

Evaluation of BBSRC's Research Equipment Initiative

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Appendix 1

Review Panel Membership

Dr Michael Csukai
Syngenta

Professor Alison Ashcroft
University of Leeds

Professor Julian Dow
University of Glasgow

Dr Colin Groom
Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre

Dr Julia Hubbard
GlaxoSmithKline

Professor Pete Kaiser
Institute for Animal Health

Dr John Overington
EMBL – European Bioinformatics Institute

Professor Mike White
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Appendix 2

REI Grantholder Questionnaire

EVALUATION OF BBSRC's RESEARCH EQUIPMENT INITIATIVE

Survey of former REI grantholders

Thank you for participating in the evaluation of BBSRC's Research Equipment Initiative (REI).

YOUR DETAILS

Name:

Institution:

Please note:

- The objective of this evaluation is to assess the Research Equipment Initiative **as a whole**. There is no intent to make judgements on the performance of individual researchers.
- The survey consists of 22 questions. To help reduce the time taken to complete the questionnaire we have used multiple choice questions where possible. However, we would still appreciate your written comments.
- Responses relating to the achievements of your REI grant will be provided to the evaluation Review Panel with your name attached. All other responses will be collated and made **non-attributable**.

A: YOUR RESEARCH EQUIPMENT INITIATIVE (REI) GRANT

- The REI did not require grantholders to submit final reports and, as such, there is limited information available to assess the effectiveness of REI funding
- The following questions will help us by providing information about the outputs and outcomes of your REI grant

GRANT OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

1. How successful was the REI grant in enabling you and your colleagues to address your wider research objectives?

Please mark one box and provide brief comments

1 not at all successful	2 somewhat successful	3 successful	4 very successful

Comments:

2. Please list the most notable publications to arise from the research enabled by the REI grant.

As a guide, please list up to five publications and only include those arising from research that was significantly enabled by the use of the REI-funded equipment.

3. Please provide brief details on the most notable achievements to arise from the REI grant.

As a guide, please list up to three achievements but do not exceed an average of 50 words per achievement. Please include any economic or social impacts, or wider benefits to the public good, that have arisen from the research enabled by the REI grant.

4. Please comment on the added value, if any, the REI grant provided to your or your colleagues' other research funding.

Please estimate how many of your or your colleagues' research grants used or were enabled by the REI equipment.

Number of research grants	
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EQUIPMENT USE AND MAINTENANCE

5. Please estimate how many Principal Investigators (PIs) have directly benefited from the use of the REI equipment. i.e. how many PIs or equivalents had their research programme enabled by the use of the equipment

PIs based at your institution	
PIs based at other institutions	

6. Is the equipment:

- still at the state-of-the-art?
- still in good working order?
- still in regular use?

Please mark one box for each item and provide brief comments

	Yes	No
The equipment is still at the state-of-the-art		
The equipment is still in good working order		
The equipment is still in regular use		

7. If the equipment is no longer in regular use, please indicate the year when the equipment ceased being used and the reasons for this:

Year	
-------------	--

Reason <i>Please mark all that apply</i>	✓
The equipment was in need of repair	
The equipment was obsolete	
The equipment was replaced	
The equipment's performance was no longer sufficient for our research needs (e.g. the data produced were not of sufficient quality)	
It was not cost-effective to use the equipment (e.g. it was cheaper to outsource the research activity)	
There was no funding to maintain or repair the equipment	
There was no funding to provide the skilled personnel necessary to use the equipment	
There was no funding to replace the equipment	
The equipment was no longer relevant to our research objectives	
Other – please specify	

8. Please provide brief details on the current funding sources used to maintain and operate the equipment. If the equipment is no longer in use, please answer with respect to the period when it was in use.

9. Please indicate the type(s) of research staff who currently operate the equipment.

If the equipment is no longer in use, please answer with respect to the period when it was in use.

Research staff <i>Please mark all that apply</i>	✓
Undergraduate students	
MSc students	
PhD students	
Postdoctoral researchers	
Fixed-term support staff	
Permanent support staff	
Other – please specify	

10. To what extent is the current expertise at your institution sufficient to enable you and your colleagues to conduct the most innovative experiments with the equipment?

If the equipment is no longer in use, please answer with respect to the period when it was in use.

