Asthma health technology

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	**Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)**
Co-funders:	Asthma UK (AUK), British Lung Foundation Partnership (BLF)
Funding type:	Grant
Total fund:	£1,500,000
Maximum award:	£750,000
Publication date:	20 October 2020
Opening date:	20 October 2020
Closing date:	11 February 2021 16:00 UK time

Last updated: 28 October 2020

Start application

You can apply for up to £750,000 to support research and development of technologies for diagnosis, monitoring and management tools for asthma.

Projects should aim to transform asthma outcomes to prevent asthma attacks, and reduce emergency healthcare use and asthma deaths.

Projects will be funded at 80% full economic cost and can be up to 24 months in duration. You can apply if you meet standard EPSRC eligibility rules.

Submissions to this call will count towards the **Repeatedly Unsuccessful Applicants Policy**.

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Open all

Who can apply

Standard EPSRC eligibility rules apply.

Research grants are open to:

- UK higher education institutions
- research council institutes
- UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) approved independent research organisations
- NHS bodies with research capacity.

Read the guidance on **institutional eligibility**.

You can apply if you are a resident in the UK and meet at least one of the below:

- are employed at the submitting research organisation at lecturer level or equivalent
- hold a fixed-term contract that extends beyond the duration of the proposed project, and the host research organisation is prepared to give you all the support normal for a permanent employee
- hold an EPSRC, Royal Society or Royal Academy of Engineering fellowship aimed at later career stages
- hold fellowships under other schemes. Please contact EPSRC to check your eligibility, which is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Holders of postdoctoral level fellowships are not eligible to apply for an EPSRC grant.

Submissions to this call will count towards the **repeatedly unsuccessful applicants policy**.

What we're looking for

We are seeking high-quality projects that demonstrate research and development of innovative technologies for accurate, scalable and low-cost diagnosis, monitoring or management tools in asthma.

There may be opportunities for projects to address one or more of these areas and we strongly encourage applicants to consider solutions which can achieve this.

We encourage research collaborations with clinical, business or public sector partners to help support research advances and the take-up of results.

Applicants are asked to consider how to involve people with asthma and other key stakeholders in the development, to ensure that the technology is acceptable to people with asthma, their families, healthcare professionals and providers.

Projects are expected to remain within **EPSRC remit** and should be able to demonstrate technical and clinical feasibility by the end of the grant.

This grant is in partnership with Asthma UK and British Lung Foundation (AUK-BLF), who will be co-funding proposals. It is expected that researchers provide annual progress reports against non-financial performance metrics to AUK-BLF.

Generating impact in health is often longer and more complex than that seen in other sectors. Given this, there is a need for researchers working in this area to consider carefully how they will undertake their work in a manner that maximises the opportunity for impact to arise from it.

A number of topics of particular importance are highlighted as part of the **Impact and Translation Toolkit**.

Applicants must consider how these topics relate to their proposed programme of work and, if they are relevant, describe in their proposal how they will be addressed throughout the award. Not all topics will relate to every project and researchers need not address those which do not.

There is no expectation that researchers will undertake all impact activities themselves, nor is there an expectation that researchers will develop extensive expertise in all the areas noted in the toolkit. However, applicants should consider what skills, knowledge and expertise are required and how these will be brought to the project through collaboration, training, consultation, discipline hops or other means. We strongly encourage applicants to request resources to support these elements of the proposal.

Funding available

Successful proposals will be funded at 80% full economic cost.

The applicant can request funding for anything that is eligible as detailed in the **EPSRC funding guide** with the exception of equipment over £10,000 in value (including VAT), which is not available through this call. Smaller items of equipment (individually under £10,000) should be in the 'Directly Incurred – Other Costs' heading.

Read more information on **equipment funding**.

EPSRC will pay the research costs associated with the NHS component of a proposal. However, NHS support and NHS treatment costs will not be covered. Further information can be found in **EPSRC funding guide resources**.

How to apply

Applicants should ensure they are aware of and comply with any internal institutional deadlines that may be in place.

ou should prepare and submit your proposal using the **Joint Electronic Submission system (Je-S)**.

