



SARIC • SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE RESEARCH & INNOVATION CLUB

THIRD SARIC CALL FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS

Executive summary

BBSRC and NERC invite proposals for both research and research translation projects to the third call of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Innovation Club (SARIC). Up to £1.8M of funding is available for this Call, divided approximately between Research Grants (£1.2M) and Research Translation Grants (£0.6M). The precise ratio of funding between the two types of grants will reflect the applications received. The closing date for full proposals for Research Grant and Research Translation Grants is 29 November 2017 at 4.00pm. **Only delegates who attended the SARIC Sandpit in October 2017 are eligible to submit project proposals to this funding call.** Applicants will be able to include researchers not present at the sandpit as Co-Investigators or project team members providing there is strong scientific justification for their inclusion.

Research proposals must fall within the scope of SARIC, which is to address challenges that will improve the sustainability of the UK crop and livestock agricultural system. Applicants are advised to align their proposals with the needs of the agricultural sector. The SARIC industry members have identified two areas of focus: 'resilient and robust crop and livestock production systems' and 'predictive capabilities for sustainable agriculture' and these are described fully in the [Scientific Scope](#) section.

Introduction

A rapidly increasing global population, climate change and intensified pressure upon vital resources are collectively threatening global food security. Consequently, there is an urgent need for research, and the translation of research, to support the understanding, development and management of sustainable agricultural systems. The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), as contributors to the UK Global Food Security programme, are responding by working in collaboration with industry to bring the UK biological, environmental and social science research base together to exploit knowledge, data and expertise to address the barriers to sustainable and increased agricultural production.

Consultations have been conducted with industry, trade associations, levy boards, policymakers and academia to inform BBSRC and NERC where investment would make a significant difference to the UK agriculture sector. These consultations identified **water and nutrient-related topics** as areas where there is a need for pre-competitive, innovative projects aimed at integrating research outcomes from different sectors and across relevant food production systems.

As a result of consultations with industry, the **Sustainable Agriculture Research and Innovation Club (SARIC)** was launched in 2014 as a partnership between industry, BBSRC and NERC. The club will invest £10M to support innovative projects to provide solutions to key challenges affecting the efficiency, productivity and sustainability of the UK crop and livestock sectors, with a **focus on water and nutrient related issues**.

The industry members of the club identified two key challenges to be addressed: **Resilient and robust crop and livestock production systems** and **Predictive capabilities for sustainable agriculture**.

Having contributed to informing and defining the research and translation focus for SARIC, the Club's industry members continue to steer the programme, participate in funding decisions, and ultimately benefit from their involvement through early access to the outcomes. The industry members of SARIC are:

- AB Agri
- Agriculture & Horticulture Development Board
- Anglian Water
- Barworth Agriculture Ltd
- Bayer CropScience
- British Beet Research Organisation
- Cawood Scientific
- Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water
- Environment Systems
- Elsoms Seeds
- Monsanto
- Syngenta

Research & innovation club aims

The aims of SARIC are to:

1. **Support high-quality, innovative, strategic** research within UK universities and institutes to address water and nutrient-related challenges in sustainable agricultural systems. SARIC will also support the translation of research data and knowledge into new tools, technologies and other outcomes that create tangible economic or societal benefits.
2. Ensure the **exchange of knowledge between the academic science base and industry** through the support of effective networking between academic groups and companies involved in SARIC.
3. **Bring together and strengthen the environmental and biological sciences research communities** in order to build underpinning capacity to meet the long-term needs of industry through interdisciplinary research, the provision of training, and research translation.

Background

Previous calls for proposals

The first SARIC call was launched in 2014 and focused upon '**Resilient and robust crop and livestock production systems**'. £3M was awarded to support six [research projects](#) and £1M to support five [research translation](#) projects.

The second call began in 2015 and addressed the challenge of '**predictive capabilities for sustainable agriculture**'. ESRC became a partner in the second SARIC call in recognition of an increased interest and importance in the inclusion of social and economic science perspectives for this challenge. SARIC awarded £1M to three [research projects](#) and £2M for seven [research translation](#) projects.

