

Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grants

Guidelines

Applicants should be working in the field of comparative physiology and/or biomechanics with a focus on experimental work that is hypothesis-driven and aims to elucidate mechanism (i.e. aligns with the core focus of Journal of Experimental Biology). Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grants are awarded to initiate and support new research partnerships/collaborations and projects, not existing ones. Each application will be judged on the excellence of the applicant, the benefits of the new partnership/collaboration, and the innovative quality of the research that is being proposed to be put forward as an application to a major competitive funding body (e.g. NSERC, NSF, ARC).

Guidelines for completing the application form

- Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grants can be awarded once only to an applicant.
- There are two funding rounds per year. If an application is unsuccessful, the applicant may not apply again in the following funding round (e.g. if an applicant is unsuccessful in the December 2023 funding round, they cannot apply again in the June 2024 funding round).
- The date of travel must occur within six months of funding being awarded.
- Applications will not be considered retrospectively.
- Existing research collaborations will not be supported.
- Applications will be considered only from junior faculty staff members within five years (excluding any career breaks) of their first faculty position (e.g. appointed as a Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Group Leader, Principal Research Investigator).
- The application form and all supporting documents must be completed in English, and letters of support must be on headed paper and signed.
- Expenses covered can include travel, accommodation, subsistence and visa fees. Travel insurance costs should not be included in the expenses.
- Please attach the following documents to your application:
 - letter of employment status from your Head of Department/School
 - letter of support from your host research collaborator
 - Curriculum Vitae
 - publication list
- It is your responsibility to ensure that you meet the criteria required for a Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant.
- You cannot apply for both a Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant and an ECR Visiting Fellowships within a 12-month period.

Conditions of the Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant

1. If your application is successful, you will be required to sign our Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant Agreement.
2. The date of the collaborative visit must occur within six months of funding being awarded.
3. If for any reason the visit is delayed beyond six months of the award, you must seek permission to extend the funding.
4. If the visit does not go ahead, the funds allocated will need to be returned, in full.
5. Any unspent funds must be returned within one month of the end of the visit.

6. You must keep all receipts related to your visit. These must be scanned and uploaded via the online application portal within one month of the end of your visit.
7. You must provide at least two bright, clear photographs and a 300–500-word summary of the outcomes of your visit within three months of return from the collaborator's lab.

Applicant handbook

This handbook will help you to complete your application and to understand the terms and conditions of the Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant. **Please read thoroughly before submitting your application.**

What is a Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant?

The Company of Biologists and Journal of Experimental Biology are offering **Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grants** to support junior faculty staff (e.g. Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Group Leader, Principal Research Investigator) to travel to another research lab for up to seven days to initiate a new research partnership and develop, write and submit a major grant application for collaborative research. Each grant is a maximum of £2,000 (or currency equivalent) and is to be used towards travel to the collaborator's Institution, University, Research Centre, etc, and accommodation and subsistence during the visit.

Who can apply for a Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant?

- Junior faculty staff (e.g. Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Group Leader, Principal Research Investigator) within five years (excluding any career breaks) of their first appointment to a faculty position.
- Applicants must be working in the field of experimental biology relating to animal comparative physiology or biomechanics.
- Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grants can be awarded only once to an applicant.
- If an application is unsuccessful, the applicant cannot apply again within 12 months.
- Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grants will not be awarded to applicants with existing collaborations and research partnerships with the proposed host.
- Grants do not support attendance at scientific meetings, conferences or training courses.
- Although there is no restriction on nationality, we are unable to pay awards to recipients in jurisdictions, countries or regions of the world subject to sanctions, embargoes or other political trade restrictions put in place by the United Nations, the EU or the UK.

Application deadlines

There are two funding rounds each year. Please refer to our website <https://www.biologists.com/grants/kickstart-travel-grants/> for further details.

How are applications assessed?

- A JEB Editor with the appropriate expertise and discipline knowledge will referee and assess the proposal.
- Applications will be evaluated for their merit across several attributes, including proposed benefits and outcomes from the proposed partnership, merit of the research proposal to be submitted to a major funding body, applicant's track record, and alignment to the core remit of Journal of Experimental Biology.
- Applicants will generally be informed of the outcome of their application within four weeks of the application deadline.

Completing the application form

- Unsuccessful applicants may re-apply for a Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant for a revised project 12 months from the date of the original application (e.g. if you are

unsuccessful for the December 2023 funding round, you can apply again in the December 2024 funding round).

- All sections of the application must be completed unless specifically stated; incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- The application and all supporting documents must be submitted in English.
- Applications will not be considered retrospectively.
- If possible, please convert your attachments into a single PDF file.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that you meet the criteria required for the Grant.

Documents to be submitted with your application:

- **Letter of status from your Head of Department/School** should include who you are, your position, and when you were appointed to that position at your institution. It should also include a supporting statement.
- **Letter of support from your proposed host collaborator**, briefly outlining, from their perspective, the benefits of the collaboration and their ability to host.
- **Curriculum Vitae**
- **Publication list**

All supporting letters must be:

- provided in an institutional letter-headed document, written in English and signed.
- submitted with the application; we do not accept supporting letters directly from the Head of Department/School or host collaborator.