When adding a new proposal, you should go to documents, select New Document, then select:

- council: EPSRC
- document type: Standard Proposal
- scheme: Standard.

On the project details page you should select the 'Asthma Health Technology' call.

After completing the application you must 'Submit document' which will send your application to your host organisation's administration.

Your host organisation's administration is required to complete the submission process. You should allow sufficient time for your organisation's submission process between submitting your proposal to them and the call closing date.

The deadline for applications is 11 February 2021, 16:00.

As well as the Je-S application form, the following documents must be submitted:

- case for support: eight pages, with two on your track record and six on the scientific case
- workplan: one page
- justification of resources: two pages
- CVs: up to two A4 sides each only for named postdoctoral staff, researcher- co-investigators (research assistants who have made a substantial contribution to the proposal and will be employed on the project for a significant amount of time), and visiting researchers
- letters of support from all project partners included in the Je-S form: no page limit
- technical assessments for facilities listed as requiring one in the Je-S guidance: no page limit
- cover letter: optional attachment, no page limit, not seen by peer review.

Applicants should state how the proposed research addresses the EPSRC healthcare grand challenges. Read more information on the **healthcare grand challenges**.

Applicants should also state how they will advance the cross-cutting research capabilities relevant to their proposal. The six capabilities are:

- advanced materials
- disruptive technologies for sensing and analysis
- future manufacturing technologies
- medical device design and innovation
- novel computational and mathematical sciences
- novel imaging technologies.

For more information on the cross-cutting themes, please see **EPSRC research capabilities**.

You should attach your documents as PDFs to avoid errors. They should be completed in single-spaced Arial 11 font or similar-sized sans serif typeface.

For advice on writing proposals, see **EPSRC preparing a proposal**.

EPSRC will not fund a project if it believes that there are ethical concerns that have been overlooked or not appropriately accounted for. All relevant parts of the ethical information section must be completed. Further guidance can be found in the **Je-S handbook**. EPSRC guidance can be found under additional information.

How we will assess your application

Assessment process

This call is an invitation for proposals. Proposals will undergo postal peer review, followed by a panel, resulting in a rank ordered list. A decision is expected to be made within two weeks of the panel meeting.

The reviewers will comment on how well the proposal meets both EPSRC's standard and call specific assessment criteria. If sufficiently positive comments are received, applicants

will be invited to respond to these comments.

Proposals will be ranked by a prioritisation panel using the reviewers' comments and the principal investigator response.

Proposals will be shared with AUK-BLF to provide reviewer suggestions. Successful proposals will have ongoing contact with both EPSRC and AUK-BLF through the lifetime of the grant. A representative from AUK-BLF will be present during the panel meeting.

Assessment criteria

Standard criteria:

Quality (primary), the research excellence, making reference to:

- the novelty, relationship to the context, timeliness and relevance to identified stakeholders
- the ambition, adventure, transformative aspects or potential outcomes
- the suitability of the proposed methodology and the appropriateness of the approach to achieving impact.

National importance (secondary), how the research:

- contributes to, or helps maintain the health of other disciplines, contributes to addressing key UK societal challenges, or contributes to future UK economic success and development of emerging industry(s)
- meets national needs by establishing or maintaining a unique world-leading activity
- complements other UK research funded in the area, including any relationship to the EPSRC portfolio.

Applicant and partnerships (secondary), the ability to deliver the proposed project, making reference to:

- appropriateness of the track record of the applicant(s)
- balance and inclusiveness of skills of the project team, including collaborators.

Resources and management (secondary), the effectiveness of the proposed planning and management and whether the requested resources are appropriate and have been fully justified, making reference to:

- any equipment requested, or the viability of the arrangements described to access equipment needed for this project, and particularly on any university or third-party contribution
- any resources requested for activities to either increase impact, for public engagement or to support responsible innovation.

Call specific criteria:

Fit to call (secondary major):

- addresses at least one of the areas of unmet need – diagnosis, monitoring and management tools in asthma
- relevance and appropriateness of any beneficiaries or collaborators, evidence that the proposal has been co-created and developed in partnership to deliver maximum impact
- evidence of patient involvement in the development of the proposal, to ensure that the technology is acceptable to end users.

