

NeuMat Sponsorship Policy v1.0

1. Purpose of Sponsorship

NeuMat may provide sponsorship for external events that align with the Network's mission of advancing neuromorphic materials, devices, circuits, systems, and algorithms across the UK community. Sponsorship is considered a tool for:

- Strengthening UK-wide neuromorphic research collaboration
- Supporting early-career researchers (ECRs)
- Enhancing visibility and impact of NeuMat activities
- Ensuring complementarity, not duplication, with existing NeuMat-supported meetings

2. Scope of Sponsorship

NeuMat may sponsor or co-sponsor:

- Scientific workshops, discussion meetings, and symposia
- Poster prizes, travel bursaries, or ECR-supporting activities
- Specific event components (e.g., dinners, student support)

NeuMat does **not** provide unrestricted or open-ended financial support; sponsorship decisions must be clearly aligned with NeuMat's aims and budget. Under UKRI rules, alcohol and drinks receptions are not eligible for funding.

3. Guiding Principles

3.1 Strategic Alignment

Events must demonstrate clear benefit to the NeuMat network. The event should meet at least one of the criteria:

- Supports the UK neuromorphic community
- Advances cross-institution collaboration in areas relevant to NeuMat themes
- Provides a platform for NeuMat to deliver talks or outreach
- Benefits ECRs or builds research capacity

3.2 Non-duplication

NeuMat should avoid sponsoring events that duplicate its own existing or scheduled meetings.

3.3 Sponsorship Type & Specificity

NeuMat prefers to sponsor *specific* components (e.g., prizes, travel bursaries, receptions) rather than general or unrestricted funding; this is consistent with recent sponsorship decisions.

3.4 Financial and Administrative Compliance

- Sponsorship may be subject to VAT; confirm inclusive/exclusive amounts before commitment.
- Hosts must provide invoicing details (full organisation name, accounts payable address, VAT number, etc.).

3.5 Joint or Emergency Funding

Where ad-hoc “emergency meeting funding” is needed, NeuMat may participate **only if**:

- The event is jointly organised
- Costs are shared
- Benefit to NeuMat is clear

4. Eligibility Requirements

Organisers must demonstrate:

1. **Clear alignment** with NeuMat goals and activities (training, collaboration, community-building).
2. **Transparent budget**, including how NeuMat’s contribution will be used.
3. **Acknowledgment plan** (logos, verbal recognition, programme inclusion).
4. **Plan for NeuMat involvement**, e.g. talk by a Network PI, session contribution, or promotional material. (Examples include invitations for NeuMat presentations at sponsored events.)

5. Sponsorship Levels

As a guideline, NeuMat may maintain the following sponsorship tiers:

- **Up to £1,000** – poster prizes, travel bursaries, ECR-focused items.
- **£1,000–£3,000** – partial funding of event components (e.g., receptions, dinners). Such requests are to be considered by the NeuMat Core Team (PIs and management).
- **>£3,000** – exceptional cases requiring EPSRC approval.

This reflects past commitments (e.g., £2.5k tier for NEXT-AI 2026).

6. Application Process

Organisers should submit a request including:

1. Event summary, dates, and host institution
2. Description of alignment with NeuMat's objectives
3. Budget including VAT status
4. Specific sponsorship components requested
5. Recognition plan
6. Contact details for invoicing and contracting

Requests should be submitted to the NeuMat Network Manager (currently Seb Dixon).

7. Review & Decision-Making

- Reviewed by first the NeuMat Core Team then the Meetings Committee at scheduled meetings or via written circulation.
- Decisions consider current commitments (e.g., avoiding overlap with NeuMat meetings).
- Final approval by Network Director (Judith L. Driscoll) or delegate.

8. Obligations of Sponsored Events

Sponsored events must:

- Provide NeuMat branding on promotional materials
- Acknowledge NeuMat verbally during the event
- Allow NeuMat to distribute materials or present a talk where appropriate
- Provide a brief post-event summary (attendance, outcomes, photos if appropriate) which we can include on NeuMat website.

9. Budget Management

Sponsorship must be drawn from designated NeuMat budget lines and must remain compliant with EPSRC spending rules.

10. Exceptions

Exceptions may be made for events of exceptional strategic importance (e.g., national cross-council initiatives, EPSRC-aligned programmes), subject to Core Team approval.