Scientific scope

This third call will cover both of the SARIC key challenges: '**Resilient and robust crop and livestock production systems**' and '**Predictive capabilities for sustainable agriculture**'. The call is being run jointly between BBSRC and NERC and will fund both Research Grants and Research Translation Grants. The scope of these challenges extends to livestock (excluding aquaculture) and crops, including both food and non-food crops such as bioenergy crops and forage grasses.

RESILIENT AND ROBUST CROP AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

The first challenge aims to increase resilience to changes in resource quality, quantity and availability as experienced during climatic stress. To do so requires the integration of the biological contribution of nutrient transformation and mobilisation at the plant/animal-soil-water interface with soil geochemistry, hydrology and crop biology.

A key focus within this challenge is the need to **improve water and nutrient use efficiency of economically important UK crops**. Research is required alongside the translation of existing and emergent knowledge to enable innovative solutions that inform land management practices and future technology development. Within this context there is a need to improve the capture, retention and recycling of water and nutrients in the farmed landscape. Systems-based approaches that inform land management options at a range of scales are encouraged.

Below are examples of topic areas of interest to the sector:

- The application of an ecosystem services approach in developing management systems for the productive and efficient use of grasslands for livestock production.
- Subcellular responses to water stress and how this might be used in improving the water use efficiency of crops.
- Linking of novel sensing and predictive capability via the appropriate models to inform land management options.
- Model nutrient fluxes in the soil profile utilising current knowledge of nutrient cycling and the moderating role of biodiversity.
- Development of crops with characteristics suitable for sustainable livestock feed supply chains.
- The role of wetting and drying cycles on the release of nutrients from microbial biomass in productive agricultural soils.
- New solutions for harvesting phosphorus from wastewater
- Development of novel vegetation structure of buffer strips to control nutrient and sediment run-off and to mitigate the effects of flooding.
- The impact of microbial mineralisation of nutrients on greenhouse gas emissions from soil and appropriate methods to control mineralisation.
- The contribution of biosolids products could make to delivering resilient crop production systems.
- The use of molecular markers to allow for crop physiology to be matched against catchment features (e.g. soil type, drainage, etc).

PREDICTIVE CAPABILITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

The second challenge aims to provide decision makers with the **ability to forecast, interpret and respond to potential threats to UK crop and livestock production systems**, with a particular focus on water and nutrient related challenges. This will be achieved by harnessing the potential of observational technologies (e.g. earth observation, mapping, sensors) and analysis technologies (e.g. modelling, big data and analytics), understanding how, and under what circumstances, they can be employed, and by combining observations with models to improve predictive capability for sustainable agriculture in the UK at a range of scales.

This challenge supports the development of modelling approaches, new metrics and technologies that sustainably enhance the quality and yield of produce, lead to the development of novel or improved crop and livestock systems or facilitate the acceptance and uptake of sustainability measures in the field. The challenge also addresses the need for tools, products and services that inform and de-risk the management of water and nutrient resources, to protect water and soil quality, and the future availability of resources. This could be achieved through adopting new learning, on-farm engagement, integration of research with real world agriculture practices and understanding drivers of behaviour.

Below are examples of topic areas of interest to the sector:

Sensing and data for decision support

- Earth observation, remote sensing and distributed sensor networks to study farm, landscape and catchment scale responses and reactions to abiotic and biotic stresses. On-farm management of adaptation to changing resource availability and efficiency of use in agricultural systems.
- Sensors and data collection integrated with farmer behaviours across spatial (micro-soil biology/rhizosphere/micro-fauna, soils/ plant/animal, crop/herd, field/farm and landscape) and temporal scales, particularly the interactions between micro-biology, soils, livestock and plants, to ensure sustainable crop/livestock performance under variable environmental and agronomic conditions.

