Guidelines for Applicants for the Dame Julia Higgins Postdoc Collaborative Research Fund 2024

Overview

The Dame Julia Higgins Postdoc Collaborative Research Fund has £35,000+ available to fund collaborative research projects. This fund aims to promote collaboration between postdocs in the Faculties of Engineering and Medicine (departments of Brain Sciences; Immunology and Inflammation; Infectious Disease; Institute of Clinical Sciences; Metabolism, Digestion and Reproduction; National Heart and Lung Institute; Surgery and Cancer; and the Institute of Clinical Sciences. Funding applications submitted must involve a minimum of two postdocs from different eligible departments. You may not include an independently funded fellow or lecturer/professor on the application.

Timeline and Application link

Application deadline: 12.00 noon on Monday 30 September 2024
Assessment panel: 8 October 2024
Successful applicants will be notified by 11 October 2024
All spending and final reports are due by 31 July 2025.

To apply, please complete the Template Dame Julia Higgins Postdoc Collaborative Research Fund Application 2024 and submit your application online.

Submit your Application

General Guidance

All applications must be submitted via Forms with the completed Template attached as a .pdf. All applications must be in 11-point Arial drafted using the Microsoft Word Template provided. Applications in another font or not submitted using the Template will not be considered. Please do not alter the margins or line spacing, these are already set at narrow and 1.0.

- Applications must not exceed two pages. Any application longer than two pages will not be considered.
- A list of collaborators must be included in the application. There must be at least two departments involved in the collaboration, i.e. one postdoc from at least two departments either in the Faculty of Engineering or one of the Faculty of Medicine departments stated above. Cross faculty collaboration is encouraged, but not required.
- All proposals should be pitched at a level as to be understood by a non-specialist.
- A project lead should be indicated on the form. This person will be the main correspondent for all queries related to the application and all correspondence should the funds be

awarded. It is their responsibility to inform their collaborators of any enquires and the outcome.

- An eligible postdoc can be part of several proposals as a collaborator but can only be a project lead on one project. If you are involved with several proposals, please consider how you would deliver multiple projects, if more than one is successful.
- When you submit your application, it needs to be saved as a PDF with a filename title of the last name of the project lead. For example, where John Smith is project lead, the PDF is submitted as Smith.pdf.
- To submit an application to the fund, you must be an eligible **postdoc** at the time of submission. **You may not be an independently funded fellow or lecturer/professor.**
- The aim of the fund is to promote new collaborations between eligible departments – therefore you **clearly need to indicate** how your proposed project **is different** to what is currently being undertaken by **your PI**.
- Costings: £2,000 - £3,000 is expected to be available per proposal but larger amounts can be requested if warranted. No project is to exceed £10,000. Equipment can be requested but will remain the property of the host department at the end of the project. Publication fees will not be covered. The fund cannot be used to cover postdoc or student salary.
- Outcomes/Impact: please indicate **both** the academic and non-academic impact that your work may have.
- **This fund is not a travel grant**. To aid the dissemination of results up to £1,000 can be requested towards attending a conference, if appropriate. Funding will be withheld until there is proof that the results arising from the project will be presented. It is not expected that all proposals will request conference funding.
- The deadline for submitting your application is 12:00 noon Monday 30 September 2024. If you miss the deadline your application will not be considered.
- Applicants will not receive detailed individual feedback should their application be unsuccessful.
- Successful applications will not be circulated. It is up to the successful applicants to decide if they are happy to share their proposal, however they are under no obligation to do so.
- By accepting the award, successful applicants agree to submit a short one-page **report** describing the key achievements of the project no later than **31 July 2025** which will be presented at the relevant Faculty Research Committees. Extracts may be included in the Early Career Researcher Institute newsletter, website or other communications.

Completing the Application Template

You may find resources on the website useful, including tipsheets on writing a lay summary, research impact, research vision and more.

