



Astronomy Grant Application Guidelines - 2012

Introduction

The purpose of these notes is to provide advice and instructions to Applicants when preparing a grant application for consideration by the Astronomy Grants Panel (AGP). They are intended to supplement the fEC Grants Handbook and Je-S system but aim to provide specific advice on:

- 1 - The Astronomy Grants Panel remit, structure and timetable
- 2 - A guide to the Astronomy Grants Panel procedure
- 3 - General information- applying for a consolidated grant
- 4 - Key elements required within a proposal
- 5 - Research grant assessment criteria
- 6 - Structure of proposals
- 7 - Completing a Gantt chart
- 8 - Completing a requested summary table
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Background

The specific aims of the scheme will be to:

- ensure that the programme supported is scientifically excellent;
- ensure that the programme is clearly in line with Council strategic science objectives; consider the strategic objectives of the UK Space Agency, address the impact agenda and be responsive to changes and new ideas;
- ensure that the process is transparent and accountable, particularly with respect to the means of prioritisation;
- ensure that the outcome, where appropriate, takes account of the Council's and the UK Space Agency's current and planned investment in facilities;
- ensure that the process is efficient in terms of the requirement for Applicants (length of proposals and detail provided), the reviewers – both panels and referees and the use of office resources;
- ensure that the process provides a timely outcome;
- ensure that there is an appropriate balance between observation, instrumentation and theory, and between the various sub-disciplines of astronomy, and the development of novel, generic technologies for astronomy and space science, consistent with the overall strategy of the research council.

1. The Astronomy Grants Panel Remit and Structure

The Astronomy Grants Panel (AGP) will assess and provide recommendations to the Council Executive and the Science Programme Advisory Committee (SPAC) of the UK Space Agency (under the dual key arrangement) on all responsive research grant applications in astronomy and space science covering basic research, exploitation, theory and modelling and the development of basic ('blue skies') technology related to the programme.

The AGP will comprise experts to cover all science areas of the programme which can be grouped as Astronomy Theory and modelling; Astronomy Observations; Solar System studies and Planetary studies (including exploration). The AGP will provide an overview of the process and programme to ensure sufficient support is provided to key science areas and to facility / mission exploitation.

Sub-panels of appropriate experts from the AGP will meet to assess elements of each proposal that fall within their remit and to provide input to the overall recommendation.

The full AGP will review the output of the meetings and draw up final recommendations to be submitted to the Science Board (SB) and to the Science Programme Advisory Committee (SPAC) of the UK Space Agency.

Astronomy Grants Panel Closing Dates & Schedule (note this may change in future years)

Date:	Action:
February	Submission of consolidated applications
April	Review Process – Applicants to respond to reviewer comments
May	Applicants to respond to Introducer / Panel questions
September	AGP Grants meetings
October	SB and UKSA endorsement
October	Outcome Announced

2. A Guide to the Astronomy Grant Panel procedure

AGP Membership

The AGP is comprised of experts covering the following four broad science areas within Astronomy:

AGP: AO - Astronomy Observations

AGP: AT – Astronomy Theory

AGP: SS – Solar Studies & Space based Solar Terrestrial Physics

AGP: PL – Planetary Studies

The sub-panels and the AGP as a whole do not have delegated financial authority but wherever possible will be given information on the availability of funds.

All the AGP members will have access to all information pertaining to the round i.e. proposals, reviewer reports, applicants response etc. subject to conflicts of interest

On receipt of the proposals the panel chairs will identify at least one Introducer (a panel member) for each proposal. Proposals relevant to more than one broad Science area will have multiple Introducers as appropriate

For each proposal allocated, the Introducer/s will identify appropriate reviewers. Reviewers are asked to provide comments within three weeks. Responses will be monitored by the office with reminders issued where necessary.

All reviewer comments received are sent to the applicants along with guidance on page length for responses and response due dates.

In addition, the Applicants are given the opportunity to address specific Panel questions. The office will coordinate this process which will be dealt with via e-mail.

Panel members are asked to leave the room when a proposal from their own Institution is being discussed. Any conflicts of interest are identified prior to discussing a proposal and recorded by the office. Each proposal is considered in turn with the Introducer leading the discussion by providing an overview of the proposed science, taking account of both reviewer comments and Applicants responses..

In its assessment of proposals the panel will look at each category referred to in the assessment criteria detailed in the Research Grants Handbook.

