

BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING PROGRAMME (BEP) RUN 2 CALL FOR PROPOSAL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

ABOUT THE BEP	
Q1	Who is administering the BEP? What kind of projects does the BEP support?
Ans	<p>The BEP is administered by the A*STAR Health & MedTech Horizontal Technology Programme Office (HMT HTPO), and is a competitive, multidisciplinary funding initiative which supports clinically-driven MedTech innovation with promising commercialization potential.</p> <p>The BEP is geared to support MedTech projects in achieving proof-of-concept (i.e. concept generation, testing of a technology on the clinical need, up to early prototype testing). This is described as Technology Readiness Levels 2-4 (TRL 2-4). For reference, the TRL scale is described in the Annex of the 'BEP Run 2 – Call for proposal' Information Deck.</p> <p>All funded projects must demonstrate high potential for commercial outcome and show a high likelihood of rapid impact on patient care.</p> <p>For definitions on what is covered under MedTech, please refer to the section on "Scope of MedTech" in the 'BEP Run 2 – Call for proposal' Information Deck.</p> <p><u>About the Health & MedTech Horizontal Technology Programme Office:</u> The HMT HTPO strives to unite A*STAR's HealthTech & MedTech capabilities to contribute towards national healthcare priorities and build a sustainable pipeline for industry adoption. Under this mandate, one of the key pillars is to build a sustainable pipeline of MedTech innovations, through establishing funding initiatives such as the BEP.</p>
Q2	When will the BEP Run 2 call for proposal be opened?
Ans	The BEP Run 2 Call for proposal will open on 21st June 2021 , and will close on 30th July 2021 .

	<p>The application window has taken into account ample time for interested teams to obtain internal clearance that may be required for their institutes/organizations.</p> <p>No further extension will be granted for submissions.</p> <p>Virtual roadshows have been scheduled on <u>05 July 2021 and 19 July 2021</u>, where you will have the opportunity to have your queries addressed. Please register for the session you wish to attend, and the meeting link will be sent to your e-mail.</p>
Q3	How do I apply for the BEP?
Ans	<p>LOI submissions will only be accepted via iGrants. Email applications will <u>not</u> be accepted. Incomplete submissions will be disqualified.</p> <p>Refer to the section on “Application Guidelines” in the ‘BEP Run 2 – Call for proposal’ Information Deck.</p> <p>If you encounter difficulties with account creation on iGrants, please write to A-STAR_OGA@hq.a-star.edu.sg for help.</p>
Q4	What are the key dates I should take note of?
Ans	<p>After the LOI submission deadline, there will be a period of review to shortlist potential teams. Shortlisted teams will be informed <u>by early September 2021</u> of their team’s eligibility to progress in the selection process.</p> <p>Shortlisted teams will be invited to attend a 2-day Singapore Biodesign workshop on <u>20th & 21st September 2021</u>.</p> <p>The deadline for full proposal submission is <u>6th October 2021</u>.</p> <p>Teams will be invited to present and defend their proposals at the Final Review, which will be held <u>in early November 2021</u>. Teams will be informed of the scheduling for the Final Review closer to the date.</p> <p>Successful teams can expect to receive the Letter of Allocation (LOA) in <u>end December 2021</u>.</p>

Q5	Is there a specific clinical domain which will be prioritized for the BEP?
Ans	No, the BEP is not restricted to any particular clinical area.
ABOUT PROJECT TEAMS	
Q6	May I choose <u>not</u> to collaborate with an A*STAR PI for this BEP?
Ans	As BEP is funded through the A*STAR Core budget, it is mandatory that A*STAR is represented on each application, in the position of Technical Lead Principal Investigator (PI). In addition, multiple A*STAR performers can collaborate on a single project, where there is one main Technical Lead PI, and others as Co-Investigator(s).
Q7	Can I work with a Clinical PI from a private organization?
Ans	To be eligible for BEP, Clinical PIs must hold a primary appointment with a public healthcare institution or academic medical school in Singapore and be salaried by the institution. You may choose to collaborate with a clinical Collaborator, but Collaborators will not receive any funding. However, note that your proposal must still have a Clinical PI on top of any other clinical Collaborator.
Q8	Who should I list as Collaborators?
Ans	List only individuals who are committed to the project, have participated in preparing the proposals and will actively perform the work. Avoid honorific or collaborations “in name only.”
ABOUT THE APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS	
Q9	May I submit copies of relevant publications along with the LOI?
Ans	No, this is not necessary.
Q10	Will you accept a video showing how my system works?
Ans	No. If shortlisted for the full proposal stage, your team will have an opportunity to present at the Final Review. Videos and/or other demonstrations (prototype model etc.) can be incorporated into your presentation for the Final Review.

