Prof P Raithby
Department of Chemistry
University of Bath
BATH
BA2 7AY, UK

DIRECTED ASSEMBLY NETWORK
Beyond the Molecule

An EPSRC Grand Challenges Network

Applying for Funding from the Directed Assembly Network

The EPSRC Directed Assembly Network offers 3 types of funding to network members wishing to take part in collaborative activities: travel awards, seed-funds for small purchases and awards for pump-priming projects or feasibility studies.

To qualify for funding:
- the application must contribute to enhancing research in one or more of the theme areas of the Network, or in a topic of cross-theme interest;
- the application must promote collaboration between two or more institutions;
- upon completion of the visit, supported purchase or project the applicant must supply a short report of the work undertaken, to assist the Network in evaluation of its activities;
- the applicant must be willing to discuss the outcomes of the funded visit, purchase or project openly at Network meetings;
- the applicant must identify themselves as a member of the EPSRC Directed Assembly Network in any publicity, publication or further grant application arising from research supported by the funds;
- the applicant may be based in academia or industry, however industrial applicants must give detailed explanation of why they are unable to obtain financial support from their company.

Part of each category of funding will be earmarked for award to Early Career Researchers. We would encourage supervisors and team leaders to support ECRs in making bids in their own right, as such awards will enhance their track record and progress.

Applications which leverage additional funding from other sources, for example delivering matching funding from other research councils or industry, are particularly welcome.

Demand for these awards is expected to exceed the available budget, therefore applications will be assessed through a light-touch peer-review system, managed by the Network Manager. Award panels will consist of Network Champions with appropriate theme expertise and other Network members co-opted as necessary.

Note: We categorise ECRs as PhD students, PDRAs or their equivalents, new Fellows and Lecturers within 3 years of their first appointment. Appropriate allowance will be made for those returning from career breaks. Applications from PhD students, PDRAs and equivalents must be supported by their supervisors or group leaders.

Travel awards

The purpose of these awards is to support travel to a partner institution, for the applicant to learn new skills and techniques or take part in a short collaborative research project that could not otherwise be supported. They are not intended for support to attend conferences (unless these fall naturally during the proposed work programme).

The award is intended to enable the visitor to pay for their travel and accommodation costs and to cover any charges which might be incurred during their time at the host institution, for example to pay for technical help in carrying out their research.

Funding for successful travel award applications will be given when we are presented with an invoice from the awardees institution, or retrospectively, upon presentation of receipts or invoices and a short evaluation report.

We intend to issue around 30 of these awards per year through an open call with assessment four times a year. It is expected that proposals for these awards will be for no more than £1000.

Seed-funds

The purpose of these awards is to enable skills or techniques learned in a collaborating organisation to be embedded in the home institution through the purchase of materials, equipment, software or similar items. They may be applied for following a successful travel award or as a stand-alone award, so long as the collaborative nature of the research to be supported is demonstrated.

The funds for successful applications will be awarded on presentation of a quotation for the cost of the items to be purchased. As it is expected these funds will be spent on items to support ongoing research, the evaluation report will be requested six months after the date of award.

We intend to issue around 15 of these awards per year through an open call with assessment four times a year. It is expected that proposals for these awards will be for no more than £1000.

Pump-priming Awards/Short-term research project awards

These are intended to support pump-priming projects and feasibility studies focussed on tackling well-defined barriers to progress. These should be cross-institution projects, with investigators providing expertise from different fields and have the intent to provide a foundation for larger collaborative projects funded through the usual Research Council or other funding channels.

Assigned staff time may be applied for, providing clear evidence is given that the requested effort is appropriate for tackling the research need. Materials and equipment, travel and accommodation needed in support of the project can also be funded. Funding will be awarded on production of a detailed cost breakdown, in advance of the project start. An evaluation report will be required six months after the award of funds.

We intend to issue around 5 of these awards per year through an open call with assessment twice a year. It is expected that proposals for these awards will be for no more than £15,000 FEC.

Notes
In each category we list the expected maximum value of the award, but we do not expect every application to skim just below this limit! We ask that applicants consider our need to run the Network economically, to enable us to support the greatest possible range of projects.

Where needs arise, we may *very occasionally* award above the expected maximum, providing the requirement for funds has been adequately demonstrated. In *very exceptional* circumstances, we may consider an application for an award between assessment dates.

The intent of these funds is to enhance collaborative working between members of the Network and the guidelines list the type of application we expect. However, if you feel that you are limited by these guidelines, please discuss your requirements with us – we would not wish your collaborative research projects to be limited by administrative imagination! Forthcoming assessment dates will be advertised on our website and in our newsletters.

Funds for Meetings and Other Activities
We run a range of community meetings each year. If you would like help in organising and running a meeting on a topic of interest to Directed Assembly Network members and which might be appropriate to designate as one of our theme, cross-theme or DREAMS meetings, please contact us.