The sub-panel will agree a final score; recommend appropriate level of resources and a ranking position within the relevant science area for each project contained within the grant application, separately.

After all proposals have been considered, the panel will revisit the ranking list to ensure it is satisfied with the outcome. A ranked list will be agreed which will go forward to the merging meeting

Throughout the meeting the chairs will note science areas, facilities, number of PDRA’s, number of students, applicant fEC etc. which will form part of the AGP report required by the Science Committee.

AGP Merging Meeting

After the sub panel meetings the sub-panel chairs and AGP chair will review all recommendations and agree a final combined ranking list for all projects, across the sub-panel areas. This meeting will be chaired by the AGP chair and will include a sub set of the AGP including the sub panel chairs.

Plenary meeting

All panel members will attend the plenary meeting which will be chaired by the AGP chair. The panel will review the outcome of the round and provide input to the report to Science Board and the UKSA

Post meeting

The AGP chair will report to Science Board and to the UK Space Agency on the outcome of the round. The final funding line will be determined by the STFC budget holder at which point applicants will be informed of the outcome with appropriate feedback.

3. General information - Applying for a Consolidated Grant

Having completed the 2011 grant round, the AGP agreed in consultation with the office that future consolidated grant proposals should have a maximum duration of 3 years. The original suggestion of 3 years funding over a 4 year period (in order to provide flexibility for delaying staff start dates) has proved overly complicated. Flexibility can be achieved, where required, by STFC allowing a no- cost extension of up to 1 year.

As an example:

Requested grant duration 3 years starting 1st April 2013, the request includes 2 PDRA posts, which should have 1st April as the start date.

The grant would start 1st April with PDRA 1 expenditure. However PDRA 2 does not commence until 1st October (6 months later). At that point the Applicant may request a 6 month no-cost extension, which ensures a full 36 month period for PDRA 2.

Existing support

When a group first submits a consolidated grant, any existing standard grants should be subsumed into the application, but the existing support is considered a funding commitment and needs only a brief nominal justification. Of course many applicants will then request funding for new projects closely related to the existing grant, in which case the nominal justification for the existing grant can be included in the full case for the new project.

Groups currently supported via a Rolling Grant submitting their first consolidated proposal should note that Years 1-3 of their grants, like standard grants, are considered commitments, but previous AGP recommendations for Years 4-5 of Rolling Grants are not considered funding commitments.

However AGP will be fully aware of the previous peer review recommendations when considering the appropriate level for the new grant.

Consolidated Proposal - grouping

It is expected that each university department or similar organisational unit will submit one consolidated grant for its Astronomical Research Programme. However, STFC recognises that there may be exceptional cases so would consider such cases on an individual basis. These should be directed to the office in the first instance.

Consortium Proposals

Consortium proposals may be applied for by groups of researchers, from more than one University Department or Institution, with a common research programme. The aim is to provide a concerted and coordinated effort to tackle a particular research area or technology development. Different institutions submit a single case for support but separate JeS forms. Given the limitations of the current grants system the office would strongly advise that joint proposals are NOT linked using the JeS functionality. If considering submitting a Consortium proposal, applicants are required to discuss this with the office well in advance of submission to agree whether a Consortium application would be appropriate. A brief written summary of the proposed consortium is likely to be requested as part of this process

Applicants should note that, whilst an individual may be named on both a consolidated and Consortium grant, they can only request resources from one or the other. Therefore individuals that apply for resources as part of a Consortium will be excluded from also applying for resources (including fEC) as part of their individual university department application.

Travel and Visitors

Travel and visitor requests should be merged into consolidated proposals, however, the merging of PATT travel support grants will be undertaken in a subsequent round. The PATT scheme will remain available to the community for now.

Outreach

Applicants may request funds for public outreach activities on consolidated grants, subject to a well justified case. A description of the proposed activities and a justification of the resources requested should be included as a separate section within the Case for Support. (This is required in addition to the Pathways to Impact document so that the request can be peer-reviewed.) This section should be a maximum of one page.

Core vs. non- Core posts

Astronomy proposals will not be required to make a distinction between core and non-core posts.

Level of request

Applicants are strongly advised that they should be realistic about the level of support requested. As a general rule the AGP would suggest that only a small number of additional posts should be requested above existing support. All applicants should consider the level of their request carefully and of course contact the office for advice if needed. We stress that it is not in the applicant's interest to apply for large numbers of posts that have very little hope of being supported. We will expect therefore departments to choose those projects put forward within their consolidated grants with care.

