JISC Research Information Management Grant Funding Opportunity 11/09: Call for Proposals

JISC

Published on: Mailing lists, JISC Website (http://www.jisc.ac.uk)

Of Interest To:
Pro Vice Chancellors for (e)Learning and (e)Research
Directors of Information Services and Systems
Learning Resource Managers, Librarians and Archivists
Principal Investigators in Research Teams
Learning Technologists
Heads of e-Learning and ILT Managers

Introduction

1.   The Joint Information Systems Committee[1] (JISC) invites institutions to submit proposals for projects in the area of research information management.

2.   'Research Information' in this document refers to structured information about projects, researchers, research outputs and their value and impact, research impact more widely, funding streams, organisations such as funders and universities, and so on.

Summary of Funding Opportunities

3.   There is funding of up to £400,000 available for projects funded through this call. Projects should be up to six months long, and grants available will range from £20,000 up to £50,000 per project.

4.   In the interest of sustainability, evidence of institutional commitment is required. This can be shown in direct funding contributions from the HEI to the project, commitment of staff time, equipment, software purchase etc. It is anticipated that projects in the call will involve institutions already working in this area and therefore will have complementary plans in place.

5.   The deadline for receipt of proposals in response to this call is 12 noon UK time on Monday 11th January 2010. Projects should start at the beginning of March 2010 and end by the end of August 2010.

---

[1] Further information on JISC is available at http://www.jisc.ac.uk

Eligibility

6. Proposals may be submitted by HE institutions funded via HEFCE, SFC, HEFCW and DEL Northern Ireland, and by FE institutions funded via SFC, DCELLS Wales and DEL Northern Ireland. FE institutions in England that teach HE to more than 400 FTEs are also eligible to bid provided proposals demonstrate how the work supports the HE in FE agenda.

7. Proposals involving Welsh institutions should address one or more of the priorities outlined in 'One Wales'[2], the Welsh Assembly Government's progressive agenda for Wales. Specifically, proposals are welcomed that seek to:

   • address maximisation of the economic, social and cultural impact of universities on learners and on the wider community;
   • broaden the range of learning opportunities;
   • respond to the needs of students and employers, and tackle poverty and disadvantage;
   • widen participation in higher education;
   • encourage collaboration with other educational institutions to widen opportunities;
   • respond to the needs of Welsh medium/bilingual learners.

8. Proposals may be from single institutions or consortia. Partnership arrangements may be developed outside the sector (for example with research council sites, publishers, commercial suppliers), but the lead partner must meet the criteria outlined above. Funds can only be allocated through a lead partner.

Background and Context

9. The JISC Strategic aims include developing and providing innovative and sustainable ICT infrastructure, services and practice that support institutions in meeting their mission. This can be summarised as the development, provision and use of an e-Infrastructure for education and research. Alongside this there are aims to (i) promote the development, uptake and effective use of ICT within institutions and in support of their management, and (ii) promote the development, uptake and effective use of ICT to support research. Activities under this call would be relevant to all three of these aims.

10. Higher education institutions need to manage information about the research they host, in order to inform strategic decisions about that research, to ease reporting to external stakeholders such as funding councils and research funders, and to offer useful services to those within and beyond the institution's boundaries. A short summary of some work in this area is available on the JISC website at: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/themes/informationenvironment/researchinfomgt.aspx Bidders are advised to become familiar with work in the UK sector and elsewhere in developing their proposals to ensure that their proposals will contribute to growing knowledge and expertise in this area, and so demonstrate the evidence required to meet all the evaluation criteria.

11. Research information typically arises from a range of activities and processes, such as grant application, drafting research outputs and managing projects, and is typically held in a range of IT systems such as HR systems, finance systems, repositories, research

---

[2] *One Wales: A progressive agenda for the government of Wales*
http://wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/1wales/?lang=en

and project management systems, as well as external systems such as those of research funders, bibliographic databases and name authority services. There are compelling use cases, such as those noted in paragraph 9 above, that demand that such information is brought together. However, given its fragmentation, the barriers to interoperability are organisational and cultural as well as technical.

Terms of Reference

12.　JISC invites proposals for projects that both improve the extent to which research information is managed across one or more higher education institutions, and contribute to growing UK knowledge and expertise in this area.

13.　The projects funded under this call are all part of the JISC Innovation Programme and therefore they contribute to the generic JISC Innovation benefits. These are:

　　　a. Enhanced capacity, knowledge and skills to enable positive and informed change in the sector (through piloting new technologies and approaches);
　　　b. Guidance to the sector on 'best practice' models for using technology that can be used at departmental, institutional, regional or national levels;
　　　c. Strategic leadership to the sector and other bodies in specialist areas and to influence national and international agendas;
　　　d. Knowledge and experience as a basis for future funding decisions for the JISC and its sub committees;
　　　e. New or enhanced services, infrastructure, standards or applications that may be used at departmental, institutional, regional or national levels.

14.　As noted above, bidders are strongly advised to identify useful previous work on which they can build. The following page may offer some points to relevant work: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/themes/informationenvironment/researchinfomgt.aspx Bidders are also advised to investigate other JISC areas of work that might be relevant to their bid, including the current Information Environment programme[3] and previous programmes on repositories[4]. In addition, bidders may wish to liaise with relevant sector organisations such as the Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA)[5], the Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association (UCISA)[6], and the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL)[7].

15.　Additionally this call relates to the JISC Virtual Research Environments programme. The following page may offer some points to relevant work supporting the research process: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/vre.aspx.

