LIV-SRF Voucher Scheme
Guidelines for Applications

The following guidelines are intended to assist in preparing an application for the LIV-SRF Voucher Scheme. 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.

**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 all academic staff, research staff and PGR students within the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences and Faculty of Science and Engineering. 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 (for the purposes of the scheme, defined as PGR Students, Postdoctoral Researchers, Tenure Track Fellows, and externally funded Research Fellows) 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 (as defined above) 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). LIV-SRF has a total fund of £15k available for this purpose and any requests for this funding must be clearly itemised and justified in the relevant section of the application.
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 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 SRF academic leads is also a mandatory part of the application. Please allow at least five days for assessment of your application by the relevant academic lead.

**For PGR Students and Postdoctoral Researchers**, we would strongly recommend that you talk to your PI / Supervisor ahead of starting an application to ensure that they are supportive. In the case of PGR and Postdoctoral applicants, 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 PGR and Postdoctoral applicants only, 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 according to their scientific merit and future potential, and do so in the context of available funding. 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 not be considered for submission to future rounds of the scheme. In exceptional circumstances, a resubmission may be invited but this will only occur following a dialogue with the applicant.

**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 three rounds. Unsuccessful applications cannot be resubmitted.

**Timetable**

See figure below.

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LIV-SRF Voucher Scheme: Guidance notes (April 2021)
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

**Biomedical Light Microscopy Facility**
Academic Lead: Dr Tobias Zech  tzech@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4984

**Centre for Cell Imaging**
Academic Lead: Dr Daimark Bennett  daimark@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4568  
Dr Violaine See  violaine@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4598  
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 794 5444  
Facility Manager: Dr Mahon Maguire  mahon.maguire@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 9460

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

**Histology Facility**
Academic Lead: Prof Rob Van ‘T Hof  ryanthof@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 9067  
Dr Bettina Wilm  bwilm@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4988

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

**NMR Centre for Structural Biology**
Academic Lead: Prof Lu-Yun Lian  lylian1@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4458  
Dr Igor Barsukov  igb2@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4307

**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: Dr Lynn McLaughlin  lynnmac@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 9608

**Chick Embryo Facility**
Facility Manager: Dr Anne Herrmann  herrmann@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4454

**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  
Facility Manager: Dr Kathryn Jackson  
Prof Alistair Darby  
Facility Manager: Dr James Johnson  

GeneMill
Academic Lead: Prof Douglas Kell  
Facility Manager: Dr James Johnson  

EdgeSeq
Academic Lead: Dr Lakis Liloglou  
Facility Manager: Dr Mike Davies  

Centre for Metabolomics
Academic Lead: Prof Roy Goodacre  
Facility Manager: Dr Marie Phelan  

NMR Metabolomics
Facility Manager: Dr Marie Phelan  

Centre for Proteome Research
Academic Lead: Prof Claire Eyers  
Facility Manager: Dr Philip Brownridge  

CDSS Bioanalytical Facility
Facility Manager: Dr Roz Jenkins  

Computational Biology Facility
Academic Lead: Prof Andy Jones  
Facility Manager: John Heap  

Facility Manager: Dr Francesco Falciani  