



Strategic Development Fund for Research Initiatives

Application template for match funding requests

BACKGROUND

The Strategic Development Fund (SDF) provides **time-limited** financial support to strategic initiatives which aim to have a **transformational impact on the institution**. The University's Executive Group approved the following set of principles for allocating SDF to support research initiatives:

- To provide financial support for research that cannot easily be obtained through School based funding;
- To match fund with external research income or to enhance considerably the ability to attract external income funding, including large research capital;
- To provide funding that will enhance our international reputation in world rankings;
- To provide funding that will enhance our standing in either REF or KEF.

PURPOSE OF THE FUND

- This form is for applications to the SDF for "**match funding**" requests only.
- Applications will be prioritised where institutional match funding is explicitly required by an external funder and stated in their call documentation. However, applications will also be considered where there is a clear funder expectation for match funding.
- Applications should outline the specific added value of the match funding and explain why institutional investment is an appropriate and strategic use of University funds.
- Applications are expected to be aligned with [strategic objectives of the University](#) and/or Schools, and in particular will be aligned with both areas of strength or growth and external opportunities.
- Requests to match fund large equipment bids need to evidence their strategic value and benefit to a wide user community.
- Applications should represent good value for money, i.e. a good benefit to cost ratio.
- Cross-School applications are particularly encouraged.

DURATION AND FUNDING LIMIT

- The maximum duration of an SDF award is five years, however, it should not exceed the duration of the external funding award.
- The minimum SDF request is £100k.
- Costs requested must be for Directly Incurred Costs only. Directly Allocated costs are not eligible.
- There is no maximum level of funding that can be requested from the SDF, however, it must be proportionate to the external funding request. Value for money will be considered against the expected benefits described in the application.
- If the external funding application involves collaborators, there is an expectation that the Sussex match funding requested should be proportionate to that provided by project collaborators.

ELIGIBILITY

- The SDF for match funding is open to faculty from all disciplines.
- BSMS-only initiatives are not eligible as the appropriate application route is the BSMS joint Board. BSMS is eligible to receive SDF funds if colleagues are involved in collaborative proposals with other Sussex Schools.
- Members of faculty on fixed-term contracts and those on Education and Scholarship focussed contracts are eligible to apply for match funding if they meet the eligibility requirements of the external funding call and have explicit Head of School approval.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Applicants must discuss their proposal with all relevant Heads of School. The lead Head of School is required to provide a statement of support clearly describing the strategic significance of the research to the Schools involved and why the School is unable to provide the funding.
 - Applicants must use the SDF match funding application form and work with Chris Chaplin in the Finance Division to create a FEC budget indicating which costs will be covered from the external funder, the School(s) and the SDF. The appendix provides three example financial scenarios for when a match funding SDF application would be appropriate.
 - The benefits of the proposed research should be clearly indicated and (where possible) quantified and the link between those and the University/School strategic objectives.
 - SDF match funding applications need to present the total cost of the activity, e.g. costs requested from the SDF, from the external funder and those provided by the School, including all direct and indirect costs whether included in the application to the funder or not. The following colleagues will support this activity:
 - (1) Your [Research Development Officer](#) will help create the budget for your external bid. Applicants must contact their RDO as soon as the need for match funding is identified and within the minimum [ResDev timeframes](#). The request for match funding should be identified on the RES/School proforma.
 - (2) [Chris Chaplin](#) in central Finance will create the financial summary for the whole activity which will be included in your SDF application. Applicants must provide relevant information to Chris one week before their planned SDF match funding submission date.
- Applicants must engage early with these colleagues to ensure a decision on SDF match funding can be made well in advance of the external funder deadline.**
- SDF match funding applications can be submitted at any time to D.Foy@sussex.ac.uk

REVIEW PROCESS

Applications for match funding requests will be reviewed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise. Recognising the time-sensitive nature of match funding requests, we will endeavour to provide a rapid response. We will aim to respond within 1-2 weeks of receiving an application, however in exceptional circumstances, may be able to respond more quickly.

Applications should address the following criteria which will be used to review proposals:

- What is the strategic importance of the research area to the Institution and how will it contribute towards the delivery of School(s) and institutional research strategies?
- Does the proposal represent value for money considering both the cost (i.e. the difference between the full economic cost of the project and income received from the funder) and the

expected benefits, e.g. total grant income, contribution income, outputs, positioning for future funding opportunities, engagement with strategic partners etc.

- The PVCRE will also consider the "opportunity cost", i.e. how this project would limit future possible uses of SDF bearing in mind reasonable expectations of budgets.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like to discuss your SDF application please contact Debbie Foy, D.Foy@sussex.ac.uk

The budget for your external funder application should be developed with your [Research Development Officer](#).

All financial queries relating to the costs requested from the SDF and those provided by Schools should be directed to Chris Chaplin in the Finance Division Chris.Chaplin@sussex.ac.uk

Appendix – Financial Examples

Example 1

- Funder only pays direct costs and expects match-funding for equipment over 50k
- Equipment at 400k is required – **200k match-funding is being requested from SDF**
- Bid is eligible for QR
- School is providing a school funded studentship

Summary for HoS Decision

fEC project cost	£1,854,827
Research income	£1,287,475
Funding shortfall	(£567,352)
Funding rate	69%
Contribution rate	-16%

Contribution/(Cost) to School	(£200,000)
Additional RAM Charges	(£75,834)
Charity QR Income	£233,033
Net Contribution/(Cost)	(£42,801)

**Excluding REF related QR income*

Additional School Match Funding

Studentships	(£63,226)
Equipment	£0
In Kind	£0
Other	£0
Total	(£63,226)

Net University Position

Net	(£30,193)
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Financially, this example would be appropriate for a match funding application. The school would not receive any Research Contribution Income with which to offset the 200k match-funding required to purchase the equipment.

Example 2

- Funder pays at 80% FEC and expects match-funding for equipment over 50k
- Equipment at 200k is required – **100k match-funding is being requested from SDF**
- Bid is not eligible for QR
- School is providing a school funded studentship

Summary for HoS Decision

fEC project cost	£1,251,237
Research income	£940,990
Funding shortfall	(£310,247)
Funding rate	75%
Contribution rate	6%

Contribution/(Cost) to School	£57,104
Additional RAM Charges	(£75,834)
Charity QR Income	£0
Net Contribution/(Cost)	(£18,730)

**Excluding REF related QR income*

Additional School Match Funding

Studentships	(£63,226)
Equipment	£0
In Kind	£0
Other	£0
Total	(£63,226)

Net University Position

Net	(£6,122)
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Financially, this example is not appropriate for a match funding application. The school, even after funding the 100k will enjoy 57k of Research Contribution Income and so can fund the match-funding requirement within the level of Contribution Income generated.

Example 3

- Funder pays at 80% FEC
- Bid is not eligible for QR
- School wants to provide 2 x studentships and **126k match-funding is being requested from SDF to pay for these**

Summary for HoS Decision

fEC project cost	£1,152,560
Research income	£922,048
Funding shortfall	(£230,512)
Funding rate	80%
Contribution rate	15%

Contribution/(Cost) to School	£136,839
Additional RAM Charges	(£75,834)
Charity QR Income	£0
Net Contribution/(Cost)	£61,005

*Excluding REF related QR income

Additional School Match Funding

Studentships	(£126,452)
Equipment	£0
In Kind	£0
Other	£0
Total	(£126,452)

Net University Position

Net	£10,387
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Financially, this example is not appropriate for a match funding application. The school can choose whether to fund the studentships from within their own budgets and funding studentships is day to day activity for a school.

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