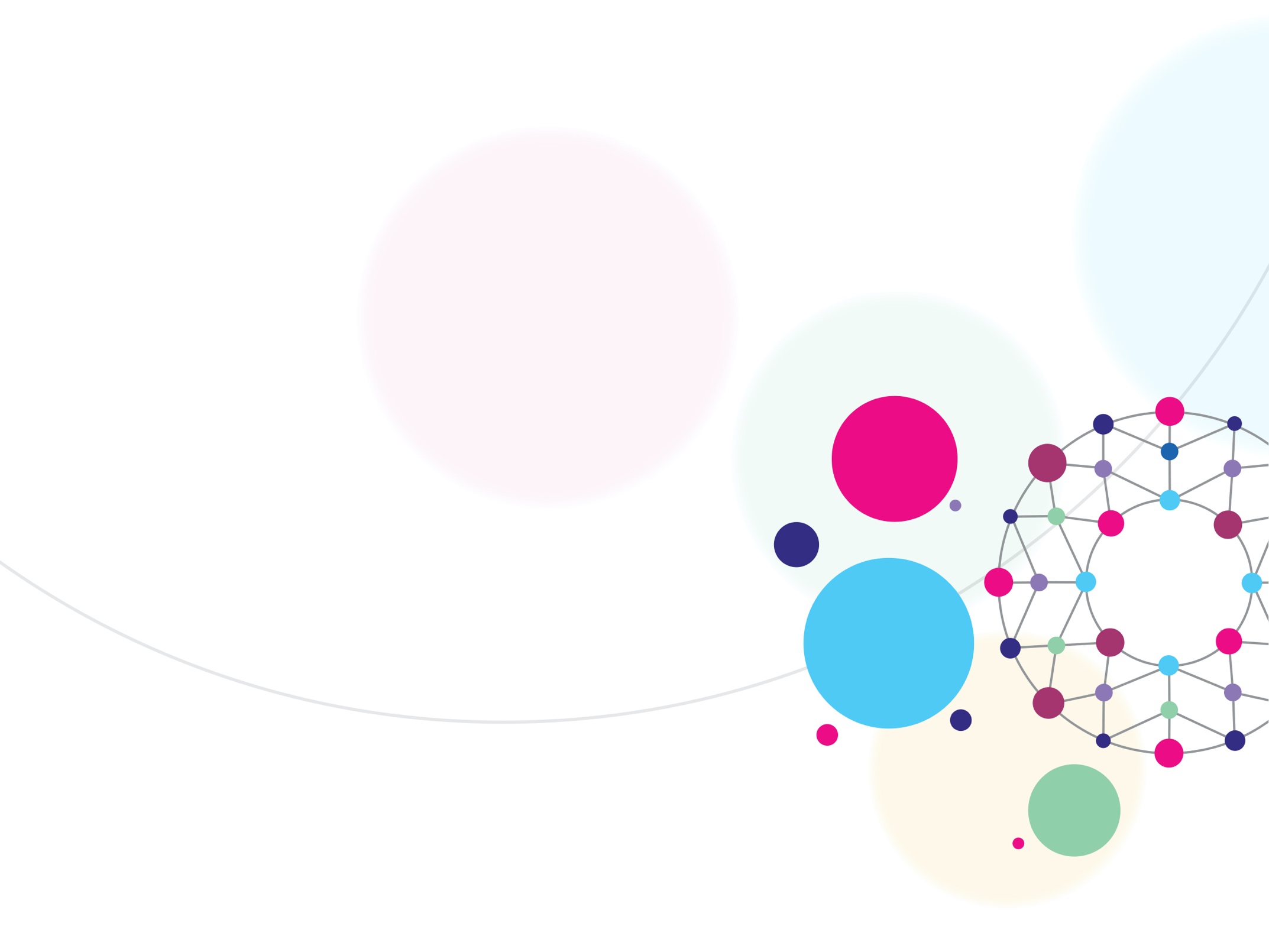
## 



## Placement Awards

**February 2022**

# **GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

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**GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

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# **About BioAirNet**

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) awarded £3 million to support six research networks that will investigate solutions to air pollution. Poor air quality is a major environmental risk to public health in the UK. The new multidisciplinary networks will research ways to tackle major air quality challenges compounded by changing emissions sources and exposure patterns across the indoor and outdoor interface. Cranfield University is leading “Indoor/Outdoor Bioaerosols Interface and Relationships Network (BioAirNet)” in partnership with the Universities of Oxford, Plymouth, Essex, and De Montfort, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), the Environment Agency (EA) and (Defence Science and Technology Laboratory) DSTL.