Modelling resource requirement and predicting availability

- Identifying risk factors and de-risking food production using integrated water, soil, land use and nutrient models to protect and improve water quality and soil health, and to increase water security at a range of temporal and spatial scales.
- Modelling and identifying metrics of agricultural intensification and/or extensification for future sustainability of the agriculture supply chain.

Predicting resilience to extreme events

- Predicting and communicating the large-scale impact of, and reactions to, increased threats to the sustainability of UK agriculture. This could include: the impact of climatic variability; increased frequency of extreme events (e.g. droughts or floods); input availability changes (e.g. the availability and cost of energy or raw materials such as imported Soya as livestock feed etc.); or regulatory change (e.g. the availability of key agricultural chemicals, or GHG emissions legislation etc).
- Modelling crop and livestock production systems, ecosystem services, and sustainability of the agriculture supply chain for future resilience, and investigating the implications of change, future trade-offs or tipping points within these systems. This could include modelling the integration and interactions within agriculture, for example the interactions between crop and livestock supply chains.

Guidelines for applicants

Researchers may apply for two different funding streams which will support Research Grants and Research Translation Grants respectively. Both funding streams will operate concurrently.

- **Research Grants:** Specific guidelines for proposals which aim to **generate new data and knowledge** are provided in [Annex 1](#).
- **Research Translation Grants:** Specific guidelines for proposals which aim to **translate existing research data and knowledge** into new tools, technologies and other outcomes are provided in [Annex 2](#).

The two funding streams have been developed in consultation with the industry members of the Club and are intended to enable researchers to contribute to new innovations in agriculture. Applicants are advised to consider the industrial relevance of their research when writing their proposal in addition to the scientific quality or innovation potential.

Applicants are advised to note the following points:

- Applicants are encouraged to include industrial or policy collaborators as project partners where this is appropriate for the research or research translation project. Applicants must note the Special Grant Conditions in [Annex 3](#) relating to first access for SARIC industry members. Where proposals include project partners, the resource commitment of such partners should be outlined (e.g. staff time, materials, facilities, financial).
- The [Scientific Scope](#) details the priority areas where proposals are encouraged within this third call. Projects may comprise combinations of these topic areas. Projects addressing the wider remit of SARIC, to increase the sustainability of the UK crop and livestock production system, are eligible for submission.
- Projects in this call must focus on providing benefits for sustainable agriculture in the UK. However, it is recognised that there may also be utilisation of data and technology from outside the UK, and transfer of findings and technologies to agriculture in other countries.
- Only delegates who attended the SARIC Sandpit in October 2017 are invited to submit grant proposals to this call as the Principal Investigator. Applicants will be able to include individuals not present at the sandpit as Co-Investigators providing there is strong scientific justification for their inclusion. Additional project partners may be added to a proposal after the sandpit if a gap has been identified and if fully justified.
- Grant proposals must be led by a Research Council eligible UK research organisation.
- The specific role of Co-Investigators and project partners, in terms of their involvement with, and contribution to, the project must be agreed by the project team and outlined in the grant proposal. A flexibility of approximately 10% will be allowed in the full proposal as compared to financial costings estimated during the Sandpit.

Timetable

Stage	Date
SARIC Sandpit	24 - 26 October 2017
Full proposal submission deadline	4pm on 29 November 2017
Panel Assessment Meeting	Late-April 2018
Earliest project(s) start date	June 2018

ANNEX 1 – Research Grants

Guidelines for Research Grant call

- Research proposals must fall within the scope of SARIC and address challenges about the sustainability of the UK crop and livestock agricultural system. Applicants are advised to align their proposals with the needs of the agricultural sector. The SARIC industry members have identified two areas of focus: 'resilient and robust crop and livestock production systems' and 'predictive capabilities for sustainable agriculture' as described in the [Scientific Scope](#) section.
- Projects are typically 3-4 years in duration but projects up to 5 years will be considered.
- It is likely that the aims of this Club can best be achieved by an interdisciplinary approach. Therefore, collaborative projects which bring together groups with relevant expertise or experience to move research closer to application are encouraged.
- Total funding of approximately £1.0M is available from BBSRC and NERC for this third call to support projects at 80% FEC.
- Proposals will be shared with all the industry members of SARIC to assess their industrial relevance.

