

The British Society of Soil Science Interdisciplinary Grant for Early Career Researchers and Professionals

Applicant's guidelines v1.0

Table of Contents:

1 Overview	2
2 Eligibility and number of participants	2
3 Award conditions and funding	2
4 Application	3
4.1 Application process.....	3
4.2 The application Form	4
4.3 Case for Support	4
4.4 Diagrammatic workplan	5
4.5 Justification of resources	5
5 Assessment criteria	6

1 Overview

There will be a grant available for early career professionals attending and registered to Eurosoil 2021 who wish to develop their own ideas, build a track record in their chosen soil science discipline(s) and work in multi-disciplinary teams. Participating delegates will create an interdisciplinary team (see section 4) and develop a project tackling one or more of the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) related to soils: No poverty (SDG1), Zero hunger (SDG2), Good Health and Wellbeing (SDG3), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG6 & SDG15), Sustainable cities and communities (SDG11), and/or Climate Action (SDG13).

The British Society of Soil Science (BSSS) was founded in 1947 and is an established international membership organisation and charity committed to the study of soil in its widest aspects. The society brings together those working within academia, practitioners implementing soil science in industry and all those working with, or with an interest in soils.

We promote research and education, both academically and in practice, and build collaborative partnerships to help safeguard our soil for the future. This includes hosting the World Congress of Soil Science 2022 in Glasgow, where those with an interest in soil science can meet to discuss the critical global issues relating to soil.

This grant provides an ideal opportunity to highlight the importance of soil science research and collaboration across interdisciplinary teams.

Teams need to include at least two attendees or delegates to Eurosoil 2021 and the application must be made by one of these members. In addition, when relevant for the project, the team can propose further partnerships with early career professionals not attending Eurosoil 2021. Each team can consist of a maximum of 5 people.

2 Eligibility and number of participants

This grant scheme is intended for: a) PhD students, b) post-doctoral researchers without a permanent position, and c) non-academic early career soil professionals. To be eligible, academic applicants cannot have been Principal Investigator or co-Investigator in any major funded grant or have had a permanent position in academia. Soil professionals will need to have up to 7 years of experience in the soil sector. . All members of the group must meet one of the above categories.

The number of group participants is limited to 100 Eurosoil 2021 attendees.

3 Award conditions and funding

One grant of up to €5,000 is available, which has been sponsored by the [British Society of Soil Science](#) (BSSS). The grant will be paid to the recipients in UK pounds sterling at the prevailing exchange rate.

The grant prize must be used to perform research related activities or to transfer knowledge to the sector. It must not be used to pay salaries, overheads, attendance at conferences or to cover publication costs. For example, the grant prize could be used to obtain preliminary data, develop proof of concept of the research or knowledge transfer effort, and organize

workshops or meetings to prepare bigger initiatives. Please, note that the submitted project must be **stand-alone, independent from the current activity** of the co-applicants: the money cannot be used to expand a component of an already funded study.

Obtaining required permits and permissions required to undertake the funded project is the responsibility of the applicants.

The research is not subedited to any specific country.

The grant prize is given to the applicants and not to their organisations.

The project team will have to submit a 1-page report to the satisfaction of the grant sponsor, BSSS, at the end of the project.

4 Application

4.1 Application process

The development, submission and award of the grants will take place during the conference week and organised as follows:

Step 1. Interested delegates will be required to attend an initial workshop “Early Career Scientists Grant Contest” held the first day of Eurosoil (**Monday 23 August**). No preregistration to the initial workshop is required. Opportunities for the attendees to network will be provided. During this session, interested participants will have to gather in interdisciplinary groups of at least two attendees and start developing their project ideas. The session conveners will provide support and advice, and the teams will begin filling the application documentation.

Step 2. The team will undertake **autonomous work** between **23 and 25 August**. The team will further develop the project idea and submit the application documentation. This documentation includes:

- 1) an application form (see section 4.2)
- 2) a case for support (see section 4.3), and
- 3) a diagrammatic work plan (see section 4.4).

The documentation must be submitted online by the applicants to admin@soils.org.uk by on 25 August 2021 at 12:00pm.

The application will be reviewed by Eurosoil Committee members and one member of the BSSS Grants and Awards Committee. Projects submitted by successful applicants will be required to achieve a minimum quality.

Step 3. The winning project will be **announced at the closing conference** of Eurosoil on Friday **27 August 2021**. The award may be subject to conditions applied by the reviewing panel.

