

LIV-SRF Voucher Scheme

Guidelines for Applications

The following guidelines are intended to assist in preparing an application for the LIV-SRF Voucher Scheme. We strongly advise that you read and fully understand the guidelines before submitting an application. If you require further guidance or clarification, please contact the LIV-SRF Office (livsrf@liverpool.ac.uk). Further contact details are available on the [LIV-SRF website](#).

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Guidelines for applicants


Purpose The scheme is designed to fund small pump-priming projects that have the potential to develop new areas of research by offsetting the costs of accessing our Shared Research Facilities (SRFs).

Eligibility The voucher scheme is open to the following researchers within the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences and Faculty of Science and Engineering:

- **Academic Staff**
- **Research Fellows**
- **Post-Doctoral Research Associates (PDRAs)**
 - Senior PDRAs able to demonstrate a clear line of sight to future funding are eligible to apply as a main applicant with support from their HoD and with their PI / Supervisor as a co-applicant.
 - Junior PDRAs can apply as a co-applicant with their PI / Supervisor as the main applicant.
- **PGR students**
 - Students in their third or fourth year of study can apply to the scheme as a co-applicant with their PI / Supervisor as main applicant.
 - Students in their first and second year of study are not eligible to apply as either a co-applicant or main applicant.

To promote early career and less-established researchers, the career stage of applicants will be considered during the assessment process. Applications from more junior staff will enjoy a higher chance of success and such applicants are also potentially able to access additional support. There are also restrictions around successful applicants applying to subsequent rounds of the scheme (see the section 'Consecutive Awards' below).

Voucher Value Vouchers are available for a minimum value of £500 to a maximum of £15,000. This includes both the LIV-SRF and applicant match funding contributions (see below). Voucher awards are made solely towards the cost of access to an SRF, sample preparation costs are borne completely by the applicant.

Match Funds	All applications should contain an element of match funding (see the section 'Additional ECR Support – Match Funds' for details around possible exceptions). This can be internal funding (e.g. from your department) or external (e.g. from a collaborating university or commercial partner). Whilst each application will be considered on an individual basis, as a guide we would hope for a 50% contribution in match funds. Match funds are only acceptable as payments towards access fees for an SRF. Services in kind, such as sample preparation costs, are not acceptable as match funds.
Additional ECR Support – Match Funds	Early Career Researchers can apply to have the requirement for a match funding contribution suspended, however 100% funding will only be supported under exceptional circumstances. Applicants who wish to apply for this will need to justify why it's necessary and how the award will support their career development.
Participating Facilities	Voucher applications are limited to SRFs currently supported by LIV-SRF in Health and Life Sciences. We are not able to accept voucher applications to use facilities that are not part of LIV-SRF. You can find all the participating facilities and their key contacts in Appendix 1. Further information on these facilities is also available at the LIV-SRF website .
Before you apply	<p>You must talk to the academic lead (or designated deputy) of the SRF you wish to use before you submit an application. They will give invaluable advice about the feasibility of your project, the best experimental approach and, crucially, how much it is likely to cost. This will help you write the best application possible, with the greatest chance of being funded. Sign off by the SRF representative is also a mandatory part of the application.</p> <p><u>Sign off by the relevant SRF representative(s) and Head of Department will be completed following application submission. You must consult with the SRF(s) before application submission, as applications cannot be returned for amendments after 27th November 2024.</u></p> <p>For PGR Students and Postdoctoral Researchers applying as a co-applicant, your PI / Supervisor must be listed as the main applicant.</p> <p>For Postdoctoral Researchers applying as a main applicant, we would strongly recommend that you talk to your PI / Supervisor ahead of starting an application to ensure that they are supportive. PI / Supervisor sign-off is also a mandatory part of the application.</p>
Application Form	<p>The electronic application form can be accessed from the LIV-SRF website. To access the form, you will need to use your MWS login details when prompted. Select the 'Applications' tab at the top of the screen followed by </p> <p>All mandatory fields marked with an asterisk must be completed before a form can be saved and submitted for authorisation successfully. We encourage you to contact the LIV-SRF team (livsrfliverpool.ac.uk) if you experience any complications. Please note if you are off-site you will need to connect to the VPN before you attempt to login.</p> <p>The form has six sections for completion: <u>Sections A, B, C and D</u> seek to capture details of the proposed project and should be completed by you with input from the SRF academic lead/representative. Once this section is complete you will need to click to submit the form, which will then be made available for the SRF(s) in the system to add their comments and sign off. Please note</p>

that SRFs are able to view applications ahead of the submission deadline, as long as the SRF(s) in question have been selected on the application and the form saved; this is to facilitate consultation with SRFs ahead of the deadline.

If you wish to share your application for peer review, you can save the application form and share the web link with your colleague(s). They will have access to edit your form. This step must take place before you submit your application form.

Section E is an assessment of the project feasibility and timescale by the SRF(s) academic lead/representative. As described above, this section will be made available, and a notification sent to the SRFs, once sections A-D have been completed and the application submitted.

