

# **GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

## **The Anaerobic Digestion Network – a BBSRC NIBB**

### **Travel Bursary Grants**



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## Introduction

### Anaerobic Digestion Network - a BBSRC NIBB

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) has committed £18M to fund 13 collaborative Networks in Industrial Biotechnology and Bioenergy (BBSRC NIBB). The BBSRC NIBB will foster collaborations between academia, industry, policy makers and NGOs in order to find new approaches to tackle research challenges, translate research and deliver key benefits in Industrial Biotechnology and Bioenergy (IBBE). Each network has a particular focus area, mainly within the UK, but with interest to build international links. Details of all of the Networks can be found on the BBSRC website (<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/bbsrcnibb>).

These multidisciplinary networks will drive new ideas to harness the potential of biological resources for producing and processing materials, biopharmaceuticals, chemicals and energy. The Networks can provide Proof of Concept funding, Business Interaction Vouchers and events and are open to new members.

The BBSRC NIBB, along with the IB Catalyst, form the central part of the BBSRC's strategy to support the development of IBBE as a key component of the UK bioeconomy. The Networks will help to provide sustainable processes for producing bio-based alternatives to products which currently rely on petrochemicals.

The Anaerobic Digestion Network (AD Network) addresses scientific and technical challenges in the development of anaerobic biotechnology, drawing on the expertise of leading academics underpinned by new tools and concepts. As well as enhancing the performance of anaerobic digestion as a second generation bioenergy process, these can create new areas of application in the creation of value-added bio-based products, widening the process scope to a biorefinery. Bio-molecular tools open up the possibility of improved diagnostics and advanced on-line process control, topics of immediate interest to industry. For more information, see the website (<http://www.anaerobicdigestionnet.com>).

The AD Network is led by an Executive Board comprising Professor Charles Banks, University of Southampton (Primary Investigator) and Professor Orkun Soyer, University of Warwick (Co-Investigator).

## Travel Bursary Grants

### What is a Travel Bursary?

Travel bursaries are available to help fund UK-based Network members attend and travel to and from national and international events/meetings. Funds are available for several purposes.

- **Travel bursaries for early career researchers – UK only** are available for qualifying members to attend network events in the UK (e.g. to attend the annual AD Network Early Careers Researcher conference)
- **Travel bursaries for early career researchers – UK to overseas** are available for qualifying members to attend network-related events abroad (e.g. to attend international conferences). This is not intended for people who merely wish to attend or present a poster. In order to qualify you should be able to demonstrate that you have had an oral presentation of your paper accepted at that particular conference. The paper should seek to promote work conducted via a UK-based institution to a larger audience.
- **Existing Collaboration Grants** cover the travel and incidental expenses for any member who wishes to collaborate with existing initiatives that further the aims of the network (e.g. Funding bids, NEXUS Network, Newton programme, IWA, ADBA etc.)

Available Bursaries		
	Total available (annual limit*)	Max. value per award (incl. VAT)
Travel Bursaries for early career researchers – UK only	250 (50)	£100
Travel Bursaries for early career researchers – UK to overseas	15 (3)	£1,500
Existing Collaboration Grants	150 (30)	£100

\*Bursaries will be allocated over the 5 year lifetime of the network. Therefore, for example, 3 *Travel Bursaries for early career researchers – UK to overseas* may be allocated each year for 5 years, i.e. a total of 15. The exact dates and quantities of available bursaries are subject to change and details will be posted on the network website, [www.anaerobicdigestionnet.com](http://www.anaerobicdigestionnet.com).

All bursaries must be requested and approved in advance of the planned activities taking place. We ask that you roughly estimate the anticipated spend, but will only reimburse expenditure claims supported with full receipts. Each bursary has a maximum spending limit (above). We accept no responsibility for spending that exceeds that limit.

Members might also like to investigate the BBSRC FLIP programme which supports longer exchanges than those offered by the AD Network. There are 20 available each year, exchanges last up to 24 months and cost up to £150,000 at 80% FEC. Details can be found at: <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/people-information/flexible-interchange-programme.aspx>.

### Aims and Objectives in relation to the Bursaries

These Bursaries are intended to further the aims and objectives of the AD Network by:

- encouraging and fostering collaboration between members
- enabling members to attend relevant events that they would otherwise be unlikely to access
- supporting the efforts of those who wish to build strong consortia to bid for further funding in the area

We will publicise the larger bursaries through our website. Where we have supported attendance at a conference, we expect that our contribution is acknowledged in some way at the event.