Duration of awards

Applicants should request 3 years of support, as detailed above, and should note that, unlike the previous rolling grant system, consolidated grants are considered independently of each other. If a consolidated grant is awarded which overlaps with the existing grant, due to an extension, the existing grant remains active and its duration unchanged.

Review Cycle

Although there will be no guarantee of funding, it is expected that most groups will apply for new consolidated grants on a 3 year cycle to refresh their support. The following shows the pattern that should apply in the steady state:

Note: Review is the date on which a new proposal should be submitted. Renewal is when a new grant would start

Grant 1: submit to the 2012 closing date

Duration: Start 1.4.13 – 31.3.16 (3 years)

Review: 2015 closing date

Outcome notified by October 2015 – 6 months before 1.4.16 when the new grant is due to start

Grant 2: submit to the 2015 closing date

Duration: Start 1.4.16 – 31.3.19 (3 years)

Review: 2018 closing date

Outcome notified by October 2018 - 6 months before 1.4.19 when the new grant is due to start

Grant 3: submit to the 2018 closing date

Duration: Start 1.4.19 – 31.3.22(3 years)

Review: 2021 closing date

Outcome notified by October 2021 – 6 months before 1.4.22 when the new grant is due to start

STFC in consultation with the AGP are looking at ways to reduce the time between submission and notification of

outcome. As part of this process it would be extremely helpful if Applicants could email a copy of the proposal to the office as well as submitting by the formal JeS route

4. Key Elements required within a proposal

For each project proposed within the application, the applicants must clearly set out both the science case, and the specific plan of work intended, including the roles of any PDRAs involved and all the investigators named. The general need to make these two things clear to the typical scientist serving on the AGP is more important than anything else. However, applicants should be aware that the AGP works within the framework set out within the fEC Research Grants Handbook. Applicants are strongly advised to read these guidelines in conjunction with the Research Grants Handbook. The Handbook specifies the categories against which applications are assessed, as explained in Section 2. It also provides twelve *key elements* which should be addressed. We reproduce these below. Please note that the AGP does not expect applicants to explicitly address these questions separately and laboriously, which would take too much space. Rather, the answers to these questions should be clear in a natural way within the flow of the scientific case and workplan:

1. What are the aims and scope of the programme? Describe the components and any interrelation, where appropriate.
2. In what areas do the Applicants and/or named PDRAs have national or international leadership?
3. In the case of a Consortium proposal, what is the added value of funding as a consortium
4. Briefly describe the support your institution provides to your group with particular emphasis on recent investments that are relevant to the research programme.

Likewise with regard to each individual project

5. How will the field be advanced as a result of the proposed research?
6. How does the research fit within the international context?
7. What are the main highlights / achievements of the applicants within the last three years in the broad area of each proposed project and what impact have these had on the field, both nationally and internationally?
8. How do you expect the research to evolve over the proposed grant period?
9. What are the major goals and what is the plan of work for the proposed grant period?
10. Justify the level of resources requested to execute the work, including academic support and any request for studentships and equipment.
11. What facilities or Space missions will be required to achieve the aims? (This includes facilities developed by international organisations to which the Council or the UK Space Agency subscribes)

5. Research grant assessment criteria for all applications

Please see the Assessment Procedures section of the Research Grants Handbook for guidance.

The AGP will assess all proposals against each category of the assessment criteria

6. Structure of proposals

Proposals should be clearly divided into distinct *projects*, each of which should be presented as a self contained case. Although projects are reviewed within the context of whole grant applications, they are assessed and ranked independently. The expectation is that projects normally correspond to one or more PDRA lines, but there may occasionally be projects which involve only Investigator time. It is recognised that some applicants may wish to divide the time of some staff members between projects, but they should be aware that projects will be considered and

ranked separately. In order to be easily partitioned for review, each project should start on a new page, should carefully justify each element of related resource, and should specify which of the broad sub-panel areas (Astronomy Observation, Astronomy Theory, Solar Studies, Planetary Studies) it relates to. Note however that the AGP may revise this allocation to sub-panels.

Applicants may wish to group their projects into scientific “themes” or similar, point out cross-links, stress synergies, and so on, if they feel this makes their case stronger. However there is no obligation to make the projects link together or present a coherent plan. Such cross-links or coherent planning will not form part of the formal assessment of a proposal. It is up to applicants to decide what makes their case read best.