Eligibility

Standard [RCUK eligibility rules](#) for BBSRC and NERC apply to this call. Main research Providers (MRPs) to the Scottish Government are not eligible to apply for funding from this call, except where they are listed as an IRO on the [RCUK IRO list](#).

Ethics

The Research Organisation is responsible for ensuring that ethical issues relating to the project are identified and brought to the attention of the relevant approval or regulatory body. Approval to undertake the research must be granted before any work requiring approval begins. Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass, among other things, relevant codes of practice, the involvement of human participants, tissue or data in research, the use of animals, research that may result in damage to the environment and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data. For full guidance please refer the [BBSRC Grants Guide](#).

Applications procedure

Only SARIC Sandpit delegates are invited to submit grant proposals to this call. There is a 1-stage application process.

The Je-S system will be open for submissions on **26 October 2017**. The closing date for Research Grant proposals is **29 November 2017 at 4.00 pm**.

Project proposals must be submitted electronically through the Je-S system, as below:

1. **Log-in** to the Joint Electronic System (Je-S)
2. Select Council: **BBSRC**
3. Document Type: **Standard Proposal**
4. Scheme: **Standard**

ANNEX 1 – Research Grants

5. Call/Type/Mode: BBSRC/NERC **Sustainable Agriculture Research and Innovation Club Call 3 (SARIC3)**
6. Click **Create Document**

General enquiries regarding the Je-S should be directed to the Je-S helpdesk.

JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk Telephone: 01793 444164

Making your application

Proposals for SARIC Research Grants will use the standard Je-S form with the normal BBSRC guidelines and page allowances. Guidance on making a proposal to BBSRC is included in the [BBSRC Grants Guide](#).

In addition to the standard Je-S pro forma, applicants will be expected to provide attachments, including a Case for Support, as described under the 'When Applying' section of the BBSRC Grants Guide on pages 26-29. When writing the Case for Support, applicants should note the [Criteria for Assessment](#) for the SARIC call as described below. Proposals will be assessed for both **Scientific Excellence** and **Strategic Relevance** and the Case for Support should address both of these criteria.

Travel costs

Please include on your proposal **travel costs for attending SARIC dissemination events once a year** throughout the duration of your grant. A maximum of three places for staff funded on the grant will be allowed per dissemination event.

Special conditions

A letter from the applicant's Technology Transfer Office (TTO), or equivalent, is required. This letter must confirm the University or Research Institution accepts the Special Conditions of this call (see **Annex 3**).

Assessment

Full proposals will be externally peer reviewed prior to final assessment by the SARIC Assessment Sub-Group. Further details on assessment are as follows:

- To be considered fundable proposals must demonstrate both scientific excellence and strategic relevance to the crop and/or livestock sectors.
- The SARIC Assessment Sub-Group consists of a chair, 7 academic members and 7 industrial representatives.
- For assessments conducted by the SARIC Assessment Sub-Group, each proposal is assigned to at least two Introducers. One Introducer is from academia and the other is from industry.
- Where there is a conflict of interest (e.g. where an Assessment Sub-Group member has pre-existing links to an applicant) individuals will leave the room while the proposal is being discussed.
- Project proposals will be circulated to the SARIC Steering Group, which includes all industry members that are not represented on the SARIC Assessment Sub-Group, to seek their views. Any comments provided by company members will be taken into account by the SARIC Assessment Sub-Group when the proposal is assessed.
- After the assessment is undertaken, feedback on proposals will be provided by BBSRC only.

