LIV-SRF Voucher Scheme
Guidelines for Applications

The following guidelines are intended to assist in preparing an application for the LIV-SRF Voucher Scheme. We strongly advise that you read and fully understand the guidelines before submitting an application. If you require further guidance or clarification, please contact the LIV-SRF Office (livsrf@liverpool.ac.uk). Further contact details are available on the LIV-SRF website.

- Guidelines for applicants
- Guidelines for Shared Research Facility (SRF) Leads and Manager
- Guidelines for PI / Supervisor
- Guidelines for Heads of Department
- Appendix 1: SRF contact details

Guidelines for applicants

Purpose
The scheme is designed to fund small pump-priming projects that have the potential to develop new areas of research by offsetting the costs of accessing our Shared Research Facilities (SRFs).

Eligibility
The voucher scheme is open to the following researchers within the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences and Faculty of Science and Engineering:

- Academic Staff
- Research Fellows
- Post-Doctoral Research Associates (PDRAs)
  - Senior PDRAs able to demonstrate a clear line of sight to future funding are eligible to apply as a main applicant with support from their HoD and with their PI / Supervisor as a co-applicant.
  - Junior PDRAs can apply as a co-applicant with their PI / Supervisor as the main applicant.
- PGR students
  - Students in their third or fourth year of study can apply to the scheme as a co-applicant with their PI / Supervisor as main applicant.
  - Students in their first and second year of study are not eligible to apply as either a co-applicant or main applicant.

To promote early career and less-established researchers, the career stage of applicants will be considered during the assessment process. Applications from more junior staff will enjoy a higher chance of success and such applicants are also potentially able to access additional support (see the ‘Additional ECR Support’ sections). There are also restrictions around successful applicants applying to subsequent rounds of the scheme (see the section ‘Consecutive Awards’ below).

Voucher Value
Vouchers are available for a minimum value of £500 to a maximum of £15,000. This includes both the LIV-SRF and applicant match funding contributions (see below). Voucher awards are made solely towards the cost of access to an SRF, sample preparation costs are borne completely by the applicant.
Match Funds

All applications should contain an element of match funding (see the section ‘Additional ECR Support – Match Funds’ for details around possible exceptions). This can be internal funding (e.g. from your department) or external (e.g. from a collaborating university or commercial partner). Whilst each application will be considered on an individual basis, as a guide we would hope for a 50% contribution in match funds. Match funds are only acceptable as payments towards access fees for an SRF. Services in kind, such as sample preparation costs, are not acceptable as match funds.

Additional ECR Support – Match Funds

Early Career Researchers can apply to have the requirement for a match funding contribution suspended. Applicants who wish to apply for this will need to justify why it’s necessary and how the award will support their career development.

Additional ECR Support – ‘Other’ project costs

ECRs can also potentially be awarded additional funding to cover project costs outside of SRF access charges. This funding is courtesy of the Wellcome Trust Institutional Strategic Support Fund (ISSF), and the project should therefore be aligned to the Wellcome Trust remit and the costs essential to delivery of the project. Costs may include consumables to support the project, travel and subsistence, or sample collection costs (this list is not exhaustive and applicants are encouraged to check with the LIV-SRF office for any items not mentioned here). Any requests for this funding must be clearly itemised and justified in the relevant section of the application.

N.B. Any projects awarded including a request for this additional funding must be able to spend the money by 31st December 2022 at the latest. If the funds cannot be spent in this timeframe, it should not be requested.

Participating Facilities

Voucher applications are limited to SRFs currently supported by LIV-SRF. We are not able to accept voucher applications to use facilities that are not part of LIV-SRF. You can find all the participating facilities and their key contacts in Appendix 1. Further information on these facilities is also available at the LIV-SRF website.

Before you apply

You must talk to the academic lead (or designated deputy) of the SRF you wish to use before you submit an application. They will give invaluable advice about the feasibility of your project, the best experimental approach and, crucially, how much it is likely to cost. This will help you write the best application possible, with the greatest chance of being funded. Sign off by the SRF representative is also a mandatory part of the application.

Consultation and sign off by the relevant SRF representative must be completed by 14th June 2022. Please note that applications will not be considered by SRF leads / managers after this point.

For PGR Students and Postdoctoral Researchers applying as a co-applicant, your PI / Supervisor must be listed as the main applicant.

For Postdoctoral Researchers applying as a main applicant, we would strongly recommend that you talk to your PI / Supervisor ahead of starting an application to ensure that they are supportive. PI / Supervisor sign-off is also a mandatory part of the application.