BioAirNet aims to take a transdisciplinary approach to understand the complexity and connectivity among people, biological particulate matter (BioPM) exposure and health impacts across the indoor/outdoor continuum to inform interventions development, prioritisation, and assessment of environmental and health interventions.

BioAirNet operates via four interdisciplinary and interconnected themes:

1. BioPM sources and dynamics at the indoor/outdoor environments, covering the range of BioPM sources and identifying research needs
2. BioPM sampling and characterisation, covering microbial systems complexity, sampling, and characterisation needs
3. Human health, behaviour, and wellbeing, covering human exposure to BioPM and risk to public health and prevention
4. Policy and public engagement, covering communication of evidence for healthy environments.

We are employing a range of activities and dissemination mechanisms. These include outreach (social media, university press office, website), annual stakeholders network events, theme group meetings producing guidance, roadmaps and policy documents, joint events with other Air Networks, sandpit workshops, exchanges, and short-term industrial placement for Early Career Researchers (ECRs), cross-disciplinary skills training and annual ECR events. To learn more about BioAirNet, ongoing activities and how to get in touch with us, please visit [www.bioairnet.co.uk](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com_-3Furl-3Dhttps-253A-252F-252Fbioairnet.co.uk-252F-26data-3D04-257C01-257Cstevensonv-2540cardiff.ac.uk-257C1f94a05d7907461aaf2608d8920c9892-257Cbdb74b3095684856bdbf06759778fcbc-257C1-257C0-257C637419930103496078-257CUnknown-257CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0-253D-257C1000-26sdata-3DwpfhSl7IZDOW9YO8lVkk-252FaCqEfuZOfgs8Oiqatb4GEU-253D-26reserved-3D0&d=DwMFAg&c=KveGjKEXiH4bMFgGs-LRbCbewnnyGW6-rJ0JK7ViA_E&r=EKdRgVR8HaeY7KqobojjruvVBsmXZ_h02Bp5-CK1ngA&m=NhwX8MgY6ySjW6uoDme_m5fxP4VhRnoEpypAuVodSlI&s=fZNygb6U-N46IjpJ0nKExLWCG5vTC4TNW9FQBuCSH_Y&e=).

# **Placement Awards overview**

Placement Awards are available to help fund UK-based BioAirNet members (membership is free and can be joined via <https://bioairnet.co.uk/join-our-network/> ) to facilitate the transfer and exchange of research and knowledge. This could be for training purposes or for the accumulation of new skills. They may be used to fund a visit to an industry partner or research laboratory for training purposes but may not be used for training *within* an organisation. They are not to be used for conference attendance.

They are available to all UK-based members, whether ECR or mid-career, and will be assessed upon the potential value of the placement to the applicant, the applicant’s organisation, and the wider UK BioAirNet community.

## Aims and Objectives of the Placements

These Placements are intended to further the aims and objectives of the BioAirNet by:

* Encouraging and fostering collaboration between members for knowledge exchange and potential future collaboration.
* Enabling members to access training opportunities or to attend relevant training events that they would otherwise be unlikely to access.

## Eligibility

Only UK-based members of the BioAirNet may apply for placements. Membership is free (see: <https://bioairnet.co.uk/join-our-network/>). If you have questions regarding your eligibility, please contact us at [contact@bioairnet.co.uk](mailto:contact@bioairnet.co.uk)

## Funds available

Funds are available for two schemes.

* **Research Placement Awards – UK/overseas** are aimed at UK-based BioAirNet researchers who wish to spend time with an UK or overseas partner organisation for the accumulation of new skills or training.
* **Industry Placement Awards – UK only** are aimed at UK-based BioAirNet **industry members** who wish to spend time with a UK-based academic or industrial partner organisation or for the accumulation of new skills or training. Whilst these are aimed at UK only placements, should you have a strong argument for attending an overseas placement, please do contact us.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Available Placements** | **Total available  (annual limit\*)** | **Max. value per award (incl. VAT) at 100% FEC** |
| Industry Placement – UK | 3 (1) | £400 |
| Research Placement – UK | 3 (1) | £400 |
| Research Placement – overseas | 6 (2) | £1100 |

\*Placements will be allocated over the 3-year lifetime of the Network at the discretion of the BioAirNet Executive Group.