ANNEX 1 – Research Grants

Criteria for assessment

The primary criteria for assessment are the quality of science proposed and the strategic relevance to the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Innovation Club. It is expected that any proposal that goes on to be funded through the Club will be competitive against comparable international work and will demonstrate alignment with the Club's aims. Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- **Scientific Excellence**
The extent to which the proposal meets the highest international standards of current research in its field. High performance against this factor will indicate a project of the highest standard, competitive with the best activity anywhere in the world, demonstrating originality and innovative potential.
- **Strategic Relevance to SARIC**
Demonstrated alignment with the Club's aims and research challenges, and relevance to the crop and livestock sectors. Plans to enhance the impact of the research. Balance of the overall research portfolio of the Club.
- **Timeliness and Promise**
The extent to which the proposal is particularly appropriate at the present time, or offers longer-term benefits over and above the direct value of the research.
- **Economic and Social Impact**
The extent to which the output of the research will contribute knowledge that shows direct potential for economic return or societal benefits to the UK.
- **Value for Money**
The extent to which the resources requested, relative to the anticipated scientific gains, represent an attractive investment of BBSRC and NERC funds.
- **Staff Training Potential of the Project**
Where resources are requested for postdoctoral or other research staff the extent to which the proposed project will provide research training and development opportunities of benefit both to the individual(s) employed, and to the wider science base beyond the completion of the specific project.

BBSRC strategy contacts

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BBSRC delivery contact

Matthew Freeman

Peer Review Officer, Delivery Unit
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ANNEX 2 – Research Translation Grants

Guidelines for Research Translation call

What is research translation?

For the purposes of the SARIC programme, research translation is defined as the integration or adaptation of existing research outputs to enable the development of technologies and solutions for the benefit of practitioners and decision-makers. This includes merging or adapting research outputs to either significantly reduce the technical uncertainty of a particular solution or technology, or the bringing together of dispersed knowledge in an appropriate form, to overcome barriers to future business investment. Furthermore, research translation is predicated on access to expertise and the exchange of knowledge. Therefore, effective knowledge exchange is the cornerstone of research translation which itself leads to new products, services, tools, technologies, demonstrator projects, evidence-based systematic reviews, and other outcomes that create tangible economic or societal benefits.

- Research translation proposals must fall within the scope of SARIC and address challenges about the sustainability of the UK crop and livestock agricultural system. Applicants are advised to align their proposals with the needs of the agricultural sector. The SARIC industry members have identified two areas of focus: 'resilient and robust crop and livestock production systems' and 'predictive capabilities for sustainable agriculture' as described in the [Scientific Scope](#) section. Research translation proposals must clearly describe how the project (if funded) will create sustainable, tangible economic or societal benefits.
- Projects should be 18-24 months.
- It is likely that the aims of this Club can best be achieved by an interdisciplinary approach. Therefore, collaborative projects which bring together groups with relevant expertise or experience to move research closer to application are particularly encouraged.
- Project partners are encouraged in order to accelerate the translation of solutions for sustainable agriculture into policy or business practice, through co-design and delivery of the project. We especially encourage project partners with industry members of SARIC and other project partners are accepted where required, noting the Special Grant Conditions relating to first access for SARIC industry members.
- Total funding of approximately £0.6M is available from NERC and BBSRC for this third call to support a portfolio of projects at 80% FEC. Projects typically request £150k- £250K(80% FEC). We expect to make 3 awards.
- Proposals will be shared with SARIC industry members to assess industrial relevance.

Eligibility

Standard [RCUK eligibility rules](#) for BBSRC and NERC apply to this call. Main research Providers (MRPs) to the Scottish Government are not eligible to apply for funding from this call, except where they are listed as an IRO on the [RCUK IRO list](#).

Ethics

The Research Organisation is responsible for ensuring that ethical issues relating to the project are identified and brought to the attention of the relevant approval or regulatory body. Approval to undertake the research must be granted before any work requiring approval

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begins. Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass, among other things, relevant codes of practice, the involvement of human participants, tissue or data in research, the use of animals, research that may result in damage to the environment and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data.

For full guidance please refer to the [BBSRC Grants Guide](#)

Applications procedure

There is a 1-stage application process. Research Translation proposals must be submitted in an electronic form using the Je-S system.

The Je-S system will be open for submissions on **26 October 2017**.