16.　Proposals are invited for projects that address at least two of the following programme objectives:
　　　a. Collecting and deploying evidence to develop a business case for appropriate investment by institution(s) in systems and processes (broadly defined) to support better research information management. Proposals addressing this objective should note that JISC infoNet has released an Impact calculator[8] in

---

[3] JISC Information Environment programme: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/inf11.aspx
[4] Repositories and Preservation programme: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/reppres.aspx
[5] ARMA: http://www.arma.ac.uk/
[6] UCISA: http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/
[7] SCONUL: http://www.sconul.ac.uk/
[8] http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/records-management/measuring-impact/impact-calculator/index_html

November 2009 that offers a structured approach to assessing the costs and benefits of information management.

b. Understanding and sharing good practice in how research information can be better developed and used by research managers, working closely with those using the information to understand more clearly how it does and might inform their decisions at operational and strategic level.

c. Helping to specify requirements for, and implementing (in-house or procured) IT systems in support of improved research information management (note that JISC funds cannot be used for any such procurement).

d. Identifying, piloting and perhaps implementing processes and systems that improve interoperability between systems within and, possibly, beyond institutions in support of improved research information management. Proposals should describe the specific use case and user (for example to inform strategic planning and management of research, or more efficient external reporting). Proposals addressing this objective should note that JISC has funded an investigation into the potential for a common exchange format for research information between institutions, HEFCE and the Research Councils. The project will report at the end of 2009. JISC has also funded a pilot name authority service, Names[9], which will welcome collaboration from projects funded under this call.

17. In addition to addressing at least two of the programme objectives noted above, projects should also contribute to sector knowledge and expertise in these areas in one of two ways, either by (a) building on and sharing extensive work already undertaken at that institution or (b) drawing from lessons learned elsewhere and sharing experiences of deploying that locally. Proposals will be expected to include an adequately resourced work package to achieve this. This work package should reflect the following as appropriate:

a. JISC has funded a number of innovation projects in this area, and other work has been undertaken without JISC funding. As noted above, bidders are strongly advised to identify previous work in the area, and the following page may assist:
http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/themes/informationenvironment/researchinfomgt.aspx

b. JISC has funded JISC infoNet[10] to act as a focus and support project for work in this area, offering organisational support, programme synthesis, stakeholder review and analysis, and identification of the requirements of institutional senior management in terms of information management, and the benefits that would flow from meeting them[11]. Further information is available from Steve Bailey, Senior Adviser, steve.bailey@northumbria.ac.uk. Projects will be expected to work with JISC infoNet to ensure the lessons learned by them are effectively shared. This may take the form of telephone interviews, workshops, site visits, and so on.

c. JISC has commissioned UKOLN to provide technical support to projects funded under this call. This will consist of a helpdesk, briefings on standards, systems and development work, and case studies. Further information is available from Michael Day, Research Officer, m.day@ukoln.ac.uk. Again, projects will be expected to work with UKOLN to ensure the lessons learned by them are effectively shared. This may take the form of telephone interviews, workshops, site visits, and so on.

---

[9] http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/reppres/sharedservices/names.aspx
[10] JISC InfoNet Research Information Management: http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/research
[11] Projects may consider piloting the Records & Information Management Impact Calculator recently released by JISC infoNet: http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/records-management/measuring-impact

    d. The HEFCE-funded 'Research Management and Administration System' (RMAS[12], see Appendix E) feasibility study concluded that a shared service in this area is viable and potentially beneficial. Projects addressing any of the objectives noted above may inform any planning and development work being undertaken by RMAS during 2010. Further information is available from Deborah Welland, Assistant Director Academic Services, Exeter University D.Welland@exeter.ac.uk.

    e. JISC has commissioned CETIS to support the Flexible Service Delivery Programme[13], for example by hosting 'supplier forums'. The RMAS project is participating in this programme. Further information is available from Alex Hawker, e-Framework Programme Manager a.hawker@jisc.ac.uk.

    f. As noted above, a number of sector organisations (ARMA, UCISA, SCONUL, and others) have an interest in this area, and may provide networks through which to share project lessons, knowledge and expertise.

18. We hope to encourage an approach whereby the sector can learn from 'failures' as well as 'successes', which will require the building of trust between those involved in projects funded under this call and other relevant work across the sector. The final key objective for the programme is to enhance the capacity of the sector as a whole to manage projects and deliver change in this area.

19. It is essential for projects to demonstrate institutional commitment to the work being proposed, given the potential benefits to be derived by the institution from this work. The JISC contribution in any project will not exceed £50,000. Evidence of institutional contribution and commitment should be clearly addressed in proposals.

20. Proposals should clearly identify related projects and activities underway in the lead institution, and describe how the proposal relates to (rather than duplicating) them.

21. Overview of call:
    a. proposals should address at least two of the objectives noted in paragraph 16
    b. proposals should specify whether they are (a) building on and sharing extensive work already undertaken at that institution or (b) drawing from lessons learned elsewhere and sharing experiences of deploying that locally.
    c. proposals should describe an adequately resourced workpackage whereby project lessons will be shared openly with the sector
    d. A budget of between £20,000 to £50,000 per project is available, with appropriate institutional contribution; In total a budget of £400,000 is available
    e. All projects should start by early March 2010

22. JISC will seek to fund a spread of proposals that as far as possible addresses all of the objectives and types described in paragraph 16.

23. Potential bidders should note that a second call similar to this will be released in early 2010.

24. They should also note that rapid, technical innovation projects in this area may be in scope for the recent Virtual Research Environment Rapid Innovation grant funding call[14].

---

[12] RMAS: http://as.exeter.ac.uk/rmas
[13] Flexible Service Delivery Programme:
http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/flexibleservicedelivery.aspx
[14] VRE-RI call: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/fundingopportunities/funding_calls/2009/10/vreri.aspx#