Application Form

The form has six sections for completion. Sections A, B, C and D seek to capture details of the proposed project and should be completed by you with input from the SRF academic lead.
Section E is an assessment of the project feasibility and timescale by the SRF academic lead.

In the case of Postdoctoral applicants applying as a main applicant, you should arrange for the form to be signed off by your PI / Supervisor as confirmation that they are supportive of the application (section F).

Following completion of these sections, the form should be sent to the applicant’s Head of Department (HoD) who will carry out an assessment of the strategic impact of the project in section F.

The fully completed form should then be submitted directly to LIV-SRF (livsrf@liverpool.ac.uk) by the HoD. N.B. Once sent to the HoD, the form should not be returned to the applicant. All responsibility for ensuring the application is submitted prior to the closing date is with the applicant: LIV-SRF will not make enquiries of HoDs regarding the progress of an application. Upon receipt of an application form from an HoD, we will send an email to the applicant and the HoD acknowledging receipt.

Multi-Disciplinary Projects

Applications for multi-disciplinary projects, which require access to more than one SRF, can be submitted using a single application form. In such instances, the applicant should indicate the relevant SRFs in section B and, in conjunction with the appropriate academic leads, complete feasibility assessments (section E) for each of these SRFs. Financial details for multi-disciplinary projects (section C) should clearly indicate the costs associated with the use of each SRF.

Assessment

There will be 2 rounds of the voucher scheme each year and the applications submitted in a particular round will be assessed by the LIV-SRF Strategic Oversight Committee (SOC) at their next meeting following the closure date. The group will score the applications, in the context of available funding, against the following criteria:

- Scientific question / Quality of study
- Technical feasibility
- Potential impact
- Training / capacity building / career potential

The University status of the applicant will be considered when assessing applications. In line with the aims of the scheme, this will confer an advantage to more junior applicants.

Unsuccessful applications will only be considered for submission to a future round of the scheme if a significant change has been indicated. Please see the “Resubmissions” section.

Notification of Application Outcome

The outcome of voucher applications will be communicated by email to all applicants as soon as possible following the LIV-SRF SOC meeting for that round. Following the successful applicant’s transfer of match funds to LIV-SRF, a written instruction will simultaneously be mailed to the applicant and the academic lead of the SRF to proceed with the project. Upon receipt of an instruction to proceed, the applicant is free to engage directly with the academic lead of the SRF to undertake the agreed work. The LIV-SRF match funds will be transferred to the SRF following the satisfactory conclusion of the project.

Time Limit

All work undertaken as part of a voucher award should be completed within 12 months of the date of the award notification. All samples should be in place prior to the application or, in exceptional circumstances, be gathered during the course of the
work. In this case, it should be clearly recorded on the application form that samples are not currently available. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that match funds are transferred to LIV-SRF in a timely manner; any delay in doing so will not be considered a suitable reason for extending the duration of the award. When approaching the 12-month limit, LIV-SRF will contact the applicant and SRF to understand the status of the project. In limited circumstances, an extension to the work can be granted but, if this is required, a request should be made to livsrf@liverpool.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity. Please note that, in the event of the work associated with a voucher award being incomplete or unable to deliver its objectives beyond this 12-month time limit, LIV-SRF will not be in a position to reimburse any participant match funds unless an extension has been requested and mitigating circumstances agreed.

**Final Report**

Awards are granted on the condition that the recipient will undertake to write a short report (250 words) detailing the outcome of the work and how it has since progressed. This will be requested by LIV-SRF following completion of the project.

**Consecutive Awards**

Successful applicants to the voucher scheme will not be eligible to apply for a subsequent award in the following round.

**Resubmissions**

Unsuccessful applications can only be resubmitted if there is a significant change to the application. The change(s) must be clearly highlighted within the application form. Any resubmitted application where a significant change is not identified will be automatically withdrawn.

**Timetable**

See figure below.
**Guidelines for Shared Research Facility (SRF) Leads and Managers**

| **SRF consultation and sign-off deadline** | Consultation and sign off by SRF academic leads (or designated deputy) is a mandatory part of the application process. Applicants have been advised throughout this document that consultation and sign off of applications must be completed by 14th June 2022.

