Bristol International Research Collaboration Activities Scheme
Call specification 2023-24

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Overview

Bristol International Research Collaboration Activities (BIRCA) awards are designed to stimulate and support collaboration between the University of Bristol and international academic collaborators. The BIRCA scheme is an evolution of our previous Bristol International Research Workshops scheme. Bids to this scheme must therefore be for specific, co-produced activities which fall within the broad concept of a workshop-like activity. Activities can either be virtual, in-person, or a combination thereof. We would normally expect in-person activities to take place in Bristol unless clear justification can be provided for the added value of an alternative location. If an in-person activity takes place away from Bristol we would generally only be able to cover the travel and subsistence(T&S) costs of the UoB participant(s) involved, although we can make an exception where sufficient justification has been provided. We would expect to see at least some contribution offered from the international collaborator's institution (financial and/or in-kind).

Applicants can bid for a single activity or set of related activities, depending on what best serves their needs and delivers the greatest potential for enhancing the University of Bristol's international collaborations and outputs. Some examples of suitable activities could include, for example:

- A consultation with international stakeholders to inform user-driven international collaborative research development activity.
- A forum designed to lead to influential policy briefing(s).
- A workshop to identify shared research questions and complementary expertise for specific future collaborative research bids.
- A writing workshop to coordinate contributions to an international co-authored output for publication.

Other activities may also be suitable; please contact the International Research Development (IRD) team (ird-office@bristol.ac.uk) to check eligibility if you are unsure. All activities must be co-produced with international academic collaborators and must involve these collaborators in their delivery. Activities should be interactive events which involve two-way knowledge exchange, rather than dissemination events. This funding scheme is therefore not suitable for applications to support conferences. Activities can, however, be live-streamed and/or recorded for sharing publicly, where appropriate. This scheme is also not intended to provide funding for international travel for general collaborative work; the BIRCA scheme is designed to provide funding to facilitate international collaborative activities such as workshops specifically. There are other schemes available which can support extended collaborative work, please visit the IRD website for more information.

This scheme has been designed to support collaborative activities which are geared towards enhancing international research development and collaboration, and which have strong potential for producing international co-authored publications and/or international research bids as well as enhancing the University of Bristol's global research profile.

Eligibility

All workshop proposals must have a Lead Applicant from both the University of Bristol and the Collaborator Institution; however, the inclusion of additional internal and external collaborators (including non-academic collaborators) is encouraged where appropriate.

University of Bristol Lead Applicant

UoB Lead Applicants can be based in any school, department, or faculty, and can be on any academic pathway (i.e. Pathway 1, 2 or 3). UoB Lead Applicants must be officially registered as an academic researcher at the University of Bristol for the full duration of the proposed activities. UoB Lead Applicants can be at any career stage; however, they need to be able to demonstrate the capacity, knowledge, and experience to deliver a collaborative international research activity which meets the requirements of the scheme. We therefore anticipate that the majority of UoB Lead Applicants will be middle and senior career researchers. We do, however, encourage Lead Applicants to include early career researchers in their BIRCA activities as a capacity development opportunity. Applicants are only permitted to submit one application each calendar month, and no more than three per academic year. Unsuccessful bids cannot be resubmitted, unless specifically invited to do so by the International Research Development team.

Collaborator Institution Lead Applicant

Collaborator Institution Lead Applicants can be from any recognised research organisation outside of the United Kingdom. As with UoB Lead Applicants they can be from any disciplinary field and on any academic development pathway. We anticipate that the majority of Collaborator Lead Applicants will be middle and senior career researchers.

Additional participants

Applicants are welcome to include any other academic or non-academic participants who can add value to the activities. These can be from any country, with international participation particularly encouraged.

Practicalities

Applications will be reviewed on a monthly rolling basis until all available funds have been allocated. Applications can be submitted at any time; the final deadline for applications is the 31st May 2024 or when all available funds have been allocated, whichever is sooner; **all funded activities must be completed by the 31st July 2024.**

The maximum value of a BIRCA award is £3000. Applicants are welcome to seek **additional sources of funding** to increase the total budget for their activities, and we would expect to see **at least some contribution offered from the Collaborator's institution (financial and/or in-kind)**.

