

Identification of UK Biomedical Community Access Nodes for Euro-Biolmaging – Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the purpose of this activity?

This activity seeks to identify new biomedical imaging facilities to join the existing UK Node of biological imaging infrastructure for community access within the UK. The call is linked to the UK membership of Euro-Biolmaging (EuBI, <https://www.eurobioimaging.eu/>), with successful Node candidates expected to dedicate a fair proportion of capacity for the wider EuBI community.

2. What do you mean by "biomedical imaging", and how does this differ from "biological imaging"?

Euro-Biolmaging distinguishes between two imaging communities: biological imaging, coordinated through the EuBI Bio-Hub, and biomedical imaging, coordinated through the EuBI Med-Hub. This call is specifically for facilities that fall within the **biomedical imaging** community.

In the EuBI context, biomedical imaging refers to technologies used for **in vivo imaging of animals or human subjects**, primarily in the context of disease research, drug development, or clinical/translational science. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), including high-field and ultra-high-field systems
- Nuclear imaging: PET, SPECT, CT, and bimodal combinations (e.g. PET/CT, PET/MRI)
- Ultrasound and photoacoustic imaging
- Optical imaging for in vivo animal studies
- Clinical and preclinical imaging for human and animal subjects

Biological imaging — such as light microscopy (confocal, super-resolution, MINFLUX), electron microscopy, and related cell and molecular imaging technologies — is not the focus of this call. The UK Node already includes biological imaging sites, established through the previous call. Facilities whose primary offer is in this area should not apply via this route.

We recognise there are grey areas. Facilities that work with **ex vivo animal tissue, organoids, or ex vivo human tissue** may find themselves spanning both communities. If you are unsure whether your facility's primary focus is considered biomedical in the EuBI sense, please review the [EuBI Technologies pages](#) and the [existing EuBI Node portfolio](#), or contact us at georgina@rms.org.uk to discuss before applying.

3. Is any UKRI funding associated with this call?

No funding is directly associated with this call. However, we do have separate funding for the UK Node to support professional development of core facility staff and for supporting user access projects.

4. Does my application need to fall within MRC remit?

Euro-Biolmaging includes both bioimaging and biomedical imaging technologies and facilities. Applications in biomedical areas only are welcome in this call.

Facilities with a focus on physical and material sciences are not suitable for this particular call. We are looking for facilities with an already established user base in biomedical imaging.

5. Who is eligible to apply?

The call is open to all UK-based imaging facilities who are able to offer sufficient capacity (at least 20%) for use by Euro-Biolmaging members.

Lead applicants should be eligible to receive UKRI funding and be associated with a UK Imaging facility (please see here: <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/find-out-if-you-can-apply-for-funding/>)

6. What type of facility would you consider suitable for this exercise?

While a range of facilities are eligible to apply for this call, there will be a particular focus on uniqueness, strategic importance and rare or multi-modal imaging capabilities that are not already offered by Euro-Biolmaging (<https://www.eurobioimaging.eu/service>).

7. You are looking for facilities who are able to offer sufficient capacity. What constitutes “sufficient”?

Euro-Biolmaging require a guarantee to provide open access for Euro-Biolmaging users to at least 50% of this newly created capacity as part of their Node application process, but for this UK Node call we are not mandating this. Instead we request that all Node candidates declare a minimum of 20% capacity commitment, recognising that what constitutes 20% could be different for different types of Nodes and capabilities.

Please keep in mind that if successful you need to be in a position to offer enough capacity to add value to the UK infrastructure as well as EuBI.

8. I would like to apply, but our facility currently has no spare capacity. Would it still be useful for me to apply now?

Proposed Nodes must be able to demonstrate immediate capacity to support new users. However, we are very keen to hear from potential future Nodes who do not have current capacity but would be interested in applying for node status in future should that capacity become available. This helps us to understand future breadth and also where investments might need to be made if specific areas are of strategic importance. Please contact us using Georgina@rms.org.uk

9. My proposal involves partners from multiple institutions. Should I submit a single application or separate applications for all institutions?

Please submit one single application including all institutions involved in the proposed Node candidate.

10. Does the host institution need to provide a financial contribution?

Financial contributions from the host institution(s) and/or other external sources are welcome but are not mandatory.

However, clear statements of support from the host institution(s) are essential, in particular those that provide assurances of the continuity of support for the facility. Institutional commitments directed towards staff posts to fulfil aspects such as running and maintenance of the facility, as well as training of users are encouraged.

11. Can Nodes charge for access?

Yes. Please use section B4 of the Expression of Interest form to outline your financial model for the Node and provide details on the user charges.

12. Who is considered a suitable legal representative to sign the Letter of Commitment from the host institution?

The signatory should be someone with sufficient authority to make the relevant statements.

13. How are the applications assessed?

Applications will be assessed by a multidisciplinary panel of experts covering scientific, managerial, technical and user aspects of bioimaging infrastructure. External reviews and responses from principle investigators will not be sought.