Applicants are advised that once the above date is reached, applications will no longer be considered by SRFs. |
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<tr>
<td><strong>Application form - Completion of Section E</strong></td>
<td>Section E of the application form requires sign off from the academic lead (or designated deputy) of the SRF on the project feasibility and timescale. SRF comments greatly assist the scoring panel when applications are assessed, so we strongly encourage you to provide comments about the technical feasibility of the project. This can include (but is not limited to) sample size; likelihood; novelty and timescale.</td>
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Guidelines for PI / Supervisor

Application form

PGR students who are in their third or fourth year of study can apply to the scheme as a co-applicant with their PI / Supervisor as a main applicant. Please complete the application form in consultation with the researcher and ensure they are named as a co-applicant in section A.

PGR / PDRA co-application

Junior Post-Doctoral Research Associates (PDRAs) can apply to the scheme as a co-applicant with their PI / Supervisor as a main applicant. Please complete the application form in consultation with the researcher and ensure they are named as a co-applicant in section A.

Senior PDRAs who are able to demonstrate a clear line of sight to future funding are eligible to apply as a main applicant. However, they are required to discuss the project with their PI / Supervisor and ensure that they have their full support.

Completion of Section F

Section F of the application form requires sign off by the PI / Supervisor to demonstrate that the project has been discussed and is supported.
Guidelines for Heads of Department

**Application form**

Section F of the application form requires sign off and a statement from the Head of Department to assess the strategic impact of the project.

**Completion of Section F**

Your comments are essential in assisting the scoring panel with their assessment of applications so please provide information about how the voucher will help the individual’s development, how it aligns with departmental objectives, and why the work cannot be funded by the department. **Please note that it may impact the success of the application if this HoD context is not provided.**

The fully completed form should then be submitted directly to LIV-SRF (livsrfliverpool.ac.uk) by the HoD. Upon receipt of an application form from an HoD, we will send an email to the applicant and the HoD acknowledging receipt.
Appendix 1

Bio-imaging

Biomedical Electron Microscopy Unit
Academic Lead: Prof Ian Prior iprior@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 5332
Facility Manager: Alison Beckett alib@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 494 5461

Centre for Cell Imaging
Academic Lead: Dr Tobias Zech tzech@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4984
Facility Manager: Dr Marco Marcello marcomar@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 5154

Centre for Preclinical Imaging
Academic Lead: Prof Harish Poptani harishp@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 5444
Facility Manager: Dr Mohesh Moothanchery Mohesh.Moothanchery@liverpool.ac.uk;

Cell Sorting and Isolation Facility
Academic Lead: Prof Joe Slupsky jslusky@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 5552

Histology Facility
Academic Lead: Prof Bettina Wilm bwilm@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4988
Dr Simon Tew tew@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 9029
Facility Manager: Ms Gemma Charlesworth gemmach@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 9008

Liverpool Magnetic Resonance Imaging Centre (LiMRIC)
Academic Lead: Prof Graham Kemp gkemp@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 9493

Barkla X-Ray Centre
Academic Lead: Prof Samar Hasnain ssh98@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 5149
Dr Svetlana Antonyuk antonyuk@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 5145

Bio-resources

Biomedical Services Unit
Facility Manager: Mrs Sarah Roper sarah@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 9608

Chick Embryo Facility
Academic Lead: Prof Judy Coulson jcoulson@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 5850
Facility Manager: Dr Sarah Barnett saraht40@liverpool.ac.uk;

Tick Cell Biobank
Academic Lead: Dr Ben Makepeace blm1@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 1586
Facility Manager: Lesley Bell-Sakyi lsakyi@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 0226

Multi-omics

Centre for Genomic Research (CGR)
Academic Lead: Prof Steve Paterson stevep11@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4521
Prof Alistair Darby acdarby@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4557
Facility Manager: Dr Kathryn Jackson kjackson@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 8303

GeneMill
Academic Lead: Prof Douglas Kell dbk@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 7772
Facility Manager: Dr J Enrique Salcedo-Sora Salcedo-Sora@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4475
Centre for Metabolomics Research
Academic Lead: Prof Roy Goodacre roy.goodacre@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4498

High-Field NMR Facility
Facility Manager: Dr Marie Phelan mphelan@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4398

Centre for Proteome Research
Academic Lead: Prof Claire Eyers ceyers@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4424
Facility Manager: Dr Philip Brownridge philipjb@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 5344

CDSS Bioanalytical Facility
Facility Manager: Dr Roz Jenkins rjenkins@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 8214

Computational Biology Facility
Academic Lead: Prof Andy Jones jonesar@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4514
Facility Manager: Dr Eva Caamano-Gutierrez caamano@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 5473
Mr John Heap johnheap@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 5473