

R&D Solutions Fund Call 8

Guidance Notes

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1. SUMMARY OF CALL

Maximum value per proposal	£20,000
	Call 8
Call opens	Monday 20 th January 2025
In-person Info Session	12.30pm to 1.30pm, Thursday 30 th January 2025 Babbage 410
Online Info Session	12.30pm to 13.30pm, Wednesday 29 th January 2025 by Zoom
Call for full proposals closes	Monday 17 th March 2025, 5.00pm
Due Diligence Check	18 th March 2025
ADR Consultation	w/c 24 th March 2025
Shortlisting panel	8 th April 2025
Peer Review	Completed by 6 th May 2025
Costings review and credit check	7 th – 16 th May 2025
Head of School Approval	To be signed off by 30 th May 2025
Notification of unsuccessful applicants	2 nd June 2025
Offer letters sent to successful applicants	2 nd June 2025
Offer letters signed and returned	By 16 th June 2025
Funding awarded	By 30 th June 2025

2. INTRODUCTION

The University of Plymouth (UoP) R&D Solutions Fund is a research and development (R&D) grant funded by the University. The aim is to bring different people together to develop R&D opportunities through funding research activities or the provision of specialist technical support to businesses and academics.

The fund responds to the need to develop new products and services for existing and emerging markets nationally and internationally, where the research intensity of our university can accelerate that innovation process. The University of Plymouth is committed to supporting our business community to create a vibrant and dynamic economy and help industry overcome barriers to growth. Our aim is to foster industrial partnerships with relatively small, but impactful and valued, interventions in the first instance to “solve an initial business problem”. Ultimately the provision of financial support is to enable this problem solving to happen, to encourage real-world collaborations, and aid the deepening of new or existing relationships with the University of Plymouth that result in longer-term, mutually beneficial, and successful alliances.

3. ELIGIBILITY

Grants of up to £20,000 can fund new, or deepen existing, collaborations between the University and business, that address a specific business need or opportunity. This could include feasibility studies, proof of concept, prototyping and commercial development. It is open to all sectors and all research disciplines.

Eligible activities include:

- Academic research time (including replacement teaching costs) to focus on a specific opportunity or challenge to a business.
- Access to specialist University facilities or equipment.
- Research time of the business partner. This would reimburse time spent on the project.

4. CRITERIA

- The Awards Panel is seeking applications from either academics that are employed by the University of Plymouth or industry partners where a strong collaboration is proposed between the two parties.
- The R&D Solutions Fund primarily seeks to develop new or early-stage university/industry relationships but also welcomes applications from existing collaborations.
- R&D proposals must demonstrate how they will deliver benefits to the business partner and the University of Plymouth.
- The Awards Panel would like to see applications with the potential for further ongoing collaboration between the project partners.
- Applications are up to a maximum of £20,000 and to not exceed 12 months until project completion.

- Matched funding is strongly encouraged (financially and in kind), and the geographic location of the industrial partner is **not** limited to Plymouth.
- Continuation funding for previously R&D Solutions Funded projects will be eligible to apply.
- Applicants must specify what outputs and impact the project will produce (e.g. papers, reports, presentations, funding bids).
- Within 6 weeks of the completion of the project, partners will be required to complete an initial case study template detailing the academic and business outputs and impacts of the project. Successful applicants will also be required to provide further annual updates on additional impacts derived from the R&D Solutions Fund project. Failure to do so will exclude you from being eligible for future R&D Solutions Funding calls.
- All projects must operate within the [University of Plymouth's Research Ethics policy](#)
- Offer letters are subject to all applicants complying with the [University of Plymouth's Declaration of Interest Policy](#) (UoP staff access only).

5. APPLICATION PROCESS

- This fund will be promoted via Call 8 which will run from Monday 20th January 2024 to 5.00pm on Monday 17th March 2024.
- Information sessions for the R&D Solutions Fund will be held on:
 - *Online via Zoom on Wednesday 29th January 2024, from 12.30pm to 1.30pm*
 - *In Person on the University Campus from 12.30pm to 1.30pm on Thursday 30th January 2025 in Babbage Building Room 410*

Please contact enterprisesolutions@plymouth.ac.uk for more information.

- All applicants to register their interest in the R&D Solutions Fund via Enterprise Solutions by contacting enterprisesolutions@plymouth.ac.uk to receive an application form.
- Completed applications to be submitted to enterprisesolutions@plymouth.ac.uk by 5.00pm on Monday 17th March 2025 for Call 8.
- Successful applicants will be requested to sign and return an offer letter no later than 16th June 2025
- All successful projects will require Head of School authorisation via email and a project start meeting with all partners before activity commences.

6. BUDGET PROPOSAL GUIDANCE

Budget proposals need to specify how the project will be delivered within the maximum R&D Solutions funding of £20,000 inclusive of VAT and may include additional agreed funding from project partners, including in-kind.

Estimating Staff Costs

The University of Plymouth Payroll intranet (internal access only):

[Hourly rates](#)

NB When budgeting additional staff costs, please allow at least an average 25% on-cost for casual workers who are subject to the same levels of National Insurance and Tax contributions as a standard employee. Note that exact amounts will not be known until they are set up on the Payroll system. All new appointments require Right to Work checks.

e.g. Research Assistants: Grade 5 – c. £19 / hour (£25.19/hour including NI & Pension contributions)

Associate Lecturers: Grade 8 starts at £24.10/hour

For any additional costings queries, please contact your School's Management Accountant.

7. GOVERNANCE

All applications will go through a quality assurance check. The University will establish a peer review group, with representatives from each Faculty, as well as an Awards Panel that will assess applications. The role of the panel is to appraise applications and agree project awards. Proposals will be measured against the following criteria:

- Technology & Innovation (impact on business/society)
- Deliverability
- Sustainability (of the relationship and activities beyond the initial project)
- Real World Research (responding to real world problems)
- Value for Money

Offer letters to the business and academic will be drafted by University of Plymouth. All ongoing contract management will be the responsibility of University of Plymouth.

Payments to the applicant will be made by the University of Plymouth on receipt of confirmation by Enterprise Solutions, Research & Innovation Directorate. Payments will be via BACS return and undertaken within 5 working days of University of Plymouth confirmation of payment. Payments can be made at any point during the project. Once funding has been issued any HR or Finance queries should be directed to your Faculty Business Partner or Head of School and the Finance Team.

Any queries, please contact enterprisesolutions@plymouth.ac.uk