Feedback

The postal peer review commentary will comprise the feedback to the applicants. No feedback will be provided from the prioritisation panel process unless this is specifically requested by the panel.

Nominating reviewers

As part of the application process you will be invited to nominate up to three potential reviewers who you feel have the expertise to assess your proposal. Please ensure that any nominations meet the EPSRC policy on conflicts of interest.

Read more information about the **reviewer selection process**.

Guidance for reviewers

Information about the EPSRC peer review process and guidance for reviewers can be found on our **reviewing proposals page**.

Read guidance for **reviewing grants from this call**.

Contact details

For help and advice on costings and writing your proposal please contact your research office in the first instance, allowing sufficient time for your organisation's submission process.

Any queries regarding the submission of proposals through Je-S should be directed to Je-S help desk, at **jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org**, or on 01793 444164. Refer to **Je-S help desk** for telephone opening hours.

For any other queries regarding the call, please contact a member of the healthcare technologies team:

- Mr Matthew Weaver, **matthew.weaver@epsrc.ukri.org**
- Dr Michael Onoja, **michael.onoja@epsrc.ukri.org**
- Healthcare team, **healthcare@epsrc.ukri.org**

For help in identifying collaborators with specific complementary expertise necessary for your application, please contact a member of AUK-BLF's research and innovation team at **innovation@auk-blf.org.uk**.

Additional info

Building on the work of the **European Asthma Research and Innovation Partnership (EARIP)**, AUK-BLF, EPSRC and National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) i4i are co-launching a £3 million+ Asthma Health Technology fund.

The fund will support the development and adoption of asthma health technology in some of the areas of greatest unmet need, supporting innovation from concept stage through to

scaling in the NHS, which will lead to significant advances for asthma health technologies.

The fund will be split into two phases, which will run concurrently:

- phase one is for concept stage projects, in partnership with EPSRC (Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 1-3)
- phase two is for translation projects, supporting the real-world testing and NHS adoption of innovative technologies, led by NIHR i4i and in partnership with AUK-BLF (TRL 3-7).

Successful applicants to the EPSRC phase of the fund will be expected to work in collaboration with representatives from NIHR towards the end of the grant to ensure that they are prepared to submit an application to one of the i4i calls in order to advance the technology developed.

Additional grant conditions

In addition to **UKRI standard terms and conditions (PDF, 165KB)**, the following conditions will apply.

In line with RGC 12.3, AUK-BLF will be due a reasonable share of revenue that results from intellectual property exploitation and is to be negotiated between the institution and/or beneficiary and AUK-BLF once details of any such exploitation is known.

In addition to the requirements set out in RGC 7.4.3, the grant holder is responsible for providing EPSRC and AUK-BLF progress reports against non-financial performance metrics. A detailed list of performance metrics and instructions for reporting will be agreed with the grant holder upon commencement of the grant.

Please see guidance on:

- **resubmissions**
- **repeatedly unsuccessful applications**
- **equipment**
- **use of animals (PDF, 34KB)** (if relevant)
- **responsible research and innovation**
- **ethical considerations**
- **equality, diversity and inclusion**.

We are committed to support the recommendations and principles set out by the **San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment**. You should not use journal-based metrics, such as journal impact factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an investigator's contributions, or to make funding decisions.

Supporting documents

- **Use of animals – guidance for EPSRC applicants and peer reviewers (PDF, 34KB)**
- **Equality impact assessment (PDF, 177KB)**
- **Asthma UK: EARIP – 15 key research priorities (PDF, 1.4MB)**

Timeline

○ **20 October 2020**
Opening date

○ **11 February 2021 16:00**
Closing date

○ **March to May 2021**
Peer review

○ **June 2021**
Panel review

○ **July 2021**
Decision date

Related content

Equipment on research grants

Framework for responsible innovation

Equality, diversity and inclusion at EPSRC

Ethics

Asthma UK: How to apply for a grant

Asthma UK: EARIP – 15 Key Research Priorities (PDF)