14. Why is there a limit on the number of letters of support?

It is the content of the letters provided, rather than the sheer number, which demonstrates the value of a proposed Node. Applicants should submit a representative selection of letters that demonstrate the breadth of the research their Node will enable and comment on the value of the work proposed to the research community.

Carefully chosen letters containing relevant evidence of the requirement/ benefit to be gained, are of greater value than large numbers of letters.

15. What is the difference between the letters of support under heading AT1 and AT2?

AT1: These are letters of support from potential users for the newly created capacity, helping to make the case for the added value the new capacity will provide.

AT2: These are letters of support from current users of the existing capacity, helping to make the case for the added value of the capability of the facility overall.

16. Regarding section B6, what do you understand to be the relevant community to engage with, e.g. other Node candidates, relevant research communities or community organisations? Do you expect a particular focus?

EuBI Nodes can be focussed on a specific technology or on a particular research area. Therefore, we did not want to be too prescriptive. It is for you to make the case why a proposed community engagement activity would add value to your bid overall and what research would be enabled. It is not essential for Nodes to have multiple partners or to propose larger scale engagement with other potential Nodes as the assessment panel will have oversight of all applications.

17. Regarding section C6, should the minimum capacity be stated for each equipment in the proposed Node or as an average of available capacity overall?

Please provide the capacity for the individual instruments types.

18. Can I involve industrial partners in my application?

Yes, industrial partners can be included. However, they are not mandatory and should only be added if inclusion would bring significant added value to the proposed Node and user experience.

19. Can PDRAs be included as researcher co-investigators?

At this stage all staff critical to the successful delivery of the Node should be included in the application, but the researcher co-investigator concept is not used for this particular activity.

20. Does the application need to be submitted via Je-S?

No. This particular call does not use Je-S as the submission system. Instead please submit your application and all associated documents via email to georgina@rms.org.uk by 4pm on Thursday 29th October 2026. Any submissions received after this time will be rejected.

21. When is the outcome of the call likely to be known?

We are unable to give a precise date by which outcomes will be announced, but it is anticipated that we will be able to notify applicants by end of February 2027.

22. How many Node candidates do you expect to be selected?

This is difficult to say before all received applications have been assessed, but the panel recommendation will be used as the starting point for discussion regarding potential consolidation of multiple candidates into a single Node.

23. I am unable to submit an application at this time. What does this mean regarding my prospects of applying as a UK Node in the future?

The portfolio of successful Node candidates identified through this call will provide a strong indication of the UK bioimaging community priorities at this point in time. They will represent the UK offer of potential Node candidates for EuBI, but this offer will continue to be under review, and we remain open for conversations, with the potential of new opportunities coming up in the future.

We would also encourage you to contact us (georgina@rms.org.uk) to discuss your particular circumstances and register your interest for future activities.

24. Do you envisage an opportunity for facilities to join a successful Node at a later stage?

If existing EuBI Nodes would look to expand and include additional capabilities they would need to do this in discussion with EuBI.

25. How is the Node administration process handled moving forward?

It will continue to be administered as a single Node with a common contact point with EuBI. UKRI and BiolmagingUK will work with the prospective Node candidates to provide support and facilitate discussions regarding consolidation of multiple candidates into a single Node.

26. What happens next?

The successful sites from this call will be nominated to EuBI as UK candidate Nodes to formally join the EuBI ERIC through the Node upgrade process. This is expected to be in the first half of 2027.

The process for this call was designed to be as similar as possible to the EuBI call for Nodes, and UKRI and BiolmagingUK will support facilities in the EuBI application process.

27. Are you looking for certain technologies or geographic areas in this call?

We are not specifically targeting particular geographic areas. While we encourage applications with unique offerings, this is not a requirement. All applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

28. Can you have more than five Letters of Support/Intent if you are a multi-site facility?

We are limiting submissions to five letters. If you have compelling reasons to provide more than five, please contact us at georgina@rms.org.uk to discuss.

29. With regards to technical excellence and maintenance strategies, are you assessing current status or future vision (e.g. new staff expertise onboarding)?

We assess current capacity and capability. Selected sites must be able to support external users immediately, as evidenced by their existing track record of providing user access.

30. What are you looking for in terms of Site Sustainability?

We are looking for a 5-year commitment from the Host Organisation to maintain the facility and its staff. We are also looking for evidence of long-term viability including instrument maintenance plans, service contracts, successful equipment funding bids, and relevant certifications (e.g., ISO).

31. Do you need to support the full workflow from sample prep to image data analysis and management?

This is assessed case-by-case. While supporting the full workflow is encouraged, we recognise not every facility has resources for all aspects (e.g., dedicated image analysts). However, facilities should be able to support users through most parts of the imaging experiment and data lifecycle.

32. Are SMEs and larger industrial companies welcome to apply for access to the Node?

Yes, EuBI welcomes both academic and industrial users from all countries.

33. How long is Node status valid for?

Sites will maintain their Node status indefinitely, provided the UK Node successfully passes Euro-BioImaging's 5-year review cycles (the next review is scheduled for 2027).