

# NBIC Flexible Talent Mobility Account 3

## Call Background

National Biofilms Innovation Centre (NBIC) received another round of award for the Flexible Talent Mobility Accounts (FTMA3). Due to budgetary restrictions this funding must be spent by **31 March 2022**.

NBIC has received formal confirmation in early November 2021. As a result, successful applicants will have less than 4 months to complete their projects. In view of these timeframes, NBIC is running an urgent call for applications which must be submitted by 23:59 UK time on 14 November 2021. The application process is **simple and straight forward** for this purpose. Projects will be required to start in December 2021 and all spending completed no later than 31 March 2022.

## Call Summary

FTMA3 is expected to support secondments and other activities that contribute to the mobility and development of researchers and technical staff. FTMA3s are targeted at talented researchers and technical staff in industry and academia who have the potential to be the next generation of leaders within UK academic and industrial research.

FTMA3 should support the exchange of personnel, perspectives and knowledge, skills and expertise between the academic and industrial sectors, focusing on the exchange, development, and training of individuals.

Unlike in previous FTMA3 rounds, FTMA3 funding can only be used for employed researchers and technicians and cannot be used as bridge funding to support PhD students who have recently submitted their thesis, or those who have already attained lecturer or equivalent status.

There is flexibility in the usage of the FTMA3 but activities undertaken must support the mobility and development of academic and industrialist researchers and technicians to new environments. The activities should aim to pump-prime the establishment of new academia-industry interactions and further develop existing ones. Furthermore, they can be used to support non-UK nationals to undertake short-term secondments and research collaborations that are hosted within a UK research organisation (and involve industrial partners, where appropriate). In line with the principles of the Researcher Development Concordat<sup>[1]</sup> and the Technician Commitment<sup>[2]</sup> applicants should consider how FTMA3 might be used to support individuals in their career development.

Applicants for FTMA funding will be asked to present a case for support that includes clear objectives and outputs from the proposed work, as well as identifying further routes for development and leverage of awarded funding.

Activities proposed must align with one or more of the NBIC themes to Prevent, Detect, Manage and Engineer biofilms, and must also align to one or more of the challenges outlined within the UKRI's [Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund \(ICSF\)](#). Challenges most likely to be relevant to biofilms include (but are not limited to):

- [Healthy ageing](#)
- [Prospering from the energy revolution](#)
- [From data to early diagnosis and precision medicine](#)
- [Leading-edge healthcare](#)
- [Transforming food production](#)

Applications will be scored based on their relevance to the FTMA and Industry Strategy objectives, potential sustainability through further funding leverage, and the involvement of an industrial partner.

The application portal is now open. Applications must be submitted by no later than **23:59 UK time on 14 November 2021**. In accordance with BBSRC requirements, **invoices must be submitted to NBIC by 31 March 2022** with final report submission no later than 30 April 2022.

A template for the project report can be found in the application form.

If you have any questions regarding the FTMA, please contact [nbic@biofilms.ac.uk](mailto:nbic@biofilms.ac.uk).

## Guidelines

FTMA grants may be used to support mobility between academia and industry in a flexible manner.

Secondments should take place within the following guidelines:

- Outward applications can be submitted by postdoctoral researchers and technicians currently employed;
- Inward applications can be submitted by Principle Investigators who wish to host an industrial technician or researcher of postdoctoral-equivalent level in their research group.
- The secondments must have well-defined outcomes related to a research or technology development problem and/or development of the early career researcher involved.

- Applications are welcome for secondments which facilitate the development of partnerships to foster longer-term collaborations.
- Duration of the secondments is flexible but must complete by 31 March 2022, and the structure can be tailored if clear justification is provided, e.g. one continual period, two split periods, or one day per week for several months.
- Funding can be requested for direct costs ONLY, e.g. contribution to salary of the researcher undertaking the placement, reasonable travel and subsistence costs, consumables or other direct expenses.
- Due to the Covid-19 situation, applicants should consider conducting only necessary site visits, and follow the risk assessment and procedure of the sending and hosting organisations. As part of the application you will be asked to provide a short summary of risk mitigation plan relating to the current Covid-19 situation.

