PROCEDURES FOR EXTERNAL RESEARCH FUNDING

These guidelines reflect the way the costs of all Research Grants and Contracts are calculated following the requirements of FULL ECONOMIC COSTING (fEC).

The guidelines do not cover grants for postgraduate studentships, except where the cost of a studentship is included in a project application. Enquires on individual studentships should be directed to the Graduate Research School.

These Guidelines cover:

Research Grant Application Procedures

When preparing and submitting an application for External Research Funding, the University requires you to:

- Discuss the requirements of the research project or contract with the R&I research funding team.
- Prepare your budget using figures calculated by R&I.
- Obtain Faculty approval.
- Complete the internal online sign-off
- Ensure signatures required on application documents are from University-authorised signatories.
- Submit

Discuss requirements with the R&I research funding team

Research & Innovation (R&I) will assist you with your funding application. Your Research Development Manager (RDM) will help you interpret the funder's requirements, the eligibility of costs and the regulations that must be met.

R&I also represent the University's interests and will check that you do not omit any eligible costs, commit the University to unsuitable terms and conditions or advocate unsuitable research.

Note: if Due Diligence is required, it must be considered **in advance** of submission. Discuss applicability to your partners with your RDM, and ensure any necessary approvals are attached to your project for internal electronic sign-off. See also Other Considerations section.

Prepare budget using R&I figures

The University requires that figures used in research grant applications adhere to fEC methodology and are approved by R&I. This means using salary, estates and indirect costs that we have calculated for you, taking into account on-costs, increments and inflation where appropriate. If you are undertaking contract research, R&I will ensure that your rates are at least equal to the full economic cost of the work, by either fEC and/or University Costing and Pricing methodology, as appropriate. *Our software will perform a mandatory monitoring full economic cost calculation, whether or not the funder supports fEC*. This informs the faculty and the University of the COST of carrying out the research, to compare to the PRICE applied for. If the PRICE is below the COST, it must be specifically approved by the Dean, prior to sign-off. See COST vs PRICE. Where your research involves a business, your RDM will liaise with the Business Development Manager (BDM). Your RDM will be happy to advise you of how internal and funder procedures relate to your application. Note that if you require equipment, you must adhere to the procurement procedures of the University and the Funding body when applying for funds or purchasing. Research Council procedures should be consulted as a model of good practice for applications.

Obtain Faculty Approval

The University requires that you get approval from your Head of School prior to submission of your application (see next sections). This allows them to manage their resources, check for unsuitable applications, and to ensure bids are in-line with the Faculty Research Strategy. They should also be able to offer you advice and guidance, strengthening your application via input from other colleagues. This may be achieved through discussion, or through a formal process of internal peer review – check with your RDM for Faculty requirements. Your RDM will also be able to offer you advice and assistance with elements of your bid. For preparation of business cases, negotiations etc. they may arrange for an BDM to assist you. Impact Development Managers (IDM) can offer advice on impact planning.

Please discuss your application with your Faculty at an early stage. This will prevent wasting your time on a proposal with an unsuitable slant or insufficient funding. It will also allow time for any formal processes required, and to improve in response to feedback. Depending on COST vs PRICE, your Faculty may need to make allowance to fund the shortfall before approving (see below).

Complete the internal online sign-off

Research applications are submitted by the Principal Investigator as a representative of the University. They also make use of Faculty resources (e.g. academic time) and many applications commit the University to the terms and conditions of the award. It is therefore important to obtain approval for your application. The Faculty must approve the commitment and use of resources involved, considering the management of their resources before they approve an application. Faculty approvers also act as the University-approved signatory, as only certain people are entitled to sign on behalf of the University.

Internal approval happens online through Unified. Your RDM creates and submits the system entry, including the costing and with the bid and any other necessary requirements attached. If Due Diligence is required, the approval and/or risk mitigation plan must be attached. They must have received your HoS approval in order to submit. You as Principal Investigator (PI) will have to approve, to take responsibility on behalf of all researchers and to agree that it is correct. It will usually then go to the University-approved signatory (see below) for their signature. You should make them aware of your project and discuss any necessary details with them before this stage. The bid must be fully signed-off **prior** to submission. Your Faculty may also have internal procedures to which you must adhere - please check with your Faculty. In specialist circumstances only (such as emergency calls) there may be an accelerated sign-off process in place, but they will need to be captured on the system after the deadline in these circumstances.

Please note that any research where the PRICE is below the COST, must be discussed in advance with the Dean, who will need to identify how to fund the shortfall, and there will be an additional stage in Faculty signatures. Please allow time for this to happen. See COST vs PRICE.

Use University-authorised signatories

Only authorised individuals are allowed to sign on behalf of the University, as grant applications commit the University to the funding body's terms and conditions. The system will request authorisation from the correct signatory or their authorised substitute. If your application requires a signature to designate Institutional approval, the same regulations apply. Those involved in giving approval should have advance notice of your intentions and adequate time to respond. The table below shows the University-authorised signatories for different values of application. Please note that these differ to the signatories authorised at the post-award stage, as the commitments are potential as the award has not yet been made. A list of Faculty Designated Authorities can be obtained from StaffSpace or your RDM can advise.

Value of Application for which KU is responsible (i.e. collaborator values only where KU leads)	**Application / Unified/ Other paperwork** to be signed by:
Up to £150K in total	Faculty Designated Authority / Corporate Director
Over £150K in total	Dean of Faculty / SLT
KUEL contracts	KUEL representative

NB Head of School approval (e.g. by email) must be attached to Unified prior to submission.

