Sustainable Laboratories Grant

Guidance for Applicants

The following document provides guidance on the eligibility and application process for the **25 September 2023 – 30 October 2023** application round of the Royal Society of Chemistry ("RSC") Sustainable Laboratories Grant.

Please read these before making an application.

1. About the grant

1.1 Up to £10,000 GBP will be awarded to the successful applicant to undertake a project, initiative or activity ("project") which helps make chemical sciences research more sustainable either by advancing the understanding of environmentally sustainable laboratory practice; or increasing the take-up of environmentally sustainable laboratory practices in the chemical sciences or facilitating the sharing of best practices.

2. Duration and start of award

2.1 Funding is available for a period of up to 12 months for projects occurring after 01 March 2024.

2.2 Grant recipients will be able to request a no cost extension of up to 12 months at any point within the duration of the grant.

3. Eligibility

3.1 Either the lead applicant or the named co-applicant must be an RSC member at the time of the application deadline and for the duration of the grant period. This will be checked by RSC staff and the applicant's RSC membership must be confirmed at the grant application deadline – it is not sufficient to have a membership application in process.

3.2 Applications may also involve a co-applicant. The co-applicant is someone that is part of the project team and has a clear role and responsibilities in the project. They should be involved in developing the project proposal as well as making a significant and essential contribution to its delivery. Co-applicants must not be added solely to fulfil grant eligibility requirements.

3.3 Individuals may only apply for a maximum of one Sustainable Laboratories Grant ,either as lead applicant or co-applicant, per application round.

3.4 There are no career stage restrictions associated with this scheme, however lead and co-applicants must either:

3.4.1 Hold a fixed term or permanent contract at an eligible organisation (university; industrial, private or commercial organisation; university spin-out company or research institute) that lasts for the duration of the grant period. Or

3.4.2 Be undertaking an undergraduate or graduate course at an Higher Education Institution, for example university.

3.5 Any given project may not receive more than one RSC grant. Applicants must inform the RSC if a project is successful in multiple RSC grant applications.

3.6 The applicant is solely responsible for ensuring they are not under any obligation which prevents them from applying for or receiving the funds, whether the obligations are imposed by the home organisation or otherwise.

4. Application timelines

Applications open: 25 September 2023

Application close: 30 October 2023 14:00 UK time

Initial screening decisions: Week commencing 13 November 2023

Funding decisions: February 2024

5. Application requirements

5.1 Applications will be made through our online application system, [SurveyMonkey Apply](). Before completing the online form, all applicants should check that they comply with the eligibility requirements in section 3.

5.2 The application form will ask the lead applicant to provide:

a. A summary (max 100 words) of the project which succinctly describes the challenge you are aiming to address and the actions you will take. This description may be used on our website should your application be funded.

b. A document of maximum two sides of A4 (at font size 10) describing the proposed project. Your application will be rejected without review if the project proposal exceeds length limits specified in the application form. The proposal should include:

- background of the specific issue you are seeking to address and why it is important with regards to the aims of this scheme
- overall aims and expected outcomes
- a brief description of what you are planning to do
- timeframes and key dates
- where your project will take place
- who will be delivering the project

c. Information on how the project will have wider benefits.

d. The need for RSC funding

e. The approximate costings for the project and a description of the manner in which any awarded grant funding would be spent. This should include quantities and approximate costs for each item (see eligible costs in section 6).

5.3 Applicants must include a declaration from a project sponsor. A project sponsor is someone in the lead applicant's organisation who is able to support or enable the delivery of the project (for example, someone whose permission is needed for successful delivery of the project). They do not necessarily need to be involved in the delivery of the project. This would typically be a supervisor/PI, line manager, Head of Department or another senior member of the applicant's organisation. The project sponsor cannot be the lead applicant or co-applicant.

6. Eligible costs

6.1 The scheme will be open to a wide range of projects that meet the scheme aims. Examples could include research projects, data collection, pilot studies, seed funding towards the development of larger projects, resource development, or activities to support networking, community development and sharing of best practices.

6.2 Sustainable Laboratories Grants will not be awarded to:

    a. projects which do not focus on improving environmental sustainability in chemical sciences research practice;

    b. projects whose primary aim is to generate a financial surplus or for commercial development;

    c. projects for which our support would not significantly enhance the project;

    d. projects which are unlikely to have wider benefit beyond the grant recipient or where wider benefit is not clearly articulated;

    e. cover the cost of general-purpose hardware, apparatus or equipment;

    f. cover the costs for conference attendance;

6.3 Any contributions to cover staff costs or student bursaries should be appropriate for the project. They should not include costs that might reasonably be covered otherwise, for example by employers. All costs should be justified in the budget table.

6.4 Costs for consultancy will only be covered where the applicant is explicit about the need for a consultant or specialist to be involved in the project and can demonstrate how the project will benefit from the specific expertise or skillset provided. These costs must be fully justified in the application form.

7. Inviting project sponsors to provide their support of the application.

7.1 Applicants must include confirmation of support from a project sponsor. ***Please make them aware of this before entering their details into the application system.***

7.2 Once applicants enter the details of the project sponsor, the SurveyMonkey Apply system will send them an email, which includes a link to the application. Clicking this link will allow them to login (or sign up) to confirm their support.

7.3 **Confirmation of support needs to be completed by the grant deadline.** You will not be able to submit your application form until the status shows 'complete'.

8. Assessment Criteria

8.1 The assessment criteria are:

    a. **Relevance to environmental sustainability of chemical sciences research**

    The project and its outcomes must focus on improving the environmental sustainability of research practice in the chemical sciences.

    The project objectives should align with one or more of the scheme aims. You should also explain why and how your project builds on or adds to existing knowledge or practice.

b. Outcomes and impact

The proposal must clearly describe the intended outcomes and/or impact that the project will have and include a plan to evaluate whether the project has been successful in achieving these outcomes and impacts.

c. Wider benefit

The proposal must explain how the project will have wider benefits beyond the grant recipient, including how any outputs and/or learnings will be shared.

This is an important aspect of this scheme, but we do not wish to be prescriptive in defining "wider benefit". A key finding from the Sustainable laboratories report is the need for communities to share knowledge and best practice.

f. Feasibility of proposal

The project must be clearly written and costed, be feasible to complete with the resource allocation and/or support and be within the timeframe indicated in the proposal.

g. Impact of funding

Applicants should show that the requested funding will make a significant difference to their ability to deliver the project.

9. Application assessment process

9.1 All applications will undergo an initial screening by RSC staff. Applications will be rejected at this stage if:

a) You do not meet our eligibility criteria (see section 3);

b) Your application is incomplete;

c) Your application does not adhere to the length limits instructed in the application system;

d) Your funding request exceeds the £10,000 limit.

9.2 All remaining applications will undergo peer review by members of our Researcher Grants Peer Review Group and the Sustainable Laboratories Grant Decision Panel. Final funding decisions will be overseen by the Sustainable Laboratories Grant Decision Panel.

10. Successful applications

10.1 Lead applicants will be notified by email of any funding decision.

10.2 The funding offer is conditional on RSC receiving, within fifty (50) working days from the date of the Award Letter, bank payment details and agreement to all of the conditions set out in the Standard Conditions of Grant.

10.3 The grant will be paid in a single payment to the lead applicant's organisation. No funds will be paid directly to individual applicants.

11. Contact information

If you have any questions about this grant please contact funding@rsc.org. Before

contacting us please check the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document for the grant in case this answers your question.