Q11	Why do I need to attend the Singapore Biodesign workshop? Who is Singapore Biodesign?
Ans	<p>The Singapore Biodesign (SB) workshop has been designed to equip shortlisted applicants of the BEP with the Biodesign methodology. The robust Biodesign methodology (i.e. Identify, Invent, Implement) has consistently demonstrated an outstanding track record in the ability to de-risk projects at the planning stages.</p> <p>The goal of the workshop is to provide a guided hands-on and interactive session for project teams to spend dedicated time to deliberate and de-risk the 'identify', 'invent' and 'implement' components of their project, leading to the write-up of the full proposal. The workshop will provide guidance to teams in drafting the full proposal with the right elements for evaluation.</p> <p>The workshop also provides a platform for promoting good working dynamics within the project team as well as networking with the wider A*STAR MedTech community.</p> <p>To progress to the Full Proposal stage, teams (up to 3 pax) are required to attend the workshop, with compulsory attendance for Clinical and Technical PIs.</p> <p><u>About Singapore Biodesign:</u> SB is focused on high-touch development of healthtech talent centered on a needs-based approach and quality industry mentoring to accelerate health technology innovation and adoption for Asia's unmet healthcare needs. SB is therefore poised to provide training support to inculcate a Biodesign approach for dedicated project teams, and to guide teams in preparation of the full proposal stage with a focus on understanding the clinical need and commercialization potential.</p>
Q12	If my team is shortlisted, who from my team should attend the SB workshop? What if I am unavailable to attend?
Ans	<p>It is compulsory for both the Clinical PI and Technical PI to attend the 2-day workshop.</p> <p>However, if the Technical PI can demonstrate that he/she is familiar with the Biodesign process or has the experience and knowhow of bringing MedTech projects to market, and can justify</p>

	<p>why another member of the team should attend, the team may request to delegate the attendance to another member, subject to the approval of the HMT HTPO.</p> <p>The dates for the workshop have been shared at the call for proposal. Barring significant unforeseen circumstances, teams are expected to bookmark the dates of the workshop, and to make themselves available in the event they are shortlisted and selected to attend.</p> <p>Failure to attend the workshop may result in your submission being disqualified.</p>
Q13	Why is the review and selection process so lengthy?
Ans	From LOI submission deadline to in-principle approval, the process is projected to span 5 months. This includes up to 1 month for shortlisted teams to craft a full proposal for submission and 2 stages of review and selection. For details on the selection process, please refer to the section on “Review Process & Assessment Criteria” in the ‘BEP Run 2 – Call for proposal’ Information Deck.
Q14	Will my proposal be treated confidentially?
Ans	All proposals are managed with reasonable effort to ensure that intellectual property (IP) rights and confidential plans are protected. However, per standard industry practice, investigators should take all the required steps to protect valuable IP, and should always exercise discretion when sharing sensitive material.
ABOUT FUNDING	
Q15	How much funding will be allocated to each investigator (i.e. PI/Co-I) on the project? How will the funding be disbursed?
Ans	The amount of funding that will go to each investigator should be discussed and agreed upon by all parties funded by BEP. The funding should go toward supporting the manpower needed, equipment required and other operating expenses for the project, and should be commensurate with the work undertaken by the respective investigators. The amount to each investigator will therefore vary depending on the project.

	LOA will be issued to successful teams with a defined budget breakdown (by institution) provided by the team and subject to approval by the HMT HTPO. Funds allocated to the investigators will be issued to the Host Institution of the respective PIs/Co-Is. Host Institutions will receive the funds on a quarterly disbursement basis via iGrants.
Q16	What are the limitations on EOM under the BEP?
Ans	<p>PIs are encouraged to only consider recruiting new hires if necessary. As the duration is only 12-18 months, PIs are advised to consider using the fund to support existing staff, rather than to use it to fund new hires. This is because the hiring process can take time, and could therefore cause delays in the execution of work. Hiring short-term staff could also be disruptive to business continuity.</p> <p>However, it is also acknowledged that there are circumstances under which the PI may need to recruit new staff; therefore strictly speaking, PIs are not prohibited from using EOM to fund new hires.</p> <p>PI EOM is not allowed to be funded under the BEP.</p>
Q17	Does the BEP fund clinical trials?
Ans	The BEP is geared toward Proof-of-Concept projects, and this does not include clinical trials. Large-scale clinical trials should be funded in subsequent funding stages from other appropriate sources.
Q18	Are there guidelines for the management of the seed fund?
Ans	<p>Yes. Unless otherwise explicitly stated, PIs are expected to comply with the A*STAR Grants Terms & Conditions (version 2.0, effective 1 Jan 2020; "T&Cs"), as well as the Guidelines for the Management of A*STAR Grants (version 2.0, effective 1 Jan 2020; "Grant Guidelines"), as issued by the A*STAR Office of Grant Administration.</p> <p>The T&Cs and Grant Guidelines will be issued to selected teams upon LOA.</p> <p>For specifications that deviate from the Grant Guidelines, the</p>

	HMT HTPO reserves the right to make the final judgement on the use of the BEP funding, subject to the appropriate approval.
Q19	When is funding activated?
Ans	<p>Successful teams will receive the LOA by Dec 2021. Funding is expected to be available after the HMT HTPO receives the acceptance from the successful applicants, but is contingent on the verification of the necessary IRB/IACUC approvals (if any).</p> <p>As LOAs take time to process, the HMT HTPO will inform the successful applicants once the project has been approved in principle (after the Final Review).</p>
Q20	Do I include indirect cost/overheads into the budgeting? Who does this apply to?
Ans	<p>BEP funding is from A*STAR's core, hence A*STAR Overheads Policy does not apply to A*STAR institutes.</p> <p>However, funds flow to external institutes are still subject to the respective institute's overheads policy.</p>