All Placements must be requested and approved in advance of the planned activities taking place. We ask that you roughly estimate the anticipated spend. We will only reimburse expenditure claims supported with full receipts. Each Placement has a maximum spending limit (above). We accept no responsibility for spending that exceeds that limit.

# **Application Process**

## How to apply

Application is through a simple application form available from <https://bioairnet.co.uk/funding/> or by emailing [contact@bioairnet.co.uk](mailto:contact@bioairnet.co.uk) . Applications are accepted at any time and should receive a response within 4-6 weeks from that point. Applications should be sent to [contact@bioairnet.co.uk](mailto:contact@bioairnet.co.uk) as a Word or PDF email attachment and will be acknowledged by email upon receipt with a reference number. Should an acknowledgement not be received in good time, please contact the Network Manager directly ([z.a.nasar@cranfield.ac.uk](mailto:z.a.nasar@cranfield.ac.uk)) to ensure your application is processed.

## Process for Placement review

Application

Application rejected and applicant informed: Out of scope/annual Bursary allocation already reached

Network Manager

Application rejected and applicant informed: Insufficient justification of resources

Assessment by Executive Group/Management Board Members

Application successful and applicant informed

Submissions will first be reviewed by the Network Manager to ensure they are consistent with the aims and objectives of the Network. Should sufficient funds remain available, they will then be passed to a member of the Executive Group or Management Board for assessment and approval. Applicants who have participated in BioAirNet activities (e.g. attended an event) will be viewed favourably.

Applications may then be funded up to the annual limit, rejected or further clarification sought from the applicant to assist the decision. Decisions are entirely at the discretion of the Executive Group for final approval. We aim to assess proposals and reply within 4-6 weeks of submission.