If your application requires support from the University at the highest level e.g. when only one application per Institution is accepted, it may need an SLT-level letter of support, arranged through R&I. An internal competition may be arranged in these circumstances to select the Institutional submission.

Submit

Once faculty approval and all the correct signatures have been obtained, you may submit your application. Some electronic submission systems (e.g. Research Councils' Je-S) have a stage built in for Faculty and/or Institutional approval. Even in such cases, Unified approval will be required; it addresses internal issues that are not covered by the application; provides proof of approval and forms the institutional database. If you are submitting via an electronic system with built-in approval processes, please note that all approvals must be completed by the published deadline and allow sufficient time for these to occur. If unforeseen circumstances mean that you will be close to the deadline, please notify the approvers concerned, and check their availability. Please note that Unified approvals must be completed **BEFORE** you can submit your application.

Electronic submission

Many major funding bodies now use electronic submission, often exclusively. If you need assistance with registration or use of such a system, your RDM will be happy to provide advice and training. Documents to assist with use of the Research Councils' Je-S system are available on the R&I StaffSpace pages. Many electronic systems allow you to give access to your application to colleagues and collaborators. This is a very useful feature, allowing input from a number of colleagues whose experience can strengthen your application. We recommend that you give access to your RDM, who will fill in budget values directly, and provide advice on the completion of each screen. If you are making a joint application with another Institution, consult R&I about whether to use any joint application function which, where available, allows each Institution to be responsible for its own costs. Please note that Unified approvals must be completed **BEFORE** you can submit your application.

COST vs PRICE

Your RDM will calculate the fEC of the project, this gives the COST of the Research. They will identify the eligible costs and assist with preparation of the financial section of the application. When eligible costs are not clear, if a cap on funding prevents full cost recovery or when charge-out rates can be used for personnel costs, they will use the fEC information, in consultation with you, to decide the PRICE that will be charged to the funder. In an ideal world, this would be the full fEC COST, but may actually be lower, or higher. The PRICE should be set after discussion with the Faculty, as they will have to underwrite any costs not covered, and give permission for the application to go ahead.

Note that where the PRICE is below the COST for contract research, or meeting any of the conditions (1-3) below for grant-funded research, it must be specifically agreed and signed-off by the Authorised Signatory. The Dean must agree with the Faculty Business Partner the source of Faculty funds to be used to support the research, and support the rationale for undertaking the research at that PRICE.

To allow consideration of issues, the Dean should be notified at least 4 days before the **bid** deadline, with a suitable justification when:

1. A **shortfall** is expected in the **Directly Incurred** costs (i.e. the new costs specific to that project, that in general result in external spend).
    - The only *exception* is for applications which cover *only travel costs*, up to a direct cost of £5,000, where the additional costs will be covered by a Faculty fund earmarked for that purpose.
2. When a **shortfall** is expected due to the **cost of academic time** neither being funded, nor suitable replacement costs offered by the scheme.
    - An *exception* is made that up to *11%* of the contract of an academic who is contracted to KU throughout the project period can be committed, with Faculty agreement, and provided other commitments allow.
3. a) When **no overheads** will be funded on any application where the **direct costs are greater than £50k per annum** (allows employment of grade 8 postdoctoral researcher).
    - Exceptions are made for the following
        i. Applications *exclusively for travel funds* where no research is committed to
        ii. Applications *exclusively for funds to buy research equipment*
        iii. Applications for funds to be used *exclusively to fund studentships*
        iv. Applications to the EU *Marie-Curie* schemes
        v. Applications to *UK registered charities*, including, but not limited to, the *Wellcome and Leverhulme* Trusts

    b) If **reduced** overhead is requested when such would be a fundable cost under the scheme processes. Where the funder provides for overheads with a maximum limit below KU overhead costs (e.g. Qatar National Research Fund), bids should request maximum overhead,.
    - There will be no exceptions to this criterion.

These notifications and exceptions **do not exempt** any application from the requirement to undergo the usual approval process.

Although undertaking research at less than fEC is permissible it must be demonstrable that there are longer term benefits in doing so as the Government has stated it is not acceptable to use Public money to subsidise research for Private gain. Government auditors will be checking that Universities are making their research activities sustainable through consistent application of fEC.

Different sectors fund in different ways:

- *Research Councils* fund on an fEC basis, paying 80% of fEC costs.
- *UK registered Charities* have collectively stated their inability to meet fEC costs, but some collect fEC data to inform future decisions. The Government is sympathetic to their case and there is an understanding that, for the foreseeable future, Charities will pay only 'additional' (i.e. DI) costs.
- *UK Government departments* have been instructed to meet 100% of fEC.
- *EU H2020 programmes* allot a fixed percentage towards overheads, currently 25%, for research and innovation schemes. They do not pay the full cost for innovation schemes – Universities are exempt from the reduction and receive the full cost, but your collaborative partners may see a reduction in funding when schemes are close-to-market. Similar is expected for future frameworks
- *Industry* varies in its approach to funding. The PI should use the COST, as calculated by the **University Costing and Pricing policy** to inform the PRICE of the project, depending on what the market will bear. fEC must also be monitored. This should mean a significant number of projects being priced at higher than fEC. However, many industrial funders have got used to the 'cheap' research services of Universities and may baulk at sudden sharp increases. It is at the discretion of the Faculty, in consultation with the PI, whether the PRICE quoted in an application to an industrial funder is below the COST. However, where the PRICE to be quoted is below the COST, as specified in the criteria above, the application must be approved and signed-off by the Finance Business Partner and the Authorised Signatory, **BEFORE** the quote is submitted.

