MRC: Infections and immunity research grant: Jan 2021

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	**Medical Research Council (MRC)**
Funding type:	Grant
Publication date:	20 September 2020
Opening date:	15 October 2020
Closing date:	13 January 2021 16:00 UK time

Last updated: 21 October 2020

Start application

Funding is available from MRC's Infections and Immunity Board to support focused research projects on infections and immunity:

- we award research grants to UK-based research organisations
- there is no limit to the funding you can request, but it should be appropriate to the project – typically awards are up to £1 million
- projects can last up to five years and are typically 3-4 years
- we will usually fund up to 80% of your project's full economic cost
- research grants may involve more than one research group or institution.

Open all

Who can apply

Any UK-based researcher with an employment contract at an eligible research organisation can apply. You will need to:

- have at least a graduate degree, although we usually expect most applicants to have a PhD or medical degree
- show that you will direct the project and be actively engaged in the work.

You can include one or more industry partners as project partners in your application. International co-investigators can be included if they provide expertise not available in the UK.

The focus of this funding opportunity is infections and immunity. There are similar opportunities across **other areas of medical research within our remit**, including molecular and cellular medicine, population and systems medicine, neurosciences and mental health, and applied global health. There are also other types of awards including programmes, partnerships and new investigator.

You should contact us if you are not sure which opportunity to apply to.

What we're looking for

The MRC's Infections and Immunity Board funds research into infectious human disease and disorders of the human immune system. The board supports a diverse portfolio of research of relevance to the UK and globally, and to address both long-standing questions and support the investigation of emerging higher-risk opportunities.

Research we fund includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- discovery research relating to human pathogens, pathogenicity, antimicrobial resistance, host pathogen responses including inflammation and the development function and disorders of the immune system where this informs mechanism of disease. Immune disease including allergy (except asthma and other organ-based disorders), transplantation immunology, systemic immune disorders and auto-immune disease. Including use of in silico systems, relevant animal models and experimental studies in humans throughout the lifecourse
- population-level research, using epidemiological, genetic and 'omic approaches, and computational modelling, to elucidate disease risks, aetiologies and progression, and to understand the evolution of pathogen populations and epidemic preparedness
- research to inform novel strategies for preventing and controlling infectious and immune disease, including vector control, predictive modelling and early development research to inform future intervention strategies including vaccines.

Find out more about the science areas we support and our current board opportunity areas.

We encourage you to contact us first to discuss your application if you believe your research may cross MRC research board or research council interests. If your application fits another research board remit better we may decide to transfer it there to be assessed.

Medical Research Council infections and immunity research grants:

- are suitable for focused short or long-term research projects
- can support method development or development and continuation of research facilities
- may involve more than one research group or institution.

We will fund projects lasting up to five years, although projects typically last 3-4 years. If your project will last more than three years, you must justify the reason for this; for example, if you need time for data collection or follow-up.

If your project will last less than two years, it must be for proof of principle or pilot work only. We expect proof of principle proposals to support high-risk/high-reward research by critically testing a key hypothesis and/or demonstrating feasibility of an approach that could lead to fundamentally new avenues of research.

Contact one of our programme managers for advice if you would like to apply for a short or long-duration project.

You can request funding for costs such as:

- a contribution to the salary of the principal investigator and co-investigators
- support for other posts such as research and technical
- research consumables
- equipment
- travel costs
- data preservation, data sharing and dissemination costs
- estates/indirect costs.

We won't fund:

- research involving randomised trials of clinical treatments
- funding to use as a 'bridge' between grants
- costs for PhD studentships
- publication costs.

How to apply

Application deadlines for Infections and Immunity Board funding are usually around January, May and September, although sometimes launch and application deadlines can change, so check the Funding finder for details.

You can submit to any of the available deadlines in the year. We do not expect you to submit more than two applications at the same time and encourage you to focus on application quality, not the number you can submit. **Read our guidance for applicants for details of our resubmission process**.

You must apply through the **Joint Electronic Submission system (Je-S)**. Please read the **Je-S how to apply guidance (PDF, 190KB)** for more information. If you need help in applying, you can contact Je-S on 01793 444164 or by email **jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org**

You should give your administrative department sufficient notice that you intend to apply. Your organisation must submit your application before 16:00 on the deadline date.

Guidance for applicants

Our **guidance for applicants** will:

- help you check your eligibility
- guide you through preparing a proposal

- show you how to prepare a case for support
- provide details of any ethical and regulatory requirements that may apply.

Industrial partners

If you want to include one or more industry partners as a project partner, you must also:

- complete the project partner section in Je-S
- submit an MRC industrial collaboration agreement (MICA) form and heads of terms
- include 'MICA' as a prefix to your project title.

Find out more about **MRC industry collaboration agreements**.

Population cohorts

If your application is to fund new or existing population cohort studies, you must first submit an outline to the **Cohort Strategic Review Group**. Outline applications are not needed for clinical (patient-specific or disease-focused) cohorts.

How we will assess your application

When we receive your application, it will be peer-reviewed by 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 requested funds 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?

Read the detailed assessment criteria for each grant type.

We will review these scores and comments at a triage meeting and expect to continue with the highest-quality applications with potential to be funded. If your application passes the triage stage, we will give you the chance to respond to reviewers' comments.

A board meeting will then discuss your proposal and decide if it is suitable for funding. We make a decision within six months of receiving your application.

Find out more about **our peer review process**.

Contact details

Visit our **science contacts page** or contact the programme manager most relevant to your research area for advice on developing your application and which board to apply to:

- programme manager for immunology – **iib@mrc.ukri.org**
- programme manager for vaccines, neglected tropical diseases and vector-borne diseases: Dr Martin Broadstock – **martin.broadstock@mrc.ukri.org**
- programme manager for fungal and viral infections: Dr Anna Kinsey – **anna.kinsey@mrc.ukri.org**
- head of programme – antimicrobial resistance: Dr Jessica Boname – **jessica.boname@mrc.ukri.org**

Other contacts

- for queries about submitting your application using Je-S, email **jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org** or call 01793 444164
- for general enquiries about your application contact **iib@mrc.ukri.org**

For general queries about MRC policy and eligibility or if you are not sure who to contact, get in touch with our research funding policy and delivery team:

- **rfpd@mrc.ukri.org**
- 01793 416440

Additional info

Supporting documents

- **Je-S how to apply guidance (PDF, 190KB)**

Timeline

○ **15 October 2020**
Opening date

○ **13 January 2021**
Closing date

○ **11 May 2021**
Shortlisting/triage

○ **16-17 June 2021**
Board review

Related content

Guidance for applicants

The science areas we fund and support

Peer review process

Information about full economic costing

MRC strategy

MRC terms and conditions

MRC industry collaboration agreements

Infections and Immunity Board membership