



MRC molecular and cellular medicine research grant: May 2021

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| Opportunity status: | Open |
| Funders: | Medical Research Council (MRC) |
| Funding type: | Grant |
| Publication date: | 11 February 2021 |
| Opening date: | 15 February 2021 |
| Closing date: | 5 May 2021 16:00 UK time |

Last updated: 4 March 2021

[Start application](#)

Funding is available from MRC's Molecular and Cellular Medicine Board to support focused research projects on molecular and cellular medicine.

We award research grants to UK-based research organisations. Research grants may involve more than one research group or institution.

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. We will usually fund up to 80% of your project's full economic cost.

Projects can last up to five years and are typically three to four years.

[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 molecular and cellular medicine research. There are similar opportunities across [other areas of medical research within our remit](#), including:

- population and systems medicine
- infections and immunity
- neurosciences and mental health
- applied global health.

There are also other types of awards, including:

- programmes
- partnerships
- new investigator.

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

What we're looking for

The MRC's Molecular and Cellular Medicine Board funds research into basic biological mechanisms or technologies relevant to human health and disease.

We aim to increase understanding of:

- the structure and function of molecules and complexes
- the cellular environment during development and mature states
- how biological systems respond to challenges (for example, drugs and toxins) and diseases.

We lead MRC's investments in cancer, from fundamental discovery science to epidemiology, experimental medicine and early translation. Research focused on specific organ systems or diseases (with the exception of cancer and haematology) is normally supported through our other research boards.

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

- cell biology
- structural biology and biophysics
- molecular and functional genetics, epigenetics, genomics
- developmental and stem cell biology (excluding neurobiology)
- regenerative medicine
- molecular haematology
- development of new tools and technologies relevant to MCMB remit, such as nanotechnology, chemical biology and synthetic biology
- medical bioinformatics (including biostatistics, computational biology and systems biology)
- cancer
- toxicology and adverse health effects of environmental exposures
- pharmacology.

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, especially 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.

MRC molecular and cellular medicine 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 three to four 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 or high-reward research by critically testing a key hypothesis 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 or indirect costs.

We will not fund:

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

Application deadlines for Molecular and Cellular Medicine Board funding are usually around January, May and September, although sometimes dates 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. For details of our resubmission process, read our [guidance for applicants](#).

Applying through Je-S

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

For more information, please read the [Je-S how to apply guidance \(PDF, 190KB\)](#).

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.

When applying select:

- council: MRC
- document type: standard proposal
- scheme: research grant
- call/type/mode: research boards May 2021 submissions

Indicating the proposal is a research grant

Select the 'grant type' option from the proposal document menu, within the Je-S proposal form. Within the section, select the radio button adjacent to the 'research grant' option and select the 'save' button.

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](#).

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 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?

Read the [detailed assessment criteria](#).

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

Get advice on your application or choosing a board

Email: mcmb@mrc.ukri.org

Or contact the programme manager most relevant to your research area:

Cell biology, developmental biology and the physical science interface

Dr Holger Apitz

Email: holger.apitz@mrc.ukri.org

Structural studies and biophysics

Dr Anne McGavigan

Email: anne.mcgavigan@mrc.ukri.org

Genomics, gene regulatory networks and synthetic biology

Dr Tim Cullingford

Email: tim.cullingford@mrc.ukri.org

Environmental health, pharmacology and toxicology

Dr Graham Campbell

Email: graham.campbell@mrc.ukri.org

Cancer

Dr Mariana Delfino-Machin

Email: mariana.delfino-machin@mrc.ukri.org

Regenerative medicine

Dr Charlotte Durkin

Email: charlotte.durkin@mrc.ukri.org.

See [our science and contacts](#).

Get help with using Je-S

Contact Je-S Helpdesk.

Email

jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org

Telephone

01793 444164

Discuss MRC policy and eligibility

Contact our research funding policy and delivery team.

Email

rfdp@mrc.ukri.org

Telephone

01793 416440

Additional info

Supporting documents

- [Je-S how to apply guidance \(PDF, 190KB\)](#)

Timeline

○ 15 February 2021

Opening date

○ 5 May 2021 16:00

Closing date

○ 2 September 2021

Shortlisting date

○ 6 to 7 October 2021

Meeting dates

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](#)

[Molecular and Cellular Medicine Board membership](#)

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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