Other Considerations

Below are some other matters that should be taken into consideration when writing an application:

- *Referees.* Choice of referee could have a critical bearing on the success of the application. Referees should be experts in the subject area and/or be able to provide an expert view on the value and benefits to users of the proposal. Referees may not be either KU staff or current or proposed collaborators, but do select those acquainted with your research, preferably those with whom you have had personal contact and can trust to give a fair assessment. If your project is interdisciplinary your choice of referees should reflect this. If the Grant Body gives guidelines on a format for presenting your case for support you are strongly advised to adhere to this. Regular referees and panel members will be used to this format and may not be sympathetic to variations.
- *Space.* Both large equipment purchases and new staff appointments will have space requirements. Consult your Faculty to ensure availability of the necessary space. Consider power consumption, access, refurbishment needs, safety, and the comfort and security of the research environment.
- *Equipment.* If you require equipment to carry out your research, that is not already available within the University, you may be able to include on your research grant application. If eligible, you should also consider space, servicing and maintenance, related consumables, software and training and costs of technical staff will be needed to run and maintain the equipment. The relevant procurement procedures for the University and the funding body should be adhered to both for funding applications and purchase of equipment. Research Council procedures are considered a good model for funding applications, currently using 3 cost categories. Equipment items below the lowest limit are treated as consumable items. Items above this require quotations, extra justification of the need, and an evaluation of existing equipment. Items above the capital asset threshold additionally require explanation of the strategic requirement through a business case. RCUK decide the best strategic location when approving funding for such capital items. RCUK will consider the appropriate level of funding for each equipment bid, but a contribution from the benefitting organisation is likely to be expected, likely to be around 50%. for equipment below the capitalisation limit. You must discuss such requests with the Faculty and appropriate central departments in advance. Consider alternatives such as sharing equipment with other establishments and/or renting time. Consider leasing, but costs will be considered in the same way as purchase requests.
- *Social Surveys.* If a large survey is to be undertaken, it is worth considering sub-contracting to specialists, and the value of this compared to an in-house undertaking. If so, the sub-contract

should be subject to competitive procedures, including applicable tendering process. If applying to Research Councils, sub-contracted social surveys will be funded at 100% and the cost placed in the exception equipment section of the Je-S form. If such a survey will be carried out in-house, RCUK will fund at 80%, and the rationale and benchmarking must be provided.

- *Insurance Cover.* Some research work (e.g. aeronautical tests, pharmaceutical trials and work undertaken outside the UK) may not be automatically covered by the KU insurance unless special arrangements are made in advance of work commencing – see Professional Indemnity Policy. In such cases, any additional insurance premium ought to be included in your costings. Professional Negligence Cover will be required if you are providing advice, design or specifications to another organisation or individual. Contact the Executive Support Office for advice.
- *Legal Implications, Protection of Intellectual Property (IPR).* Serious consideration should be given to the potential value to both staff and the University of any Intellectual Property that may be generated. Contact a Business Development Manager for guidance when developing a working relationship with a commercial company The University Secretary's Office has produced a series of contract templates – please consult your Research Operations Manager (ROM) regarding appropriate contracts, templates and signatories.
- *Due Diligence.* If you are entering into a contractual financial relationship with a non-publicly-funded body, please ensure that due diligence is performed to check that the company is a solvent legal entity. Finance should be contacted **4 weeks in advance** of submission.

  If the funding scheme has a Guarantee fund (e.g. EU Frameworks such as H2020):
  - Where KU will coordinate, a due diligence form should be completed.
  - Otherwise, no due diligence form is generally required to be completed regarding financial viability and therefore sustainability of partners. However, Finance can carry out due diligence on any partner/coordinator for which the Associate Dean (Research) or equivalent requires assurance.
  - Whether or not KU is coordinating, PIs must advise their Faculty of risk mitigation plans. E.g. if a partner, such as an SME should fail: which partners could complete their work packages, and which work packages would require sourcing new partners; how contract researchers would be supported if an award is temporarily stopped. A standard risk mitigation form is available to attach to Unified.
  - Where the coordinator is an SME, the Associate Dean (Research) or equivalent, must be notified and should consider whether they require the assurance of due diligence and who would replace on work packages and coordination in the event of failure. Your ROM and Finance must also be notified to allow special clauses to be added to the consortium agreement, relating to payment of pre-financing in good time and automatic consent for withdrawal if this does not occur.

  If the funding scheme does not have a Guarantee fund or is direct from a company:
  - No due diligence is required for UK HEIs or for publicly-funded institutions
  - No due diligence is required where the total KU responsibility (note this includes KU budget, plus budget of others for which we are responsible e.g. if coordinating) is less than £50,000
  - For all other collaborators or funders, the assurance of due diligence should be sought.

  Contact your Research Development Manager (RDM) for further advice. See also Contracts.
- *Ethical Considerations.* Each Faculty has a Research Ethics Lead who oversees ethics review and reports any issues to the University Research Ethics Committee. You must inform this representative if your proposal involves research on humans. Check the University's Ethics Guidance and Procedures.
- *Data Protection.* If your research involves processing personal data, especially sensitive personal data (e.g. Health Studies), or the sharing of such data with anyone outside of the University, please check with the University's Data Protection Officer concerning data protection legislation.
- *Health and Safety Issues.* Check with the Safety & Security Office.

