

MPLS Networking and Interdisciplinary Fund – Scheme Guide

Small awards are available to support activities intended to **encourage networking and interdisciplinarity**.

Deadline: Applications to be received by **12noon Monday 14 December 2015**.

Purpose of the Fund

MPLS recognises the added value that an interdisciplinary approach can bring to addressing research challenges and has therefore set aside £100k pa to introduce the 'Networking and Interdisciplinary Fund' (NIF).

The NIF offers modest awards to enable networking and interdisciplinary activities, predominantly across MPLS (activities involving researchers from other divisions are welcomed, but the PI must be from within MPLS).

Awards cannot be used to fund research projects.

Support Available

Large awards: >£10k to kick-start or support a major network where there is a critical mass of activity or significant potential resource.

Key outputs of networks could include:

- Developing large interdisciplinary grant applications, either in response to a specific call or in anticipation of significant funding in the topic area;
- Identifying new interdisciplinary research questions that have the potential to shape future funding agendas;
- Providing a single point of contact for people outside the University (researchers, policymakers etc,) to link with researchers in a specific field and to provide presence in the global research community.

A suitable *academic* 'Network Champion' who is willing and able to invest significant time should be identified to lead activities.

Example costs that can be requested include:

- Website development
- Administrative support
- Workshops/meetings

Existing networks can apply for support, but they must demonstrate what value this additional funding will add.

Small awards: <£10k to support earlier stage networking activities likely to lead to new interdisciplinary research initiatives. Example activities include:

- Workshops, seminar series, symposia
- Investigative activities to determine potential new areas for collaborative research

Eligible costs

Awards can be requested to meet 100% of directly incurred costs.

How to apply

NIF processes are intended to be light-touch. Applicants must complete a short applications form, available from martin.edmunds@mpls.ox.ac.uk

Assessment Criteria

The panel will include the following criteria in their assessment of applications:

- **Quality:** excellence of the plan to facilitate interdisciplinary activity and systematically form new connections
- **Link with potential future funding calls:** potential for the network to address areas likely to receive significant external funding support in the next few years
- **Value added:** the benefits the network will bring, potential to form a step-change
- **Critical mass:** demonstration that there is a constituency in need of coordination
- **Breadth:** though not essential, links with other Divisions (including matching support)
- **Leader and core team:** the ability of the team to achieve the objectives of the proposal and the strength of the leadership

Assessment Process

Funding decisions will be made by a multi-disciplinary panel of MPLS academics, chaired by Prof Charlotte Deane (Associate Head of Division).

Contact

Please contact martin.edmunds@mpls.ox.ac.uk if you have any queries about the Fund.