Eligible costs include:

- UoB Research Assistant or Research Associate staff costs to support logistics including planning and delivery of the activity/activities. This includes either salary costs or teaching buy-out, and all Pathways (1, 2 and 3) are eligible.

- UoB Administrative staff costs to support activity logistics. This includes buy-out of existing staff time, an uplift to an existing part-time contract, or a new appointment through the appropriate channels and subject to the necessary approvals and procedures.
- Professional event facilitation.
- Translation and/or transcription services.
- Purchase of relevant and appropriate software licenses, where UoB IT services are unable to provide a suitable option within the existing package available to UoB staff.
- Provision of free or subsidised dial-in facilities for attendees in countries or regions where internet is unavailable or unreliable, and/or data bursaries for participants.
- Travel, accommodation and subsistence costs for international speakers and/or participants to come to Bristol for in-person events or for UoB academic(s) to travel to partake in activities abroad. All costs must be in line with the UoB Travel and Expenses policy.
- Consumables, resources, and equipment necessary for the project where applicable and justified.
- COVID-19 testing, where it is a requirement for travel.
- Appropriate travel insurance, including COVID-19 cover.

The following costs are not eligible:

- Buy-out for UoB or Collaborator Institution Leads or other senior academic staff.
- Salary costs of staff from other universities and research organisations (both UK and international)
- Speaker or participant fees or honoraria.
- Indirect and estate costs; these must be covered by the UoB Lead Applicant's school where applicable.
- Salaries of people who are already 100% funded through existing grants (unless this extends their contract) or core staff who are on research leave.
- Requests for personal computing equipment.
- Travel, accommodation and/or subsistence costs for UK academics from institutions other than UoB; however, such persons would be welcome to join activities if doing so would be beneficial to the outcomes. In such cases they can be provided with refreshments and meals that are within the core activity itself (e.g. tea and coffee during meetings, or a working lunch), but any other costs such as breakfast/evening meals would need to be at their own expense, as would travel and accommodation.
- Travel, accommodation and/or subsistence costs for non-UoB participants to travel anywhere other than Bristol for the activities are generally not eligible, unless clear justification can be provided.

Costs considered extraneous to the activities or that aren't fully justified may be deducted from the award value. If you are unsure whether costs are eligible, please contact the International Research Development scheme via ird-office@bristol.ac.uk to discuss your query before submitting your application to avoid disappointment.

Where the Collaborator Lead Applicant is visiting Bristol to plan and deliver the activity, we may be able to provide accommodation on campus in Principal's House free of charge subject to availability. Please contact ird-office@bristol.ac.uk prior to submitting your application to enquire about availability. If this facility is fully booked, then you will need to make alternative arrangements and include costings in your bid accordingly. Please note that you may only apply for free accommodation at Principal's House for one visitor per BIRCA award; however, additional Visitors can also apply for accommodation at a reasonable rate, subject to availability. Please contact ird-office@bristol.ac.uk in advance of submitting your application for more information on cost and availability for your desired dates.

BIRCA awards can be developed in complement to other activities, such as Bristol Benjamin Meaker Distinguished Visiting Professorships or the Bristol 'Next Generation' Visiting Researcher Programme. For example, a BIRCA award could be used to scope a future visit, to enhance the impact during the visit itself, or could be used to develop outputs from a previous visit. Please note, however, that individual applications must be submitted to the respective schemes and will be assessed as two separate applications which **may therefore have different outcomes**. Please also be aware that the visiting researcher and professor schemes may not be available at certain times; please check our website for up to date advice.

How to apply

Application process

1. Identify an opportunity which would benefit from collaboration activities between an UoB Lead Applicant and a suitable international academic collaborators).

2. Familiarise yourself with this document before commencing your application, paying particular attention to the criteria and conditions of award. Contact ird-office@bristol.ac.uk with any queries.

3. If you are planning on employing staff to support your award, ensure you familiarise yourself with current guidance on recruitment and contracting. You may want to contact the Temporary Staffing Service (TSS) and/or your local HR team for advice.

4. Download the BIRCA Application Form, available on the BIRCA webpage.

5. Create a Worktribe project, to include a costing and add the Worktribe reference on the application form.

6. Complete the BIRCA application form (no more than four sides of A4 in total) and submit to the UoB Academic Lead's Head of School for approval.