Applicants should note that under no circumstances should their proposal exceed the page limits described. Applicants should use font size 11 point (Arial or other sans serif typeface of equivalent size), with margins of at least 2cm.

The closing date for Research Translation proposals **29 November 2017 at 4.00 pm**.

Applicants should select the following from the Je-S menus:

1. Council: **NERC**
2. Document Type: **Proposal**
3. Scheme: **Innovation**
4. Call/Type/Mode: **SARIC Research Translation Call**

In addition to the standard Je-S pro forma, applicants will be expected to provide the following documents:

- 1. Case for Support** (maximum six pages of A4)
 - Identify the aims and objectives of the proposed work.
 - Explain how your project fits within the scope of SARIC's challenges: *Resilient and robust crop & livestock production systems, and predictive capabilities for sustainable agriculture*, or the wider remit of SARIC
 - Explain why the proposed project is of sufficient timeliness and novelty to warrant consideration for funding.
 - Clearly describe how the proposed project will create sustainable tangible economic or social benefits.
 - Include core project activities and a project management plan (work-programme, Gantt chart, responsibilities, milestones).
- 2. Where there is a project partner on the proposal a Project Partner Letter of Support must be provided** (maximum 2 sides of A4 for each letter of support)
 - Although project partners are encouraged, they are not mandatory
 - The letter/s of support from the Project Partner/s must be written by an end-user organisation and include reasons why the project is important for the end-user's business, how the organisation will be involved in the project, what they will contribute and how the results will be used.
 - The name and contact details of the person providing a statement must be included.
 - Further guidance for Project Partners is provided in the Project Partner section below.

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- Letters of support should be from Project Partners only; general letters of support are not required and should not be attached.
3. **Justification of Resources** (maximum two sides of A4)
 4. **CV** (maximum two sides of A4 for each named PI, Co-I, research staff post and visiting researcher)
 5. **Special conditions acceptance letter** - A letter from the institution's technology transfer office (TTO) or equivalent, acknowledging that the institution is able to accept the special conditions outlined below must accompany the proposal. Please upload the signed letter via 'Other Attachments'

No other attachments are required.

Assessment

Research Translation grants proposals will be assessed by the SARIC Assessment Sub-Group and will not be externally reviewed. Further details on assessment are as follows:

- In order to be considered fundable research translation proposals must be based on a scientifically excellent programme of work within [NERC](#) and [BBSRC](#)'s remit, and be strategically relevant to the UK crop and/or livestock sectors.
- The SARIC Assessment Sub-Group consists of a chair, 7 academic members and 7 industrial representatives.
- For assessments conducted by the SARIC Assessment Sub-Group, each proposal is assigned to at least two Introducers. One Introducer is from academia and the other is from industry.
- Where there is a conflict of interest (e.g. where an Assessment Sub-Group member has pre-existing links to an applicant) individuals will leave the room while the proposal is being discussed.
- Research translation proposals may be circulated to company members of the SARIC Steering Group that are not represented on the Assessment Sub-Group to seek their views. Any comments provided by company members will be taken into account by the SARIC Assessment Sub-Group when the proposal is assessed.
- After the assessment is undertaken, feedback on proposals will be provided by NERC only.

Criteria for assessment

The primary criteria for assessment are: **innovation potential** and **industrial relevance** to the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Innovation Club. It is expected that any proposal that is awarded funding through SARIC will meet the highest international standards, and will demonstrate relevance to the UK crop and/or livestock production sectors. Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- **Innovation potential**
The potential for the project outputs to be transformative to the crop and/or livestock sector, and the extent to which the proposal is supported by excellent underpinning science of the highest international standards. The proposal should compare and contrast

ANNEX 2 – Research Translation Grants

the expected outcomes with existing solutions, including those under development, and how the project outcomes might be differentiated from them. A high score against this factor will indicate a project where the expected outcomes push beyond being simply competitive with current offerings to that which provides a leading-edge technology or solution.

