



Lignocellulosic Biorefinery Network

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR BUSINESS INTERACTION VOUCHERS SCHEME

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Context

BBSRC NIBB Business Interaction Vouchers will encourage and support collaboration between academic partners and industrial partners within the LBNet Network.

The vouchers will help resource small, confidence-building measures between an academic partner and an industrial based partner that are likely to lead to outcomes of:

- a longer-term relationship
- improved interaction
- new research technology transfer projects

Funding eligibility

Applicants:

Funding is available for current LBNet members who are eligible to receive BBSRC funding (<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidelines/grants-guide.pdf>). Vouchers are £10k (inclusive of VAT) maximum; the industrial partner's contribution will be at least the value of the voucher in cash or in-kind contribution. Business Interaction Vouchers are paid to the academic partner who is tackling a problem relevant to the industrial partner. Industrial members can apply for them but they are paid in arrears to the academic they are working with.

Activities funding will support:

Funds will support a collaboration that can be any defined piece of work *by* an academic partner *for* an industrial partner. New collaborations will be prioritised; however, vouchers may be used to fund existing collaborations.

The scope will be that of the LBNet Network. Examples of projects include, but are not limited to, generating new experimental data, data analysis, technical consultancy or literature review.

The work of each individual project will be constrained to 6 months maximum. Priority will be given to proposals that meet one or more of the following:

- Aid technology transfer
- Work towards solving a technical problem for an industrial partner
- Adapt an existing technology for a new application

Funding calls

The funding call will remain open for the lifetime of the Network. The dates of the evaluation meetings will be well-advertised using the LBNet website, twitter and email, as well as other outlets to ensure wide coverage of the opportunity.

Application process

Applications can be submitted by either partner but only one form is required per project.

The applicant should submit a pdf file no longer than three A4 sides of single spaced 11pt Arial text and with a 20mm margin. The pdf file must contain the following sections:

1 Applicant details:

Academic partner: name, position, University, address, e-mail and telephone

Industrial partner: name, position, Company, address, e-mail and telephone

2 Title, public description of project and proposed start/end date

Your short public description should summarise your Project in a way that can be understood by the general public and should not contain confidential or proprietary information.

3 Project details

- 3.1 Details of the work proposed
- 3.2 Clearly defined project deliverables
- 3.3 The value of the Project outputs to the industrial partner
- 3.4 Benefits to the partnership

4 Finances

Detailed expenditure breakdown of the project and brief justification; financial and in-kind contributions from each partner.

The value of the BIV requested by the **academic partner** must not exceed £10,000 inclusive of VAT. A full cost breakdown under the headings of staff costs, consumables, equipment use/hire (if applicable) and travel (if applicable), must be given. Additional headings can be used as required to fully describe Project costs.

The contribution made by the **industrial partner** to the academic partner must be at least as much as the value of the BIV requested. The contribution can be made in cash or in kind but the value of the contribution must be given as a breakdown using appropriate headings, for example, staff time (e.g. number of days at a given daily rate), consumables, equipment use/hire and travel. Additional headings can be used as required to fully describe Project costs.

5 At the bottom of the application please confirm the following:

- a. *Does the Project raise any ethical or social issues which the Evaluation Panel should be aware of? If yes, please provide details*
- b. *Does the Project involve the use of animals? If yes, please provide details*
- c. *As lead applicant I confirm that my Institution is eligible to receive BBSRC funding in line with the guidelines available at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidelines/grants---guide.pdf> and that I am personally eligible to act as Principle Investigator on a BBSRC grant*
- d. *I confirm that I am a registered member of the LBNet*
- e. *I confirm that the industrial partner named below is aware that the award of a BIV constitutes de minimis state aid and will take steps to ensure that they are not in breach of state aid rules*

Submission of applications and further information

Applications are to be submitted by e-mail to the Network Manager (veronica.ongaro@york.ac.uk); all applications will be acknowledged within three working days.

Evaluation process

The Executive Group (EG) together with a representative from the Management Board (MB) will form a BIV Evaluation Panel. In the case of conflict of interest, the EG will engage the MB to evaluate the application.

Criteria for assessment will be:

- Relevance of application to LBNet scope
- Quality of work proposed
- Value of the clearly defined project deliverable(s) to the SME/industrial partner
- Benefit to the research and industrial partnership
- Value for money
- Contribution of the industrial partner to the project, which can be in kind
- Potential for building longer-term relationship

Payment of awards

The academic and industrial partner will agree a start date and will need to have a signed agreement in place prior to the project commencing; the Network Manager will check this is the case. The LBNNet will provide a simple contract for the awardee, assigning all rights to the awardee's University or the partnership, but requiring vouchers to be spent as detailed on the proposal. The Network Manager will provide a purchase order to the applicant and the awardee will invoice LBNNet Network in arrears.

A project completion form (including a public summary of the work, which may be used by the Network) will be sent to the Network Manager within one month of the project ending and it will include an expenditure statement. Receipts will not be required by the LBNNet but the academic partner will keep proper financial records should an audit be required.

State aid rules

BBSRC NIBB Innovation Vouchers will be counted as *De minimis* aid. Industrial partners need to ensure they are not in breach of *De minimis* aid rules by accepting the Innovation voucher and will agree this when submitting an application. (Further information: www.gov.uk/state-aid).

Data protection regulations

Copies of proposals will be made available to the LBNNet Evaluation Panel, who will use information provided in the application for processing the proposal, the award of any consequential voucher, and for the payment, maintenance and review of the voucher funds. Funding comes from BBSRC, so to meet the Research Councils' obligations for public accountability and the dissemination of information, details of awards may also be made available on the Research Councils' websites and other publicly available databases, and in reports, documents and mailing lists.