

Seed Funding: Alliances for Research Challenges in Quantum Technologies & Food

For this funding round, the Alliances for Research Challenges (ARC) in Quantum Technologies (quantum-tech-alliance.co.uk) and Food (scaf-arc.co.uk) have set aside money specifically for projects that bring together quantum technology and the food sector.

Projects with a realistic and well laid-out path to obtaining further funding will be prioritised.

Overview

The Quantum Tech Alliance seeks to connect societal challenges to quantum-enabled solutions and ensure the responsible development of quantum technologies for society.

The Scottish Alliance for Food (SCAF) envisions a transformed food system prioritising health and environmental sustainability for all, regardless of socioeconomic status.

Seed funding is available to support projects which align with the ARCs. The scope of these projects is flexible, but they should contribute to one or more of the aims of the Alliances in their respective challenge areas:

- Creating new interdisciplinary projects in the quantum technologies and food sectors, including collaborations within academia, or between academia and industry.
- Generating effective collaborations relating to quantum technologies and food/nutrition research with those working in areas which have been traditionally less involved in the sector, including (but not limited to) projects involving the Arts, Social Sciences, Humanities, and Economics.
- Leveraging new funding opportunities into the Scottish quantum technologies community/food and nutrition research.
- Supporting the training/development of Early Career Researchers.
- Effectively engaging and interacting with the public around quantum technologies / creating a consensus and shared understanding around food and nutrition

For applications to the joint call, we invite proposals for interdisciplinary and/or cross-sectoral projects that explore how quantum technologies can be applied to drive innovation in food and nutrition.

List of Example Funded Activities

These examples are not exhaustive but are intended to provide some examples of possible projects:

- Proof-of-principle research projects (including support for consumables)
- Production of demonstrators
- Secondments/internships (including funding of undergraduate/PhD hours provided this is compatible with institutional policies)
- Cross-disciplinary workshops/sandpits
- Summer/winter schools or other training activities
- Public engagement events and activities
- Research visits that enable collaboration across typical discipline boundaries
- Consortium building activity (e.g., towards a collaborative funding opportunity)
- New initiatives or prizes which support a positive research culture and environment

Ineligible Costs

Projects will be awarded at 100% FEC. Funding must not be used for the purposes of:

- Indirect or estates related costs at the institution you are based in.
- Costs relating to intellectual property protection, including but not limited to registering, maintaining, or supporting patents.

Award Value

We expect most awards to be less than £10k.

Applicant Eligibility

Applications are welcome across career stages, from PhD to Professor level (or the equivalent of these). Early Career Researchers are particularly welcome to apply but applicants' positions must extend beyond the period of the project.

We welcome applications from any organisation (academia, industry, non-profit etc.), and encourage cross-discipline and cross-sectoral collaborative projects involving multiple partners.

Partners can be from outside Scotland but proposals need to include at least one named partner from a Scottish university/higher education institution (HEI). The Scottish HEI partner does not have to lead the bid but must play an active role in the project.

Project Duration

We expect most projects to be less than or equal to 6 months in duration. Longer projects may be supported if a suitable justification is given.



Application Process

Please complete the Application Form and email it to quantum-alliance@glasgow.ac.uk with the email title: 'Seed funding application'.

Submission Timeline

This call is open from 30 October 2025, and applications must be submitted by 5pm, 5th December 2025.

Multiple rounds of funding will be distributed over the duration of the ARCs. Details of future funding rounds will be announced in due course, including on the Quantum ARC website (quantum-tech-alliance.co.uk) and SCAF website (scaf-arc.co.uk).

Assessment

Applications will be reviewed independently by two reviewers selected by the ARC leadership, with applications to the joint call assessed by one reviewer from each ARC. Reviewers will often have a broad range of expertise relevant to the ARC (including specialists outside of STEM subjects), and the proposal should therefore be prepared with this in mind. The reviewers will assess the applications against the following essential criteria:

- Contribution to the aims of the ARC (outlined above)
- Quality of the proposal including feasibility, timeliness, and appropriateness of resources
- Potential impact
- Appropriate consideration of EDI in the proposal

And the following desirable criteria (you do not need to meet all of these and the assessment process will focus on the quality of the criterion/criteria met, rather than the quantity met. For example, an excellent contribution to a single desirable criterion could score more highly than a poorer contribution to multiple criteria.):

- Promotion of fruitful interdisciplinary or cross-sector dialogue
- Ability to leverage this proposal for further activities that are aligned with the ARCs' aims
- Effective public engagement
- Contribution to ECR development
- Sustainability

Suggested reviewers

We welcome suggestions for potential reviewers, including early career researchers at the level of postdoctoral researcher (or equivalent) and above. Reviewers should not have any conflict of interest with reviewing the project.

Payment Arrangements

Cost details should be submitted in the application. The award will be made to the lead applicant. Payment of the award is in arrears as detailed below.

The Award Holder shall invoice The University of Glasgow quarterly in arrears based on actual expenditure and The University Glasgow shall pay the Award Holder within thirty (30) days of a valid invoice, subject always to receipt of funds from the Funder and subject to the satisfactory completion by the Award Holder of any due diligence checks as may be reasonably required. The final invoice should be sent to The University of Glasgow within one month of the end of the Project. The cost statement should include the breakdown of the indexed full economic cost (FEC) figures as well as the actual sums claimed.

Post-award expectations

We expect awardees to provide a short report on their project following its completion.

Enquiries

Any questions can be addressed to quantum-alliance@glasgow.ac.uk. Questions related to the joint call with SCAF can also be directed to scaf@glasgow.ac.uk.