



## Engineering for Life: Seed-Corn Funding

### 1) Introduction

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Engineering for Life (EFL) is an EPSRC funded project which spans five research centres in the University. The project aims to create multidisciplinary teams to find innovative ways to enhance peoples' lives. In particular, it will address problems related to the following three themes:

- rehabilitation and assisted living
- sport, physical activity and medicine
- sustainability

EfL is able to allocate seed-corn funding to support small scale feasibility projects of up to £20k. These feasibility projects must be multidisciplinary and lead to an application for funding from an external body (e.g. EPSRC, BBSRC, EU, TSB, RDA, industry). EfL will only support new projects.

Projects will typically be of 6-12 months duration and will normally involve academic/research staff and PhD research students from the five participating research centres. However, other SHU staff or external collaborators can be included as partners within the proposed projects provided there is clear benefit to the project. For projects involving an external partner matching funding from the partner institution (or other source) is expected. The programme focuses on the interdisciplinary research at Sheffield Hallam University.

**Third Call for Applications (following the third Sand Pit Event on 8th/9th February 2011)**

**Theme: Sustainability**

**Closing date for the second call: Monday 7th March 2011, 5pm**

### 2) Allocation of funding

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The allocation of funding will be competitive. The funding can be used in variety of ways including, for example, consumables, buy-out of staff or student time, visits from external collaborators. The awards will normally lying in the range £1k – £20k.

The normal route to allocating seed-corn funding will be for ideas which arise from one of the three Sand Pit events, the first of which was in January 2010 and the second in June 2010. All applications will be subject to the criteria set out in Section 3 below.

The application deadlines and forms are available from the EFL web site: <http://engineeringforlife.shu.ac.uk>. An *Engineering for Life Award Panel* will convene



regularly to allocate funding based on applications which arise from the Idea Generator Events or responsive mode applications.

The constitution of Award panel is:-

- Principal Investigator (Chair)
- Co-investigators or nominee
- A representative from the Enterprise Centre
- Project Co-ordinator
- Project Administrator
- Two researchers drawn from the five contributing research centres. These researchers to be changed for each meeting of the Award Panel.

### **3) Evaluation criteria for project funding:**

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The criteria against which funding will be awarded are (in no particular order):-

- The project must be interdisciplinary, with staff involved from at least two of the participating research centres.
- Projects which have previously been funded, either internally or externally, will not be supported by EFL. The team will normally include some members who have not previously worked together on a research project.
- The innovation and originality of the project.
- The quality of proposed research.
- The likelihood that research conducted during the pump-priming award will lead to the submission of a high quality external grant application.
- Potential impact in enhancing people's life.
- A clear justification for cost effective use of funding. Gearing with funds from other internal or external sources is encouraged.

### **4) Eligible applicants:**

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Applicants must be academic / research SHU staff or final year SHU PhD students. Applications must be made by at least two members of staff, one each from at least two of the following: MERI, ADRC, CSES, CCRC and BMRC. The creation of highly multidisciplinary teams is encouraged - applicants from other schools are welcome in addition to the compulsory two.



## **5) Eligible uses of Seed corn Award funding (not exhaustive)**

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### **5.1) Directly Incurred Costs**

Research consumables

Equipment costs (computers, laboratory/workshop equipment, major equipment spares and software, installation costs and costs of major essential modifications necessary to house equipment)

Software

### **5.2) Staff costs**

Research staff costs (including pension and NI contributions).

Buy-out of academic staff teaching.

### **5.3) Travel costs**

Travel and subsistence expenses required for the success of the collaboration.

### **5.4) Visiting Researchers**

Support may be requested for visits by staff of acknowledged standing from within the UK or abroad to the investigator's organisation. However, support can only be sought to initiate new and relevant collaborations. Funding will not be approved to support established collaborations including links with former PhD students.

### **5.5) Other Costs**

Costs sought should be specified as far as possible in the proposal and justified in terms of requirement for the research proposed.

### **5.6) Ineligible uses of Feasibility Studies Award funding (not exhaustive)**

Studentship fees

Indirect costs, e.g. bench fees for lab-based subjects, personal insurance.

## **6) Dissemination: Inspiring and Informing**

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Award winners are expected to inform and inspire Sheffield Hallam University staff during and after their project. Multi-disciplinary projects will be favoured, as will projects expected to result in long-term collaborations. Award winners will be asked to contribute to at least one Bridging the Gap Engineering for Life event (Research Cafe, Field Lab or future Sand Pit) in order to publicise Engineering for Life and interdisciplinary research at Sheffield Hallam University. Dissemination through conferences, publishing, public engagement is strongly encouraged.

## **7) Reporting**

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Each project will report regularly to the EfL Executive Committee. The Executive Committee reserves the right to terminate seed-corn funding at any time if inadequate progress is being



made against the initially agreed project plan. The reports to the Executive should include information about research progress and expenditure to date. Within two months of the completion of the project a final report should be provided to the Executive which provides the following information:-

- Research Outcomes
- Publications
- Conferences attended
- Impact to society
- Bids for external funding

## **8) Preparing an Application**

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**If you are considering submitting an application following the Sand-Pit event, it is essential that you contact the project co-ordinator, Dr Vesna Milanovic:-**

*Dr Vesna Milanovic  
Project Co-ordinator for EFL  
ACES, MERI, Sheffield Hallam University, City Campus  
Howard Street, Sheffield S1 1WB  
Tel: +44 (0)114 225 4037  
Fax: +44 (0)114 225 3501  
<http://engineeringforlife.shu.ac.uk>*

In addition to providing guidance on your application, Dr Milanovic will also allocate one of the project investigators:

ADRC: Paul Chamberlain  
BMRC: Nicola Woodroffe  
CCRC: Simeon Yates  
MERI: Chris Care  
SERG: Steve Haake

to act as a mentor for your project. Dr Milanovic and the mentor will speak in support of your project at the Award Panel.

Our aim is to promote the development of high quality proposals and this process is designed to provide each team with the maximum support.

The application form can be found on the EFL web site: <http://engineeringforlife.shu.ac.uk>.

Email your submission the project administrator, Ms Jennie Harrison [jennie.harrison@shu.ac.uk](mailto:jennie.harrison@shu.ac.uk)