HENRY ROYCE INSTITUTE

ADVANCED MATERIALS RESEARCH & INNOVATION

MATcelerate *HEALTH*

Round 3

ROYCE

Guidance Document

HENRY ROYCE INSTITUTE

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Further information and application details are available here:
MATcelerate HEALTH Grants - Henry Royce Institute

Section 1 Overview

1.1. Summary

MATcelerate *HEALTH* is a Royce-facilitated initiative designed to accelerate the commercialisation of advanced materials technologies within the healthcare sector. It is a partnership between world leading materials research universities and leading, global MedTech companies and investors, to develop a pipeline of commercial opportunities to revolutionise healthcare.

1.2. Background information

Healthcare materials innovation faces critical bottlenecks that prevent promising technologies reaching patients. Less than 0.5% of academic health innovations achieve clinical practice due to:

- Complex interdependencies between materials, biological systems, and clinical environments
- Integration challenges across academic research and industrial development
- Scalability, manufacturing, and regulatory hurdles that increase risk profiles
- Limited early engagement with end-users, clinicians, and industry partners

1.3. Programme objectives

MATcelerate *HEALTH* addresses these challenges through a disciplined de-risking approach, turning high-impact technologies into investable solutions. The programme supports short sprint projects to de-risk critical aspects of commercialising materials-based health technologies, such as:

- Regulatory testing and compliance validation (e.g. biocompatibility, electrical safety)
- Health economics studies and cost-effectiveness analysis
- Manufacturing scale-up and quality system development
- System integration testing with new/existing medical devices
- User testing with healthcare professionals and patients
- Pre-clinical validation studies in real-world healthcare settings

MATcelerate *HEALTH* seeks to:

- Increase the volume and quality of advanced materials investment opportunities for university translational and spin-out funds, along with private/corporate investors
- Increase the effectiveness of participating HEIs, their Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs), and industry partners licensing teams
- Provide industry with access to breakthrough materials technologies for healthcare
- Encourage university researchers to translate research in high-priority areas by providing them with a highly effective way to engage industry
- Accelerate the real-world application of discovery and manufacture through commercialisation at pace

A distinguishing feature of the programme is the structured and embedded role of its industry partners. Industry representatives are involved throughout the process, including in proposal assessment, prioritisation, ‘pitch’ preparation and project guidance. This ensures that publicly-funded activity is aligned with real-world technical requirements, market needs and adoption pathways, rather than driven solely by academic or institutional incentives.

1.4. Scope

MATcelerate *HEALTH* funds projects with a TRL range 2-4 that aim to develop health innovations which align with one of the technology options and sectors below:

Technology options	Technology sectors
• Biomaterials • Medical devices • Flexible electronics e.g. sensors • Equipment/medical instruments • Sustainable materials e.g. PPE/alternative packaging	• Medical devices • Diagnostics • Biotechnology

Projects need to be materials-led with a clear materials innovation at its core. Example projects in scope include those addressing materials challenges in bioelectronics, wound care and bone implants. Out-of-scope projects include those where materials innovation is not central to the proposed technology, such as software-only, digital health or AI-led projects.

Additionally, only projects looking to develop technology based on unencumbered IP are in scope for this programme and grant funding. The IP should be defined and protected, including clear ownership. Any challenges with accessing the core IP or Freedom to Operate must be stated. If the project will generate IP or add value to current IP this should also be specified.

Section 2 Eligibility

2.1. Project size

This programme funds projects that have total project costs between £50,000 and £85,000.

2.2. Project details

Applications are currently only accepted from the following HEIs:

- University of Bristol
- University of Cambridge
- Imperial College London
- The University of Manchester
- University of Oxford
- University College London
- University of Liverpool
- The University of Sheffield
- University of Leeds
- University of Warwick

2.3. Eligibility details

To be eligible, your project must:

- Start on 01 April 2027 and finish on 30 September 2027 (6 months)
- Be a collaboration between an HEI and its TTO (i.e. fully supported and only include unencumbered IP)
- Incur all Royce-funded costs within the project's duration