It is also permissible to request some cross-cutting support, such as travel, equipment, system manager, secretarial support etc. Note however that if anything other than formulaic support is requested, it must be explicitly justified.

Prior to submitting an application, applicants are strongly advised to pay particular attention to the following:

- Applicants that do not secure funding within a consolidated grant request are not permitted to apply for funding between reviews.
- The final outcome and whether groups expand or contract will depend on the quality of the proposed science, the relevance of the research and the funding situation.
- A bid for a consolidated grant may not necessarily result in an award.
- All consolidated grants will start on the 1st April of the year following submission
- All resources should be requested for a maximum of 3 years. Please refer to guidance: Requesting resources.

It is essential that the peer review process is efficient and effective. An important element is to ensure that the Applicants and the reviewers are not overloaded with paperwork, and that applications are focused on addressing the key issues. Applicants should therefore be mindful of both clarity and brevity when preparing an application and present it in such a way that it is easy for the peer review panel to follow. Remember that not all members of the panel will be equally familiar with the research topic.

Applicants must ensure that within the proposal:

- Each element of the request is fully justified within the case for support;
- It is made clear where a proposal spans AGP sub-panels and the percentage of research relevant to each panel. e.g. 50% of a proposal may be appropriate for consideration by Astronomy Observation and the remaining 50% by Astronomy Theory;
- Responses to the key criteria required are clear or if not relevant, stated as such;
- All other assessment criteria have been fully addressed;
- The total number of permitted A4 sides is not exceeded.

Applicants are required to adhere to the following rules and to consult the office prior to submission if queries cannot be answered by reference to this guidance note.

Page limit – case for support

- All pages must be in a font equivalent to Times New Roman pt 11 or larger.
- A maximum of 2 sides of A4 is permitted to describe the programme in the group, or department, setting.
- A maximum of 2 pages of A4 is permitted for resources cutting across all projects i.e. travel, equipment, system manager support, secretary etc
- Further sides of A4 are allowed as follows:
Projects involving Directly Incurred staff (PDRA's and/or Technicians) maximum 3 pages per FTE, rounded to the nearest half page, where the FTE includes PDRA's Technicians, and associated applicant time.

As an example:

A project may request 100% PDRA, 50% Technician and 20% Applicant time, Total fte is therefore $1.7 \times 3 = 5.1$ rounded to 5.0 pages permitted for that specific project

- Student only projects – 1.5 pages

- Applicant time only projects – 1.5 pages
- Visiting Researcher projects – 3 pages in total

Applicants should note that the page limits are NOT transferable between projects

Essential Supplementary Information

This information must be provided as part of the application and may be classified as part of the case for support with the exception of the Impact Plan and Equipment quotes which must be classified separately in order to meet JeS requirements. The essential supplementary information is in addition to the case for support.

- A summary publication statistics table for all applicants, including any named or continuing PDRAs. Please refer to guidance: Publications-Supplementary Information.
- A summary of current STFC grants held by the group/department, with titles, values, the number and type of staff posts funded and the start and end dates of each grant held. It should be made clear to the peer review panel how the programme to be carried out on the requested proposal fits in with, or differs from, on-going Council-supported projects in the group/department. Some explanatory text should be included where necessary to expand on the basic grant details. It should also be made clear where applicants intend to subsume existing standard grants into the consolidated grant request.
- A Gantt chart showing current support and requested support. Please refer to the guidance provide on how to complete a Gantt Chart
- A requested summary table, which should provide details of the requested resources for each project within a science area (sub panel). Please refer to the guidance provided on the format of the table required.
- A Pathways to Impact document covering Knowledge Exchange and Outreach and Equipment quotes, please refer to the Research Grants handbook and JeS guidance for more information on both these documents.
- Additional information may be included as part of the proposal, if considered helpful to the panel, for example letters of support or links to relevant websites detailing the scientific case for approved projects e.g. Herschel. However, applicants should be mindful of both clarity and brevity when preparing an application and present all information in such a way that it is easy for the peer review panel to follow. Remember that not all members of the panel will be equally familiar with the research topic.
- Any additional clarifying information may be requested at the discretion of the AGP or the Council.

Proposals that exceed the page limits or do not follow the Astronomy guidelines will be **rejected** by the Research Council or the AGP

Applicants should be mindful to classify documents correctly when uploading to JeS. Failure to do so could result in incomplete proposals being sent out to reviewers.

