

Henry Royce Institute: Proof of market funding competition, round 1

Guidance for Applicants

Aim of the Funding Competition

The Henry Royce Institute recognises the importance of robust market understanding for the successful commercialisation of advanced materials research into real-world applications. This funding competition aims to support UK researchers in conducting primary and secondary market research to assess the commercial viability and potential impact of a specific advanced materials technology.

The funding can be used to understand:

- Market size, potential, and segmentation for the technology
- Existing and emerging competitor landscape
- End-user needs, pain points, and willingness to adopt the technology
- Potential applications, product-market fit and routes to market
- Regulatory landscape and potential barriers to entry
- Value proposition and pricing strategies

This funding is intended to bridge the gap between promising research outcomes and informed decision-making regarding further technology development, commercialisation strategies, and potential investment.

Eligibility:

This pilot round 1 is open to academics working at a UK [Royce partner](#) university and actively developing an advanced materials technology¹.

The technology should be at a Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of 3 or higher, indicating that the basic principles have been observed and demonstrated in a laboratory or relevant environment, at component/material or system level.

Funding Available:

Successful applicants will receive up to £10,000 in funding to support their market research activities. This funding can be used to:

- Subcontract market research activities to a specialist consultancy
- Allocate funding towards appropriate university staff for market research activities

¹ Any future rounds will be open for applications to all UK universities, please register your interest [here](#).

- Cover the costs of primary research activities, such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

We encourage the use of initiatives administered by university business schools that leverage MBA students.

Please note:

- Funding can be used to fund PI time (up to 10% of the award) and other direct costs only.
- Funding must be spent within 9 months of the project start date.
- Funding cannot be used to conduct R&D activities (e.g. equipment costs, consumables).
- University overheads/indirect costs are not eligible expenses.

Full costs breakdown are not required upon application. Funding is allocated upon assessment of the proposals against application questions. Successful applicants must submit a detailed project plan within one month of their award. Grants are paid in arrears for costs incurred and defrayed up to the maximum requested grant amount, as indicated in their award letter.

Key dates:

Competition opens: 8/1/2025

Competition closes: 12/2/2025

Application portal:

Apply at <https://universityofmanchester.flexigrant.com>. Competition questions are provided below for reference purposes only.

Application Question(s)

Applicants are required to respond to the following question(s) in their application:

1. Technology Description (Max. 300 words)

- Provide a concise description of the advanced materials technology you are developing.
- Explain the core scientific principles underpinning the technology and highlight its novel or disruptive aspects.

2. Potential Impact and Applications (Max. 300 words)

- Explore the range of potential applications for your technology, considering both existing and emerging markets.

- Articulate the potential impact of your technology, focusing on the key challenges it addresses and the potential benefits it could offer in various application areas.
- Provide examples of how your technology could be used to solve real-world problems or create new opportunities altogether.

3. Use of Funds (Max. 100 words)

- Specify how you intend to use the requested funding to support your market research activities.
- Indicate whether you plan to subcontract any activities, allocate funding internally, or cover the costs of primary research.
- Outline whether you have contacted your relevant delivery partner and any discussions you have had to date.

4. Indicate grant amount requested.

- The maximum grant amount requested is £10,000.
- Grant requested at application stage does not typically require university pre-award/research support approval. Please seek guidance from your respective university department.

5. Optional. Project plan.

- This question is optional and is not assessed.
- If you have an agreed project plan for your proposal, please upload it here. Your project plan must show work packages and deliverables in line with the competition guidance.
- Projects not providing a project plan on submission stage are required to submit one within one month of a possible award.
- Docx or pdf only. Maximum 2 pages using Arial 12pt font.