

## EPSRC Impact Acceleration Account: scheme guide

Funding is available to support activities that are intended to **speed up or amplify the impact arising from EPSRC funded research.**

### Deadlines

1. Technology Fund: **12noon 3<sup>rd</sup> August**
2. Secondment Scheme: **12noon 3<sup>rd</sup> August**

### Context

3. EPSRC recognises that there is often a long lead time between **research ‘discovery’** (research outcomes) and **related impacts**.
4. Oxford is one of 31 universities to be awarded an EPSRC **Impact Acceleration Account** (IAA) grant.
5. **£1.9m** is available to support activities that will reduce this lead time – and help to accelerate the impact from past, current or future EPSRC-funded research.
6. Grant will run from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. This is an extension to the £3.6m previously awarded.

### Grants available

7. IAA grants replace three earlier EPSRC funding streams: Knowledge Transfer Accounts (KTA), Knowledge Transfer Secondments (KTS) and the Follow-on Fund.
8. Reflecting this, the Oxford IAA will provide **two main types of support**:
  - **Technology fund** grants will help to:
    - develop new technologies to the point where they are suitable for venture capital funding (either from University or external sources); *or*
    - transfer know-how whose take-up will provide benefits to users, but not generate a financial return to Oxford.
  - **Secondment grants** will accelerate impact through increased engagement with end users of the research.

### IAA Technology Fund grants

#### *Technology Development Grants*

9. There is often a gap between the end of EPSRC support and the point at which a

technology is sufficiently robust to attract venture funding. **IAA Technology Fund** grants are intended to bridge that gap, for research funded (at least in part) by EPSRC.

10. Grants **cannot** be used to support additional research: IAA activities must be linked to the development or refinement of existing research outputs. Types of activity that might be supported include (but are not limited to):
  - Proof of concept studies
  - Prototyping or demonstrators
  - Scale-up testing and development work
  - Generation of additional data to demonstrate the credibility of a technology
  - Access to resources or proprietary IP from an industry partner without the need to compromise ownership or control over University IP.
11. **Eligibility & assessment criteria.** Projects must:
  - have potential to **derisk** the technology and advance it closer to the point where it is ready for venture capital investment.
  - advance technology arising (in whole or part) from EPSRC-funded research.
12. Projects are likely to be characterised by a high degree of **uncertainty** or **risk**. Precise end-use applications or even broad market sectors may not be apparent yet. However, projects must still form part of a clear impact plan or ‘roadmap’: they should address specific questions or explore identified issues, and applicants should have a broad sense of what the next steps might be if this stage is successful. Purely speculative projects are unlikely to be supported.

#### *Impact Delivery Grants*

13. Isis Innovation’s remit is the realisation of research impact that will generate a commercial return to the University. Some research outputs do not lend themselves to direct commercial exploitation in this way –

but may still have the potential to deliver financial benefits for third-party users.

14. For example, many software outputs are open source, and therefore fall outside the remit of schemes designed to promote the commercialisation of research outputs. But in their 'raw' state, they may not be suitable for take-up by industry or other users: there may be a need for training materials; or for the development of new user interfaces.
15. Impact delivery grants will support projects **designed to address specific barriers to impact**. Preference will be given to projects where there is a **clear market** and/or **barriers** have been identified in consultation with potential users.

### IAA Secondment grants

16. EPSRC considers that one of the most effective ways to transfer knowledge is through the **movement of people**. This idea underpinned its earlier **Knowledge Transfer Secondments (KTS)** scheme.
17. KTS grants had to follow a very specific model, prescribed by EPSRC. The **IAA secondments scheme** is far more flexible. Funds can be requested for:
  - **KTS-style secondments**  
Outward secondment of a PDRA / PhD student previously funded by EPSRC. \*\*
  - **Pre-application secondments**  
Enable PIs to work with users to inform the design of an EPSRC research grant proposal – thereby ensuring research

questions and/or the format of research outputs are more relevant to users.

- **Pre-proof of concept secondments**  
Enable researchers to work with users to **identify key challenges** that need to be addressed to enable further exploitation of EPSRC-funded outputs and **draw up a plan to tackle them**. \*\*
- **Senior visiting fellowships**  
Inward secondment (up to 12 months) of senior industry / user scientists. †
- **Sabbatical impact enhancement grants**  
Enable academics to engage with research users during sabbatical leave. \*\*
- **'Firewall' secondments**  
Pilot mechanisms to deliver impact across security curtains. †

\*\* must exploit EPSRC-funded research outputs

† must focus on disciplines within the EPSRC remit, with a significant body of EPSRC-funded research

### How to apply

18. IAA processes are intended to be light touch. Applicants must complete a short form (there are separate forms for the Secondments scheme and the Technology Fund), which is available from [martin.edmunds@mpls.ox.ac.uk](mailto:martin.edmunds@mpls.ox.ac.uk)

### Assessment process

19. Funding decisions will be made by a multi-disciplinary panel of academics with experience of realising the (commercial) impact of their research.

**Eligible costs** Grants will meet **100% of directly incurred / directly allocated costs** (no indirect/estates costs).

Cost	Secondments						Technology Fund	
	KTS	Pre-application	Pre-proof of concept	Visiting fellow	Sabbatical impact	Firewall	Tech development	Impact delivery
Researcher / PDRA salary **	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Travel & subsistence ( <i>outwards</i> )	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Travel & subsistence ( <i>inwards</i> )	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Project support costs	✓	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)		✓	✓
Professional fees			✓				✓	
Outsourcing (e.g. prototyping)			✓				✓	✓
Bench fees ( <i>inward</i> )	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓
Staff infrastructure charge **	✓			✓	✗	✓	✓	

\*\* For staff employed on Oxford payroll (will not fund salaries of user / partner staff)