7. Gantt Chart

Gantt charts are essential to the panel when considering past and present staff support. Applicants are only required to provide information on STFC funded posts.

Consolidated grants are designed to provide flexibility and staff may be moved to projects other than those originally recommended by the panel. One of the most difficult tasks for the AGP (Astronomy Grants Panel) is to establish which staff member is working on which project and how (if at all) that differed from the recommended award. The Gantt chart if completed correctly provides this information.

The panel will need to know of any existing grants that the applicants would like to be subsumed into the consolidated grant and similarly of any standard grants that will end prior to the start of the consolidated Grant, but where continuation of a project is requested. In the case of rolling grants that are being subsumed into a consolidated grant, the office will have contacted the applicants and provided a completed Gantt chart of the previous award (applicants should add relevant additional information and submit as part of the supplementary information). The original details as provided by the office should not be amended (although any changes as detailed above should be noted) and the requested posts section should be completed.

- [Download a worked example](#)

To ensure uniformity across groups, applicants are advised to complete the Gantt chart as shown in the enclosed example, following the guidance provided. Ambiguous or erroneous Gantt charts may result in the proposal being rejected. If in any doubt about how to complete the Gantt chart, applicants are advised to contact the office.

8. Requested Summary Table

To allow the panel to easily identify the resources and staff effort requested within each science area (sub panel) a requested summary table must be completed. To ensure uniformity across groups, applicants are advised to complete a requested summary table as in the following example

Requested SUMMARY (1.4.2012 – 31.3.2016)
Professor xxx – University xxx - Department xxx

Grant year	1/4/12	1/4/13	1/4/14
Staff fte	% FTE	% FTE	% FTE
Science Area: (AGP Sub-panel i.e. AGP- AO)			
1.1: Title of project – PDRA - Jones	100	100(6)	-
1.1: Title of project – PDRA replacement start 1.10.13 (refer to note 1)	-	100(6)	100
1.1 – PhD	100	100	100
DI - Technical support (name)	50	50	50
Applicant name 1	10	10	10
Applicant name 2	5	5	5
Science Area: (AGP Sub-panel i.e. AGP- AT)			
2.1: ex (grant ref and end date of existing Standard Grant to be subsumed) PDRA Smith (refer to note 2)	-	100	100
2.2: Title of project – PDRA – White	50	50	50
DI - Technical support (name)	50	50	50
Applicant name 1	-	5	5
Applicant name 3	5	5	5
Science Area: : (AGP Sub-panel i.e. AGP- SS)			
3.1 Title of project (Applicant time only)			
Applicant name 4	20	20	20
Science Area: (AGP Sub-panel i.e. AGP-PL)			
4.1: Title of project – PDRA – White	50	50	50
4.2: Title of project – PDRA - Un-named	100	100	100
Applicant name 3	10	10	10
Applicant name 5			10(6)
Applicant FTE			
Total FTE Applicant 1 name	10	15	15
Total FTE Applicant 2 name	5	5	5
Total FTE Applicant 3 name	15	15	15
Total FTE Applicant 4 name	20	20	20
Total FTE Applicant 5 name	-	-	10(6)
Total Applicant FTE	0.50	0.55	0.60
Total PDRA FTE	3.00	4.00	4.00
Total Research FTE	3.50	4.55	4.60
Total PhD FTE (6)	1.00	1.00	1.00
Total DI Technical FTE	1.00	1.00	1.00
Other Directly Allocated			

Secretarial support @ 8% per fte (excl PhD & Tech.)	(28% fte) £7,280	(36%fte) £9,360	(37%fte) £9,620
System Manager @10% per fte (excl. PhD & Tech.)	(35% fte) £12,250	(46%fte) £16,100	(46% fte) £16,100
Describe anything else being requested under Other Directly Allocated i.e. other technical posts (refer to note 6)			
Grant year	1/4/12	1/4/13	1/4/14
	£	£	£
Equipment – Total (3 yrs – 76,500)			
Description (project 1)	11,000	-	-
Description (project 1 & 2)	13,500	-	-
Description (project 3)	12,000	-	-
Description (all projects)	40,000	-	-
Total	76,500	-	-
Travel (Total x 3 yrs –49,450)			
Visiting researchers travel (1k per fte - excl. PhD & Tech.)	3,500	4,550	4,600
Academic conf. travel (all projects – 2k per fte - excl. Tech.)	7,000	9,100	9,200
Description additional – project 1	3,000	3,000	3,000
Description additional – project 2	500	1,000	1,000
Total	14,000	17,650	17,800
ODI – Total (3 yrs –44,150)			
Publications (all projects – 0.5k per Applicant and PDRA post)	5,000	0	0
Laptops / PC's (all projects – 2 k per fte excl. Tech.)	9,000	11,100	11,200
Recruitment – 1k per un-named Pdra)	2,000	0	0
Description – specific project 1	500	500	500
Description – specific project 2	750	750	750
Description – specific project 3	1000	1000	100
Total	18,250	13,350	12,550
Exceptions – Total (3 yrs – 20,340)			
Other costs	5,085	6,780	6,780