Research Grant Award Procedures

Different Funding Bodies have different procedures for notifying you of the outcome of your application. Regardless of procedure and outcome, it is important that you let all interested parties know. This includes Co-Investigators and staff involved in the research, anyone who mentored or assisted you with the application, the Faculty, and all administrative staff involved, such as RDM, ROM and R&E Finance.

Successful Applications

Although you are the applicant, and the letter may be addressed to you, usually grants and contracts are awarded to the University, which holds them on your behalf. The award constitutes a contract to carry out work according to the funding body's terms and conditions; for administrative and legal reasons the University is the contracted party and therefore "holds" the award. This also makes the award eligible to be counted during evaluation processes such as the Research Excellence Framework. A University-authorised signatory must therefore sign documentation on behalf of the University, the contracted party.

These procedures cover all research awards (incl. Fellowships, Travel grants and contract research) that are to be administered by the University. Your Faculty may also have internal procedures to which you must adhere. If in doubt please check with your Research Operations Manager (ROM).

Most awarding bodies will require notification of acceptance in writing, perhaps on a pro-forma acceptance slip, possibly within a time limit. They may require signatures from the grant-holder and/or a senior administrative or financial staff member. *Follow their rules but do **not** immediately send a reply to the award body. You **must** follow the University's procedures, of which notification to the awarding body is a late step.* You **must** follow these procedures, signing on behalf of the University when you are not authorised to do so may lead to legal problems.

- Pass paperwork to your ROM
- ROM and RDM will complete awards processes on Unified
- Ensure that a written contract has been issued and is understood, appropriate and legally acceptable
- Sign-off and any required signature obtained from the appropriate University-authorised signatory
- Central Finance set up and activate required sub-project to hold the budget
- Acceptance of award, **signed by University-authorised signatory** returned to funding body

Pass paperwork to your ROM

Pass the award letter and other paperwork, including any acceptance form required by the awarding body to your Faculty Research Operations Manager (ROM). They will ensure that it is complete, that authorised signatures are present and record on Unified. As Principal Investigator (or leading Kingston Investigator if it is a subcontract of a collaborative award), you are responsible for checking the value of the award and the terms and conditions of the contract. If you have any concerns about the award (e.g. if the amount awarded is less than the original bid) you should flag it to the ROM and state whether the offer is suitable for the work to be undertaken (i.e. if the amount offered is sufficient to cover costs). R&E Finance should be able to give you advice about any such concerns.

ROM and RDM will complete awards processes on Unified

Internal award acceptance follows a similar process on Unified. An award is set up, the awarded budget is specified and any concerns flagged. The contract and any other paperwork are attached. Depending on the value and complexity of the award, you ROM may arrange a kick-off meeting to align all support.

Ensure a written contract has been issued and is understood, appropriate and legally acceptable

All Awards, whether from government, Industry, a UK funding body, the EU or elsewhere involve a relationship with the funder. There must be a written contract in place to define the terms of this relationship. A contract will usually be issued by the funder to be signed as part of the acceptance. This contract will define the relationship wanted by the funder. It must be checked to ascertain that it suits the purposes of the relationship wanted by the University and that it covers all issues that might arise, and should be renegotiated if necessary. It must also be checked for legality. Your ROM will ensure that your contract is agreed with your **Faculty**, and if there are any queries or uncertainty will seek advice. Many funding bodies use standard contracts, but do not assume that this is the case with your award, or that a standard contract is necessarily acceptable - all contracts should be checked and considered in context. When ready, it must be signed by a University-authorised signatory.

Where research is collaborative, there will usually need to be additional contracts between the partners. Where there are multiple partners with different but interlocking deliverables, contracts may be quite complex. These need to be checked carefully by the Faculty, R&E Finance and R&I, and may need additional clauses added, e.g. if the lead partner is an SME.

Sign-off and any required signature obtained from the appropriate University-authorised signatory

When all contracts are agreed and concerns addressed and attached to Unified, it will undergo a similar sign-off process to the bid. Yourself and authorised signatories will be asked for sign-off. Your ROM will ensure that the authorised signatory also signs any paperwork required. Only the people below, with the appropriate financial authority to sign on behalf of the University, can formally accept a grant on behalf of the University. The same restrictions will apply to signing of contracts or acceptance letters to the grant-awarding body. Please note that these University-authorised signatories differ from those required for Grant Applications, which are a special case.

Value of Grant/Contract	Sign-off / Contract / Acceptance Letter / Other paperwork to be signed by:
Up to £100K in total	Faculty Designated Authority – where designated* / Corporate Director
Up to £250K in total	Dean of Faculty / SLT member
Over £250K in total	Vice-Chancellor or Senior Deputy VC
KUEL contracts	Member of KUEL Board of Directors

A list of current Faculty-Designated Authorities can be obtained from the R&I StaffSpace.
Please note that a grant cannot be accepted and signed-off unless the application sign-off is in order.

Central Finance set up and activate required sub-project to hold the budget

University Finance will set up the new sub-project on the Finance system and will inform you when it is available for use.
Please note that a grant cannot be accepted and signed-off unless the application sign-off is in order.

Acceptance of award, signed by University-authorised signatory returned to funding body

It may now be confirmed to the Grant Body that the award has been officially accepted by the University. Please note that your acceptance **must** be signed by a University-authorised signatory (see table). Your ROM or R&E Finance may return the acceptance on your behalf, depending on the Funder terms.

