

## Funding opportunity

# Career development award

<b>Opportunity status:</b>	Closed
<b>Funders:</b>	<a href="#">Medical Research Council (MRC)</a>
<b>Funding type:</b>	Fellowship
<b>Publication date:</b>	21 January 2022
<b>Opening date:</b>	24 February 2023 9:00am UK time
<b>Closing date:</b>	19 April 2023 4:00pm UK time

Is this page useful?

Apply for funding to support your move to independent investigator in a medical research field.

Your research can focus on any area of MRC's remit to improve human health.

You must:

- have a PhD or equivalent
- show evidence of career progression
- show clear plans for developing as a leader in your specialist area of research


Your research plans must not overlap with those of your current group leader or proposed sponsor.


There's no limit on the amount of funding you can apply for.

We will fund your salary and project costs for up to five years. We will fund 80% of the full economic cost.

You may also choose to apply for joint funding from one of the collaborating organisations.

This is an ongoing scheme. Application rounds open twice a year, closing in April and September.

 MRC is preparing the [transition of our funding opportunities to the new UKRI Funding Service](#).

 You may need to apply to the next round of this opportunity using the new service. Check this opportunity at the time the next round opens for confirmation on how to apply.

## Who can apply

To be eligible for the career development award, you must:

- have completed a PhD or equivalent
- have the skills and experience that match those of the ‘transition to independence’ career stage in the [MRC applicant skills and experience criteria](#), such as showing evidence of career progression and productivity across past appointments
- have your own research plans that do not significantly overlap with those of their current group leaders or proposed sponsors
- have the support of an [eligible research organisation](#).

There are no eligibility rules based on years of postdoctoral experience.

You are not eligible to apply if you have previously held a comparable intermediate fellowship from any organisation.

## International applicants

Proposals are welcomed from applicants of all nationalities, including those not currently based in the UK. This is subject to the fellowship being hosted by an eligible research organisation.

You will be expected to show a genuine commitment to the UK research effort beyond the end of the award.

## Career breaks and flexible working

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 [guidance for reviewers on how to assess career breaks and flexible working](#).

MRC is supportive of applicants wishing to combine their research training with caring responsibilities. All of our fellowship awards may be held on a part-time basis or within flexible working arrangements.

Read our [policy on part-time and flexible working](#).

## Find out more

Further information can be found in [guidance for fellowship applicants](#).

If you're unsure whether you are eligible to apply, email [fellows@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:fellows@mrc.ukri.org) before beginning your application.

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## What we're looking for

The aim of this scheme is to support talented researchers who have gained a higher research degree to:

- lead their own research plans
- establish their own research team
- make the transition to independent investigator

You must be able to:

- explain why a fellowship is the best way to support your long-term career goals and chosen career path to become an independent investigator in a medical research field
- describe how a fellowship would help you to move to the next level in your career through a step-change in your current role

We welcome applications from across all areas of MRC's remit to improve human health. This may range from basic studies with relevance to mechanisms of disease, to translational and developmental clinical research.

MRC science areas include:

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

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

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

## What the fellowship gives you

The career development award provides support for up to five years. We expect you to take advantage of the full five years' funding available.

If you are intending to apply for a shorter period, you should contact the programme manager ([fellows@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:fellows@mrc.ukri.org)) before submitting a proposal. 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 competitive salary, giving you the chance to concentrate fully 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.

[Read MRC's guidance for research staff development.](#)

We may allow greater flexibility on the time dedicated to non-fellowship activities (for example, those detailed above or obtaining grant support) during the second half of a fellowship.

Email the programme manager at [fellows@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:fellows@mrc.ukri.org) to discuss your plans.

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

## Funding available

The career development award will cover the full cost of your salary, as well as:

- research staff costs
- consumables expenses
- travel costs
- appropriate capital equipment.

The award will also support a period of research overseas, at a second UK institution or within industry (whichever is most appropriate).

We encourage successful applicants to take advantage of the opportunities this will provide to develop collaborative networks and establish cross-sector development.

There is no limit to the amount of funding you can request under this scheme.

Requests must be appropriate to the project and you must be able to justify the amount you need to meet the objectives of your research proposal.

Awards are made under the full economic costing framework.

MRC will typically fund 80% of the full economic cost. The research organisation must agree to find the balance of full economic cost from other resources.

You cannot hold a salaried position and a fellowship at the same time. If you are awarded a fellowship, you may need to change to a proleptic appointment.

If you want to retain an existing position and combine this with research funding, we recommend you look at one of our grant scheme funding opportunities instead.

[Search MRC grant funding opportunities.](#)

## Joint funders

MRC collaborates with royal colleges and charity funders to offer jointly-funded career development awards.

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.

We are inviting applications for the following jointly-funded clinician scientist fellowship schemes.

### Blood Cancer UK

Blood Cancer UK is a community dedicated to beating blood cancer by funding research and supporting those affected.

Since 1960, we've invested over £500 million in blood cancer research, transforming treatments and saving lives.

We welcome applications from clinicians and non-clinical academics in any area of blood cancer research.