Notes:

1 – Ensure it is clear where a named PDRA will be replaced by an un-named PDRA on the same project

2 – Show clearly where existing Standard Grants are expected to be subsumed into the Consolidated Grant, by entering grant reference number, start and end dates.

Standard Grants that are subsumed will be terminated the day before the Consolidated Grant is due to start.

Similarly show clearly where a Standard Grant has ended prior to the start date of the Consolidated Grant but where continued support is being requested.

3 – Show clearly where an applicant FTE varies across the 3 year duration and also where support is requested later in the grant period due, for example, to the applicant holding a fellowship.

It is worth noting that currently the J-eS system is unable to accommodate varying FTE and also does not allow for an Applicant start date to be different from the actual proposed start date. It is therefore essential that these details are made clear to the panel.

5 – Funds requested under the heading Other Directly Allocated, often include funding for support staff. Where this is the case the percentage FTE for each post should be detailed. For example if the organisation applies 8% secretarial support per staff member, this should be noted. Any other items requested under this heading should be described clearly.

6 - All other costs should be allocated against a project. Where this is not possible an explanation should be provided.

9. Publications

Each proposal should provide a statistical summary of the scientific productivity for each individual applicant, together with a brief statement of their role within the research programme. It is recognised that productivity may be expressed in a number of forms. As a minimum each applicant should list the number of refereed publications over a 5 year period, or shorter specified period if appropriate and, where appropriate, the number of these on which they are first author. These data should be derived from 'ADS', or 'Web of Science'. The 5 years should be the most recent five calendar year period except where there is a justifiable career break or other extenuating circumstances, in which case it should be the most recent 5 years of active research. Please use names for applicants that will, as far as possible, allow them to be uniquely identified in bibliographic searches.

Example form: Period covered January 2005-Jan2010

Applicant or	Number of Refereed	Number of first author refereed	Number of technical reports	Number of first author technical reports
A.N.Other1				
A.N. Other2				

1. Note: A.N.Other2 was on maternity leave from June-Dec 2007, thus we are using the intervals June2004-June2007 and Jan2008-Jan2010.
2. Technical papers are defined here as those specifically arising from instrument development or construction and not un-refereed science papers.

Publications by applicant PDRAs should be presented in a similar way. Again, names for individual PDRAs should be included. PDRAs that are no longer with the group at time of submission are eligible (so long as they were supported via STFC standard or rolling grants during the preceding 5 years). The intention is to provide an indication of PDRA productivity in the context of career development, and to identify potential problems in management.

In the final row of the summary table, groups should include the total number of unique papers over the most recent 5 period (this is not the same as summing output from individual investigators), and the total number of unique papers originating from within the group (i.e. total number of papers with applicants, PDRAs, and PhDs as 1st authors).

It is up to applicants to use any other means that they wish to demonstrate their scientific productivity. For example, those engaged in hardware and software projects, and other technical activities, can also demonstrate past productivity, where appropriate, by listing technical reports published, but also by showing evidence of innovation and technical development, external contracts and other enabling activities.

It should be noted that any statistics provided will be used as a starting point in establishing overall productivity rather than to make fine distinctions in determining priorities for funding.

10. Requesting Resources

Applicants should note that even where the standard levels of travel, laptops etc have been requested (see below) these will need to be fully justified. All requests for resources no matter at what level need to be fully justified; failure to do so will result in resources being rejected. Specific guidance on justification of resources can be found in the Research Grant Handbook.

The AGP considers a significant number of applications which are wide ranging in the level of resources requested. These notes are to provide applicants with some guidance on the scale of resources the AGP considers to be a standard / reasonable level, but these are by no means prescriptive.

