding.

**5. Review of scheme**

The scheme was launched in August 2017 and revised in February 2018 and October 2018. The average proposal decision takes around four to five months after submission, with an additional one to five months between the contracts being signed and the project starting (particularly if staff are to be recruited). The scheme will be reviewed by RKEO in summer 2019.

1. The seven UK research councils are [AHRC](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/), [BBSRC](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/), [EPSRC](https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/), [ESRC](http://www.esrc.ac.uk/), [MRC](https://www.mrc.ac.uk/), [NERC](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/), and [STFC](http://www.stfc.ac.uk/). This will also include any applications directly to [RCUK](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. BU applicant can be either Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator for the award. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. All values are before full economic costing (fEC) is applied, i.e. income to BU must be >£100k. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. All values are before full economic costing (fEC) is applied, i.e. income to BU must be either >£350K or >£100K (depending on career stage). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. This allows for applications to most of the early career fellowships and starter grants on offer from the prestigious funders. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. ECRs in this context are considered to be academic staff within their first seven years of entering academia. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. BU applicant can be either Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator for the award. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. All values are before full economic costing (fEC) is applied, i.e. income to BU must be either >£350K or >£100K (depending on career stage). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. This allows for applications to most of the early career fellowships and starter grants on offer from the prestigious funders. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. ECRs in this context are considered to be academic staff within their first seven years of entering academia. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. An ECR submitting a bid to a prestigious funder with income >£100K can choose between a PGR and a PDRA. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)