Note - you should notify R&E Finance and your ROM of the proposed start date and of any variation in project dates (e.g. delays in recruiting Research Staff).

Value of Grant/Contract	Sign-off / Contract / Acceptance Letter / Other paperwork to be signed by:
Up to £100K in total	Faculty Designated Authority – where designated* / Corporate Director
Up to £250K in total	Dean of Faculty / SLT member
Over £250K in total	Vice-Chancellor or Senior Deputy VC
KUEL contracts	Member of KUEL Board of Directors

* Note: The Dean may designate the Associate Dean for Research – see
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/staffspace/dep/researchsupport/rso/researchfunding/Pages/whocansign.aspx

Post-Award Responsibilities

You will be responsible, in consultation with your R&E Finance contact, for the financial management of the award throughout its duration. You will be obliged to adhere to the University's Financial Regulations in respect of expenditure. Proper records need to be kept in case of internal or external audit, and for reconciliation and final claims, and you must understand and retain what proofs your funder will require. Besides financial management you are also responsible for providing reports required by the funding body. Please ensure that you are aware of the nature (e.g. research, financial) and timing (e.g. annual, interim, final) of reports required.

You must also ensure that a written contract that is understood, appropriate and legally acceptable is in place to govern relationships with funding bodies, and also with any external bodies involved in your research, such as other Universities for collaborations. Your ROM will be able to help you with this.

Signatures

Post-award deals with actual contracts and funding, rather than potential contracts and budget at the pre-award stage. This is why the University-approved signatories differ between the two stages.

Unsuccessful Applications

When you receive notification, you should inform everyone involved in the application process, including: Co-Investigators/Collaborators, named Researchers, Faculty members, and R&I (RDM and ROM). Do please ensure that any mentors and peer reviewers are also informed.

Competition for grant funding is intense, with success rates varying between approximately 10% and 35%, depending on the funder and the scheme. Therefore no stigma should be attached to a lack of success – the majority of applicants will probably be in the same position. Instead, treat it as part of a learning process and incorporate the lessons you have learnt into future applications and pass them on to colleagues.

You should obtain feedback from the funding body as to why you have not been successful. Many funders will automatically provide referees responses, if they do not, request them (if applicable). If referees responses are positive, the funding body may be able to provide additional information e.g. if your application was highly rated, but not sufficiently highly prioritised to obtain a cut of the available budget they may be able to explain why.

If you do obtain feedback as to why they have not funded the proposal please pass this to your RDM. R&I maintain a database of applications and any detail from a funder - especially if negative - is helpful in establishing profiles and trends. Such information will help us to advise you and your colleagues in writing future applications and developing research strategy.

You may wish to re-draft your application and either re-submit (regulations allowing), or to submit it to another funding body. In either case, you should make significant changes to your application. Feedback will help you to identify areas that require changing and strengthening.

Full Economic Costing (fEC)

In order to promote sustainability and investment in infrastructure and address issues of transparency in University funding, full economic costing (fEC) was introduced in 2005. Additional budget was made available to government-funded grant-awarding bodies in order to allow them to fund the costs incurred by the University, in addition to the new direct costs of the project. It is a requirement that the University monitors full economic cost on every application for external research funding**, even where the funding body does not pay on an fEC basis, to allow the University to assess the cost of the work to be undertaken.**

Applications continue to be assessed on the strength and quality of the proposed work with the major part of the application, addressing aims, objectives, methodology, expected outcomes, impact, dissemination etc. Budgets are assessed on to be proportionality and value for money rather than absolute price.

Your Research Development Manager (RDM) will calculate both your eligible budget and the fEC. Please consult them as early as possible, as calculation cannot be left until the last minute. They appreciate that you may not have all the information required until you have worked out the details of the research, but a prior discussion may bring costs to light that you had not considered. A preliminary costing may help you make decisions concerning your budget and can be revised as the bid progresses.

Irrespective of to whom you are applying (e.g. Research Council, Charity, Government Body, EU Commission, Industry), **the fEC must be calculated**. The fEC process calculates the COST of the project, but this may ultimately be different from the PRICE as quoted on the final grant submission. For example, the Government have determined that the PRICE paid by Research Councils will be 80% of the fEC, requiring the University to meet the difference between COST and PRICE from their own or 'other' resources. Additionally, the University is at liberty to set a lower PRICE than the COST (fEC) if undertaking the project is deemed advantageous to University strategy. However, in the long term the institution must be seen to be managing its research costs in a sustainable manner. You are required to attain sign-off approval via Unified Research & Enterprise Costing & Pricing (RCP) prior to submission.

Under fEC, costs fall into the following categories:

- Directly Incurred
- Directly Allocated
- Indirect
- Exceptions

Directly Incurred (DI)

Directly incurred costs correspond approximately to items funded on many non-fEC grants. It relates to items where cost are wholly and exclusively attributable to the research project in question. Examples include additional staff hired for the project, travel, equipment, consumables and consultancy fees.

Directly Allocated (DA)

Directly allocated costs are costs which can be directly, but not exclusively, related to the project in question. An example is Investigator salary. Academics are paid by the University, but time spent on research can be directly attributed to a grant. Therefore the relevant proportion of the salary cost is allocated to the grant budget. This category may also be used for other staff who are shared between projects, but care must be taken as not all staff are eligible to be costed. For example, you cannot include part of a departmental administrator's salary to cover administrative assistance, as all University administrators' salaries are used in the calculation of Indirect costs, so this would represent double charging. This does not prevent the hiring of assistance (Directly Incurred).