- **Industrial relevance**

Demonstrated alignment with SARIC’s aims and the key challenge being addressed in this call, including relevance to the UK crop and/or livestock production sectors. The proposal should consider the extent to which the project outputs are likely to mitigate risk to business operations and their supply chains by increasing resilience to anthropogenic, environmental and climatic challenges.

- **Timeliness and potential impact**

The extent to which the proposal is particularly appropriate at the present time. The proposal should articulate what success will look like and how success will be measured: is success likely to attract a direct economic return, provide societal benefits, or significantly enhance responsible environmental management.

- **Mechanisms for delivery and long-term sustainability**

The appropriateness of the work-plan will be considered, concentrating on whether the proposed deliverable can be achieved within the stated timeframe. The management of the project and its milestones will be considered to ensure best possible success of the project. Where appropriate, the proposal should account for the long-term updating of data, and stewardship of databases, models or specific data management tools. Furthermore, due consideration should be given to the exploitation of outcomes when SARIC funding ends.

- **Value for money**

The extent to which the resources requested, relative to the anticipated deliverable(s), represent an attractive investment of SARIC funds.

- **Staff training potential of the project**

Where resources are requested for postdoctoral or other research staff the extent to which the proposed project will provide research training and development opportunities of benefit both to the individual(s) employed, and to the wider science base beyond the completion of the specific project.

Project partners

Although project partners are encouraged, it is not mandatory that they be included on proposals submitted to this call.

Who is eligible to be a project partner?

Eligible project partners may be private, public or third sector organisations or institutions, private industry, public bodies (such as government departments, local government, regulatory authorities, etc.), non-government organisations or charities. Research Council Institutes and HEIs are **not** eligible as project partners.

There is no limit to the number of project partners on each project, or to the number of projects a partner can be involved in.

ANNEX 2 – Research Translation Grants

What is the role of project partners?

Project partners on research translation projects have a stake in the proposed work. Successful research translation projects are those that generate sustainable outcomes and impact, and we therefore encourage project partners to be included on proposals.

Where a project partner/s is included on a proposal, they should co-create the project, defining the issues to be addressed, the project objectives, and the specification of outputs, ensuring value and utility to end-users.

Project partners do not receive funding directly from the project, but will have an integral role in the proposed work and will have been involved in formulating the proposal.

How can project partners be involved?

Project partners can be involved with a proposal in several ways. The following list is by no means exhaustive.

1. Collaboration in setting project aims and objectives;
2. Providing facilities or data not otherwise available to the applicant, or available at a cost;
3. Provision of staff time;
4. Involvement in workshops and meetings. This may include providing venues or helping arrange an event as well as participation;
5. Input of scientific or technical expertise and / or advice;
6. Acting as a link to other users where the partner already has contacts with such bodies;
7. Contributions to outputs (for example publications);
8. A commitment to make practical use of the project's outputs;
9. A commitment to the project beyond the period of NERC/BBSRC support;
10. Hosting seconded staff.

What evidence is needed?

Where a project partner/s is included in a proposal to this call, the project partner must submit a Letter of Support.

This letter should be on headed paper (providing contact details of the project partner organisation/representative) and should be signed by the project partner representative. The letter must also contain the following information:

1. A benefit statement from the project partner describing how the proposed activity will benefit them and their organisation (what the organisational drivers are that underpin the project partner's involvement in the proposal, what the project partner objectives are that the proposed activity will help meet, what the likely outcomes / impacts of the activity will be for the project partner, or wider, through working with the project partner, etc.).
2. The nature of the collaboration, how the project partner will be involved in the work and provide added value.
3. What contributions (cash, project support, etc.) the project partner will make and an assurance that the project partner is committed to the work for its duration and that those contributions will be made. Where a partner will receive tangible benefits from the work, Assessment Panels would hope to see a contribution to the project.
4. For project partners involved in a secondment or staff interchange, the Letter of Support should also demonstrate the commitment of the project partner organisation to host the secondees.

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5. How the partner will commit to the project beyond the period of NERC/BBSRC support, if applicable.
6. The Letter of Support should be targeted specifically to the project; it should not be generic.
7. Assessment Panels do not look favorably on supporting letters that place conditions on their support, or dictate what applicants may or may not do.