### **Eligibility - General**

Only UK-based members of the AD Network may apply for bursaries. Membership is free (see [www.anaerobicdigestionnet.com](http://www.anaerobicdigestionnet.com)).

Applicants for *Existing Collaboration Grants* may be any UK-based AD Network member.

Applicants for the *Travel bursaries for early career researchers – UK only* and *Travel bursaries for early career researchers – UK to overseas* must be academic members who qualify as an Early Career Researcher. Typically (though not exclusively), this would be an academic/postgraduate/post doctorate in a permanent position in a UK institution. This need not be full-time. To be considered under the scheme, applicants at the time of submission:

- must have no more than three years full-time employment (or the full-time equivalent taking account of career breaks, part-time employment, etc.) at lecturer or equivalent level
- should not exceed 10 years in active postgraduate research studies and postdoctoral research employment

### **Eligibility – PhD students**

The rules surrounding PhD students are complex.

#### *Travel bursaries for early career researchers – UK only*

PhD students are only eligible for these small travel bursaries to attend a specific AD Network event to facilitate their involvement in the Network (e.g. the annual AD Network Early Career Researcher event). Please check with us by email if uncertain.

#### *Travel bursaries for early career researchers – UK to overseas*

To be eligible – the PhD student or PDRA must be based at an eligible UK institution. This includes Universities and other research institutions capable of receiving BBSRC funds. All applications from PhD students MUST be accompanied by a letter of support from their supervisor (who should be BBSRC eligible).

PhD students typically have funding for travel included within their PhD stipend.

If this is not the case, the PhD student should clearly explain *why* on their application. This might be, for example, that their particular source of funding simply does not include such provision. Please give sufficient detail to justify your application to the AD Network. Explain why travel cannot take place without support.

If funding for travel is included within the PhD stipend, please explain carefully why this travel cannot take place without further support. For example, if applying to speak at a particularly expensive conference, we would want to see justification for that choice over a smaller, affordable one. If the included stipend funding has already been spent, justify why additional funds are needed to travel again. For example, is AD Network-funded work being promoted?

We anticipate competition for these larger bursaries and will only support those who make a sound case for funding. These are open to all early career researchers. Please give as much information as

you can on the application to enable us to assess your particular circumstances without the need for further clarification.

## Application Process

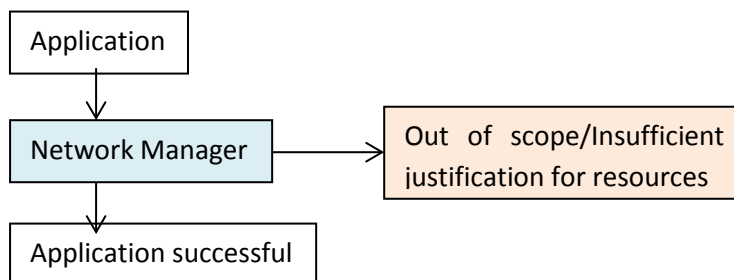
There are hundreds of smaller grants to enable all members to travel in the UK for AD Network events or collaboration. See *Travel bursaries for early career researchers – UK only* and *Existing Collaboration Grants*. These can be applied for using the same form: *Travel Bursaries ≤ £100 – UK*. Apply in advance and, if approved, up to £100 will be reimbursed for travel and incidental expenses where supported by receipts.

There is also a larger grant of up to £1500: see *Travel Bursaries for early career researchers – UK*. This is dealt with on an individual form.

### How to apply

Application is through a simple pro-forma available from [www.anaerobicdigestionnet.com](http://www.anaerobicdigestionnet.com) or by emailing [ADNet@soton.ac.uk](mailto:ADNet@soton.ac.uk). Applications are accepted at any time and should receive a response within 4 weeks from that point. Applications should be sent to [ADNet@soton.ac.uk](mailto:ADNet@soton.ac.uk) and will be acknowledged upon receipt. Should an acknowledgement not be received in good time, please contact the Network Managers directly to ensure your application is processed.

