

Report from STFC Nuclear Physics Grants Panel

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(chair 2015-2018)

[New Panel expected to be announced shortly]

January, February 2017

Panel considered Consolidated grants for 2018-2021

All themes were judged excellent quality against criteria of

- Scientific excellence
- International competitiveness
- Strategic value

All themes were judged fundable, but with a range of varying priorities and resources recommended by the panel.

~£16M of grants were awarded, representing an increase of £1M. (Flat cash would have made large cuts to the physics which could be supported). Additional money taken from projects line – no increase in overall nuclear physics funding envelope.

Note:

Academic FTE time was squeezed below 10% in order to maximise number of RA and cross community posts which could be supported.

There was a ~10% increase in the number of academic staff applying for grants.

Not all equipment funds were spent. These come from a separate budget and this was not fully appreciated by applicants. A further equipment call was issued in autumn 2018.

Next Consolidated Grant round closing date is expected to be February 2020.

November 2018

Panel considered a new Capital equipment round.

This call was for “university infrastructure equipment and not hardware components which are integral to a new detector or running experiment.”

This call was under-subscribed.

Some previously unfunded PPRP applications were judged against the criteria for this equipment call and a small fraction of these were supported.

Around £0.5M funds were not disbursed. The panel was reassured that unused funds would be made available for future equipment calls and/or project work.

Several groups bid for funds for equipment and detectors to be used at overseas laboratories. This did not meet the aims of the call, but indicated a large unsatisfied demand for a broader equipment call.

Equipment issues for future consideration

Is a 50% University contribution reasonable in this day and age?
For other grant items this contribution is only 20%.

Applicants need to read the application guidelines carefully.

STFC should consider wider remits for future equipment calls.