

MRC clinical research training fellowships: Apr 2021

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	Medical Research Council (MRC)
Funding type:	Fellowship
Publication date:	24 September 2020
Opening date:	12 February 2021
Closing date:	7 April 2021 16:00 UK time

Last updated: 28 October 2020

[Start application](#)

You can get funding for a research project across any area of MRC's remit to improve human health. You can apply for:

- predoctoral fellowships – if you are a clinician wanting to undertake a PhD or other higher research degree
- postdoctoral fellowships – if you were awarded a PhD some time ago but have not been active in research since, we can help you to reacquire research skills.

We expect you to be undertaking your specialty training. You can apply for a fellowship lasting between two and four years but they usually last for three. Funding will cover your salary and related expenses.

[Close all](#)

Who can apply

Predocutorial applicants

The aim of this scheme is to support clinically-active healthcare professionals to undertake a higher research degree such as a PhD or medical degree. You can apply if you:

- are a medic, dentist, general practitioner, nurse, midwife, [registered healthcare professional](#) or vet
- can demonstrate ownership of your project and your ambition to follow a clinical academic career
- are at an appropriate point in your clinical training to study for a PhD with clear plans for completing your specialty training
- would be no more than one year into your PhD course when starting your fellowship award.

You do not need to have registered for a PhD at the time of your fellowship application.

If you have spent more than one year on the course, you must explain within your proposal why you are a suitable candidate. If you have spent significantly more time than one year on your PhD course, we will consider your application only in exceptional circumstances.

You do not need to have held a position which includes formal research time, for example, an academic foundation or an academic clinical fellowship.

If you are clinically qualified, we will expect you to be undertaking your specialty training and have completed your membership of the Royal College of Physicians' exams or equivalent.

You should consult your deanery about studying for a PhD and your plans for completing specialty training before you apply for a clinical research training fellowship.

If you are a veterinarian, you may apply if you are a registered vet and a member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. Your project needs to be of relevance to human health.

If you are a clinical psychologist, you must have a professional doctorate-level qualification in clinical psychology that is accredited by the British Psychological Society before starting the fellowship.

If you are a non-medical healthcare professional (such as a nurse, midwife or allied health professional), you must have completed your professional training and hold a research master's degree or equivalent postgraduate research-oriented qualification.

Postdoctoral applicants

The aim of this scheme is to offer applicants who already have a PhD, but have not been active in research since, an opportunity to progress to a clinical scientist fellowship level by undertaking a new research project.

You can apply if you:

- have received a PhD or equivalent, usually five or more years ago
- are at a similar career stage to predoctoral applicants and undertaking your specialty training
- have not undertaken substantial periods of academic research since your PhD (we may also consider your application if you have a National Institute for Health Research academic clinical fellowship or similar since your PhD).

If you have completed your PhD within the last few years and are not eligible to apply for a clinical research training fellowship, you should consider the clinical scientist fellowship instead.

We will take into account any career breaks, flexible working and changes in discipline when assessing your research experience and current track record. Read our [Career breaks and flexible working guidance \(PDF, 41KB\)](#). You do not need to have a specific period of postdoctoral experience.

If you are not sure if you are eligible, email us before beginning your application on fellows@mrc.ukri.org.

Global Talent visa

Clinician research training fellowship holders are eligible for a Global Talent visa under the 'exceptional promise' category for future research leaders. [Find out about the Global Talent visa](#).

What we're looking for

We welcome applications from across [all areas of MRC's remit](#) to improve human health, ranging from basic studies with relevance to mechanisms of disease to translational and developmental clinical research.

Science areas include:

- infections and immunity
- molecular and cellular medicine
- population and systems medicine
- neurosciences and mental health
- translation
- global health
- methodology
- public health.

We also welcome proposals for interdisciplinary approaches or research which will address global health issues and be of benefit to those living in low and middle income countries.

Clinical research training fellowships usually last three years but never less than two years. For patient-orientated projects where the clinical sessions will be of direct relevance to your research, you may request up to four years' funding and undertake up to four clinical sessions a week.

These periods are based on full-time equivalents. Awards may be held on a part-time basis to meet personal commitments but not because of other professional commitments.

We expect you to take up your fellowship no more than six months after the date of the review meeting.

This fellowship scheme provides a salary, giving you protected time to concentrate on your research, training and development. You may spend up to six hours a week (pro-rated for part-time fellowships) on other commitments such as teaching, demonstrating and other funded projects or you may undertake up to two clinical sessions a week.

Find out more about [MRC's guidance for research staff development](#).

We recognise the challenges faced by clinicians in combining research training with the demands of a clinical career. We operate this scheme as flexible as possible giving you the chance to negotiate the extent of your clinical commitment depending on your specialty and your research needs.

If you are planning to undertake more than two clinical sessions a week during your fellowship, we advise you to email MRC head office on fellows@mrc.ukri.org before you apply.

Find out more about [what to expect as an MRC fellow](#).

Predocctoral fellowships

This fellowship provides:

- a salary appropriate to your level of training, up to but not including NHS consultant level
- up to £20,000 each year to cover consumables, equipment, conference travel, PhD and other course fees.

You may be able to request extra funding for costs such as:

- the cost of training at an overseas or second centre or industry placement
- the purchase and maintenance cost of animals (excluding experimental costs, related consumables or project licences)
- the costs associated with healthy volunteer studies, where costs for patient studies would be met by local clinical research networks.