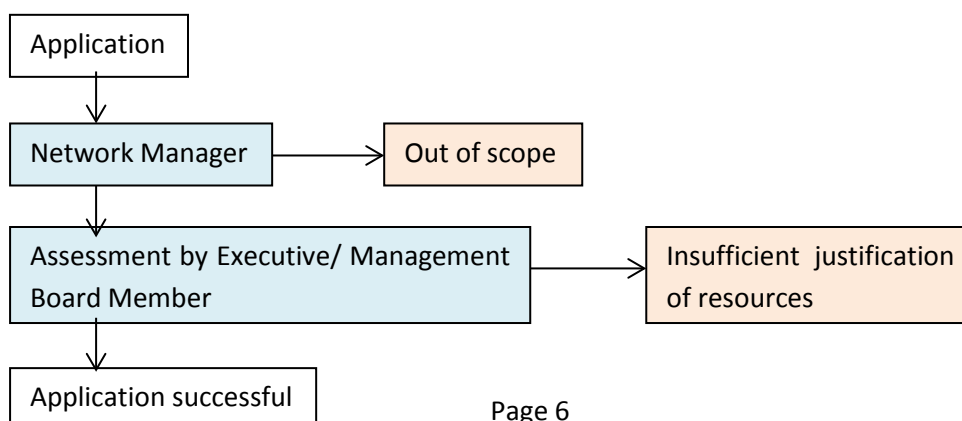
### Process for Bursary review - ≤£100



All submissions will be acknowledged by return email. Submissions will be sifted by the Network Managers to ensure they are consistent with the aims and objectives of the Network. If they are out of scope of this network, they will be rejected. They will then be briefly assessed to see if the resources sought are appropriate and justified. For example, could a cheaper form of travel suffice?

Applications may then be funded (up to the annual limit), rejected or further clarification sought from the applicant to assist the decision. We aim to assess proposals and reply within 2 weeks.

### Process for Bursary review – £1500



All submissions will be acknowledged by return email. Submissions will first be sifted by the Network Managers to ensure they are consistent with the aims and objectives of the Network. They will then be passed to a member of the Executive Board or Management Board for assessment and approval.

Applications may then be funded (up to the annual limit), rejected or further clarification sought from the applicant to assist the decision. Decisions are entirely at the discretion of the Executive Board for final approval. We aim to assess proposals and reply within 4 weeks.

The overseas travel bursaries are for researchers to present their work at high profile international meetings *which have a primary focus on some aspect of anaerobic digestion*, or where this is one of the main themes of the conference. Examples of such conferences would be the IWA biannual conference on Anaerobic Digestion which attracts around 1000 AD specialists worldwide. On a slightly smaller scale, there is the Biogas Science event which is mainly European and attracts around 300 specialists. Each year there is also the European conference and exhibition on Biomass and Bioenergy which over the last two years has had two sessions dedicated to anaerobic digestion; this event also has sessions on gasification, pyrolysis, process integration etc. and attracts around 1000 delegates of which maybe 100+ have some interest on or relationship with AD technology, including process integration, biogas upgrading, and modelling. All of these events offer huge opportunities for early career professionals to network and to have their work peer reviewed and discussed by experts in the field from around the world. In the review of your application, a major consideration will be how big an impact your work will make at the conference, and how great is the potential for networking within a peer group expert in the wider aspects of anaerobic digestion or industrial biotechnology.

Please include proof that you have been accepted for an oral presentation by the organisers with your application. If a PhD student, please include a letter of support from your supervisor and read our eligibility criteria carefully.

Note that the aim of these bursaries is to promote research in AD, conducted via a UK-based institution, to a wider audience.

### **Costs and payment**

If successful, the applicant will be informed via email. This email will confirm the maximum amount of funds that can be claimed under the bursary for the purposes stated in your application. An expenses form will be attached. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain full original receipts for their own expenditure and return the expenses form.

Funds will be paid in arrears, if supported by full receipts. Please send original receipts/travel tickets with your expenses claim form and specify the BACS or bank account details to which funds will be transferred. We cannot process your expenses claim without this information. Please ensure that you have retained copies both for your own records and in case of loss of the original receipts.

Standard University travel claim rules apply. Travel, accommodation and subsistence costs must be reasonable. No claims will be accepted for alcohol purchase. For specific enquiries prior to purchase, contact [adnet@soton.ac.uk](mailto:adnet@soton.ac.uk).

Recipients of Travel Bursaries for early career researchers-UK to overseas will also be required to submit a publically publishable, half-page report on their activities along with their expenses claim.

