

Research Translation Innovation Fund (RTIF)
Early Career Researcher Competition
2014/15

Background

A strategic initiative fund, the Research Translation Innovation Fund will be distributed by the VP (Academic) to faculties using a competitive and reward-based process to target specific strategic research initiatives which respond to the University's vision and mission as most recently expressed in the Strategic 2020 Plan.

The value of research to the University lies in its key functions of both underpinning outstanding teaching and learning and acting as a stepping stone to valuable enterprise activities. Work carried out for the REF 2014 submission has already identified areas of research excellence and potential, which will be supported, with some funding reserved for new and evolving research possibilities. To this end a research funding competition is proposed in order to stimulate quality research activity across the University.

Excellence in research planning, execution and outputs is now a given across the HE sector. However, excellence must also provide the platform for the innovation and enterprise which ultimately delivers economic and societal impact, which is increasingly important on the agenda of the funding councils and the research councils. Against this context, the OVP's annual internal research funding competition has been renamed the Research Translation Innovation Fund or RTIF.

The proposed scheme and how it will work

This scheme is solely for Early Career Researchers and **Applicants MUST be** in one of the following categories:

1) Post-doctoral researchers within five years of receiving their PhD qualification who hold a current contract of employment to conduct research at Edinburgh Napier University **and have received less than £20,000 of external research funding during their research career to date.**

OR

2) Hold a current contract of employment as a member of academic staff at Edinburgh Napier University and are **engaging in research for the first time.**

Proposals funded under this scheme are likely to be pump-priming initiatives which can act as a springboard for longer-term activity and which, if applicable, become self-financing or self-sustaining. They will normally be one-off, time-limited projects, which are aligned with University objectives, and will run for one year. Spend under this initiative should be completed in financial year 2014/15 i.e. by 31 July 2015. There can be no leakage into 2015-16.

Applications will be considered for funding which are, typically up to £6-7K maximum, with applications for smaller amounts also being considered. This scheme should not be seen as access to 'soft' funding and external funding should always be sought (where possible and appropriate – see below). Consideration will be given to applications where early career researchers have paired up with one or more experienced researchers in order to

undertake their initiative. Please note that the award will be given to the early career researcher – the principal investigator.

Priority will be given to new research or research which could lead to existing work reaching a new level or new audiences. Priority may also be given to those proposals which have external match funding or other complementary financial or in-kind support. Bids should be well specified and coherent and they must demonstrate a sound business case, a robust research methodology, a carefully worked out budget and clear outcomes.

Project Criteria

Projects will be realistic and manageable and will offer value for money. They will be results-focused, and will lead to defined outcomes which make a worthwhile contribution to the University’s academic reputation and future research potential. These outcomes will be Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART).

Some examples of types of proposals

Travel and Subsistence	Extended visit to research facility or field station elsewhere in the UK or overseas to conduct/observe research or participate in joint research e.g. preliminary scoping visit ahead of applying for collaborative EU project funding.
Travel and Subsistence	To a conference either to present a paper or a poster OR to attend a conference the theme of which would enhance work in your area of expertise.
Buy-out	As, for example, teaching and administration during extended visit as above, i.e. extended field work/scoping visit.
Buy-in	Expert advice/consultancy/part-time research assistance for a specific research project for up to six months
Purchase or hire of equipment	e.g. specialised equipment/materials/small capital items which are critical to delivering an existing or future project. The emphasis here is small for the reason that separate capital funding is available to the University.

You must be able to manage your normal research/work-load when undertaking the additional activity for which you have applied. Arrangements must be agreed with your Head of School prior to the application being submitted.

Time-lines for planning and delivery must be included in the application.

An individual may lead on only one application; however, s/he may also take part in a consortium/joint application (but should not be the named lead).

You will be required to write a report at the end of the project. The report should detail outcome and impact or likely future impact of completed research together with a brief account of your experiences of managing the project. A template for the final report will be sent to successful applicants.

Spend **MUST be completed by 15th July 2015.**

How to apply and the decision-making process

Research-active individuals or groups wishing to put forward a bid should do so using the attached template. Prior to any final decision being taken, additional detail and/or clarification may be requested by the Panel and, in addition, Heads of School will be invited to comment upon their support for proposals from their respective faculties. Comparable arrangements will be made in respect of non-faculty-based proposals. A panel, convened by the Vice-Principal (Academic) or the Director of Research Strategy and Practice, with representation from each faculty, as well as from the OVP (Academic), will consider the bids and make recommendations on funding to the Principal.

Monitoring and Evaluation

For those projects which are funded, interim and final reports will be received by the University Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC). The interim report will document progress to date including any refinements to project plans. The final report will describe the outcomes and impact to date of the funded activity.

Completed application forms should be emailed to Elaine Lambie, Administrator, Research Integrity and Development, E.Lambie@napier.ac.uk, by Monday 24th November 2014.

Professor Alistair Sambell, Vice Principal (Academic)
Professor Alison McCleery, Director of Research Strategy