In-kind contributions from project partners should be carefully costed to ensure there is no double accounting. Access to data already in the public domain cannot be counted as in-kind support.

Project partners should ensure that any facilities and infrastructure are available before the supporting letter is submitted.

NERC contacts

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Programme Manager

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Senior Programme Manager

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ANNEX 3 – SARIC Special Conditions

Special conditions

The purpose of SARIC is to deliver underpinning knowledge for the crop and livestock sector, and encourage the translation of new and existing research to assist decision-makers in making informed decisions about the impact of business practices on the environment. Therefore the grant holder that develops the proposal and conducts the research or translation activity will own any intellectual property rights arising from the grant (“resulting IPR”). However, to enable Industrial Members to maximise opportunities to commercialise research funded by SARIC, the conditions set out below will be added to the grant award letter in addition to [RCUK standard terms and conditions](#).

A letter from the institution’s technology transfer office or equivalent, acknowledging that the institution is able to accept those conditions, will be requested at the full proposal stage.

The conditions are as follows:

SARIC Coordinators

- Grant holders will be expected to liaise with the external coordinator of the club, making available annual progress reports as requested and participating in meetings with both industrial members and other participants.
- Grant holders respond to requests from BBSRC and NERC regarding project outcomes as required, during and following the end of the award.

Early Access

Industrial Members are entitled to early access to results from projects funded by SARIC. To ensure this grant holders must:

- Give a minimum of 28 days’ notice of an intention to publish, outside of SARIC, results from research funded by a SARIC grant. The material for proposed publication should be submitted to SARIC Coordinator along with the notice of intent to publish. The coordinator will distribute a copy of the same to each of the Industrial Members within seven days of receipt; who shall then have 21 days to inform the coordinator if in their view the proposed publication may: (i) dilute or prejudice the value of proprietary information of an Industrial Member or (ii) jeopardise the application for resulting IPR protection or (iii) otherwise inhibit future exploitation of the results and whether an Industrial Member has an interest in exploiting those results. The Coordinator will feedback comments to the grant holders who will be expected to consider the advice with their technology transfer officer. If an Industrial Member wishes to enter into negotiations with a grant holder regarding exploitation of IP, these negotiations shall be pursued as outlined below.
- Produce annual progress reports. Grant holders will be notified in advance when an annual progress report is due and a form will be provided. Grant holder will also be notified in advance when the final report will be due.
- Attend and present the results and progress of projects funded under SARIC at regular SARIC dissemination events. The grant holder will be notified of the dates and format of their presentation. Grant holders will be expected to submit research update summaries for dissemination booklets and encouraged to submit posters for events.
- Give advance notification of any opportunities to exploit intellectual property arising from their grant to the Industrial Members.

ANNEX 3 – SARIC Special Conditions

Access to resulting IPR

- Industrial Members are entitled, if they wish, to engage in good faith negotiations with the grant holders for terms of access to the resulting IPR. This is to allow further development or commercial exploitation of results, and such access rights preferably should include the right to sublicense. This must be offered before access to resulting IPR can be offered to third parties outside of SARIC. An interested Industrial member can exercise its option right by giving notice to the grant holder within two months of the date of receipt of notice of results or resulting IPR.

Good Faith Negotiations

- Good faith negotiations imply a willingness to reach agreement with Industrial Members on the terms and conditions of a commercial licence, to desist from publishing results or making offers to third parties while negotiation with Industrial Members are on-going and, if such agreement is not reached within a reasonable period (for example four months from the exercise of the option) that the grant holder will not seek to enter into negotiations with third parties on terms substantially more favourable to such third parties.

Background IP

- Should an instance arise where an Industrial Member wishes to contribute background IP or offer in-kind services, these must be offered on the understanding that the terms and conditions of grant, including the dissemination of results and commercial opportunities will remain the same, unless agreed otherwise by the funders and Industrial Members.