Should the conditions of payment of the grant present any difficulties that might hinder uptake of the award, please contact the Network Managers at [adnet@soton.ac.uk](mailto:adnet@soton.ac.uk) to discuss alternative payment arrangements.

## The Application Forms

This section explains the structure of the application forms and offers guidance on the information to include in each section. The purpose of the application form is to obtain enough information to enable us to understand how well your submission aligns with the Network objectives. Appendices are not required, but are accepted to provide extra information if considered helpful.

It is important that you address and respond to each section clearly. To help you, the guidance below provides an explanation of what is required for each field. The guidance notes are not intended to be exhaustive; you should develop your own responses based on your own skills, knowledge and experience.

Please use the following table to select the correct form for your needs.

Available Bursaries			
Bursary	Application Form	Payment	Reporting Requirements
Travel Bursaries for early career researchers – UK only	A) Travel Bursaries $\leq$ £100-UK.	In arrears. Full receipts required with completed expenses form.	None
Existing Collaboration Grants	A) Travel Bursaries $\leq$ £100-UK.	In arrears. Full receipts required with completed expenses form.	None
Travel Bursaries for early career researchers – UK to overseas	B) Travel Bursaries for Early Career Researchers-UK to overseas (max £1500)	In arrears. Full receipts required with completed expenses form.	Publishable half-page report

### Field Guidance

There are two forms for bursaries. Please use the specific field guidance.

#### A) Travel Bursaries $\leq$ £100

Bursary Application Form		
Required Fields	Guidance	Maximum word limits/ Further clarification
<b>Application details</b>		
Purpose of Travel Bursary	Please specify whether you are applying for a <i>Travel bursaries for early career researchers – UK only</i> or an <i>Existing Collaboration Grant</i>	Word limit – 10
Details of Event	Specify the name, date and	Please include a link



	location of the event	to the website, if appropriate
Funding requested from BBSRC NIBB AD Network (£)	Please estimate the maximum sum requested from the AD Network. This should not exceed £100	In pounds sterling (incl. VAT). Up to £100 permitted.
<b>Applicant contact details</b>		
Applicant's Name	Enter your full name, address, postcode, e-mail address and telephone number of the Primary Contact between the AD Network and the proposal. This will be the grant holder in the event of a successful bid.	No word limit
Institution	Please give the name, address and contact details of the Institution where you are employed	No word limit
Phone Number	Please give a contact number where we can reach you	No word limit
Email	Please give your email address	No word limit
Applicant's Career to date	Please give a brief overview of your career, with positions held, institution and dates. This will help enable us to verify the status of early career researchers.	Word limit - 200
Please confirm that you are a member of the AD Network and eligible for funding (Y/N)	See <a href="#">Eligibility</a>	Y/N
<b>Bursary Details</b>		
Please provide a brief description of the background to the bursary request and purpose of the funded travel/activity or collaboration to be carried out. Please also state how the bursary fits within the AD Network research themes remit.	Applicants requesting £100 or less need provide only a brief description.	Word limit - 100
Please list the key outcomes that will arise from this funding	Applicants requesting £100 or less need provide only a brief description.	Word limit - 100
<b>Financial Details</b>		
<b>Project costs. Please provide an estimate of the break-down of funding costs below.</b>		
Conference registration	Please state the name, date, location and amount (£) if you wish to claim for conference registration fees	In pounds sterling (Incl. VAT)
Accommodation	Please estimate the sum for your accommodation, if any.	In pounds sterling (Incl. VAT)
Travel	Please estimate the costs of all	In pounds sterling

	air/rail/taxi/bus travel	(Incl. VAT)
Other (please specify)	Please estimate your subsistence costs – if required.	In pounds sterling (Incl. VAT)
Total (£) contribution requested from AD Network	This should not exceed £100	In pounds sterling (Incl. VAT)
<b>Signature</b>		
I confirm that I wish to apply for an ADNet <i>Early Career Researcher Bursary - UK or Existing Collaboration Grant</i> and that the information contained in the application is accurate to the best of my knowledge.	Please sign, date and print your name	

B) Travel Bursaries for Early Career Researchers- UK to overseas (max £1500)