7. Submit a PDF copy of the completed form via email to ird-office@bristol.ac.uk, along with a CV (max. 2 pages each) for the UoB and Collaborator Lead Applicants only.

8. Your application will then be assessed by members of the RD International team at their next monthly review meeting, usually held at the end of each month.

9. Funding decisions, including any conditions of funding, will then be confirmed. We aim to communicate decisions within around four weeks of submission. If your application is successful further information will be provided on the next steps.

Please ensure that your application is written for a generalist audience, avoiding technical detail which would be inaccessible to a non-specialist. To download the application form, please visit our [BIRCA webpage](#).

Guidance for applicants

Please strictly note and adhere to all of the below guidance, as well as the guidance provided at the top of the application form. Applications which are not compliant will be considered ineligible.

Section A

In this section you need to provide details of your proposed Bristol International Research Collaboration Activities, including the project title and details of both Lead Applicants. Please adhere to the italicised grey guidance notes in the form.

All proposed activities and associated costs **must take place between 1 August 2023 and 31 July 2024**. Please allow sufficient time for the decision-making process and activity planning when submitting your application. We normally aim to communicate decisions within four weeks of submission.

Section B
B1: Case for support

Please use this section to evidence the value of the proposed activity/activities, and to demonstrate how your application meets the call criteria. Reviewers will be assessing your application primarily based on this section, so we strongly recommend you pay particular attention to this section and anticipate that it would comprise the main portion of the application. Please ensure that the application is written in language that is accessible for non-specialists.

The Case for Support should include information and evidence relating to:

- The knowledge and experience of the Lead Applicants, evidencing their capacity to effectively deliver a successful event of this nature and to attract a good calibre of participants.
- The added value which other named collaborators will bring to the workshop (see B2 below).
- The importance of the proposed project and collaboration to the development and advancement of the relevant academic field(s).
- The identified synergies between the Lead Applicants, and the potential for developing meaningful and beneficial collaboration between both individuals and institutions.
- The likelihood of significant outcomes arising from the workshop, including development of novel approaches, concepts and/or methodologies, identifying new

spaces for viable collaborative research, high-quality external funding bids, co-authored publications, and/or other potential long-term benefits for both the UoB and the Collaborator's institution.

- The potential for the proposed activity/activities to attract further external engagement, such as engagement from policy and practice, the media, and/or other sectors.

B2: Additional Collaborators
Please use this section to provide details of additional collaborators, including academics from UoB and/or the Collaborator's institution as well as any external collaborators from within or outside academia. Add or delete rows as required. You are only required to list individuals who will be actively involved in planning and/or delivery; you do not need to list all prospective event attendees and participants.

Section C
Applicants should complete this section with itemised costs in GBP. Please use xe.com for currency conversion, where applicable. The total cost applied for from this scheme must not exceed **£3000 per award**. A Full Economic Costing (FEC) is required and relevant sign-off must be obtained via the Worktribe system. Applicants should contact their Faculty Finance team at least three weeks before submission to discuss the project and its costings. Please note that awards for this scheme cannot include indirect costs. You will therefore need your Head of School's signature to confirm approval of the application and the FEC.

In Worktribe please select '*University of Bristol (Internal Funding Calls)*' as the Funder. This will generate a selection of IRD funding schemes. Please select the correct scheme, i.e. '*Bristol International Research Collaboration Activities*'.

A: Staffing Costs: Please provide information on any staff costs, including the proposed grade, timescale, and what proportion of the working week they will be working on the project. Please note it is the applicant's responsibility to undertake any recruitment and associated HR and Finance requirements for any staff costed on the project.

B: Activity Costs: Please provide information on any activity costs, including costs such as professional facilitation, venue hire, and/or software licenses. An itemised breakdown must be provided. Reasonable estimates can be provided where appropriate.

C: Visitors' Travel, Accommodation, and Subsistence Costs: Please provide information on any travel and subsistence costs (including accommodation) for participants for in-person events. Please note that we can only fund economy travel for UoB academics to travel abroad or for international researchers to travel to Bristol, and all requested costs must be compliant with the UoB Travel and Expenses policy and any COVID-19 restrictions in place at the time. An itemised breakdown must be provided (e.g. per diem breakdown for subsistence and accommodation). If you are running a virtual activity with no T&S costs, please enter 'N/A'.

