

Research IT facility at the University of Bristol

A professional software development team who specialise in creating bespoke software for academic research.

- Senior Software Engineers
 - Tessa Alexander, Mike Jones, Mark McLaren, Kieren Pitts
- Assistant Software Engineer – Mike Rodwell
- Systems Administrator – Rick Henry
- Administrative Assistant – Simon Nash
- Facility Manager – Serena Cooper

The Research IT team has broad knowledge, extensive experience and specialisms both technical and within research themes.

bristol.ac.uk

What do we do?

- We help researchers within all faculties with:
 - Complex web and mobile applications
 - Data capture, pipelines and visualisations
 - Technical guidance and consultancy
 - Research proposal support
- We are a day rate TRAC (Transparent Approach to Costing) facility
 - TRAC - standardised methodology used in UK HE to calculate the full economic cost of activities
 - Research IT staff charged to grants based on the time spent working on the project

Pros and Cons of TRAC facility

Cons

- Lots of internal admin
- Lots of estimate creation
- Not always seen as research partners
- Can look expensive but no hidden costs
- Limited to the skills in the team
- Concerns about cost recovery
- Beholden to TRAC rules (recent changes)

Pros

- Able to take on range of sized projects
- Can work on multiple projects and flex resources as required
- Benefits of scale
 - Shared infrastructure and methodologies
 - We have a SysAdmin and direct admin support
- Open-ended contracts
- Clarity of remit
- Clear costing methodology
- No hidden costs
- Simple for researchers
- Flexibility and skills development for technical staff
 - High degree of autonomy and time management
 - Little technical debt (deliverables & maintenance defined)
- Easy to cost in external specialisms (e.g. graphic design)