# **Application form guidance**

This section explains the structure of the application form and offers guidance on the information to include in each section. The purpose of the application form is to obtain enough information to enable us to understand how well your submission aligns with the Network objectives. It is important that you address and respond to each section clearly. To help you, the guidance below provides an explanation of what is required for each field.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Placement Awards Application Form** | | |
| **Required Fields** | **Guidance** | **Maximum word limits/ further clarification** |
| **Application details** | | |
| Purpose of Placement | Please state the purpose of your application. | Word limit - 25 |
| Type of placement | Put an ‘x’ to the right of Research Placement – UK/Overseas if you are a UK BioAirNet *academic member* requesting a UK/Overseas placement. If you are a UK BioAirNet *industrial member* applying for a UK placement, put an ‘x’ to the right of ‘Industry Placement – UK’ | If you are a UK BioAirNet industrial member wishing to carry out an overseas placement (within the UK budget limitations), please contact us at [contact@bioairnet.co.uk](mailto:contact@bioairnet.co.uk) |
| **Applicant’s contact details** | | |
| Applicant’s Name | Enter your full name. This will be the Award holder in the event of a successful application. | No word limits |
| Institution | Please give the name of Institution where you are employed | No word limit |
| Phone Number | Please give a contact number where we can reach you | No word limit |
| Email | Please give your email address. An institutional (not personal) email address is preferred. | No word limit |
| Applicant’s Career to date | Please give a brief overview of your career, with positions held, institution and dates.  Also, provide details of any prior activities with the Network. Are you a recipient of BioAirNet -funded research?  Have you presented or attended the BioAirNet events?  Which of our events have you participated in? | Word limit – 200  This assists us to verify your ECR status and BioPM science credentials and can be a simple table or list. You may attach a CV to the application if you wish. |
| Please confirm that you are a member of the BioAirNet and eligible for funding (Y/N) | See Eligibility | Yes/No – delete as applicable |
| **Destination details** | | |
| Name of contact | Enter the name of the primary contact at the Placement destination. | No word limit.  We may contact them to confirm your placement prior to payment. |
| Institution | Please give the name of the Placement destination | No word limit |
| Address | Please give the address of the Placement destination | No word limit |
| Phone Number | Please give a contact number for the Placement destination | No word limit |
| Email | Please give the email address for the Placement destination | No word limit |
| **Placement Details** | | |
| Please provide a brief description of the background to the placement request. | Applicants should use this opportunity to make a case as to why they should be awarded the funding, as we anticipate competition for the awards.  State the anticipated start date and duration. Explain:  - the purpose of the funded activity to be carried out  - why this activity would not take place without BioAirNet support  - how the placement aligns within the BioAirNet aims and objectives. | Word limit - 400 |
| Please list the key outcomes that will arise from this funding | Applicants should explain how this award furthers the objectives of BioAirNet – in particular the intention to leverage further funding/collaboration opportunities in the sector or the transfer of valuable skills to strengthen and consolidate future capability to respond to challenges within the area of BioPM science and technology. | Word limit - 300 |
| **Financial Details** | | |
| Please provide an estimate of the breakdown of funding costs. For currency conversions, use <https://www1.oanda.com/currency/converter/>.Standard Cranfield university travel claim rules apply. | | |
| Accommodation | Please estimate the sum for your accommodation. Only reasonable costs for the destination will be reimbursed e.g., up to 3\* accommodation. | In pounds sterling (incl. tax, if applicable) |
| Travel | Please estimate the costs of all air/rail/taxi/bus travel. Only reasonable costs will be reimbursed. The cheapest form of available transport should always be used. Where a valid public transport option exists, a claim for car/ taxis (or other more expensive options) will not be accepted as valid. | In pounds sterling (incl. tax, if applicable) |
| Subsistence/Other (please specify) | Please estimate subsistence costs – if required. Only reasonable costs will be reimbursed. No claims will be accepted for alcohol purchase. Visa costs can be reimbursed if total award amount is not exceeded. | In pounds sterling (incl. tax, if applicable) |
| Total (£) contribution requested from BioAirNet | This should not exceed the maximum permitted sum set out in the “Placement Awards ” section. | In pounds sterling (incl. tax, if applicable) |
| **Signature** | | |
| Applicant agrees to the following: *I confirm that I wish to apply for an BioAirNet Placement Award, that I am BioAirNet member and that the information contained in the application is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that BioAirNet accepts no responsibility for any legalities/insurance pertaining to the placement activity. I agree to provide a report and photograph(s) upon completion.* | | Please sign, date, and print your name. A scanned signature is acceptable. |

# **If the Award is successful**

If successful, the applicant will be informed via email and provided with a reference number which should be used on all further correspondence. This email will confirm the maximum amount of funds that can be claimed under the placement award for the purposes stated in the application. Any further stipulations specific to the offer will also be outlined. An expenses form and bank details form will be attached. Recipients are responsible for completing their own expense claims.

Once the placement has been completed, recipients will be required to submit a short report on their activities which will be made available on our website and may be published more widely elsewhere. The report should, where possible/appropriate, include copyright free images and photographs, which should also be provided to us as separate attachments in high-resolution. If you promote your placement through social media or other publicity routes, BioAirNet would be grateful for acknowledgement of our support. We are @BioAirNet1 on Twitter.

Funds will be paid in arrears, if supported by original receipts and the summary report. It is the responsibility of the applicant to post the original receipts/travel tickets to us, along with the expenses claim form and the bank details form. We cannot process your expenses claim without this information. Please ensure that you have retained copies both for your own records and in case of loss of the original receipts. Note that in case of air travel, a valid boarding pass for the return journey is required as proof of travel. No equipment purchase of any kind is permitted. If in doubt, contact the Network Managers for advice prior to any large purchase.

Applicants must ensure that they hold the appropriate visa which has been applied for in good time. BioAirNet will not be held responsible for any costs incurred should a visa not arrive on time, rendering the applicant unable to attend.

Should the conditions of payment of the Award present any difficulties that might hinder uptake of the award, please contact the Network Manager at [contact@bioairnet.co.uk](mailto:contact@bioairnet.co.uk) to discuss alternative payment arrangements. Note that the award is non-transferable.

