

Partnership Resource Fund Phase 1 Application Guidance

Scheme Overview

QuantIC's mission is to link world-leading quantum technologists with industry leaders and technology users to accelerate innovation in imaging in alignment with industry priorities and national/international needs.

The Partnership Resource Fund (PRF) has a total budget of £4M over 5 years and is designed as a flexible and responsive tool to support the translation of QuantIC's research outcomes into industrial applications and commercial opportunities.

Typical PRF Phase 1 awards will be between £10-60k in value covering 80% full economic costing. As an example, this should be sufficient cover for a RA to work full time on the project for 3-6 months and related consumables.

The programme provides grants on a discretionary basis for technical and commercial feasibility studies and two-way secondments between academia and industry. Projects should clearly demonstrate how they align and further QuantIC's mission.

Since PRF projects are targeted to addressing industrial needs, the industrial partner would be expected to be the lead-applicant and define the project in collaboration with the academic partner. An in-kind or in-cash contribution to the project is required from the industrial partner. This should be proportionate to the size of the company and will be evaluated as an indication of the company commitment to the project.

Partnership Resource Fund – Phase 1 FACTSHEET

Max award: £60k

Average project Length: 3-6 months

Industrial Contribution: matching in kind or in cash contribution required.

Deadline: The scheme is always open for submissions and operates rolling deadlines.

Example of project type: Short industry-led projects for commercial and technical feasibility including two-way staff secondments between academia and industry.

Expected outcome: The outcome of the project is the establishment of the market potential or technical feasibility of the concept proposed.

Eligible applicants: Projects must be collaborative and as a minimum include one non-academic and one academic partner.

Eligible topics: Technology in all fields of imaging and image processing is eligible.

Scope of the funding and example projects

The aim of PRF is to fast-track the development, demonstration and implementation of novel equipment, processes and/or systems in the field of imaging, in alignment with QuantIC's priorities. This phase aims to cover the assessment of technical feasibility and market potential for new ideas.

Examples of activities that can be funded through the partnership resource are:

1. Industry-lead short projects to establish technical and commercial feasibility of a new or improved / product or service.
2. Two-way staff secondments between industry and academia.

The outcome of the project is the establishment of the market or technical feasibility of the concept proposed. Should the conclusion of the study be that the concept has the potential to be developed to the level of investment readiness/market maturity, but requires additional funding in view of commercialisation, the team can apply for Phase 2 support (coming soon).

Deadlines, submission and award process

PRF is always open for applications and operates rolling deadlines for proposal evaluations.

Applicants are asked to submit their completed application forms by email to info@quantic.ac.uk. Applicants will receive an email confirmation of their application within 7 working days.

PRF deadlines are reported below. Future deadlines are expected to follow a similar pattern and updated guidance and deadlines will be available from the QuantIC website.

Rolling Deadline	Funding Outcome
24 October 2016	24 November 2016
30 January 2017	28 February 2017
8 May 2017	8 June 2017
14 August 2017	11 September 2017
16 November 2017	14 December 2017

Please note that the grant offer letter will be subject to terms and condition. Successful applicants have a maximum of 90 days to conclude a project agreement, after which the grant offer letter will expire. It is the expectation that projects will start within 30 days from the signature of the project agreement.

Eligibility Criteria

Proposals must satisfy all of the eligibility criteria below. We advise applicants to use this section as a checklist before submitting a proposal.

1. Eligible applicants are a collaboration of at least one non-academic partner and one academic partner. When this minimum is satisfied, additional academic and industrial partners are eligible.
2. Projects need to be in the field of imaging and be aligned and/or enhance the technical and commercial deliverables of QuantIC. Applicants that are currently funded through QuantIC will be required to justify why the additional resources are required.
3. The maximum award will be £30k calculated as 80% of the FEC of the eligible costs sustained by the academic partner. Larger value projects are eligible but evidence needs to be supplied that sufficient funding to cover all project costs have been secured as a contribution in cash from the industrial partner or as a separate award. Only eligible costs as per guidance below will be funded.
4. Industrial costs cannot be covered by the grant. A matching in-kind or in-cash contribution from the industrial partner is required.
5. Applications from companies established by universities or non-profit research centres in which the institution retains a shareholding are eligible to apply as long as one of the purposes of the company is the development of products or processes for commercial exploitation.
6. Applicants are required to use the appropriate application form. The form should be written in English and completed in all parts using minimum font size Arial 11. Applicants must comply with relevant page and word limits. Forms need to contain full financial information.

