

The Brunel Research Culture Seed Fund

Open to Research Staff and Technicians, the Brunel Research Culture Seed Fund (BRCSF) is to propose, lead and embed projects that contribute to fostering an inclusive and collaborative research culture at Brunel, linked to the wider external research culture agenda.

The projects can (and are encouraged to be) broad, encompassing a vast array of themes and initiatives as long as they can demonstrate added value to Brunel research culture.

The BRCSF aims at improving the research culture at the University. Ongoing issues such as barriers to equality, diversity and inclusion, narrow definitions of success, uncertain career pathways, a lack of collegiality and collaboration, unhealthy competition culture and more, all pose a great risk to the research environment in which we work. They also pose a barrier to attracting and retaining talent as well as protecting individual wellbeing.

Applications to the fund will be assessed by the extent to which the activities are likely to enhance Brunel's research culture and have the potential to be rolled out in other areas. The fund will provide support for one-off projects but, ideally, those projects are aligned to broader purposes and can serve as examples of best practice that could be rolled out in other entities across the University.

What is the funding for?

Projects could include, but are certainly not limited to, initiatives in the following areas:

- Creating seminar series across divisions and entities to foster collaboration and dialogue;
- Improving access and participation in research for people from underrepresented groups;
- Improving leadership skills across all career stages;
- Furthering representation of underrepresented groups in University committees;
- Diversifying reward and recognition across all groups and career stages;
- Training in interdisciplinary techniques;
- Co-creation and participatory research;
- Be part of an already existing project or initiative.

There is a rough limit of £2,500 per proposal to ensure we can fund a sufficient number of projects. However, we may vary the limit at our discretion and award more if the initiative warrants it. We want you to approach this strategically and creatively and be ambitious in your proposals and goals.

What does the fund not cover?

The following costs / activities cannot be covered:

- Relief from administrative and other duties
- Equipment (unless there is a clear contribution to research culture development arising)
- Conference attendance (unless the project has developed a strategic, targeted intervention to take place during the event aimed at strengthening research culture)
- Costs associated with the protection of intellectual property
- Sponsorship of an external event (note that the fund can be used towards the costs of events on external sites that are co-hosted by Brunel, but not to sponsor events that are entirely owned by the physical hosts)

Who can apply?

The BRCSF is open to Research Staff (i.e., postdoctoral researchers and research fellows) and Technicians.

Applications are open to both individuals and groups and can be intra-or interdisciplinary, as long as they can demonstrate enhancement to research culture at Brunel.

We recognise that our research staff and technicians have a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences and warmly encourage applications from everyone in those communities, including those groups who are under-represented in research at our institution.

Doctoral Researchers and academic staff are **not** eligible to apply.

Application Process

The BRCSF is an open call with a rolling deadline. However, all funds need to be spent by the end of the financial year, 31st July 2024.

The Application Form must be submitted electronically to Victoria.Schuppert@brunel.ac.uk. A small selection panel will assess the application and come back to applicants within two weeks of submission.

If you would like to discuss your application prior to submission, please contact Prof Tina Ramkalawan and Dr Victoria Schuppert (Director and Senior Researcher Developer, respectively, of the Graduate School).

Selection Process

A panel made up of the Director of the Graduate School, Senior Researcher Developer and the Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research Culture and Governance. We will consider all applications and successful applicants will be notified within two weeks.

The panel will consider:

- Whether the project fits the strategic aim of the fund;
- The potential impact of the project on enhancing research culture;
- The potential for the activities to be rolled out in other areas of the University;
- Whether the project can realistically be delivered within the proposed budget and timeframe;
- What level of funding it is appropriate for the fund to provide.

Project Outcomes and Post-project Activities

Successful applicants will be expected to share their experiences and projects outcomes in a brief project report and, more importantly, at a post-project showcase to which Brunel staff will be invited.

Terms and Conditions

- All projects must end by the of the financial year, 31st July 2024.
- All funds must be spent by the end of the financial year. Any unspent funds will not be available after this date;
- All activities related to the project must occur by the end of the financial year. Funding cannot be used to prepay for activities taking place after that date;
- The awarded funding must be spent in line with the budget specified in your proposal. Any budget changes must be submitted to the Graduate School for approval;
- All fund-related activities must adhere by Brunel University policies, all of which can be found here: [Policies and documents | Brunel University London](#)