# **Data Protection Regulations**

The PI of the BioAirNet grant has the responsibility for keeping data relating to the grant secure and safe. Copies of the applications will be made available to the NERC, who will use this information for research related activities, including but not limited to, transfer of funds, statistical analysis in relation to evaluation of the SPF clean air programme activities, study of trends and policy and strategy studies. Copies will also be made available to members of the Executive Group and Management Board for the purpose of assessment and evaluation such as processing the proposal, the award of any consequential grant and for the payment, maintenance, and review of the grant.

We are expecting applicants to conform to the NERC guidelines for data sharing: <https://nerc.ukri.org/research/sites/environmental-data-service-eds/policy/>. To meet the Research Councils’ obligations for public accountability and the dissemination of information, details of funded awards may also be made available on the Research Councils’ websites and other publicly available databases, and in reports, documents, and mailing lists.

# **Contact Details**

For any queries, please email the Network Manager, Dr Zaheer Nasar at [contact@bioairnet.co.uk](mailto:contact@bioairnet.co.uk).

# **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

***I want to learn a skill at another university. Can I use a Placement?***

Yes. Explain why this skill is unavailable at your own institution and why it will help develop UK BioPM science and your own research. This could be because you want to develop a new area of research and need specialist training. You will need to arrange your own formal agreement\* with the host.

***\*What do you mean by “formal agreement”?***

It may be the case that no such agreement is necessary for a brief visit. However, you may have in mind a personal placement at a workplace with associated health and safety issues. Most universities and companies have procedures in place, as standard, to cover visitors. It is your responsibility to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to cover insurance and legal liabilities, as necessary. This may entail registering through a pre-existing visitor system or, in rare cases, arranging your own agreement. If insurance and legal liabilities need to be covered by a separate agreement between the parties involved, this can be arranged through the support services of your own institution (whose experience of staff exchanges, secondments and placements should be extensive). We recommend that you contact them to arrange this well in advance. BioAirNet accepts no responsibility for any legal/insurance costs pertaining to the Placement activity.

***I want to learn a new skill from industry. Can I use a Placement?***

Yes. See above. We strongly encourage links between industry and academia.

***I am an industry member and I want to learn a new skill from academia. Can I apply for a Placement?***

Yes, provided the costs applied for are reasonable and well-justified. See above. We strongly encourage links between industry and academia. Be aware that this is not a substitute for activities which could otherwise be covered by a formal training course elsewhere. You should make the case for your specific need and state why a placement in academia is the most appropriate way to develop your knowledge.

***I need to spend some time with a partner organisation to develop a big, joint funding proposal. I won’t be learning a skill. Can I apply?***

No. Placements are intended solely for knowledge transfer.

***I want to combine a conference trip abroad with a skills workshop run by the event. Does this count as a Placement?***

We would examine this very carefully to determine the nature of the skill transfer. If a request is made for a substantial contribution from BioAirNet for a trip that has a minimal amount of skill transfer potential, it may be declined. Only if there was a substantial and unique opportunity to gain new skills of value to UK BioPM research would this be considered. Certainly, no contribution to conference expenses would be made. We have a separate funding stream for Early Career Researchers to attend conferences.

***I already have separate funding to attend a conference abroad but wish to extend my stay by a few weeks to learn a skill whilst there. Can you “top up” to cover my extra accommodation and expenses?***

This may be possible depending on the circumstances. Please put full details of your separate funding arrangement on your application. We must ensure that costs are kept separate. We would need to confirm the details and timings of your interaction with the host institution prior to payment. You would need to arrange your own formal agreement with the host. A decision of this kind would be made on a case-by-case basis.

***There is a specialist training course run by a commercial concern that I would like to attend. Will you fund this?***

It is envisaged that these funds will be used primarily to develop links between individuals, rather than to support external commercial training courses. However, depending on the nature of the course, it might be possible. We would need to know the details to ensure that it is within our remit. Please give us a link to the website, if possible. Please make a case stating the relevance of the course to your future work in BioPM science and why it is not possible to arrange a reciprocal visit to obtain this knowledge exchange.

***I have a particular BioPM skill and wish to train people elsewhere at another university/company. Is this covered?***

Yes, but you should be clear about the benefit to UK-based BioPM research or technology – particularly if this were to take place abroad. We encourage the transfer of skills and knowledge, so any reasonable request of this nature will be looked at favourably.

Letter

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