Please contact info@quantic.ac.uk if you require support to cost your application.

Eligible Costs

PRF awards only cover academic costs. Industrial costs are not eligible for funding.

PRF awards will cover a maximum of £60k of all eligible costs sustained by the academic partner calculated at 80% FEC. Eligible costs are:

- Directly Incurred Costs – Salaries of staff to be employed on the project, consumables, travel & subsistence which are strictly necessary to the execution of the project. Other eligible DI costs are for example those related to subcontracts.
- Estates and indirect costs are also eligible.

Ineligible costs comprise:

- Travel to conferences and scientific meetings
- Travel that is not related to the delivery of the project
- Directly allocated costs with the exception of estate costs

Evaluation Process

All projects will undertake a three stage review process:

A. Eligibility check – all projects submitted to the scheme will be checked for eligibility. Ineligible projects will be rejected and the applicant will be informed promptly. We advise all applicants to submit proposals to us at least 10 days before the deadline so that we can perform an early stage eligibility check and highlight any eligibility issues. Applicants will then be given an opportunity to modify and re-submit the proposal for the same deadline.

B. Expert review – each project will be peer-reviewed and scored by at least 3 members of the QuantIC Opportunities Panel, which is populated by industrial experts in the areas of imaging and quantum technology. Membership of the panel is available on the QuantIC website.

C. Panel discussion – All projects will be discussed and a rank order produced at the panel meeting based on the reviewer's scores and panel discussions.

Evaluation criteria

All projects will be marked 0-3 against the following 3 evaluation criteria:

A. Potential Impact/Opportunity including the following:

- a.; Size, growth rate and accessibility of the market/business opportunity. Alignment of the project with the trends in the addressed market.
- b. Identified user needs that will be addressed by the project. Main economic benefits to the users that will make them buy/invest in the innovation.
- c. Alignment with and potential for acceleration / enhancement of QuantIC's technical and commercial objectives
- d. Potential to strengthen the competitiveness and growth of companies by developing innovations meeting the needs of the market, and where relevant, by delivering such innovations to the markets;
- e. Effectiveness of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results (including management of IPR).
- f. Fit of the project objectives with the strategy of the participating company.

B. Clarity, including:

- a. Clarity and pertinence of the objectives;
- b. Credibility of the proposed approach and feasibility of the research;
- c. Soundness of the concept

C. Quality and efficiency of the implementation, including:

- a. Value for money;
- b. For partners that are currently receiving QuantIC (or other) funding for related activity, is the requirement for the additional investment justified.
- c. Company commitment
- d. Appropriateness of the participants within the consortium to carry out the project and to exploit the results.

Scoring and thresholds

Proposals are scored “as submitted” rather than on their potential. When an evaluator identifies significant shortcomings, they must reflect this by awarding a lower score for the criterion concerned. The Opportunities Panel will either recommend a proposal for funding or reject it and will not enter into negotiation with the applicants. The panel might choose to offer suggestions for improvement when the project is thought to have potential and invite the applicants to address the project shortcomings and resubmit. This does not constitute a commitment to fund the resubmitted project. Each of the three evaluation criterion will be scored as follows:

Interpretation of the scores:

0 — The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.

1 — Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.

2 — Very Good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.

3— Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

In order to be approved for funding a proposal must achieve a total score of at least 5

Feedback will be provided to all applicants. Applicants will be notified of an outcome within 6 weeks of one of the deadline dates previously mentioned in section 2. Unsuccessful applicants may resubmit a revised application.

The panel decision will be final.

Step by Step guidance on completing the form

Font Size Guidelines:

Please ensure you use Arial Font and Size 11 throughout the application.

Section A – ABSTRACT

Max 2000 characters including spaces

Please provide a short abstract of the content and objectives of your project including what is innovative about it and how it aligns with QuantIC’s objectives. Describe the proposed work in simple terms in a way that could be publicised to a general audience. Note that this summary will be automatically published on the QuantIC website and literature if the grant is awarded.

Section B – LEAD APPLICANT DETAILS

Please provide information on all academic and non-academic organisations involved in your project.

Section C – PROJECT DETAILS

Max 8000 characters including spaces

Please provide an outline description of:

- 1) The innovation, how it aligns with the scope of the scheme and its potential market impact;
- 2) What you propose to do in the study, naming organisations or individuals that you intend to work/contract with;
- 3) The deliverable and why it is technically innovative;
- 4) The main economic benefit of the innovation to the users that, compared to current state of the art, will make the users buy or invest in the innovation.
- 5) Provide a justification of resources; if you are already funded by QuantIC articulate why the additional resources are necessary.
- 6) Why have you chosen to apply to this fund, what is the added value of support from QuantIC? How does this project align and further the objectives of QuantIC.

