



# Applied global health research: improve health in LMICs

<b>Opportunity status:</b>	Open
<b>Funders:</b>	<a href="#">Medical Research Council (MRC)</a>
<b>Co-funders:</b>	UK Department for Health and Social Care through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR); Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)
<b>Funding type:</b>	Grant
<b>Publication date:</b>	26 November 2020
<b>Opening date:</b>	1 February 2021
<b>Closing date:</b>	To be confirmed

*Last updated: 12 March 2021*

Start application



This call has temporarily been suspended please refer to: [UKRI required to review Official Development Assistance funding](#) for further information.

Apply for funding for applied global health research that will benefit the health of people living in low and middle income countries (LMICs).

We particularly welcome proposals that combine expertise from more than one sector to meet a global health challenge.

There is no limit to the amount of funding you can apply for. You can submit a proposal of any size, from a small seed-funding proposal to a large-scale programme grant.

You can apply if you are:

- an LMIC-based principal investigator
- a UK-based principal investigator working in partnership with LMIC investigators.

[Open all](#)

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## Who can apply

We particularly encourage applications from principal investigators in LMICs, as well as principal investigators who are based in the UK and working in equal partnership with LMIC investigators.

If you are a LMIC principal investigator or co-investigator, you must be based at one of the following:

- higher education institution
- non-profit research institution
- non-governmental organisation with sufficient research capacity to manage and deliver research.

### [Check if your organisation is eligible](#)

You should check with your research office whether previous applications have been awarded by MRC or UKRI. If they have not, you should email us before you apply to check if you are eligible on [international@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:international@mrc.ukri.org).

In exceptional circumstances, it may be possible to include staff members of government ministries or intergovernmental organisations (for example, WHO and World Bank) as named co-investigators rather than project partners, where a proportion of their time is spent working on the project.

Inclusion of named government officials or intergovernmental organisation staff as co-investigators must be discussed and agreed with the relevant programme manager in advance of application. Please contact [international@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:international@mrc.ukri.org).

You must not be a principal investigator on more than two proposals submitted to the Board at any one time. You may support others as a co-investigator, as long as you have the capacity to do so without detriment to the project you are leading.

Researchers from high-income countries outside of the UK (and India and China) may be co-investigators provided their requested costs are not more than 30% of the proposal total project costs.

## Working in China and India

Principal investigators cannot be based at institutions in China or India, but they can be named as co-investigators.

Partnerships with co-investigators from China or India must have global or regional development impact as their main objective, with local or national impacts within China or India as secondary objectives.

We expect international co-investigators from China and India will make a significant contribution to their own research costs, including covering their own overheads.

Applicants working in India or China who wish to apply are strongly advised to contact the office for guidance as early as possible. Please contact [international@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:international@mrc.ukri.org).

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## What we're looking for

The Applied Global Health Research Board supports applied research that will be of direct and primary benefit to the health of vulnerable populations living in low and middle income countries.

We're looking for research projects that will develop practical solutions to health challenges. This includes:

- late-stage intervention development
- [implementation science](#)
- scale-up activities
- health services research
- health economics
- health policy research
- research with a predominantly applied focus that does not fit within the remit of other MRC boards and panels.

We also welcome cross-sectoral research that combines expertise to meet a global health challenge (such as urban planning, health policy and non-communicable disease research) within a single proposal.

The research question might involve different disciplines and approaches from outside the health sector, but the primary objective must be health focused.

Applied research into understanding the effects of COVID-19 in LMICs will be funded through this board.

The resources you request should be commensurate with the objectives of your proposal.

We will accept proposals of all sizes, including large applications over £1 million and small to medium-scale applications. We will take into account value for money when

assessing proposals.

You can apply for funding to address any health topic of relevance in the context where the research will be conducted.

The board currently has board opportunities in:

- maternal and neonatal health
- early childhood development
- adolescent health
- implementation science.

Applications falling within these areas will be prioritised for funding (see '[board opportunities](#)' below), but we welcome applications in any area.

Three grant schemes are available through the Applied Global Health Research Board:

- [research grants](#)
- [programme grants](#)
- [partnership grants](#).

You must read the [supplementary guidance for outline submissions to the Applied Global Health Research Board \(PDF, 385KB\)](#). This document provides details of our assessment criteria and how this funding opportunity differs from other MRC schemes.

Funding for the Applied Global Health Research Board forms part of the UK's official development assistance commitment.

Your proposal must show that your research is relevant and directly linked to near-term benefits to the health and economic development of the poorest and most vulnerable populations within low and middle income countries, as defined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's [development assistance countries list](#), except for India and China.

## Capacity building as part of your application

We are committed to strengthening research capacity within low and middle income countries and the UK. We expect all grants funded through this board to contribute to the development of fair and sustainable global research systems.

If your outline proposal is successful, we will ask you to complete a capacity-building annex as part of your full submission. We encourage you to start discussing priorities as early as possible, in consultation with key stakeholders, both within and outside of your project team. For example, researchers, laboratory technicians, data collectors, field workers, managers, practitioners, policymakers and research management offices.