The same is true of technical assistance, except in the Faculty of Science, Schools of Engineering & the Environment and Life Sciences, Pharmacy & Chemistry. In these lab-based subjects, technical assistance has been used to calculate an 'Infrastructure cost', which relates to costs of general assistance (e.g. washing glassware, preparing solutions, dealing with hazardous waste) benefitting all research projects, and a 'Pool staff cost' which can be applied when specific technical assistance is required.

This category also contains 'estates costs' which relate to the cost of maintenance of the facilities to be used (e.g. heating, lighting, furniture, cleaning).

Indirect

Indirect costs cover the costs of running the University that benefit and support a project, but cannot be directly attributed to the project. Examples are central administration, library services, mail delivery. TRAC assigns a percentage of each of the running costs of the University to different types of activity, producing a rate for research which is used to calculate the charges for each research project.

Exceptions

This category denotes items that do not fit into the above categories. It may be used differently (or not at all) by different funding bodies. It is often used for items that are funded at a different rate to the rest of the items applied for. An example is the Research Councils, which generally fund a PRICE that is 80% of the COST. However, certain items are fully funded (100%), such as studentships, Capital Equipment and overseas collaborators. These are therefore treated as exceptions.

Examples of the different cost categories

Directly Incurred Costs	Description
Dedicated Staff Salaries	Salaries of staff working solely on the project in question. **R&I will calculate staff costs over the duration of a grant - including employer's costs (National Insurance & Superannuation), also known as on-costs, and annual increments.** Usually researchers, but could include administrative or technical assistance. The PI will need to work with R&I to decide the level of expertise required. Grade 5 – Research Assistant ▪ Grade 6 – Research Associate ▪ Grade 7 – Researcher (new Postdoc temporary training grade) ▪ Grade 8 – Researcher (standard Postdoctoral) ▪ Grade 9 – Senior Researcher Information on employment legislation is available from Human Resources.
Replacement Teaching Costs	Some schemes (e.g. Leverhulme Trust) that do not fund on an fEC basis will pay Replacement Teaching costs during the applicant's period of Research Leave. Check with your RDM how these schemes operate.
Travel & Subsistence	Travel should be booked via the University Travel agent, STA Business Travel. HR StaffSpace pages give rates and details for expense incurred. R&I can advise on budgeting. Please note that you will need to provide proof of travel (e.g. Boarding card), not just of booking.
Conferences and Seminar costs	Where possible you should give full details of the name, location and dates of conferences as this shows you have planned your scheme of work and your dissemination strategy. Check if this is an 'eligible' item, as some grant bodies do not fund dissemination costs.
Dissemination Costs	E.g. exhibitions, printing of specialist material. Check if this is an 'eligible' item, as some grant bodies do not fund dissemination costs.
Equipment, inc. Computer Hardware & Software	Many schemes class small equipment as consumables – check the guidance. Research Councils classify large equipment as Exceptions, as it is funded at a different rate.

	You will need to make a case that any equipment is *essential* to the conduct of your research and will also need to consider if you will use it full time as only the proportion you do use may be eligible in some cases. Basic necessities should be provided, only specialist equipment should be requested from project funds e.g. including a PC in your costs without full justification why the University equipment is unsuitable is inadvisable. Check with your Faculty Technical Officer and/or the University's Purchasing Manager on specification, price and VAT – you must follow the Procurement procedures of both the [University]() and the Funding Body. These will apply at application for funds as well as when purchasing. [Research Council Procedures]() should be regarded as a model of good practice for applications. You may need to include a quotation, extra justification and/or a business case. Costs of computer software licences should be included. Consider also the installation and maintenance costs of any equipment and whether these costs will be borne by the funder.
Consumables	Small items needed to carry out the research can be included under most schemes, but must be justified. General running costs, such as normal usage of stationary and photocopying cannot be included within fEC-funded grants as this is included within the University's costs.
Advertising and Interview costs	Human Resources can advise on current rates in various Media. Under fEC the Research Councils will now contribute to these costs, but they may not be eligible from all funders.
Research Studentship Stipends and Fees	These costs are directly incurred, but may be found under Exceptions for some funding bodies e.g. Research Councils, where they are funded at a different rate. Where a Research Studentship is able to be included in a project application, consult R&I about the standard rates. There may be bench fees and/or a requirement to include training and conference budgets to consider.
Directly Allocated Costs	**Description**
Principal Investigator (PI) Salary	The amount of time that the PI will commit to the Project should be discussed with your RDM who will calculate the equivalent salary cost. If a Postgraduate Student is to be funded on the project then the time the PI spends supervising the student should be determined separately.
Co-Investigator Salary	As for PI salary. Co-Investigators at other Institutions should approach their own Research Office for salary calculations which should be passed on to your RDM, along with applicable overheads (estates, infrastructure, indirect etc.).
Technical and Support Staff Costs Any other KU staff e.g. pool technicians	The Project may require technical support on a part-time basis from existing support staff members. The availability of such support should be discussed with the appropriate Faculty staff. If the funding body supports fEC, such costs can only be included for pool technicians in the Schools of Engineering & the Environment and Life Sciences, Pharmacy & Chemistry. All other staff are covered by Indirect costs. If the funding body does not support fEC, these costs can be included, but are rarely eligible. Your RDM will calculate these staff costs on your behalf.
Estates Costs	These costs are compulsory, integral to fEC and calculated by R&I. Your RDM takes the information provided about research staff commitment (any new research staff plus PI and Co-Investigator time) and applies this to an institutional rate. The institutional rate is set based on data provided through the mandatory TRAC exercise.
Infrastructure Costs	Similar to Estates costs, R&I calculates these compulsory and integral costs from an institutional rate set based on the mandatory TRAC exercise.