In the case of Postdoctoral applicants applying as a main applicant, you will be prompted to share the application link with your PI / Supervisor for confirmation that they are supportive of the application. Please ensure you provide their details in section F, and send them the link, this link will not automatically be shared. This signoff must be completed ahead of the 27th November 2024 deadline.

Following the submission deadline, and SRF sign off, the applicant's Head of Department (HoD) will then be required to carry out an assessment of the strategic impact of the project in section F. Your HoD should receive an email notification prompting them to complete this action. We encourage you to check the status of your application on the dashboard and if your application has not been signed off by the HoD to make contact with them to do so.

Once HoD authorisation is completed, the final form will be submitted directly to LIV-SRF.

N.B. the form will not be returned to the applicant after submission unless the facility / facilities return the form for amendments before the deadline on 27th November. All responsibility for ensuring the application is submitted prior to the closing date is with the applicant. The applicant is also responsible for ensuring their application has been signed off by their HoD, LIV-SRF will not make enquiries of HoDs regarding the progress of an application. If you are unsure whether your application has been authorised, we encourage you to make contact with your HoD directly to ensure they have signed off your application ahead of the deadline.

Multi-Disciplinary Projects

Applications for multi-disciplinary projects, which require access to more than one SRF, can be submitted using a single application form. Applicants must consult with all SRFs they wish to include on their application. In such instances, the applicant should indicate the relevant SRFs in section B. All relevant SRFs will receive notifications to complete individual feasibility assessments (section E) in the application. Financial details for multi-disciplinary projects (section C) should clearly indicate the costs associated with the use of each SRF.

Assessment

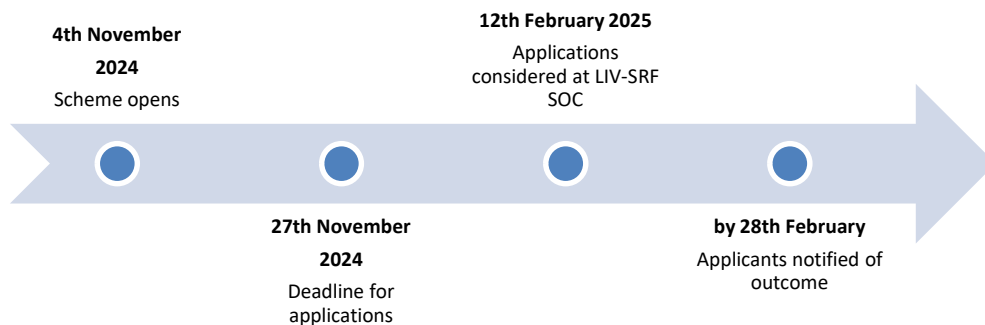
There will be 2 rounds of the voucher scheme each year and the applications submitted in a particular round will be assessed by the LIV-SRF Strategic Oversight Committee (SOC) at their next meeting following the closure date. The group will score the applications, in the context of available funding, against the following criteria:

- Scientific question / Quality of study
- Technical feasibility
- Potential impact
- Training / capacity building / career potential

The University status of the applicant will be considered when assessing applications. In line with the aims of the scheme, this will confer an advantage to more junior applicants.

Unsuccessful applications will only be considered for submission to a future round of the scheme if a significant change has been indicated. Please see the “Resubmissions” section.

Notification of Application Outcome	The outcome of voucher applications will be communicated by email to all applicants as soon as possible following the LIV-SRF SOC meeting for that round. Following the successful applicant’s transfer of match funds to LIV-SRF, a written instruction will simultaneously be mailed to the applicant and the academic lead of the SRF to proceed with the project. Upon receipt of an instruction to proceed, the applicant is free to engage directly with the academic lead of the SRF to undertake the agreed work. The LIV-SRF match funds will be transferred to the SRF following the satisfactory conclusion of the project.
Time Limit	All work undertaken as part of a voucher award should be completed within 12 months of the date of the award notification. All samples should be in place prior to the application or, in exceptional circumstances, be gathered during the course of the work. In this case, it should be clearly recorded on the application form that samples are not currently available. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that match funds are transferred to LIV-SRF in a timely manner; any delay in doing so will not be considered a suitable reason for extending the duration of the award. When approaching the 12-month limit, LIV-SRF will contact the applicant and SRF to understand the status of the project. In limited circumstances, an extension to the work can be granted but, if this is required, a request should be made to livsrf@liverpool.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity. Please note that, in the event of the work associated with a voucher award being incomplete or unable to deliver its objectives beyond this 12-month time limit, LIV-SRF will not be in a position to reimburse any participant match funds unless an extension has been requested and mitigating circumstances agreed.
Final Report	Awards are granted on the condition that the recipient will undertake to write a short report (250 words) detailing the outcome of the work and how it has since progressed. This will be requested by LIV-SRF following completion of the project.
Consecutive Awards	Successful applicants to the voucher scheme will not be eligible to apply for a subsequent award in the following round.
Resubmissions	Unsuccessful applications can only be resubmitted if there is a significant change to the application. The change(s) must be clearly highlighted within the application form. Any resubmitted application where a significant change is not identified will be automatically withdrawn.
Timetable	See figure below.



