OVERVIEW

The Innovation Pump-Priming Fund is an initiative by the University of Liverpool Technology Directorate designed to build collaborations with the local business community. It provides local businesses with access to the analytical equipment and expertise within the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences. The scheme specifically seeks to pump-prime small, early stage research projects that address a significant objective or barrier for the business, which could be developed into a larger collaboration with the University in response to a specific funding call.

Awards made under this scheme can only be used to offset access fees to Technology Directorate Shared Research Facilities and applications that do not contain a significant research element will not be considered.

BEFORE YOU APPLY

- You must first contact the Technology Directorate Secretariat to discuss your proposal and intention to apply to the scheme. Please email techdir@liverpool.ac.uk or contact either Duncan Robertson (dhlr@liverpool.ac.uk, Tel: 0151 794 5473) or Ben Mollitt (ben.mollitt@liverpool.ac.uk, Tel: 0151 795 8147).
- The Secretariat will then put you in touch with the appropriate academic lead of the facility you wish to use. It’s vital that you speak to the academic lead prior to submitting your application as they will provide invaluable advice about the feasibility of your project, the best experimental approach, and crucially, how much it’s likely to cost.
- We won’t consider any applications where prior contact hasn’t been made with the SRF academic lead and you should allow at least five days for assessment of your application.

PARTICIPATING FACILITIES

The following facilities are participating in the scheme:

- Centre for Proteome Research
- Centre for Cell Imaging
- Computational Biology Facility
Liverpool Magnetic Resonance Imaging Centre
• Cell Sorting and Isolation Facility
• NMR Metabolomics Facility

All facilities are experienced service providers for a large University faculty. They have state of the art equipment and are led by highly experienced members of academic staff. To find out more about the capability of the participating facilities, please visit: https://www.liv.ac.uk/technology-directorate.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the funds your company should be classified as a micro, small or medium enterprise according to the EU definition. You can find out more about this definition from the European Commission website but, for guidance, if your company contains fewer than 250 employees, it is likely to be eligible. The scheme is designed to fund small pump-priming projects that have the potential to develop new areas of research and collaboration. Mature projects that lack such potential and merely require routine analysis by our facilities are highly unlikely to be successful.

PROJECT VALUE

Applications can be of any value up to £10,000. Funds can only be used to pay for access charges to the appropriate facility; all other costs, including sample collection, sample processing and sample delivery will be met by the applicant. Access charges will be billed at the standard external rate, which can be obtained from the academic lead of the facility.

COMPANY CONTRIBUTION

The company is not required to make any cash contribution towards the funds but applications should contain some form of “in-kind” contribution. The exact nature of this contribution is flexible but, for guidance, anything that contributes to teaching or research at the University will be considered.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PROJECTS

Multi-disciplinary applications, which use more than one facility on the same project, are both permitted and encouraged. In such cases, a separate application form should be completed for each facility participating in the project and it should be clearly stated on each that it is a linked project. Each participating facility must be approached prior to making an application and the total contribution of all participating facilities should not exceed the maximum project value of £10,000.

APPLICATION FORM

The application form can be obtained from the TD Secretariat following your initial contact (please see contact details above).

The form contains three sections, A, B and C. All fields should be completed in all sections.

Section A is completed by the Company Partner and attempts to capture details about your business and the project, how your business will benefit, the role played by the research facility, and the further development of the work following project completion.

Section B is completed by the Shared Research Facility and confirms the feasibility of the project and a breakdown of the work and costs involved.
**Section C** is a declaration to be signed by the Company Partner, the Shared Research Facility, and a representative of the Technology Directorate Secretariat (the latter signature will be provided post-submission) to provide confirmation that the information in the application form is accurate and to agree that the work will be carried out in line with the associated Terms and Conditions.

**SUBMISSION PROCESS**

Completed application forms should be submitted by email to techdir@liverpool.ac.uk. We will not under any circumstances accept paper applications. Following submission of an application, we will send an email acknowledging receipt.

**ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

All applications will be assessed by the Technology Directorate within 10 working days. The decision of the Head of the Technology Directorate in respect of all applications will be final and there is no appeals process. Unsuccessful applications will not be eligible for submission to any future round of the scheme. In exceptional circumstances, the Technology Directorate may invite a resubmission but this will only occur following a dialogue with the applicant.

**COMPLETION OF PROJECTS**

All projects funded by this scheme must be completed within one year of the award date by the Technology Directorate. For many different reasons, projects can get delayed and, in such circumstances, the delay should be communicated to the Technology Directorate Secretariat as quickly as possible. We are sympathetic to most reasonable causes of delay.

All successful applicants will be required to provide feedback summarising the outcome of the project; how it performed against its objectives; the value to the business; and details of any future collaborations that might arise. The Technology Directorate may use the non-confidential elements of the project and feedback as a case study.