Project title

Keep this short, include your key terms and keep it as clear and simple as possible without losing meaning.

Project proposal

Here you should justify your project, highlighting the **problem** you wish to solve. It should be pitched at a non-specialist. You need to show how your proposal is novel and different to what is currently being done at Imperial.

Collaboration

In this section, please detail why your collaboration is best placed to solve the problem you have outlined in your proposal and how you will **work together** to deliver the project. Outline how long the project will last and how much time each collaborator will dedicate to the project and when Please note that spending on all projects must be completed and accounted for by 31 July 2025. Please clearly show how the work that the collaboration is about to undertake is different from the work of your current PIs.

Risk mitigation

Please identify the three main **risks** in the proposed project and indicate how your team will **mitigate** each risk. These could include timescales, access to equipment or data sets, or risks intrinsic to your research project.

Expected outcomes/Impact

Please indicate what you expect the impact/outcomes of your project, both academic and social/economic, will be and how you will ensure that this information is disseminated. Regarding academic impact, please note that the College is a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA).

Justification of costs (not to exceed £10,000)

Please give an overview of the costs of the project, including a full cost breakdown and justification of resources. See above for funding restrictions. Please state clearly the total amount you are requesting.

Please note that this fund is not a travel grant. To aid the dissemination of results up to £1,000 can be requested towards attending a conference, if appropriate and permitted. These funds will only be released once there is proof that a member of the collaboration team is presenting results directly related to the work undertaken in the proposal at the specified conference. The conference should take place or be paid for before 31 July 2025 for it to be eligible.

Selection Criteria

The Assessment Panel will be composed of Dr Liz Elvidge, Chair, (Head of PFDC); a member each of the Faculty of Engineering and Faculty of Medicine Research Committees; Dr Anna Seabourne (PFDC Consultant); Postdoc and Fellows Champions and at least one Dame Julia Higgins Fund awardee from a previous cohort.

Each application can score a maximum of 25 points based on the criteria below:

- **Justification for the project (0-5)**. Is it viable? Written for a non-specialist? Is it novel?
- **Collaboration (0-5)** Does it clearly show how participants will work together to deliver the project? Have they outlined how long the project will last and how much time each collaborator will dedicate to the project and when? Does it show that it is different from the work that is carried out by participants' current PIs?
- **Risk mitigation (0-5)** Have they identified three risks? Would the mitigation proposed alleviate the risk that has been identified?

- **Expected outcomes (0-5)** (e.g. publications, patents), are they achievable and appropriate for the project?
- **Cost breakdown (0-5)** (no project to exceed £10,000), are the costings realistic and do they offer value for money?
- **Should this project be funded?** (Yes/No)

FAQs

My contract ends part way through the grant period, am I still eligible?

> Yes, you absolutely can apply, but please ensure your collaborators are aware of your situation and build in some risk mitigation to your project should the timelines require revision.

Can we include equipment?

> Yes, equipment can be requested but will remain the property of the host department at the end of the project.

Can I use the funds to extend my contract?

> No, the fund cannot be used to cover postdoc or student salary.

Can the project run beyond July 2025? Is it for projects lasting several years or more short-term funding?

> All funds must be spent and accounted for by 31 July 2025, though the project can continue beyond this. For example, you may be working on a paper which is submitted after the monies are spent, or pay for a conference in advance which you then attend later in the year to present the outcomes from the project.

What is the limit on the funds being awarded and can be applied for -how much can we apply for?

> £10,000 is the limit, but most funded projects are expected to be £2,000 - £3,000. The lowest funded project in 2023 was for £1,400 and the highest was £4,600.

Can we include diagrams and figures?

> Yes, please do include these in the Template where appropriate and relevant. Please note: images must not be used to circumvent the limits (two pages, Arial 11 point, line spacing, or margins).

I have another question not addressed here, who should I contact?

> For all enquiries, please contact Anna Seabourne, a.seabourne@imperial.ac.uk.