- Be a new project or activity that has not already started – please note that you can re-apply using a previously submitted unsuccessful application, provided that you have effectively addressed any feedback
- Be within the scope of MATcelerate *HEALTH*
- Be a materials-led project with a clear materials innovation at its core
- Be led by either a researcher holding a permanent academic position (e.g. lecturer or equivalent) or a holder of an early career fellowship who is granted the same stature as a permanent academic staff member
- Projects must primarily fund work outside of universities, unless there is a good reason for it to be done within the university. These should be organisations where work will be done under contract (e.g. CROs, clinical testing facilities, regulatory consultants, specialist consultancies). If working with companies that could potentially license/commercialise the technology, their permission must be obtained. TTOs must ensure no conflict of interest or breach of confidentiality.

Section 3 Funding model and eligible costs

3.1. Funding models

The grant awarded to successful projects covers 100% of the total eligible project costs.

3.2. Eligible costs

All eligible costs must be incurred directly for the project and solely for research, development and innovation purposes. Such costs must be strictly necessary for the delivery of the project or activity and must be incurred within the approved project period.
The following costs are eligible:

Cost category	Notes
Staffing	May include researchers, investigators, technicians and should all be existing staff members.
Consumables	Consumables are items used during the project (e.g. chemicals, reagents) and do not have a long-term lifespan.
Travel and subsistence	Travel that is essential to the delivery of the project is eligible, where this is completed within the project duration. Reasonable subsistence for any approved travel is also eligible.
Royce facilities	See section 3.6
Non-Royce facilities	For use of your institution's own facilities or those of a non-Royce institution
Subcontracting	Subcontracting is eligible where the work undertaken by the subcontractor: • is essential to the success of your project • involves expertise that does not exist within the project team • involves skills that it is not practical to develop in-house for your project
Market research	Primary market research and customer discovery activities.
Other	This category may be used for any direct project costs which are not covered in the above categories. An example of this would be third party laboratory costs.

All costs submitted as part of an application must be fully justified in the application form.

3.3. Examples of ineligible costs

Ineligible costs include:

• Equipment, including IT • Software costs incurred outside of the project duration • Non-economy travel and accommodation over £150	• Staff training and development • PhD fees/stipends • A licence fee to access third-party IP for the project	• Entertainment and marketing • Alcohol • Overheads • Indirect Costs • VAT (recoverable)

3.4. VAT treatment of grant income by grant recipients

UKRI grants are not considered to be payment for services. They are provided without expectation of any supply or direct benefit to the grant funder. As a result, VAT does not arise, and any invoices submitted by the grant recipient should not include VAT. They should be issued 'outside the scope' of VAT.

Please note this reflects the UKRI funding conditions for the grant and does not constitute VAT advice.

3.5. VAT treatment of grant expenditure

Recoverable VAT (i.e. where it can be reclaimed from HMRC via a VAT return) should not be included within grant claims. It is not a cost to the grant recipient.

HEIs and industry partners can legitimately claim irrecoverable VAT incurred as part of their costs (i.e. VAT that is not reclaimed from HMRC). Organisations that are not VAT registered can include all VAT incurred on relevant expenditure within their claims.

3.6. Use of Royce facilities

More information on the facilities available can be found here.

Royce facilities costings should be obtained from the appropriate facilities manager. Contact details can be found in Appendix A.

Section 4 Key dates

Date	Task/deadline
01 September 2026	Applications open
17 November 2026	Applications close
18 – 20 November 2026	Eligibility checks
23 November – 14 December 2026	Industry partner review stage
15 December – 8 January 2027	Due diligence
11 January – 30 January 2027	Pitch preparation for shortlisted projects only
w/c 1 February 2027	Investment Committee (in-person presentations only)
w/c 15 February 2027	Projects awarded
1 April 2027	Projects start
30 September 2027	Projects end

Section 5 Completing and submitting your application

The application must be submitted through Royce's Flexigrant system by the Primary applicant (Lead/PI) from the lead organisation (HEI). The HEI's TTO should be listed as a 'collaborator 1' in the application. Please note that subcontractors should not be listed as collaborators in the application.

