

Technical Support on Research Grants

This document outlines the process for requesting technical support for research from Technical Services on Research Council and other grants.

On research council grants, there are a number of ways to include technical support.

a) Infrastructure technician costs

These costs are applied to all lab based projects on research council grants and these are actually part of the overhead, like the estates and indirect costs, and are worked out on a £/research FTE basis. RES will calculate the costs for these.

Infrastructure technician costs includes the following category 1 support from Technical Services:

Category 1: Infrastructure cost is included on all laboratory, field and workshop based projects

Provide advice and knowledge upon specialist technical systems and procedures

Manage Permit to Work system

Provide project support for local refurbishment of technical/specialist areas

Provide advice for large scale technical infrastructure projects (new buildings or extensions)

Receipt of goods

Procurement advice

Stock control of items such as gasses & cryogenics

Manage core equipment compliance

Legislative checks e.g. LEV (fume cupboards, safety cabinets) and pressure equipment (autoclaves)

Management of defined equipment breakdowns and disposals

Manage service contracts for equipment compliance

Glassware processing

Autoclave processing (sterile preparation services)

Laboratory coat processing

Hazardous waste processing

Health and Safety Co-ordinators

Management of technical staff to carry out infrastructure activities

Please note – if your proposal has been costed using classroom rates (generally applied to non-science/lab based schools), then you will not have infrastructure technician costs on the application and therefore you may have to request additional technical support via pool technicians (see below). If you are applying to a charity or other funder that doesn't accept full economic costing (fEC) and therefore infrastructure technician costs can't be included, then you may also need to request additional support

b) Pool technician costs

If requiring a small amount of technical support in addition to those services listed above covered by the infrastructure technician costs you can request **pool technical support**. This will be a **directly allocated** cost on Research Council grants (under Pool staff costs on the Je-S form) and a direct cost on other grants. The technician can be named at application stage though depending on availability, alternative resource with the required skills may be allocated to you post award.

There are 2 types of pool technician support

1. **Generic pool technician support**

This level of support includes the following Category 2 support, from Technical Services:

Category 2 : Generic pooled cost is applicable to applicants where technical staff carry out generic laboratory, field and workshop based activities i.e. SAGES, SAPD, SBS, SPCLS , SMPCS and SCFP (is not applicable to CAF, fMRI and BRU as these activities are already accounted for in charges for these facilities)

- Carrying out daily checks of research areas
- Management of controlled environments where research materials are stored
- Performing /organising programmed maintenance, calibration and monitoring of defined equipment used in research
- Stocking with agreed research consumables
- Researching and ordering specialist materials and equipment
- Liaising with researchers to determine requirements
- Induction, using Local Rules, of researchers
- Training of researchers against SOPs for safety critical equipment (e.g. safety cabinets, fume cupboards, autoclaves, ultracentrifuges)
- Training of researchers against safety critical procedures (e.g. waste procedures, dealing with spillages)
- Core equipment training of researchers
- Training of researchers on general procedures, preparation methods and more specialist techniques and equipment
- Researching and ordering specialist materials and equipment for researchers/commercial clients
- Ordering materials

A 5% Grade 4 technician cost per annum is associated with generic pooled support and this should be included in all proposals involving lab, field or workshop based activities (where the funder allows) from the Schools named above. Additional generic pooled support can be requested subject to agreement from Technical Services.

Example useful text to justify these costs is as follows:

Pool staff costs: In addition, 5% FTE of a Directly Allocated pool technician is requested. This technician will ensure that the PDRA can focus on the research project free from distraction and provide professional support to the PDRA **[insert project-specific text here linking support to particular equipment and/or other resources being used]** as well as laboratory management, ensuring the building and lab environment is fit for purpose and ensuring good health and safety within the laboratories. In addition they will train and induct new researchers, manage freezer and liquid nitrogen storage archives and ensure the safe acquisition, storage, use and disposal of controlled and hazardous materials including appropriate waste stream management.

2. Specific pool technician support

This level of support includes the following Category 3 support from Technical Services:

Category 3: Specific pool cost is applicable to applicants who are requesting technical support in any School for the following activities (is not applicable to CAF, fMRI and BRU as these activities are already accounted for in charges for these facilities)

- Expansion of research stock materials
- Set up, or maintenance, collection or analysis of field samples
- Provision of service i.e. generation of experimental data and/or products
- Design, maintenance and construction of specialist research materials and equipment for researchers
- Method development and optimisation of processes
- Conducting experiments
- Generating experimental data and/or products
- Analysis of samples
- Interpretation of results
- Involvement in manuscript creation

Specific pool technical support should be requested on a time/effort basis.

The proposed internal process if specific pool technician time (Category 3) is required is as follows:

- The PI should contact their RD manager at the point of the application to discuss their requirements around technical support
- The PI or RD manager should contact Technical Services to ensure that the time requested is sufficient and that the grade reflects the level of skills required.
- The Director of Technical Services will approve the request for technician time.
- Research Accounts will notify the Director of Technical Services if the application is successful.
- The pooled funds are then allocated to the Technical Services budget and the successful applicant is provided with the resource as outlined in the application.

Fully externally funded fixed term technician

Should a researcher wish to consider support from Technical Services in recruitment, development or performance management of a fully externally funded fixed term technician (directly incurred technician), a request can be made to the Director of Technical Services in the first instance. The PI would remain fully responsible for supervising and directing the research activities.