D: Faculty/School/Departmental Contribution: Where some of the costs of the activity are being funded by the UoB Lead Applicant's Faculty/School/Department details of this should be outlined in this section, including a summary of the contribution and the financial value (where applicable). Please enter 'N/A' in this field if not applicable.

E: Collaborator Institution Contribution: Where some of the costs of the activity are being funded by the Collaboator's institution, details of this should be outlined in this section, including a summary of the contribution and financial value (where applicable). Please enter 'N/A' in this field if not applicable.

To complete the table applicants should calculate the total cost of the activity (i.e. A+B+C), and then deduct the Faculty/School/Department and any Collaborator Institution contributions (i.e. A+B+C, then subtract D and E) to give the total amount being applied for via the BIRCA scheme. The total cost applied for from this scheme must not exceed **£3000 per award**. An example has been provided on the following page:

Costs applied for				
Item		**Breakdown**	**Value (GBP)**	
A	Staffing costs	**Research Associate** 2months RA 0.2fte Grade J to plan and coordinate the workshop	£1692	
B	Activity costs	Translation of resultant policy briefing into Spanish	£500	
		Tea, coffee and lunch for workshop participants in Bristol (£9pp for 20 people)	£180	
C	Visitors' Travel, Accommodation and Subsistence costs	**Professor Suarez, UNAM** Return economy flights Mexico-London (£660) Taxi to/from airport in Mexico (£20) Return National Express bus from Heathrow to Bristol (£50) Daily subsistence (£30/day for 4 days, total £120) Accommodation (Principal's House, £0) Travel insurance (£30) 880 **Professor Beccaria, University of Colombia** Return economy flights Bogota-London (£750) Taxi to/from airport in Bogota (£20) Return National Express bus from Heathrow to Bristol (£50) Daily subsistence (£30/day for 3 days, total £90) Accommodation (£80/night for 3nights, total £240) Travel insurance (£30)	£2060	
Total cost of activity (A+B+C)			**£4432**	
D	UoB Faculty/School/ Department Contribution	The Faculty has agreed to provide the RA's time from an existing contract without charge	£1692	
E	Partner Institution Contribution	Colombia University are paying for Professor Beccaria's flight	£750	
Total applied for via BIRCA scheme			**£1990**	

Applicants should also provide details of any other applications being made for funding in connection with this visit in the Section C2 of the application form, including both internal and external funding sources. If no other applications are being made, then please enter 'N/A' in this box.

Section D

This section must be completed by the UoB Academic Host's Head of School. By providing their signature, the Head of School agrees to all terms outlined in the declaration. Under the current circumstances a digital signature is acceptable with an accompanying email trail. The Head of School also has the opportunity to add any further comments on the application in this section if they wish (maximum 200 words). For example, they may want to add further comments on the value of the project and its planned outcomes for the Department/School and/or the UoB more generally, substantiating and supporting information provided in the Case for Support. This is an optional field.

Assessment process

Research Development International (RDI) will process submitted applications at the end of each month. Applications will be reviewed by a panel from the RDI team, with oversight from the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Global Engagement Professor Agnes Nairn as required.

The review process usually takes around four weeks on average, depending on when applications are submitted relative to the next review meeting date. Exceptionally, where an urgent need for a quicker turnaround can be demonstrated we will try and accommodate this; however, this cannot be guaranteed.

Applications will be reviewed against the following criteria:

- Are the activity/activities being co-produced and co-delivered with international collaborator(s)?
- Is the proposed activity/activities likely to stimulate new ideas and develop new research and/or impact pathways, building on synergies between the UoB and Collaborator Lead Applicants (and other collaborators, where relevant)?
- Is there a strong likelihood of significant outcomes arising from the activity/activities, including high-quality external funding bids, international co-authored publications, ongoing collaborations, and/or other potential long-term benefits for UoB and the Collaborator institution(s)?
- Does the proposed activity/activities have ambitious objectives and demonstrable importance to the relevant academic field?
- Is the activity/activities demonstrably interactive, focussed on engagement rather than dissemination?
- Is there demonstrable buy-in from the Collaborator's institution, evidenced through financial and/or in-kind contributions?
- Will the proposed activity/activities attract further external engagement, such as engagement from policy and practice, the media, and/or other sectors?
- Are the cited costs reasonable and appropriate for the proposed activity/activities?