## Funding Arrangements

The funding should support short term projects, which must be completed **by 31 March 2022. Invoices must be submitted to NBIC by 31 March 2022. Invoices will not be paid until receipt of the final project report which should be sent to NBIC within 1 month of project completion and by no later than 30 April 2022.**

The funding dates are detailed below:

	<b>Opening date</b>	<b>Closing date</b>	<b>Invoice submitted to NBIC</b>	<b>Final report submitted to NBIC</b>
<b>Innovation Secondments</b>	Now	23:59 UK time on 14 November 2021	Spending Items dated by 31 March 2022, invoice submitted by 30 April 2022	Within one month of the secondment finishing and by no later than 30 April 2022

Potential applicants are advised to contact the NBIC team ([nbic@biofilms.ac.uk](mailto:nbic@biofilms.ac.uk)) before submitting their application if they have any questions. Unfortunately, the spending deadlines are out of our control.

## Who can apply?

All researchers at NBIC partner institutions and companies. We are looking for proposals that support the exchange of personnel, perspectives, knowledge, skills and expertise between the academic and industrial sectors via a secondment undertaken by a technician or postdoctoral (or equivalent level) researcher. FTMA3 cannot be used as bridge funding to support PhD students who have recently

submitted their thesis, or those who have already attained lecturer or equivalent status.

## **Eligible Costs**

The costs awarded for each project may vary depending on the work proposed for the project but should generally not exceed **£15,000 on average**.

FTMA grants will be made on the basis of individual project needs. The funding is intended to be flexible but covers direct costs (at 100% FEC) only such as staff costs (full- or part-time), travel and subsistence, consumables and any other direct expenses.

**In all cases funds cannot be used for patent costs, estates costs, indirect costs or capital items of equipment.**

All applications must be fully costed and approved by your institution's finance office. Please liaise with your departmental finance team to obtain a costing for your proposal. Due to the short timeframe of the application call, signed-off costings from your finance office can be submitted post application but no later than 21 November 2021.

## **FTMA grant application process**

Applications must be submitted on the NBIC application portal (link to be attached) and with a letter of support from your collaborator and an approved costing from your finance department. A template of the application form is included in the application form to help you work off-line (and cannot be accepted as an alternative to the portal). If you have any questions regarding the application portal please email [nbic@biofilms.ac.uk](mailto:nbic@biofilms.ac.uk) for assistance. If making an enquiry after you have started an application on the portal please remember to include your application ID in the subject line of your email.

In addition to the application form, you will be required to provide the following supporting documents:

- A budget and signature form (template attached in the application form).
- Your approved institutional costing (both signed-off versions and email communication are acceptable).
- A letter of support from the collaborative partner.

Please submit all attachment in PDF format via the application portal. The letter of support must be uploaded with your application however if your financial approval is not available in time for the application deadline (14 November 2021) you can send by no later than 21 November 2021 by email attachment to [nbic@biofilms.ac.uk](mailto:nbic@biofilms.ac.uk) (including your application ID in the subject line).

NBIC will send award letters (via Docusign) to successful applicants by early December 2021. Applicant and Department/Finance signatures need to be submitted via Docusign before the project begins or within two weeks of receipt of award letter, whichever is the earlier date.

## **Assessment process**

For industry-academia FTMA innovation secondments we will utilise our Industry Advisory Board (IAB) to rank the proposals. The IAB is a stakeholder advisory group - It is non-executive and provides guidance and advice to NBIC as well as to challenge it to achieve excellence in translation and innovation, and its membership comprises both large and SME companies from across the sectors. The ranked lists of FTMA proposals will be ratified by the NBIC Executive Management Team who will agree funding thresholds and approve the awards.

## **Assessment criteria**

Applications will be considered against the following criteria:

- Relevance to FTMA objectives
- Relevance to objectives of the Industrial Strategy
- Potential benefits to industrial partner
- Potential development benefits to the technician or postdoctoral researcher
- Plan for further translational activity as a result of the placement

## **Award Conditions and Final Report**

Funding will be dispersed using the usual financial regulations and systems. Funds must be spent in accordance with the [terms and conditions of the BBSRC](#).

Those receiving awards will be required to work with their institutional Research Support Office to ensure appropriate protection of intellectual property, if relevant.

As a condition of the grant, a final report and invoice must be submitted to [nbic@biofilms.ac.uk](mailto:nbic@biofilms.ac.uk), within one month of the secondment finishing (and by no later than 30 April 2022). A template of final report is available to download in the application form. We will also request image(s) of the projects to use in reporting outcomes of the FTMA to BBSRC and others.

Any questions regarding the scheme should be directed to [nbic@biofilms.ac.uk](mailto:nbic@biofilms.ac.uk).

<sup>[1]</sup> <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat/full>

<sup>[2]</sup> <https://www.technicians.org.uk/technician-commitment>