	They represent general technical support and are only applicable to the Schools of Engineering & the Environment and Life Sciences, Pharmacy & Chemistry.
Use of Major Facilities, Charge out rates for shared equipment.	Faculties may offset the cost of major facilities by charging for their use. For fEC-funders, a limited number of small research Facilities (SRF) have set rates that can be applied. Charges for use of external facilities can be claimed. If the funding body does not support fEC, consult with the appropriate Faculty Staff on the cost of the facilities you wish to use.
Indirect Costs	Description
Indirect Costs	Similar to Estates costs, R&I calculates these compulsory and integral costs from an institutional rate set based on the mandatory TRAC exercise. They represent the costs of running the University that benefit and support a project, but cannot be directly attributed to the project.

Calculation of fEC

Research Development Managers (RDMs) will discuss the funding required with the PI and will calculate the salary costs, estates, pool staff, infrastructure, SRF use and Indirect costs. Please provide, by discussion, e-mail, or by using the optional form RS0:

- Funding body, start date, duration etc.
- Details of new staff posts to be created and existing contract staff to be transferred to new project
- Details of studentships to be created
- Details of Principal Investigator time commitment and Co-Investigators time commitments
- Details of any supporting staff roles
- Use of existing Facilities and/or equipment during the Project. This will need to be discussed with your faculty finance or administrative staff.
- Details of other costs such as consumables, travel, subsistence, new equipment, recruitment and advertising costs, publication costs etc.

If the Project is a collaborative bid (e.g. with other HEIs or companies), we will need information regarding their roles, budgets and commitments, but the collaborating organisation should prepare their own budgetary information.

All fEC budgets will be calculated by your RDM on Unified Research & Enterprise costing and pricing (RCP). These form the basis of sign-off workflow. Investigators and Faculty leaders can access through Unified.

Costing and Pricing Policy

University policy requires that cost for projects funded outside of an fEC basis, such as Contract Research, consultancy and non-research activities. Provision must be made for charging both direct and indirect costs including the recovery of overheads and such projects must normally be priced to be surplus-generating. Your Faculty Research Development Manager and Business Development Manager can provide further information and will help to support your bid.

Please note, that where the PRICE is below the COST, or where research grant applications fit within the guidelines in the COST vs PRICE section, additional approvals are required, and the Dean and Finance Business Partner will need to agree how these costs will be covered. Any deficits incurred on non-core income-generating activities will be charged to the relevant Faculty or Directorate.

Research Funding Guidance

These guidelines are also useful for grant applications for postgraduate studentships. However, enquires on individual studentships should be directed to the Graduate School (email:graduate-school@kingston.ac.uk). Your Research Development Manager can advise you at any stage.

Identify Source of Funding

Identify to whom you will apply for funding. We have an Institutional subscription to ResearchProfessional (http://www.researchprofessional.com). You can access from any University computer on campus or sign up for a personal account, which uses University authentication. They have a large database of funders and call information which you can search for suitable opportunities. You may like to consider the following questions:

- What do I want funding for – to start, develop or complete research?
- What is the "scale" of the research – a small self-contained project that requires minimal financial support or perhaps a full-scale interdisciplinary, cross-institutional and international scheme of several years' duration?
- What are the aims of my research? What am I trying to do – in both theoretical and practical terms?
- What is my subject area? Some funding schemes are very specific as to subject and may be missed if not considering all aspects of the research subject.

Contact your Research Development Manager (RDM) if you require assistance.

Once you have identified likely sources of funding, or if you are already aware of funding bodies with a track record of funding research in your area, you will need to the detailed guidance and the funding body's requirements for your selected scheme(s). You should be able to download guidance notes and applications forms or access the online submission system from the funder's website. It is important to read what a funding body has to say about itself; especially its funding philosophy. Please read their literature on what they will and will not fund; e.g. if replacement teaching costs are integral to your research methodology and thus budget (and your Head of School agrees), you would need to ensure that replacement teaching costs are eligible.

Produce Project Proposal

Work out the broad details of your project. Consider producing an outline or use the 'Plan on a Page' template. Cover the questions to be answered, the methodology, the timeframe and levels of staffing and resources likely to be required.

- What are the research questions or problems that I intend to address and what are the issues that will be explored in the course of the research?
- Why is it important that these questions or issues be explored?
    - What other research is being or has been conducted in this area?
    - What contribution will my project make to my area of study and to which audiences will the outcomes be of interest?
- What will be my research methodology?
- How am I going to address the questions I have set myself?
    - Is my chosen methodology the most rational and appropriate means by which to answer the research questions?
    - What will be the roles of other staff involved (staff, collaborators, researchers etc.)?
    - How realistic is my research timetable?
- How can the research costs be justified? Will the research be value for money?

An outline will give you a framework on which to base your application and to outline your resource requirements – remember to give your RDM plenty of notice of your costing requirements. Your outline will also serve as a basis for discussion of your project with your colleagues (highly recommended), who may be able to suggest improvements and also to take your proposed application to your Faculty. You must discuss the suitability of your proposed project with your Faculty before proceeding. The Faculty will wish to reassure themselves that time and space are available; that you are applying for sufficient funding to cover the costs of the research, and that your proposed project fits with the University Strategy. This will also allow you to be check that a University-authorised signatory will be available to approve your application when you propose to submit it. Check with your Faculty concerning any local requirements for approving funding applications.