Step 4. The winning team will have **12 months to undertake the funded project**. A justification of resources document of up to 1 page (see section 4.5) by Monday 27 September 2021 at 5:00pm (UK time).

Step 5. At the end of the grant, a brief **1-page report must be submitted to BSSS**. As required by BSSS, grant recipients agree to:

- Present at a future BSSS meeting (presenting remotely will be considered for international recipients)
- Write an article to appear in BSSS journals (European Journal of Soil Science and Soil Use and Management) and/or website
- Provide copyright-free images of the project or taken whilst completing the project which could appear in BSSS journals and/ or website
- Acknowledge the BSSS funding in all presentations, press releases, and activities relating to the grant output
- Provide any tangible outcomes of grant funding, which may include but is not limited to, factsheets, teaching materials, event programmes, to BSSS which will be hosted on the website
- Provide an interview with, or complete a case study form, which will be used to promote the outcome of the grant award to BSSS members and the wider public via BSSS journals and/or website.

BSSS may ask grant recipients to undertake additional activities to promote the outcome of the grant. These potential activities are set out at: <https://soils.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/2020-Terms-and-Conditions.pdf>.

4.2 The application Form

Applicants will be required to complete the application form which will include the:

- title of the project
- amount of funding requested
- names and roles of the applicants in the group
- project executive summary and
- project lay summary.

The summary is intended as an overview of the project suggested by the applicants aimed at specialised readers. Unlike the executive summary, the lay summary is intended to explain the project to non-specialised public.

4.3 Case for Support

Applicants must describe their plans for the grant in a case for support document to be annexed to the application form. While writing the case for support, applicants should note the available assessment criteria (section 5).

In addition to the title of the project, it is suggested that the case for support includes:

- **Applicants.** Description of the applicants' profiles and their adequacy for the research intended.
- **Scientific background.** Describe briefly the relevant scientific background to frame the project, highlighting current knowledge gaps.
- **Aim of the project.** Describe the aim(s) of the suggested project including, when relevant, specific objectives.

- **Workplan.** This section should describe how the research will be organised, describing relevant tasks, deliverables and milestones (see section 4.4). A diagrammatic work plan is optional but, if provided, must be submitted in a separate document (see section 4.4).
- **Impact of the research.** Describe briefly how the research will contribute to the sustainable development goals highlighted in the application form.
- **Independence statement.** This section should demonstrate the independence of the proposed project from the applicants' current research/innovation activities.
- **Key references.** Include references cited at the end of the case for support. There is no specific style, but the reference must include sufficient information for reviewers to easily locate the articles listed.

The case for support document must be written in 11-point Arial font A4 size, with all page margins set to 2 cm. The page limit for the Case for Support is 2 sides of A4, including figures and references.

4.4 Diagrammatic workplan

A diagrammatic work plan illustrating the workplan described in the Case for Support is highly recommended but optional. This should be a standalone document and it cannot be used to extend the case for support. Project-specific timelines, milestones and deliverables should be clearly and accurately shown.

Deliverables are distinct outputs of the action, meaningful to attain the action's overall objectives (e.g., reports, technical diagrams, ...). Milestones are check points in the action allowing to chart progress (e.g., completion of a key deliverable, critical decision point in the adoption of different technologies or strategies in the light of the action's development).

The workplan should not exceed 1 side of A4.

4.5 Justification of resources

The winning team will have to submit a justification of resources document of up to 1 page (see section 4.1). The JoR is a free text document providing a justification of the funding amount requested on the application form.

We recommend matching the costs to the headings shown in Table 1. Subheading can be used to better explain the resources requested.

Table 1. Justification of Resources heading and brief description.

JoR heading	Description
Travel and subsistence	Resources required for travelling purposes (e.g., meetings, traveling for sampling purposes).
Other directly incurred costs	Costs directly derived from the realisation of the project. For example, experimentation consumables or advertising costs should go in this heading.
Impact	Resources aimed at boosting the impact of the research among the general public.

5 Assessment criteria

The activity proposed will be assessed according to:

- (i) Quality of the proposed research or transfer knowledge activity (50%)
- (ii) Fit within the identified SDG(s) (10%)
- (iii) Impact potential across the identified stakeholders (10%)
- (iv) Fit within the identified SDG(s) (10%)
- (v) Feasibility (20%).