Conditions of funding

Pre-Award Requirements

All successful applications will be required to submit a 300-word summary of the Bristol International Research Collaboration Activities award to the International Research Development team for use on our website and other communications **within four weeks of award outcome notification**.

It is the UoB Lead Applicant's responsibility to ensure that this information is delivered on time. The International Research Development team **reserve the right to cancel awards if this information is not received within the specified timeframe**. We recommend that you prepare this information as part of your application process, to assist with timely processing of your award.

It is the UoB Lead Applicant's responsibility to make any and all arrangements pertaining to staffing for the project, including recruitment, contracting, and provision of IT equipment, where required.

A Worktribe project must be created at application stage. **Completing the Worktribe costing is a condition of award**, and the applicant must provide the IRD team with the Worktribe reference number on the application form. The final Worktribe costing should be reflective of the award made, which may vary from the amount requested in the original application. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the Worktribe project has been finalised, including any costing changes, within four weeks of the award notification, and to send the IRD team confirmation of this.

Award Requirements and Conditions

All applicants should familiarise themselves with the below requirements and conditions of funding, which apply to all awards under this scheme.

- All activities funded through this scheme must be branded and advertised as a **Bristol International Research Collaboration Activities** award, and University of Bristol branding must be included on all associated documents and outputs[1].
- It is the responsibility of the Applicant(s) to make all arrangements for the activity/activities, including logistics such as staff contracts, software registrations, webinar set-up, participant recruitment, etc.
- Details of the activity/activities must be provided to the International Research Development team for our records and to enable us to assist with event promotion and publicity, where applicable.
- UoB and/or Collaborator Lead Applicant(s) are required to produce a blog post related to their award for the University of Bristol International Research Development blog either during the award itself or within six months of its completion.
- It is the responsibility of the UoB Lead Applicant to ensure that the proposed activity/activities are compliant with all UoB policies. This includes, but is not limited

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[1] We recognise that the current UoB logo has attracted some controversy. If you are uncomfortable with using the logo, please contact us for advice on how to ensure your activities are suitably branded.

to, ensuring that they have undertaken due diligence with regard to [Intellectual Property Rights](), [Research Integrity](), and the [UoB Freedom of Speech Code of Practice](), in consultation with their School or Department as appropriate.

- If the activity involves international travel, it is the Lead Applicants' responsibility to ensure that appropriate travel insurance, including COVID-19 cover, is in place as soon as possible once the dates of travel are confirmed. This is to ensure that the policy can be drawn upon if travel needs to be postponed or cancelled.
- All visa and related requirements are the responsibility of the Lead Applicants. Please refer to the [UK government website]() for more details on visa requirements.
  - o Please note that visitors from certain countries may also need to apply to the [Academic Technology Approval System (ATAS)]() when planning to undertake research in the UK. Please visit the UK government website for details and allow sufficient time for any application and approvals process where applicable.
- Awardees will need to use the University's [Global Travel Approval System]() to ensure their international travel is approved by their School/Faculty prior to finalising travel plans associated with their BIRCA award. This needs to be submitted at least two weeks before the proposed travel.
- It is the responsibility of the Lead Applicants to ensure that the proposed visit is compliant with all COVID-19 policies, regulations and restrictions, including those of the partner's home country and UK national guidance as well as local rules. Please refer to the [UK government COVID-19 website]() for more details.

Post-Award Requirements

Please be aware that it is a condition of funding that all award holders complete a Bristol International Research Collaboration Activities **End of Award Report Form**. This form must be forwarded to the UoB Academic Host's Head of School for sign-off before submitting electronically to [ird-office@bristol.ac.uk]() **within four weeks of the award end date**. Recognising that impact and outcomes can take some time to be realised, UoB Lead Applicants will also be contacted annually in January for up to three years following the award in order to complete a short survey to report on their award outcomes and impacts. Please also note that it is also the UoB Lead Applicant's responsibility to enter **all relevant visit outcomes into [PURE]()**, suitably acknowledging the Bristol International Research Collaboration Activities scheme.

Contact information

For all queries please contact the International Research Development team via [ird-office@bristol.ac.uk]().