Presenting The Best Case To The Funder

Every applicant has a different experience, and drawing from these will help to improve your application. Consult colleagues, and your RDM can advise on past applicants. Funding body administrators may give further guidance on their schemes and insights into their expectations of what constitutes a good application. It may also be useful to consult lists of projects funded in the past – see funders' websites, or major funders are covered by Research Insight on Research Professional.

Familiarise yourself with the application procedure. For example, some request outline applications in the first instance, whereas other schemes, even from the same funder, will have a one-stage process. Be sure to check their deadlines and their administrative requirements on layout, budgets, referees, number of application copies etc. Ensure that you provide the information requested.

Remember that competition for funding is very fierce and increasing, so your application will need to stand out if it is to receive support. All funding bodies are likely to take account of the following;

- If the project falls within their terms of reference, meets their rules, and is presented in the required format.
- Have the objectives of the research have been clearly defined? Ensure any requested 'short description' is a succinct and positive piece understandable to the layman.
- Are you up-to-date with current research in the field? How your work will complement the state of the art or extend the boundaries?
- Whether a convincing case for the originality and timeliness of the project has been presented.
- Is the proposal realistic in terms of experience and resources (particularly time)? Include sufficient detail in your plan of investigation to demonstrate staff and resources will be needed.
- Whether the project represents 'value for money'. Note value (not cost) is considered; reducing costs may count against you when your proposal is assessed for realistic planning.
- Is methodology appropriate? You will need to demonstrate that you have thought the proposal through and describe methodology appropriate for the research questions and how the project will succeed in answering the questions. In some areas it is useful to show evidence from pilot studies to support your application.
- Have you demonstrated appropriate consideration to ethical, data protection and health and safety considerations?
- Whether you have a good track record or clear potential in research usually through peer review. Highlight completion of research projects; particularly stressing completion on-time.
- Is project is relevant? Government Departments and the Research Councils in particular, are required to take account of 'user communities' and the impact of research, whether e.g. economic, policy, societal or cultural. Consider the knock on benefits (e.g. The outcomes of this project will have direct relevance to surgeons, improving the quality and speed of operations and will therefore also benefit patients. Ultimately it will have a knock-on effect on lengths of waiting lists, availability of NHS resources, and on stress in patients, carers and their families, thus proving beneficial to the entire community)Ensure claimed impacts are realistic and not speculative. Include expected timeframes and your plans for how to realise them and capture evidence. If applicable, show you have given due consideration to the issue of Intellectual Property Rights. Check which of these costs are eligible for funding.
- Be sure to have a dissemination strategy and Consider whether collaboration with colleagues in other universities or a multidisciplinary approach will enhance your prospects.

Peer Review

We have an internal Peer Review College. We strongly recommend pre-submission peer review even where not mandatory. Invite corrections, amendments, hints on presentation and comments on the strength and viability of the application. Colleagues' suggestions that will strengthen your bid.

Your funder will probably ask you to suggest referees to peer-review your application. Some or all of these will be used. Choose your referees with care as an application with a poor review is unlikely to be funded. Referees should be external to Kingston University and should not be current collaborators. They should be experts in the field who can comment intelligently on your work. However, one that is familiar with your work may be more able to give a valid opinion than a big name in the field whose opinion is highly respected. Unfamiliarity can lead to refusal to referee, or misunderstanding of research intent, thus lower scores, especially where time may be limited. If your project is interdisciplinary your choice of referees should reflect this.

Finally, don't be discouraged if you are unsuccessful. Success rates vary across Funding Bodies but around 20% success is the norm. This could mean four or five applications to achieve one award. See further information on unsuccessful applications here.

Tips from a Research Council

These are some suggestions from the BBSRC – they are good advice for bids to most funders.

How not to get a grant

- × Don't bother following the guidelines, they're for other people, your idea is so brilliant it must be funded...
- × *Use an unusual typeface in the smallest font possible to maximise the number of words you can use. (Referees will enjoy the challenge of reading your case for support).*
- × fEC means that you can apply for anything you want, whether or not you need it. Put the costs in whatever category looks right.
- × Don't justify the costs of your research, everyone will recognise that you need it all, even the technician who isn't mentioned anywhere in the case for support.
- × Use jargon wherever possible. Everyone who sees your application will be an expert in the field and will know what you mean.
- × Don't bother with experimental details, a vague overview of what you plan to do will suffice.
- × If the referees dare to criticise your application, complain about the choice of referees. Do not bother to react to their trivial suggestions.
- × Don't write the application until the day before the closing date. Your HoD and administrator will definitely be there to approve it and the JeS server never crashes. If you miss the closing date, it will be the Research Council's fault.
- × Be rude to Research Council staff whenever possible, they'll respect you for it and will be more helpful in the future!
- × Don't speak to anyone else about your application, no other scientist in your department has ever had a grant and besides what do they know about what you are doing...
- × Proof reading is pointless this is a science application, you are not taking an English exam- sloppy applications will impress the committee

What makes a successful grant application?

- ✓ Is it high quality research?
- ✓ Is it really high quality research?
- ✓ Are you absolutely sure it is high quality research?
- ✓ Is the case for support clearly written and not overloaded with extraneous detail?
- ✓ Have you had someone read it who is reasonably expert in the subject?
- ✓ Can a non-specialist understand why the work is important?
- ✓ Have you had someone read it who doesn't know the area in detail?