Guidelines for Shared Research Facility (SRF) Leads and Managers

SRF consultation and sign-off deadline

Consultation and sign off by SRF academic leads (or designated deputy) is a mandatory part of the application process. Applicants have been encouraged throughout this document to consult with SRFs ahead of the application deadline on 27th November. Applications cannot be returned to applicants for amendments after this date.

Application form – Completion of Section E

Section E of the application form requires sign off from the academic lead (or designated deputy) of the SRF on the project feasibility and timescale. SRF comments greatly assist the scoring panel when applications are assessed, so we strongly encourage you to provide comments about the technical feasibility of the project. This can include (but is not limited to) sample size; likelihood; novelty and timescale.

Guidelines for PI / Supervisor

Application form PGR / PDRA co-application PGR students who are in their third or fourth year of study can apply to the scheme as a co-applicant with their PI / Supervisor as a main applicant. Please complete the application form in consultation with the researcher and ensure they are named as a co-applicant in section A

Junior Post-Doctoral Research Associates (PDRAs) can apply to the scheme as a co-applicant with their PI / Supervisor as a main applicant. Please complete the application form in consultation with the researcher and ensure they are named as a co-applicant in section A.

Senior PDRAs who are able to demonstrate a clear line of sight to future funding are eligible to apply as a main applicant. However, they are required to discuss the project with their PI / Supervisor and ensure that they have their full support.

Completion of Section F Section F of the application form requires sign off by the PI / Supervisor to demonstrate that the project has been discussed and is supported.

Guidelines for Heads of Department

Application form Section F of the application form requires sign off and a statement from the Head of Department to assess the strategic impact of the project.

Completion of Section F Applications should not be supported if sign off in section E is not complete.

Your comments are essential in assisting the scoring panel with their assessment of applications so please provide:

- Your understanding of the applicant's current career stage
- Your understanding of the applicant's career plans including any current applications in progress / development
- Information about how the voucher will help the individual's development
- How the application aligns with departmental objectives
- Why the work cannot be funded by the department.

Please note that it may impact the success of the application if this HoD context is not provided.

Once HoD sign-off is complete, the form will then be **submitted directly to LIV-SRF**. Upon receipt of a fully completed application form, an email will be sent to the applicant and the HoD acknowledging receipt.

Appendix 1

Bio-imaging

Biomedical Electron Microscopy Unit

Academic Lead: Prof Ian Prior iprior@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 5332
Facility Manager: Alison Beckett alib@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 494 5461

Centre for Cell Imaging

Academic Lead: Dr Tobias Zech tzech@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4984
Facility Manager: Dr Marco Marcello marcomar@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 5154

Centre for Preclinical Imaging

Academic Lead: Prof Harish Poptani harishp@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 5444
Facility Manager: Dr Mohesh Moothanchery Mohesh.Moothanchery@liverpool.ac.uk;

Cell Sorting and Isolation Facility

Academic Lead: Prof Joe Slupsky jslupsky@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 5552

Histology Facility

Facility Manager: Ms Gemma Charlesworth gemmach@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 9008

Liverpool Magnetic Resonance Imaging Centre (LiMRIC)

Academic Lead: Prof Graham Kemp gkemp@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 9493

Bio-resources

Biomedical Services Unit

Facility Manager: Mrs Sarah Roper sarah@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 9608

Chick Embryo Facility

Academic Lead: Prof Judy Coulson jcoulson@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 5850
Facility Manager: Dr Sarah Barnett saraht40@liverpool.ac.uk;

Tick Cell Biobank

Academic Lead: Dr Ben Makepeace blm1@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 1586
Facility Manager: Lesley Bell-Sakyi lsakyi@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 0226

Multi-omics

Centre for Genomic Research (CGR)

Academic Lead: Prof Steve Paterson stevep11@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4521
Prof Alistair Darby acdarby@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4557
Facility Manager: Dr Kathryn Jackson kjackson@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 8303

GeneMill

Academic Lead: Prof Douglas Kell dbk@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 7772
Facility Manager: Dr J Enrique Salcedo-Sora Salcedo-Sora@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4475

Centre for Metabolomics Research

Co-Directors: Prof Roy Goodacre roy.goodacre@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4498
Prof Warwick Dunn warwick.dunn@liverpool.ac.uk

Facility Manager: Dr Nigel Gotts nigel.gotts@liverpool.ac.uk

High-Field NMR Facility

Facility Manager: Dr Marie Phelan mphelan@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4398

Centre for Proteome Research

Academic Lead: Prof Claire Evers cevers@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4424

Facility Manager: Dr Philip Brownridge philipjb@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 5344

CDSS Bioanalytical Facility

Facility Manager: Dr Roz Jenkins rjenkins@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 794 8214

Computational Biology Facility

Academic Lead: Prof Andy Jones ionesar@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 4514

Facility Manager: Dr Eva Caamano-Gutierrez caamano@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 5473

Mr John Heap johnheap@liverpool.ac.uk; 0151 795 5473

Spatial Profiling Lab

Facility Manager: Dr. Frances Greaney-Davies nanostring@liverpool.ac.uk