

**Managing BES research grants – process and assessment criteria**

**Process**

Research proposals will be received, logged and collated by the chief operations officer. Applications will be discussed with the Chair of the research committee and any conflicts of interest will be determined. If the chair has a conflict of interest, organisation for that round of judging will be passed to the deputy chair. If any committee member has a conflict of interest they will not take part in the round of judging. Applications should be assessed by a minimum of 4 members of the research committee. If there are not enough assessors from within the committee then another council member or academic member of the BES will be invited to take part in the judging.

Once the judging panel has been determined the Chief Operations officer will send the applications and scoring sheets to the panel members with a deadline to receive scores for each application. Each assessor will score the proposal and return the completed scoring sheet to the Chief operations officer who will collate the scores on the summary scoring sheet.

A meeting will be convened for the judging panel to discuss the applications. The summary score sheet will be shared with the judging panel prior to the meeting. The merit of each applications will be discussed by the panel and award(s) will be agreed. The scoring process is meant to provide the basis for discussion and it does not mean that the highest scoring application (s) are given the award. It is expected that all awards made will be by unanimous agreement, that is, all members are in favour.

The Chair or deputy Chair will notify all applicants of the judging panel’s decision within 2 months of the submission deadline.

**Research grant assessment criteria**

Each application will be scored based on the following criteria by each of the five members of the research committee.

**Importance and Impact**

* How important are the research questions, or gaps in knowledge, that would be addressed?
* Is the level of innovation likely to lead to significant new understanding?
* What is the potential economic and societal impact of the proposed research? Please consider:
	+ identification of realistic potential improvements to human or population health
	+ contribution to relieving disease/disability burden and/or improving quality of life
	+ identification of potential impacts of research and plans to deliver these (in the Pathways to Impact statement)

**Research quality**

* What are the prospects for good scientific progress?
* How convincing and coherent is the management strategy proposed?
* Robust methodology and experimental design should be at the centre of any proposal to aid reproducibility of research findings. Has the applicant clearly set out and justified the following:
	+ Measures for avoidance of bias (eg blinding, randomisation)
	+ Number of experimental and control groups and sample size per group
	+ How the sample size was calculated, showing power calculations and including justification of effect size
	+ Overview of the planned statistical analyses in relation to the primary outcomes to be assessed
	+ Frequency of measurements/interventions to be used
	+ Circumstances in which power calculations are not appropriate to determine sample size
	+ How well have project risks been identified, and will they be mitigated?

**Applicant, Research Team and Environment**

* Suitability and potential of the researcher and the research team?
* Is the principal applicant well established researcher? Will they predictably deliver?
* Does the principal applicant have the potential to develop a research-based career? Please consider the track record of the individual in their field and their potential to becoming an independent Principal Investigator. Are they ready to take the next step towards that goal. In such cases do they have the necessary support and expertise within the investigator group?
	+ Awards can be made to support career development and to established researchers. They can be made to the same applicant more than once especially if one award builds to the next.
* How suitable is the environment where the proposed research will take place? Please consider on the level of commitment of the host research organisation to supporting the proposed research and whether appropriate facilities will be available to the researchers.

**Resources requested**

* Are the funds requested essential for the work and justified by the importance and scientific potential of the research?
* Does the proposal demonstrate value for money in terms of the resources requested?
* Is any animal use fully justified in terms of need, species, number, conformance to guidelines?

**Ethics**

* Are there any ethical and/or research governance issues? Please consider:
	+ whether the proposed research is ethically acceptable
	+ any ethical issues that need separate consideration
	+ appropriateness of ethical review and research governance considerations
	+ any potential adverse consequences for humans, animals or the environment and whether these risks have been addressed satisfactorily in the proposal

**BES research grant scoring sheet**

**Name of assessor: Date:**

**Title of research proposal:**

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| **Importance and Impact** |
| Comments | Score (out of 30) |
|  |  |
| **Research Quality** |
| Comments | Score (Out of 20) |
|  |  |
| **Applicant, Research Team and Environment** |
| Comments | Score (Out of 20) |
|  |  |
| **Resources requested** |
| Comments | Score (Out of 20) |
|  |  |
| **Ethics** |
| Comments | Score (Out of 10) |
|  |  |
| Total Score (out of 100) |  |
|  |
| Is this research fundable – Yes or No |  |