Applications comprise four parts:

Part 1 Applicant details and technology overview

You are required to include details on the applicant HEI (under 'Lead organisation') and the TTO (under 'Collaborator'), as well as information on the project background, development status, intellectual property, technology, and the overall project overview.

Part 2 Project specification and costs

You are required to describe your project, including its scope, rationale, target patient population, milestones, deliverables, partners, risks, and costs. Applicants are responsible for ensuring their proposals are within scope of this scheme.

You are also required to complete a budget table with proposed project costs. Use of third-party services is encouraged, and projects are requested to have already established the scope, costs, dependencies and feasibility of any work prior to application submission.

Part 3 Clinical, commercial and market context

You are required to outline details of the competitive landscape, market dynamics, route to market, and regulatory pathway for your proposed technology, building on the clinical need described in Section 2.

Part 4 Next steps (post-project development and funding plan)

You are required to detail what further work, if any, would likely be required at the end of the project to get the technology ready for licencing or spinout formation/funding.

Section 6 Evaluation

Applications will be assessed for both eligibility and quality.

After the application deadline, all applications received will be assessed against the eligibility criteria listed in Section 2 of this Guidance.

All eligible proposals will then be reviewed by the industry partners against the following criteria:

- Clinical Need & Impact
- Technology Solution & Innovation
- Project Design & Feasibility
- Commercial Opportunity
- Future Development

A list of industry partners can be found in Appendix B.

As this is a competitive process, not all projects can be funded. Royce will provide feedback to all eligible applicants; however, detailed scoring or ranking will not be provided.

Up to four projects are shortlisted and invited to work with an industry partner for approximately three weeks to refine their PoC project and develop a slide deck presentation for the in-person Investment Committee (IC). Project teams will have 10 minutes to pitch their project to the IC, followed by a 10-minute Q&A session.

The IC, comprised of industry partners, evaluates the presentations and recommends funding for a decision by the Henry Royce Institute.

Section 7 Award

Projects funded under this programme are jointly awarded to the HEI and its TTO. The HEI is responsible for delivering the project and receiving and administering project finances. The TTO is expected to maintain oversight of the HEI, is ultimately responsible for the satisfactory completion of the project and responsible for meeting the project's reporting requirements.

Where you have been previously awarded funding by Royce, you must have completed any outstanding requirements of that funding to be awarded new funding.

If your application is selected for funding, you will be issued an award letter detailing the funding award offered and the conditions under which the award is being made. The conditions of any award are listed on the Royce website.

If awarded funding, you must:

- Confirm your acceptance of the grant on the Flexigrant portal.
- Sign and upload the award letter to the Flexigrant portal within two weeks after award.

Project awarded under this scheme are also required to submit the following:

- A Progress Report
- A Final Report and Case Study within one month after the project end date
- Claims - the HEI is responsible for submitting claims for all project costs. Please refer to Royce's Grants Claims Guidance on the Royce website for detailed information on how to claim the funding award.

Failure in submitting these documents within the required timeframes may impact your eligibility for future Royce funding opportunities.

Appendix A Royce Facilities

Information on all Royce Facilities is listed here. For access to Royce facilities, the appropriate facilities managers should be contacted by applicants to confirm equipment name, costings and time required to be included in your application.

- Cranfield University royce@cranfield.ac.uk
- Imperial College London royce@imperial.ac.uk
- National Nuclear Laboratory royce@uknnl.com
- The University of Sheffield royce@sheffield.ac.uk
- UK Atomic Energy Authority royce@mrf.ukaea.uk
- University of Cambridge royce@maxwell.cam.ac.uk
- University of Leeds royce@leeds.ac.uk
- University of Liverpool royce@liverpool.ac.uk
- University of Oxford royce.access@materials.ox.ac.uk
- The University of Manchester royce@manchester.ac.uk

Appendix B MATcelerate *HEALTH* Industry Partners

- Advanced Medical Solutions
- Convatec
- CPI Enterprises
- Earlybird Health
- Johnson & Johnson
- Lionstead Ventures
- Meridian Health Ventures
- Siemens Healthineers
- Smith & Nephew
- TAR Network
- Well Purposed