Please clearly number your answers to cover all 5 areas outlined above.

Section D – OPPORTUNITY AND MARKET

Max 4000 characters including spaces

Please provide responses to the following 5 questions:

1. What is the business opportunity that this project addresses? Please comment specifically on the size, growth rate and accessibility of the market opportunity that this project might open up.
2. Identify the key competitors and competitive solutions.
3. How will the results of the project be exploited? Indicate the most relevant market segments for the initial introduction of the innovation to the market
4. What economic opportunities will this project help bring about to those outside of your business and over what timescale? What about social and environmental benefits?
5. If access to a partner's background IP will be required for the project or exploitation, what are the arrangements with regard to that? What are the arrangements regarding the exploitation of foreground IP?

Section E – FINANCE TABLE

DIRECTLY INCURRED STAFF

Directly incurred staff can be:

a) A researcher that will be dedicated to the project or whose time working on the project can be fully supported by an auditable record for its duration. Researchers may be named or unnamed.

Include only the salary costs for the time to be spent working on this project.

b) Technicians: funding only for technicians who will be dedicated to the research project, or whose time working on the project can be fully supported by an auditable record for its duration. Costs of pool technicians or for technicians whose time will be shared with other projects/activities and will not be supported by an auditable record are not eligible.

Only include details of the payroll costs requested from for staff, full or part-time, whose time can be supported by a full audit trail during the life of the project.

Include only the salary costs for the time to be spent working on this project.

c) Other Staff: funding only for staff who will be dedicated to the research project, or whose time working on the project can be fully supported by an auditable record for its duration. Costs of pool staff or for staff whose time will be shared with other projects/activities and will not be supported by an auditable record are not eligible.

For support in the calculation of your salary costs please contact info@quantic.ac.uk.

All directly incurred staff must be justified in section C of your application.

TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE

A proposal may include funds for travel and subsistence for use where these are required by the nature of the work but travel and subsistence to conferences and scientific meetings is not eligible.

Please note:

- a) All journeys should be by the most suitable and economical means.
- b) You should clearly identify in section C of your proposal the purpose and destination for each journey for which funds are sought.
- d) Costs for attendance at conferences cannot be included.

OTHER DIRECTLY INCURRED COSTS

Examples of Other Directly Incurred Costs eligible under the project are:

- a) Consumables.
- b) Consultancy fees.
- c) Field work costs.
- d) Computing - include costs of computing dedicated to each project only, e.g. special software licences. Do not include any costs associated with the use of the host

organisation's central computing facilities.

e) Rental charges (specify equipment or service being used on the basis of charging).

f) Hire/running costs of vehicles if necessary for the project.

g) Sub-contracting.

h) Market assessment.

Small pieces of equipment might be considered when a compelling case can be made of how they support the exploitation of the project rather than the underpinning R&D. Please note that the PRF does not cover pieces of equipment above £10k.

Section F - OTHER SUPPORT

Provide details of any other support sought or received from any other source for this or other research in the same field in the past three years. Please declare for support either received or pending a decision.

Please list as follows:

Award organisation

Title of project

Decision made (yes or no)

Start date

End date

Amount sought

Section G – START DATE

Please confirm by answering yes or no.

Section H - DE MINIMIS RULES AND STATE AID

The assistance for a Knowledge Exchange Business Assist Support Award constitutes State aid as defined under Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty of Rome and is being granted as 'de minimis' aid under Commission Regulation EC 1998/2006 (the "de minimis" aid regulation).

European Commission rules prohibit any undertaking from receiving more than €200,000 'de minimis' aid over any period of three fiscal years. Any 'de minimis' aid granted over the €200,000 limit may be subject to repayment with interest.

For more information see: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/overview/index_en.html

Other Important Information

Applications are submitted to QuantIC in confidence and members of the assessment panel are bound by confidentiality. The panel membership will be made available on our website as soon as it becomes live. In the interim, the panel list can be obtained by sending a request to info@quantic.ac.uk. If there are members of the panel you would wish to exclude from assessing your application, please notify us by email when submitting your application, stating the reason (direct competitor, professional rivalry etc.).

A Project Manager may be appointed to oversee your project. Reporting requirements will be set out in the offer letter.

Contact

For more information and if you have any questions please contact: info@quantic.ac.uk and our team will be delighted to help.