 

***Business Partnership and Innovation* funding competition**

**Introduction**

In November 2021 Innovate UK published their *Innovation Plan for Action* document, setting out the areas that will be the focus of future funding through Innovate UK. To receive Innovate UK funding, projects will now need to fit within Innovate UK’s *Future Economy areas* of Net Zero, Health and Wellbeing or Technologies, as set out in the *Plan for Action* document. These include:

* Net Zero: energy (home, business, manufacturing and transport), impact of industrial processes and materials; agriculture and food and other sources of emissions; capital intensity.
* Health and wellbeing: tackling ill health; wellbeing; diet and food.
* Technologies: AI, digital and advanced computing; bioinformatics and genomics; engineering biology; electronics, photonics and quantum; energy and environment technologies; robotics and smart machines.

For further details of the Action Plan and the *Future Economy areas*, a link to the document can be found here.

**Competition**

Following on from the *Innovation Plan for Action* publication, RHUL Internal funds are now available to help support RHUL academics build partnerships with businesses and develop innovation projects that have the potential to achieve future Innovate UK funding. The competition is open to academics who:

* have existing connections with business partners and would like to develop relationships further with a specific innovation project in mind

**or**

* are currently collaborating with business partners and would like to carry out further research and development on an innovation project.

**Eligibility**

Academics from any discipline are eligible to apply for the funds if they have existing connections with businesses that are interested in undertaking R&D projects to develop commercially viable products and services. The application project must come under one of the *Future Economy* areas set out above (Net Zero, Health and Wellbeing, Technologies) and in the Innovate UK *Plan for Action for UK Business Innovation* document. SME/business partners must show commitment to the partnership and project by providing either:

* a letter of support for networking funding or
* matched funding/in-kind contributions for feasibility studies/product development on an innovation projects.

Applicants should identify an end user and a potential route to market for the innovation and detail these in the application form.

**Funding type and level will come under 3 categories:**

* **Networking with UK business partners to develop project ideas (up to £2,500)**
* **Networking with international\* business partners to explore and develop ideas (up to £5,000)**
* **Feasibility studies or project development in collaboration with UK and/or international\* business partners (up to £10,000)**

**\*International partners can be from EU member states, EU Horizon associated countries, Eurostar countries (Eurostar** [**eligible countries**](https://www.eurekanetwork.org/open-calls/eurostars-funding-programme-2022-call-1)**) or countries beyond these networks. Funds must be spent within one academic year and by July 15th**.

Eligible costs include reasonable travel, subsistence and venue costs for networking and partnership meetings (provided that these do not contravene Covid-19 travel restrictions or rules in place either locally or internationally) and consumables for research and development projects. Teaching buyout and large equipment costs are ineligible.

 If you have an existing business partner and associated project that would benefit from this funding and are able to complete the work before 15th July within one academic year, please apply by completing the application form below and emailing it to Dr Hilary Lynch (hilary.lynch@rhul.ac.uk).

Underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply, including early career researchers. Applications will be reviewed by a multidisciplinary and diverse panel of senior academic staff. Shortlisted applicants may be asked to interview.

Please note that projects that do not have a business partner, do not show a direct link to the Innovate UK *Future Economy areas*, cannot be conducted safely due to Covid-19 restrictions (local or international) will not be funded. Due diligence will be carried out on business partners before any funds can be spent and projects approved. A collaboration agreement or NDA will be put in place to protect the IP of all parties before work can begin.

**Please note that the funding is time-limited, and the funds must be spent by 15th July regardless of when the project starts. Any unspent funds by this date will be recouped. A report on activity and results will be requested at the project mid-point and after the activity/project has been completed. A template for the report will be sent out and this must be completed and returned within 2 weeks of the mid-point/end of the project.**

**Application for *Business Partnership and Innovation* Funding**

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| **Name** |  |
| **Department** |  |
| **Name of project seeking funding** |  |
| **Collaborator details. To be eligible please include at least one (company house registered) business partner. Please provide organisation name, address, lead contact person.** |  |
| **Time scale of funding requested (must end by 15th July in any one academic year)** |  |
| **Type of funding requested (networking, feasibility, development project)** |  |
| **Future Economy area the project fits into: Net Zero; Health and Wellbeing; Technologies?** |  |
| **Is the business partner based in the UK or Internationally? If international say which country.** |  |
| **Description of proposed project****(please include project role of all partners) (1000 word max)** |  |
| **What product or service will be the perceived future outcome of this project? (500 words max)** |  |
| **Who will be the end user?** |  |
| **Detail potential route to market. (500 words max)** |  |
| **How has the project been designed to minimise impacts of international and local Covid-19 restrictions and risks to project participants? (500 words max)** |  |
| **Key project milestones (please note payments will be broken down into 2 allocations with the second payment made only after milestones have been reached. These milestones will provide the basis for the payments)** |  |
| **Budget Requested, please provide details of breakdown (please note RHUL staff time, and costs associated with any participants, cannot be claimed)** |  |
| **Detail business partner’s matched funding and/or in-kind contribution** |  |
| **Any other relevant details?** |  |

Please send a copy to of the application form hilary.lynch@rhul.ac.uk . There is no deadline for this competition. Applicants will be notified of the outcome within 2-4 weeks of submission.