PACE Fund: FAQ Document

Updated: 21 July 2023

Application Process and Application Form

1. **Is it up to the faculty how they administer the application process? And should applications come from a faculty (Steering Group) or an individual applicant level?**
   a. The application process has been developed with an individual applicant in mind. Part of the application form does request approval from the Head of Department but approval from the Dean is at the discretion of the Faculty.
   Having said this, we would expect that applicants would discuss large commercial opportunities at a strategic level to ensure they have faculty level endorsement before or alongside the development of their PACE application. The PACE application process does not require the application to go through the Faculty Steering Group but please check what the expectation is in your faculty.

2. **How much market research is required in the application form?**
   a. We would expect there to be an indication of what the potential market is and why the project is a sensible commercial prospect. However, if needed, the first part of the project could be to conduct more extensive market research which PACE funding could help to support. HEIF budget can also help to support early stage market research as well.

3. **How are professional service staff allocated to projects and what support do they offer?**
   a. In terms of allocation, this would be on the basis of which team is most relevant. For example the Research and Innovation Development Team (RIDT) would advise on collaborative or contract research proposals whereas CPD would support proposals in which there is a strong focus on CPD. We would expect professional service staff to offer advice, support, answer questions and signpost where appropriate. Research support colleagues such as research facilitators would be better placed to assist with costing proposals.

4. **Who can lead PACE applications?**
   a. PACE applications are not necessarily "research" and we are not limiting the leadership applications from T&S staff as a result. Whether or not leading a particular project is part of an individual's role expectations requires the HoD to confirm or support.

Funding Eligibility

5. **Are projects aimed at income generation from the public sector / non profit eligible for PACE funding?**
   a. PACE is part of BIEI, whose remit is to generate income from private sector business and industry. However, projects that have a mixed portfolio can be considered. The amount of funding that is being requested needs to be proportionate to the amount of

income being generated from industry. There may be other funds which are more suitable to support projects that have more emphasis on public sector engagement.

6. **Is continuation of funding of a research project allowed? And can applications come from schools or from semi autonomous research projects that have been engaging in BIEI related work?**
   a. This depends on what the new opportunity is. It doesn't matter whether it is something new or something which already exists, the main objective is that it will have future significant commercial potential. The idea is that this will not just fund a project but prime an opportunity that will provide financial sustainability and return on investment in the future. There are no restrictions for what contracts applicants are on and who is applying, although it would need to be agreed by the Head of Department. The fund does not restrict people who are applying for salary cover, as long as the reason and benefit for this can be clearly defined.

7. **Can the fund be used for match funding?**
   a. No, there are already match funding schemes in place, PACE does not replace them.

8. **Could PACE be used to form spin outs?**
   a. This would need to be discussed with the commercialisation team. Unless there are other commercial opportunities alongside the spin out or a very fast exit strategy which generates income, PACE would probably not be the right funding route.

9. **If a project is developing a service where the purpose is initially for internal use but the future ambition is for the service to be used externally, can this be funded through PACE?**
   a. Yes, as long as there is a long term income generation from an external source. There would need to be a clear route to market. If this has not been established prior to the application then PACE could be used to fund some in depth market research as a first part of the proposal. Any follow on funding would be determined by the outcomes of the market research.

Funding Administration and Process

10. **Will there be a formal reporting process?**
    a. Yes, both the finances and milestones of the project will be monitored. Once the application has been approved, the approval panel will work with the applicant(s) to agree the most appropriate reporting period, which will differ from project to project. There is no template at this moment but reporting will be in line with the objectives and stage gates which will be appropriate to the length of the project, with an expectation of a progress report being submitted at least twice a year. There will be a dedicated professional support individual allocated to support this.

11. **What is the department level financial approval and is Worktribe required?**

a. The expectation is the Worktribe would be used to cost the proposal and these figures entered into the PACE financial form. There is more information and guidance available about how to cost your application through Worktribe in the attached guidance sheet.

You can also access the main financial template information here but please contact your representative, Sarah Thompson or Amanda Selvaratnam should you have any queries on this.

12. **How long could staff be funded for as part of PACE? It can be a challenge with short term contracts, secondments and buyouts.**
   a. This would depend on the long term plans for the department and whether the intention would be for the department to fund the role in the future i.e. is it a temporary resource requirement for the priming period, or something longer term? PACE could be used to fund the role initially and then the department could see the value of the role in the long term and decide to amend a fixed term contract to an open contract.

13. **What are the timescales and requirements for posts to become financially sustainable after the initial PACE fund input?**
   a. The following is measured in income per FTE, and is based on an institutional average of £98K income per one FTE academic per year. Please note this is a starting model and it is very likely targets will be adapted by faculty, but the below provides a baseline assumption:
      - Research only academic posts will have an income target of:
         - Year 0-2: £0
         - Year 3-5: £200k per year
         - Years 6 - 8: £240k per year
         - Years 8 onwards: £300k per year
      - Professional Service Practice to have income targets:
         - Year 0-1: £0
         - Year 2-3: 70% recovery of cost
         - Years 4-5: 80% recovery of cost
         - Years 5 onwards: 90% recovery of cost