Please mark one box and provide brief comments

1 not at all sufficient; no or limited expertise	2 somewhat sufficient; fair expertise	3 sufficient; good expertise	4 more than sufficient; very good expertise

SUPPORT FROM EXTERNAL PROJECT PARTNERS

11. The REI required grantholders to obtain external contributions towards the direct costs of the equipment (e.g. manufacturer's discounts). To what extent was this requirement an effective way of leveraging external support?

Please mark one box and provide brief comments

1 not at all effective	2 somewhat effective	3 effective	4 very effective

12. Did you receive any additional benefits or contributions from your external partner that were unanticipated at the time of your application?

Yes	
No	

If yes, please provide brief details

AVAILABILITY OF SIMILAR EQUIPMENT TO UK BIOSCIENCE RESEARCHERS

13. At the time your REI grant was awarded, how accessible were similar items of equipment to bioscience researchers at UK institutions?

Please mark one box and provide brief comments

Accessibility	✓
Very Poor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The REI equipment was unique within the UK • It was not possible for researchers to access such equipment within the UK 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar equipment was available in a few UK institutions • It was very difficult for researchers to access such equipment 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fair: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar equipment was available in several UK institutions • It was difficult for researchers to access such equipment and they may have needed to collaborate with another institution 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar equipment was available in many UK institutions • Multiple pieces of similar equipment were sometimes available at the same institution • Researchers could generally gain access to such equipment within their institution 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very good: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar equipment was available in the majority of UK institutions • Multiple pieces of similar equipment were often available at the same institution • Researchers could readily access the equipment; the primary issue restricting access to the equipment was demands on its use 	<input type="checkbox"/>

B: CURRENT MECHANISMS FOR THE PROVISION OF MID-RANGE EQUIPMENT TO UK BIOSCIENCE RESEARCHERS

- We are interested in learning about the current approaches used by researchers to obtain mid-range equipment (£50K-£300K)
- This includes both the purchase of new equipment and the replacement of old equipment

PROVISION OF MID-RANGE EQUIPMENT BY YOUR INSTITUTION

14. Please comment on the approaches taken by your institution to provide researchers with new and replacement mid-range equipment.

PROVISION OF MID-RANGE EQUIPMENT BY FUNDERS OF UK BIOSCIENCE

15. How would you rate the current support for the provision of mid-range equipment by BBSRC and other funders of UK bioscience?

Please mark one box for each category and provide brief comments if you wish

	1 poor	2 fair	3 good	4 very good	Don't know
BBSRC					
Other Research Councils					
Wellcome Trust					
Other funding organisations					

FULL ECONOMIC COSTING

- The introduction of full economic costing (fEC) was designed to enhance the sustainability of the research environment within UK institutions
- Under fEC, institutions should use the depreciation costs claimed on other grants to purchase equipment

16. Have you or your colleagues been provided with mid-range equipment under fEC?

Yes	
No	
Don't know	

17. How effective would you rate fEC in providing funding for the provision of mid-range equipment?

Please mark one box and provide brief comments

1 not at all effective	2 somewhat effective	3 effective	4 very effective	Don't know

C. BBSRC SUPPORT FOR THE PURCHASE OF MID-RANGE EQUIPMENT THROUGH RESPONSIVE MODE

- Since the REI ended in 2007, the primary mechanism by which BBSRC provides support for the purchase of mid-range equipment has been through responsive mode
- The following questions will help us assess the effectiveness of responsive mode funding arrangements compared with the REI

18. If you were seeking funding to purchase mid-range equipment, would you consider submitting an application through BBSRC’s responsive mode?

Yes	
No	

19. Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of responsive mode funding for the provision of mid-range equipment compared to the REI.

20. How effective is responsive mode in leveraging external contributions towards the cost of mid-range equipment compared with the REI?

Please mark one box and provide brief comments if you wish

1 Resp. mode is much less effective	2 Resp. mode is less effective	3 No difference	4 Resp. mode is more effective	5 Resp. mode is much more effective

21. To what extent is there a need for a separate BBSRC funding scheme to support the provision of mid-range equipment?

Please consider that the introduction of a new scheme may impact on other BBSRC funding, including responsive mode. In addition, please justify your answer in the comments box below (e.g. explaining why funding is not available from other sources).

1 no need	2 some need	3 significant need	4 very significant need

D. ANY OTHER COMMENTS

22. Please provide any other comments relevant to this evaluation.

Thank you, your contribution is greatly appreciated