Host collaborator. The host should be the person responsible for receiving the applicant, and contact information should include their position and email address.

Details of travel should include dates of the proposed visit, which may be provisional at the time of application but should be confirmed prior to your visit if the Grant is awarded.

The total amount requested **should not exceed £2,000.**

You should indicate how you propose to use the funds.

- **Travel and accommodation:** please include a level of detail to support your request, e.g. return flights LHR to SEA (British Airways) or accommodation for six nights at Orchard Hotel single en-suite room. Travel insurance is not included.
- **Fees:** includes visa fees, COVID tests.
- **Estimated costs are acceptable,** as you will be required to provide evidence of expenditure and return unspent funds.

Funding sought from other sources. If you have applied or intend to apply to other funding bodies, then please provide details in this section. This should include the amount requested and a link to the organisation website. If you do not intend to receive additional funding for your visit then this section should be left blank.

Proposed Project proposal should include full details and explanation of the proposed project, its alignment to the core remit of Journal of Experimental Biology, and funding body that the research proposal will be submitted to.

Receipts [evidence of expenditure] from successful applicants

- We will require receipts following the completion of your trip and return of unused funds within one month of your return from the host lab. Evidence of every expense incurred and paid must be provided or monies returned.

- Receipts must be scanned and submitted via the Online Application portal.

Reports from successful applicants

- You will be required to provide a 300-500-word summary detailing your visit, benefits and outcomes within three months of return from the host lab.
- We request that you provide at least two bright, clear photographs (e.g. these can be of yourself and host from your visit). Please ensure individuals featured in photographs complete and sign a consent form.
- Your report will be retained for at least seven years and may be inspected by the Charity Commission.

Terms & conditions

- The date of travel must occur within six months of funding being awarded.
- If for any reason your visit is delayed beyond six months of the award, you must seek permission to extend the funding.
- If your application is successful, you will be required to sign our Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant Agreement.
- Funds will be paid directly into your personal bank account once the grant has been approved. We require you to acknowledge receipt of funds by emailing accounts@biologists.com.
- Awarded funds must be returned in full if for any reason you are unable to complete the planned trip.
- We may require a partial return of funds in the event that you undertake a shorter trip than the one detailed in your application.
- We are unable to 'top up' the fellowship in the instance that the actual cost of travel exceeds the funding awarded.
- Under no circumstances is a Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant transferable to another person.
- Funds can only be used to support the trip specified in your application. You must seek agreement from us if any details change after your application has been submitted.
- The Company of Biologists/Journal of Experimental Biology should be acknowledged wherever relevant and possible (e.g. oral/poster presentations, submitted manuscripts, social media etc). Our company logo and journal logo will be provided to you.

FAQs

Can I apply for a Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant even if I already have an existing collaboration or partnership with the proposed researcher?

No, we do not award funds for existing collaborations.

Do supporting letters have to be signed?

Yes, all supporting letters must be on headed paper with a signature. They can then be scanned, and submitted with your completed application through the grant application portal.

What information needs to be included in the Letter of Status from my Head of Department/School?

The Letter of Status must include who you are, your position, and when you were appointed to that position at your institution. It should also include a supporting statement.

Can my Head of Department/School send you their letter directly?

No, the application letter and all supporting documents should be submitted through the grant application portal together, either as one document or as separate attachments.

Is it acceptable to complete the application with estimated costs for expenses as I don't know the exact costs at this stage?

Yes, that is acceptable, as you will be required to provide evidence of expenditure and to return unspent funds.

If I am awarded a Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant, will I get the funding before I go on my visit?

Yes, we pay the funds directly into your personal bank account once the award has been granted.

If my application is successful, will you publish the details of my submission?

This is a great achievement, and your success will inspire other junior faculty staff to apply for Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grants. However, given that you will be developing a research proposal, we recognise that your intellectual property needs to be protected. Therefore, the only information we might communicate on our website, social media channels and in other promotional material would be your name, institution and project title. If you have any concerns about the use of your material or personal data in this way, please let us know.

Would you like the original receipts mailed to you or can I scan them and send you copies electronically?

Receipts must be scanned and submitted via the Online Application portal.

I assume any amount of money that I can't explain with receipts will have to be returned?

Yes, we do require evidence for every expense incurred and paid.

Will I have an answer about the result of my application even if it is negative?

Yes, you will be notified even if your application is unsuccessful.

Are career interruptions (e.g. parental leave, illness, carer's responsibilities) taken into consideration?

Yes, all applications are considered relative to opportunity, including time elapsed since taking up first appointment as a junior faculty member.

How does a Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grant differ from an ECR Visiting Fellowship?

Both schemes have been initiated to support junior faculty staff members entering a critical stage in their careers, a stage where there are few funding initiatives. ECR Visiting Fellowships are different from Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grants in that they are designed to attract and support an early-career researcher (student or postdoc) visiting the junior faculty member's lab to undertake a defined research project. Research Partnership Kickstart Travel Grants are designed to initiate a new research collaboration by providing funds to support a junior faculty member visiting another research lab for up to seven days to initiate a new research partnership and develop, write and submit a major grant application for collaborative research.