Grant Scheme
An alternative way for research to be managed and funded

Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the RSSB Research and Development Grant Scheme?

The RSSB Research and Development Grant Scheme is a mechanism for funding railway research and development that was launched in June 2009. The mechanism aims to support the rail industry and its stakeholders by contributing to the funding of their research and development where this will bring a demonstrable benefit.

What does the Grant Scheme route offer to applicants?

- Rapid decision making – The aim is to decide on whether to award a grant on average within four weeks of receiving the application. The actual time will depend on the nature of the project, on the size of the economic support requested, and on the application providing sufficient details.
- Retention of the management of projects by the organisation leading the consortium – By directly managing it, the consortium, and in particular the organisation leading it, can better control and steer the specification and delivery, making sure that the project meets the consortium needs.
- A bespoke approach to sharing intellectual property rights - Intellectual property rights can rest with the consortium or individual organisations. The findings of the project are expected to be published and shared with the rest of the industry, with flexibility on the timing and extent of findings being shared.

How does the Grant Scheme benefit the rail industry?

- Facilitating the development of products and solutions by enabling some sharing of the costs and risks associated with it
- High degree of stakeholder ‘buy-in’ to the delivery and implementation of research outputs as they commits their own resources
- Ensuring that the existence of the work and key findings are captured and shared across industry to avoid duplication and allow cross-fertilisation

Who can apply for a RSSB Research and Development Grant?

Applications for the grant are open to a consortium of at least two potential users of the research one of which must be a RSSB member. The RSSB member is to champion the application. This means that the RSSB member is expected to be the lead organisation or play a key role in the consortium, including providing a financial contribution.

How much of the project costs can be covered by the Grant?

Grants are made up to a maximum of 50% of the total project cost. The contribution from the consortium must be made up of at least 20% cash (ie incremental costs), the remainder being in-kind contributions (eg use of existing equipment and resources). Contribution from grants received from other sources cannot be counted toward the consortium contribution.
What projects are eligible for a Grant?

For a project to be eligible for the RSSB Research and Development Grant Scheme the following criteria must be met:

- The application must be made by a consortium of at least two potential users of the research outputs, one of which must be a RSSB member. A list of RSSB members can be found on the RSSB website.
- The RSSB member is to champion the application. This means that the RSSB member is expected to be the lead organisation or play a key role in the consortium, including providing a financial contribution.
- The project must be research or development. Commercial product development cannot be included, though work to produce early prototypes or carry out trials could be considered if a generic benefit can be shown.
- There must be wider benefit to the rail industry from the work.
- Arrangements regarding intellectual property rights must be agreed in advance and the findings are expected to be published after an agreed time period.
- The consortium should have an agreement in place with an identified Lead Organisation for contractual purposes.

How do I apply for a RSSB Research and Development Grant?

If you would like any further information on the scheme, or to discuss a project for funding, please contact us via research.grant@rssb.co.uk.

Can I apply if the research has already started?

Applications cannot be made for projects that have already started or have been committed to, as the Grant Scheme is aimed at promoting research and development that would not go ahead without a grant being awarded.

How are Grant applications assessed?

All applications are assessed using a standard set of criteria by a RSSB panel comprising subject matter experts, analysts and senior R&D management. The high-level criteria considered are:

- Planning and commitment demonstrated by the consortium
- Likelihood of success
- Rewards including wider industry benefits

Once a Grant has been awarded, what role does RSSB play?

In some cases RSSB may accept involvement as an active member or advisor to the consortium (eg providing specialist technical input). It is not intended that RSSB should have a project management role. Where RSSB is not a member of the consortium it will adopt a 'light touch' approach to its involvement in the research project, as the consortium will manage the project. RSSB's role would
generally be limited to:

- Proposal assessment and selection
- Award of grant to successful proposals
- Making payments, at stage gates specified in the Grant Agreement, having ensured that the consortium contributions have been delivered
- Monitoring the success of individual projects and the overall benefits delivered by the grant scheme
- Ensuring that the benefits of the research flow back to the industry
- Publication of the findings and sharing with RSSB members

**When do proposals have to be received by?**

There is a continuous call for proposals which are assessed shortly after they are received.

**What are the types of costs that the Grant contribution could cover?**

- Labour Costs - This includes the costs of personnel from the consortium organisations working directly on the project. The costs of project management as well as report writing are eligible and should be included within the labour totals.
- Travel and subsistence – This includes costs incurred exclusively for progressing the project.
- Subcontractor – This includes any work that is essential to the success of the project and that is outsourced because of lack of time or expertise within the consortium.
- Capital equipment – This includes capital equipment and tools bought or consumed on the project
- Materials - These are the materials to be consumed on the project, and purchased from third parties.

The following are ineligible costs:

- Overheads, eg desk space for the project team
- Interest, eg hire-purchase interest
- Patent costs
- Advertising
- Certification
- Entertainment
- Software
- Training

**Is the Grant Scheme the same as the EPSRC/ DfT/ RSSB Strategic Partnership?**

No, the EPSRC/ DfT/ RSSB Strategic Partnership is a separate funding scheme aimed at more blue sky type research. Information about this can be found by [following this link](#).
How is the Grant Scheme different from research funded and managed by RSSB?

The RSSB-managed research is usually in response to issues raised by cross-industry groups. Wherever an idea originates, a cross-industry group will need to be involved in building consensus for the ‘case for research’ and endorsing the business case, as well as in steering the specification, procurement, delivery and publishing stages of research. Also, intellectual property generated by these research projects is generally owned by RSSB on the behalf of the rail industry. To know more about the governance of these projects, please see the Guide to cross-industry research and development.

Research funded by the R&D Grant Scheme does not involve a cross-industry client group, as industry buy-in is demonstrated by the consortium members and their willingness to invest money in the project. Research funded via the Grant Scheme is not normally managed by RSSB, as the consortium lead is best placed to manage and control project delivery. Intellectual property arrangements are also more flexible in recognition of the financial contribution made by the consortium.