

BBSRC Horticulture and Potato Initiative



Andy Cureton
Head of Business & Innovation

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council



BBSRC allocates around £470M p.a. (2009/10) to:

- Fund innovative **bioscience research**
- **Train** bioscientists
- Support **knowledge transfer and encourage economic and social impact**
- **Engage** with the public

Stakeholders include the scientific community, industry, government, the public and international partners

BBSRC

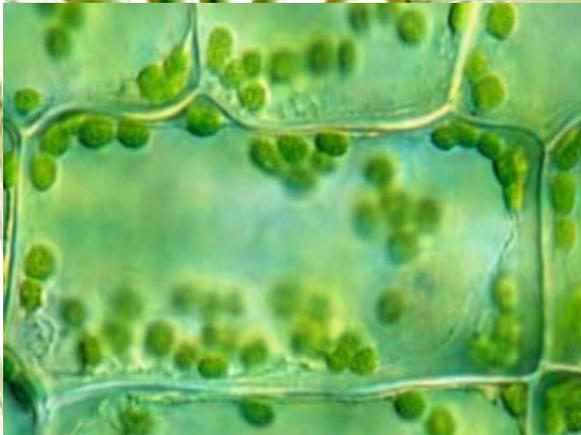
The leading UK public funder of non-clinical bioscience research that:

- ★ Underpins directly or indirectly key economic sectors such as:
 - food and drink, agriculture, biopharmaceuticals, industrial biotechnology
- ★ Has wide impact on social well being, informing policy development in crucial areas such as:
 - food security, sustainable agriculture and land use, healthcare, renewable energy



Strategic Plan 2010-2015

Three major research priorities



**Bio-energy and
Industrial
Biotechnology**



Food Security



**Basic bioscience
underpinning health**

BBSRC – Impact from Research

BBSRC actively drives economic and social impact from the research that it funds.

An important route to achieving this is to work with companies to fund research that addresses challenges they are faced with.

Food Security is an important strategic priority for BBSRC and working with the horticulture and potato sectors is just one of the ways we are seeking to support research relevant to this important issue.



Aims

To support high quality, innovative, strategic research within UK universities and institutes to underpin the development of improved potato and edible horticulture crop production systems that sustainably deliver increased productivity and consistent, high quality food products.

To strengthen the research community in the areas of crop breeding, production and processing through interdisciplinary research and the provision of training

To ensure the exchange of knowledge between the science base and industry through effective networking between academic groups and companies



Key Features of the Initiative

Companies can access significant public research budget towards important industry research challenges.

Regular Dissemination Events to enable knowledge exchange and network building.

BBSRC supports additional training and knowledge exchange alongside funded research projects



Initiative timeline

- Industry meeting to raise awareness, agree challenges and mechanism: October 2011
- 1st Call Consortia building workshop: Today
- Outline applications – Deadline: **25 April 2012**
- Full applications – Deadline Autumn 2012 (tbc)
- Award Grants
- Dissemination Events organised at 9-monthly intervals
- 2nd Call launched in summer 2013 (tbc)



Initiative Mechanism

- Collaborative research grants that are academic-led
- Projects must have at least 10% contribution from industry partners, 5% must be cash
- Projects will be assessed on industrial relevance in addition to scientific excellence
- Likely to fund a handful of larger projects across two calls
- Dissemination meetings for funded projects to support networking and knowledge exchange
- In addition to BBSRC's contribution of up to £7M there will be a £0.5M contribution from the Scottish Government and KE support from NERC



Horticulture and Potato Initiative

Studentships

- BBSRC will also award a number of PhD studentships alongside the funded projects. This competition will only be open to successful applicants. We would encourage these studentships to be converted to CASE.

Coordination

- Simon Bright from the Biosciences KTN will be providing coordination support for this initiative – in particular helping to foster project consortia and the development of project proposals.



NERC support for the Initiative



Studentships

- NERC will also support a number of CASE PhD studentships in the Initiative's research challenge areas. These will be linked to the Initiative through the Dissemination Events.

Knowledge Exchange Fellow

- NERC will also support a KE fellow linked to the Initiative to help support knowledge exchange, including across the current NERC portfolio in this area.



Research Challenges

The following research challenges form the remit of the Initiative, all areas are within the scope of the first call for proposals.

- Changing Seasons – adapting to different growing conditions resulting from climate change
- Crop Maturity and Spoilage
- Soil
- Pests and Pathogens
- Seed Quality and Vigour
- Resource Use Efficiency – particularly water, nitrogen, phosphorus and energy.



Cross-cutting Themes

Two cross-cutting themes should be considered in all applications:

- **Consideration of the production-system context.**
Research projects are encouraged that take into account the context of the wider crop production-system.
- **Aiming to deliver broad relevance.**
Proposals that are relevant to more than one crop species or to different elements of the agri-food supply chain are particularly encouraged.



- Further details can be found on the BBSRC website:
www.bbsrc.ac.uk/horticulture

BBSRC Contact - Dan Godfrey: dan.godfrey@bbsrc.ac.uk

Coordinator - Simon Bright: bright@jbright.demon.co.uk