We are keen to promote our area of research through outreach to public, industry and policy makers. We have a small amount of funding to support activities in this area. If you have identified outreach activities in the area of the Directed Assembly Network's interest which you would like to take part in, please get in touch as we may be able to help.

Further Questions?
Any additional queries on any of the above should be directed to the Network Manager
directedassembly@bath.ac.uk

Notes for Finance Teams

The grant supporting the network is held by the University of Bath.

We are permitted to manage our funding in a much more flexible manner than is the case for direct grants from EPSRC, for example we can support applications from early career researchers, such as post-docs, or from SMEs. All proposals will be peer reviewed within the Network and tensioned against other applications for our funds.

Our awards are 'light-touch', intended to transfer money with the minimum of bureaucracy. We do not require intellectual property agreements or other contracts to be drawn up between Bath and the recipient institution.

As our funding has already received dual-stream matching, we can fund 100% of the costs of the research project – although financial contribution to the research project from the proposing institution may strengthen the case for support.

We like to transfer awards for travel, seed-corn and pump priming projects by asking the recipient organisation to issue us with a simple invoice. Details to be included will be issued if the award is made. We can pay out travel awards after the visit has been carried out, on submission of a claim form and receipts.

So long as the aims of the research programme, particularly the collaborative aspects, are carried out to the best of the recipient's ability we permit funds to be vired flexibly between headings as the project progresses. Provided we are kept informed by the recipient, we do not mind if the projected start or end dates of the research programme need to move.

We do not expect small amounts of unspent funds to be returned to us, the recipient may use those to further collaborative research within the Network's aims. However, if a problem arises with pump priming projects such that significant sums above £1000 remain unspent, please let us know as we will request the return of the unspent sum.

Any staff employed on the grant are expected to be supported according to standard conditions at the recipient's institution. The Network itself does not place any conditions or limitations on employment contracts, except that where a named researcher is mentioned in the application, we do not expect the recipient university to need to advertise the post.

Note that it usually takes a 1-2 months for funds to be transferred from Bath to the recipient institution. We can speed the process in cases of urgency, but do not expect to have to use urgent procedures for typical awards. Please take this into account when managing the funding flow for any particular project.

Invoicing

Complete the invoice by including your unique reference number (supplied by the Directed Assembly Network eg PP 31-05-15 Bloggs, Joe) and by addressing it to:

Prof Paul Raithby
Directed Assembly Network
Dept. of Chemistry
University of Bath
BATH
BA2 7AY.

Please **email** your completed invoice to directedassembly@bath.ac.uk

For specific finance questions please contact the Faculty of Science, University of Bath, Finance team:

Ulrika Whitley, Finance Officer Research
fac-sci-research@bath.ac.uk   or   01225 38 63 16

Information for Awardees

Upon completion of the visit/purchase/project, recipients should:
- Supply an **'Evaluation Report'** of the work undertaken to assist the Network in evaluation of its activities.
- The applicant must be willing to discuss the outcomes of the funded visit, purchase or project openly at Network meetings.
- The applicant must identify themselves as a member of the EPSRC Directed Assembly Network in any publicity, publication or further grant application arising from research supported by the funds: eg Acknowledgements on a paper.
- Keep in touch with the Network and let us know how the award has helped contribute to a subsequent collaboration and major grant.

Evaluation Report - Guidance

The Directed Assembly Network Champions require a report on funded travel, seed corn or pump-priming projects no later than 6 months after the first spend on the project/award (irrespective of whether you have received the award upfront or retrospectively).

Travel/seed-corn projects: Report roughly 1-2 pages each.

Pump-priming grants: Report roughly 2-3 pages.

The reports should contain the following:

1. A report on the research carried out including the key discoveries and outcomes.
2. A note of any publications arising from the project
3. Details of further funding applications to research councils or other bodies where the DA Network Grant underpinned the research or provided proof-of-concept experiments.
4. A comment on the benefits to the applicants of receiving the DA award and how the results of the project fit into the objectives of the DA Network.
5. Highlight how this work moves us closer to meeting the Grand Challenge (click here for more info on our website and here for the Roadmap)

No detailed financial statement is required.
(any significant changes in the use of the funding should be explained. In the event of an underspend of over £1000 the Network may require that unspent funds be returned – please let us know if that is the case.)

Please keep us updated as your career progresses, with the following in mind:

- How a DA award/meeting has led on to a major research grant award/collaboration.
- How a DA award/meeting has helped to develop your research.
- How the DA Network has helped you secure a Fellowship/position.
- How your DA award has helped to move 'us' closer to meeting the Grand Challenge (click here for more info on our website and here for the Roadmap).