We will ask you to describe your long-term capacity-building goals, as well as planned activities within your research project. We will assess your proposed approach to capacity building as part of the review process.

Find out more about the review process in the [supplementary guidance for outline submissions to the Applied Global Health Research Board \(PDF, 385KB\)](#).

Examples of capacity building include, but are not limited to:

- building leadership skills among early career researchers
- opportunities for mutual learning across the project team (such as through staff exchanges)
- building capacity to work collaboratively, across disciplines and across practice-research boundaries (for example with policy-makers, managers and practitioners in the system)
- providing mentoring to improve the capacity of less-experienced researchers to generate new knowledge and achieve policy impact
- team members attending training courses to develop specific expertise or obtain relevant qualifications (excluding Masters and PhDs)
- opportunities for staff and associated health managers to author or co-author journal and conference papers and participate in national and international conferences
- building organisational capacity (for example, in management, finance or communications)
- formation of low and middle income countries research networks.

Find out more about [capacity building](#).

Although new investigator research grants are not available through the Applied Global Health Research Board, we are committed to supporting early career researchers in applied global health. The board will consider each applicant's career stage and proposed mentorship arrangements during funding discussions.

We will not fund:

- discovery research, and research that includes an applied component that fits within a [current board or panel](#) remit, including early translation
- phase I/IIa clinical trials within remit of the [MRC developmental pathway funding scheme](#).
- global public health intervention development up to £150,000 and led by a UK principal investigator (within the [public health intervention development scheme](#) remit). Proposals costing more than £150,000 or led by an LMIC principal investigator are eligible to apply to the board
- vaccine development research (such as within [Infections and Immunity Board](#) and [developmental pathway funding scheme](#) remits).

If your proposal includes health systems research or a late phase clinical trial, please contact the MRC to determine which scheme to apply to.

If your proposal fits the remit of the FCDO/ESRC/MRC/Wellcome [health systems research initiative](#) or MRC-FCDO-Wellcome-National Institute for Health Research [joint global health trials](#) scheme, and there is an available funding opportunity, you will be redirected to the above and your proposal may be rejected from the Applied Global Health Research Board.

## Board opportunities

### Maternal and neonatal health

MRC's work in this area is informed by the [MRC-National Institute for Health Research overview of global maternal and neonatal health research priorities \(PDF, 1.9MB\)](#).

Find out more about [what we're looking for in maternal and neonatal health research](#).

### Early childhood development

The board supports research in early childhood development, a critical period when health and education intersect.

Proposals in this area will be co-funded by the Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office as part of a coordinated effort to increase and scale up the evidence base for early childhood development interventions.

Find out more about [what we're looking for in early childhood development research](#).

### Adolescent health

Adolescent health has been a recent focus of investment for MRC and Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (via the MRC-FCDO concordat) and the National Institute for Health Research, in partnership with ESRC.

Find out more about [what we're looking for in adolescent health research](#).

### Implementation science

Maximising impact from research remains a priority for MRC. To ensure that we meet this priority, we are funding research to address the implementation gap and progress interventions towards real-world impact.

This complements existing applied global health schemes addressing late-phase trials and health systems research, by providing a regular funding opportunity for research using robust implementation science approaches.

We expect this research to ensure that evidence-based health interventions are implemented in an accessible and fair way for the poorest and most vulnerable populations living in low and middle income countries.

Find out more about [what we're looking for in implementation science research](#).

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## 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: outline proposa
- scheme: standard outline
- call/type/mode: applied Global Health Research Board Outline 3 2021.

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](mailto:jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org).

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

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## How we will assess your application

We will assess your proposal in two stages:

- stage one – outline proposals are reviewed by independent Board members and MRC's Global Health Faculty of Experts
- stage two – if your outline proposal is successful, we will invite you to submit a full application. This will undergo external peer review to inform the board's final decision.

If invited to the full submission stage, the assessment process will take around nine months from the outline proposal submission deadline to the final decision.

Unsuccessful outline applicants will be notified within approximately three months of submission.

We will provide guidance on how to prepare a full proposal if you are successful at stage one, along with feedback from the initial review.

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## Contact details

If you have a query about scientific aspects of your research proposal or if you are not sure which board to apply to, email [international@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:international@mrc.ukri.org).

We will forward your enquiry to the relevant programme manager:

- Dr Philip Woodgate, Programme Manager for Global Health Challenges (maternal and neonatal health, early child development, ageing, multimorbidity, mental health, neurodegeneration)
- Dr Caroline Harris, Programme Manager for Global Health Strategy (global health trials, implementation science, health systems research, adolescent health, capacity building)
- Dr Hannah Boycott, Programme Manager for Applied Global Health (non-communicable disease, infectious disease).

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## Additional info

### Supporting documents

- [Supplementary guidance for outline submissions to the Applied Global Health Research Board \(PDF, 385KB\)](#)

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## Timeline

**1 February 2021**  
Opening date

**To be confirmed**  
Panel review

### Related content

[MRC-FCDO Applied Global Health Research Board webinar](#)



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](#).

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