Applicant time:

- 5% - For the management time of a PI managing the whole of a large consolidated grant
- 5-15% - Where an academic has a clear and significant, but not major, personal role in the research
- 15-25% - Where the academic is heavily involved with the research project at the personal level or it is their main research endeavour and they are managing a large programme

Applicants should note that the JeS system averages applicant time over the duration of the proposal. The actual request which may vary over the years should be made clear on the requested summary table.

Travel

- Conferences, workshops and meetings etc. - £2k per FTE per annum (applicants, researchers, students)
- Conferences, workshops and meetings etc. - £2.4k per FTE per annum - Ireland, Scotland and other distant places at the discretion of the office.
- Visitor Travel - £1k per full time effort per annum (applicants, researchers)

Other Directly Incurred (ODI)

- Computing equipment (Laptops & PC's) - £2k per full time effort per annum (applicants, researchers, students)
- Page Charges - £0.5k per post, not full time effort (Applicants & Researchers)
- Recruitment costs - £1k per un-named PDRA (postdoctoral research assistant)
- Consumables - General consumables are expected to be found by the University from within indirect costs. The panel will only consider requests that are project specific.

Support Staff – Directly Incurred

Secretarial support 8% per full time effort (applicants, researchers)

Computer Officer 10% per full time effort (applicants, researchers)

Support Staff - Other Directly Allocated

Pooled staff costs and pooled technical posts should be clearly identified as %FTE on the requested summary table. Secretarial and computer officer support requested under this fund heading should follow the same guidelines as above.

It is recognised that Research Organisations may apply a rate per full time effort or post for certain items. Whilst this is fully acceptable it must be clear from the case what is included within the rate.

Applicants should note that with the exception of DI staff posts (which will be profiled and paid as per the start and end dates of the posts) all funds awarded will be evenly profiled and subsequently paid over the full 3 year duration.

11. Requesting Studentships

For guidance please see the Studentships on grants section of the Research Grants Handbook.

Applicants should not confuse requests for project students with the specific studentship schemes, available from STFC. However, the AGP will need to be informed of the number of STFC-funded studentships held within the group.

Applicants need to be mindful that as with all elements of a proposal full justification for a studentship is required.

12. New Applicants Scheme

Newly appointed academic members of staff (lecturers or lecturer equivalent fellows) who have joined a department between grant reviews may exceptionally apply separately for support. This will potentially allow them to begin to

establish a research programme on appointment. If grant funding is agreed, funding is likely to be awarded as an addition to the departments / consortium's existing consolidated grant.

It should be noted that the number of awards is likely to be very low and funding will be extremely competitive.

Eligibility

- Applicants may not be funded on more than one grant. For example, if an individual transfers from another university, they cannot hold resource on both a new applicant grant, and a consolidated grant at their previous institution.
- Applicants must be employed on a full or part-time basis as academic members of staff at the grant- holding University by the start date of the new applicants grant.
- The relevant department's / consortium's consolidated grant submission date should be a minimum of 1 year away from the submission date of the new applicants grant.
- Applicants will need to demonstrate that there are insufficient funds within the flexibility of the existing grant to support their research.

Terms of the Scheme

- Applicants must be the sole investigator.
- Applicants can only apply once at any institution for a new applicant award.
- Applicants can apply for funding for a minimum of a year and a maximum of 3 years (or until the issue of the department's / consortium's consolidated grant).
- Applicants can apply for limited resources to allow the applicant to begin to establish a research programme
- The relevant grant panel will assess applications against the same criteria as the consolidated grant proposals (and funding will come from the appropriate grants line); however, research potential in addition to track record will be taken into account.

Proposals

- Applicants should submit a 1 page pre-proposal for consideration by the executive in consultation with the relevant grant panel chair.
- The pre-proposal should briefly set out the circumstances, explaining why a new applicant proposal is appropriate, and how the application matches the eligibility criteria set out above.
- The pre-proposal should also briefly sketch the nature and strength of the scientific case that would be described in full if permission for a full proposal is given.
- The pre-proposal should provide an indication of the requested resources
- The pre-proposal should be accompanied by a brief letter from the Principal Investigator of the consolidated grant held by the department concerned, confirming the employment status and timing, and explaining carefully why the new member of staff's research cannot be supported using the spending flexibility allowed within the existing grant.
- If the case for funding is considered to be potentially a high priority, applicants will be advised of next steps.