You can find out more in the [guidance for fellowship applicants](#) and the [clinical research training fellowship – frequently asked questions](#).

Postdoctoral fellowships

This fellowship provides:

- salary costs appropriate to your level of training up to but not including NHS consultant level

- funding to cover research expenses and travel costs (full economic costing). There is no limit to the amount you can claim for expenses

Jointly-funded clinical research training fellowships

MRC and the [Wellcome Trust](#) have entered into a partnership to increase the funding available for clinical PhDs through this clinical research training fellowship.

MRC is also collaborating with [royal colleges and charity funders](#) to offer jointly-funded clinical research training fellowships.

These awards offer the prestige of having the relevant organisation co-fund your fellowship and may offer additional opportunities to report on your project, present your work at meetings and take part in professional networking.

How to apply

You must apply using the [Joint Electronic Submission system \(Je-S\)](#).

We recommend you start your application early. You can save completed details in Je-S at any time and return to continue your application later.

When applying select 'New document' then:

- council: MRC
- document type: fellowship proposal
- scheme: total costs fellowship (for predoctoral applications) and fellowships, FEC (for postdoctoral applications)
- call: clinical research training fellowship.
- You can find advice on completing your application in the [Je-S handbook](#).

If you need further help, you can contact the Je-S help desk on 01793 444164 or by email jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org.

Your host organisation will be able to provide advice and guidance on completing your application.

The clinical research training fellowship award opens three times a year, closing in January, April and September.

[Find dates for future competitions.](#)

If you need advice on your suitability for an MRC fellowship scheme, email your CV using the [template we provide \(Word, 28KB\)](#), to fellows@mrc.ukri.org including a one-page project outline, a list of your publications and a description of how you meet the [skills and experience](#) for this scheme.

You may apply to any MRC fellowship scheme no more than twice even if your proposal changes. You should allow at least a year between submissions whether applying to the same or a different scheme. If you want to reapply within a year you

should request permission from the relevant programme manager before resubmission by contacting fellows@mrc.ukri.org.

Applying for a jointly-funded clinical research training fellowship

To apply for a fellowship that is jointly funded by the [Wellcome Trust](#), [royal colleges or charity funders](#), you must include the [joint funding form \(Word, 63KB\)](#) as part of your application.

For more information on the application process, see:

- [guidance for fellowship applicants](#)
- [choosing the right fellowship](#)
- [applicant skills and experience table](#)
- [clinical research training fellowship – frequently asked questions](#)
- [interview day: what's it like to face a fellowship panel](#)
- [what the panel's really thinking](#)

If you need further information, you can email us on fellows@mrc.ukri.org.

How we will assess your application

When we receive your application, we will check it to make sure it is within remit. It will then be peer reviewed by at least three independent experts from the UK and overseas.

You can nominate up to three independent reviewers. We will invite only one to assess your application and may decide not to approach any of your nominated reviewers.

Peer reviewers will assess your application and provide comments. They will also score it using the peer reviewer scoring system against the following criteria:

- importance – how important are the questions, or gaps in knowledge, that are being addressed?
- scientific potential – what are the prospects for good scientific progress?
- resources requested – are the funds requested essential for the work? And do the importance and scientific potential justify funding on the scale requested? Does the proposal represent good value for money?

A sub-committee of members of the clinical training and career development panel will review these scores and comments at a shortlisting meeting. We continue with the highest-quality applications with potential to be funded.

If your application passes the shortlisting stage, we will invite you to interview and send you copies of the external reviewers' comments.

Interviews with the clinical training and career development panel will usually last 30 minutes. We will contribute towards the cost of your return travel, modest

subsistence costs and reasonable additional family care costs.

Read the detailed [assessment criteria for each fellowship type](#).

Feedback

We will let you know as soon as possible after we have made a final decision about your application. This is usually within five working days of your interview.

If you reach the interview stage, we will send you feedback and let you know the reasons for the panel's decision. If you are not invited to interview we will send you copies of the external reviewers' comments.

We aim to make a decision within six months of receiving your application.

Find out more about the [fellowship assessment process](#) and an overview of our [peer review process](#).

Contact details

For further information contact on fellows@mrc.ukri.org.

Additional info

Supporting documents

- [Career breaks and flexible working guidance \(PDF, 41KB\)](#)
 - [Fellowship CV template \(Word, 28KB\)](#)
 - [Joint funding form \(Word, 63KB\)](#)
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Timeline

- **12 February 2021**
Competition opens
- **7 April 2021**
Competition closes
- **19 October 2021**
Shortlisting date

○ 17-18 November 2021

Meeting dates

Related content

[MRC's areas of scientific remit](#)

[MRC's current research strategy](#)

[MRC applicant skills and experience table](#)

[Choosing the right fellowship](#)

[What to expect as an MRC fellow](#)

[Clinical research training fellowships - frequently asked questions](#)

[Fellowship assessment process](#)

[Peer review process](#)

[Dates for future competitions](#)

[12 top tips for writing a grant application](#)

Related opportunities

[MRC clinical research training fellowships: Jan 2021](#)

[MRC clinical research training fellowship: Sep 2021](#)

NOTE This is the first phase of our new website – let us know if you have [feedback](#) or would like to [help us test new developments](#).