<b>Bursary Application Form</b>		
<b>Required Fields</b>	<b>Guidance</b>	<b>Maximum word limits/ Further clarification</b>
<b>Application details</b>		
Purpose of Travel Bursary	Please state the purpose of your application.	Word limit - 25
Details of Event	Specify the name, date and location of the event/conference.	Please include a link to the website, if appropriate
Funding requested from BBSRC NIBB AD Network (£)	Please estimate the maximum sum requested from the AD Network. This should not exceed £1,500	In pounds sterling (incl. VAT). Up to £1500 permitted.
<b>Applicant contact details</b>		
Applicant's Name	Enter your full name, address, postcode, e-mail address and telephone number of the Primary Contact between the AD Network and the proposal. This will be the grant holder in the event of a successful bid.	No word limit
Institution	Please give the name, address and contact details of the Institution where you are employed	No word limit
Phone Number	Please give a contact number where we can reach you	No word limit
Email	Please give your email address	No word limit
Applicant's Career to date	Please give a brief overview of your career, with positions held, institution and dates. This will help enable us to verify the	Word limit - 200

	status of early career researchers.	
Please confirm that you are a member of the AD Network and eligible for funding (Y/N)	See <a href="#">Eligibility</a>	Y/N
<b>Bursary Details</b>		
Please provide a brief description of the background to the bursary request and purpose of the funded travel/activity or collaboration to be carried out. Please also state how the bursary fits within the AD Network research themes remit.	Applicants should use this opportunity to make a case for funding as we anticipate competition for the awards.	Word limit - 400
Please list the key outcomes that will arise from this funding	Applicants should explain how this award furthers the objectives of the AD Network. This section could cover international networking, dissemination of research, information exchange etc.	Word limit- 300
<b>Financial Details</b>		
<b>Project costs. Please provide an estimate of the break-down of funding costs below.</b>		
Conference registration	Please state the name, date, location and amount (£) if you wish to claim for conference registration fees	In pounds sterling (Incl. VAT)
Accommodation	Please estimate the sum for your accommodation. Only reasonable costs for the destination will be reimbursed e.g. up to 3* accommodation.	In pounds sterling (Incl. VAT)
Travel	Please estimate the costs of all air/rail/taxi/bus travel. Only reasonable costs will be reimbursed. The cheapest form of available transport should always be used.	In pounds sterling (Incl. VAT) Please note that in case of air travel a valid boarding pass for the return journey is required as proof of travel.
Other (please specify)	Please estimate your subsistence costs – if required. Only reasonable costs will be reimbursed.	In pounds sterling (Incl. VAT) No alcohol purchases are permitted.
Total (£) contribution requested from AD Network	This should not exceed £1,500	In pounds sterling (Incl. VAT)
<b>Signature</b>		
Applicant I confirm that I wish to apply for an ADNet <i>Early Career Researcher Bursary – UK to overseas</i> and that the information contained in the	Please sign, date and print your name	

application is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I agree to provide a half page summary report upon completion of the bursary.		
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For this bursary, we also request that the applicant attach a copy of the abstract and the conference invitation letter as proof that an oral presentation of the paper is being given.

## Other Information

### Data Protection Regulations

The PI of the BBSRC NIBB grant has the responsibility for keeping data relating to the grant secure and safe. Copies of the applications will be made available to the BBSRC, who will use this information for research related activities, including but not limited to, transfer of funds, statistical analysis in relation to evaluation of the BBSRC NIBB, study of trends and policy and strategy studies.

Copies will also be made available to members of the Executive Board and Management Board for the purpose of assessment and evaluation such as; processing the proposal, the award of any consequential grant, and for the payment, maintenance and review of the grant. They will be expected to adhere to the highest standards of scientific integrity as laid down by the BBSRC (Ref: [http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Policies/good\\_scientific\\_practice.pdf](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Policies/good_scientific_practice.pdf)).

To meet the Research Councils' obligations for public accountability and the dissemination of information, details of funded awards may also be made available on the Research Councils' websites and other publically available databases, and in reports, documents and mailing lists.

We are expecting applicants to conform to the BBSRC guidelines for data sharing: <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/publications/policy/data-sharing-policy.aspx> and good scientific practice: [http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Policies/good\\_scientific\\_practice.pdf](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Policies/good_scientific_practice.pdf).

### Contact Details

For any queries, please contact the Network Managers:

Angela Bywater/Dr Louise Byfield at [ADNet@soton.ac.uk](mailto:ADNet@soton.ac.uk)  
Tel: 023 8059 1281

Post: AD Network, Building 26, Room 2011, University of Southampton, Highfield Campus, University Road, Southampton, SO17 1BJ.