We offer joint funding opportunities with MRC administered through the clinician scientist fellowship and career development award schemes.

If you have any questions about the fellowship, please contact our research team via [research@bloodcancer.org.uk](mailto:research@bloodcancer.org.uk) or take a look at the [Blood Cancer UK website for funding schemes](#).

For further information on the charity and its work please visit [Blood Cancer UK's website](#).

### DEBRA

Each year, one clinical development award will be awarded jointly by MRC and DEBRA.

DEBRA is the largest UK funder of epidermolysis bullosa (EB) research. To support continued growth of EB research, we are committed to building a strong community of highly trained, innovative researchers with a clear career pathway into and through EB research.

DEBRA will be there to provide support at every stage: to attract, retain and support existing researchers and to bring new researchers into the field. This will ensure we inspire the next generation of EB researchers to become leaders of a future where no one suffers with EB.

Our new strategy puts patient outputs front and centre, with a focus on translational research that will have a positive impact on those with EB today. Our ambition is to find and fund treatments to lessen the day-to-day impact of EB, and cures to eradicate EB.

If you wish to discuss the fellowship or your proposed research area, please contact Dr Sagair Hussain, Director of Research at DEBRA:

[sagair.hussain@debra.org.uk](mailto:sagair.hussain@debra.org.uk)

For more information about the charity and our research strategy [visit the DEBRA website](#).

## Diabetes UK

Diabetes UK is leading the fight against the UK's biggest and growing health crisis. Our vision is a world where diabetes can do no harm and we fight diabetes through support, information, campaigning and research. As part of our research ambitions, we're committed to attracting new research talent and retaining expertise so that we are growing the next generation of the future leaders.

We are partnering with MRC on a suite of research training fellowships to help grow investment in diabetes research careers. These include:

- clinical research training fellowship
- clinical scientist fellowship
- senior clinical fellowship
- career development award
- senior non-clinical fellowship

We will jointly fund up to 1 fellowship annually across these funding schemes. We will consider high quality applications into any aspect of diabetes and its related complications.

For further information regarding the charity's work, including the research strategy, please visit the [Diabetes UK website](#).

## Kidney Research UK

Kidney Research UK is the leading medical research charity that funds research dedicated to deliver change for people affected by kidney disease.

Career development awards under this joint funding initiative awards will be for those who wish to pursue research that will help us drive forward our [research strategy](#).

Applications that include an element of industry collaboration are welcomed, and Kidney Research UK may be able to assist potential applicants in establishing industrial contacts.

Kidney Research UK supports a wide range of research projects and career awards through open calls to UK academic clinicians and scientists.

We welcome applications from non-clinical academics.

We offer joint funding opportunities with MRC administered through the clinical research training fellowship, clinician scientist fellowship, and career development award schemes.

Additional benefits provided to successful applicants will include attendance at Kidney Research UK's annual Driving Discoveries event

For further information on our work, please [visit the Kidney Research UK website](#) or email [grants@kidneyresearchuk.org](mailto:grants@kidneyresearchuk.org)

## **Multiple Sclerosis Society**

Up to one fellowship is awarded each year under this scheme, aimed at researchers who are involved in treating patients and who wish to pursue research into understanding and treatment of multiple sclerosis.

For more information about the charity visit: [Multiple Sclerosis Society](#).

## **Parkinson's UK**

Up to one fellowship is awarded each year under this scheme, jointly funded by Parkinson's UK and the MRC.

Parkinson's UK is focused on finding new and better treatments for Parkinson's, and one day a cure. It is also keen to fund research that improves quality of life in the shorter term.

As part of a jointly funded award, fellows would be required to submit annual and final reports to the charity and to submit grant evaluation data to Researchfish annually.

Grant holders are also asked to host up to two engagement activities with people affected by Parkinson's.

## **Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health**

Founded in 1996 and now with about 17,500 members across the world, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) trains and educates paediatricians throughout their careers to the highest professional standards.

It also promotes research and child health policy in the UK and worldwide.

Its mission is to transform child health through knowledge, innovation and expertise. Its vision is a healthier future for children and young people across the world.

The Children's Research Fund has been established to grow child health research capacity in the UK and to reverse the decline in the number of paediatric academics and researchers.

We welcome applications from clinicians and non-clinical academics in any area of child health research.

We offer joint funding opportunities with the MRC administered through the clinical research training fellowship, clinician scientist fellowship, and career development award schemes.



For further information on the charity and its work visit: [Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health \(RCPCH\)](#).

Email: [research@rcpch.ac.uk](mailto:research@rcpch.ac.uk)

## **The Borne Foundation**

The Borne Foundation supports research into pregnancy and the factors and conditions that may lead to preterm birth.

They fund research programmes and projects that examine the biological processes of pregnancy and childbirth to understand changes in the maternal environment and their significance, and the mechanisms involved in normal and abnormal labour.

For further information regarding Borne and its work visit: [The Borne Foundation](#).

## **Tuberous Sclerosis Association**

The Tuberous Sclerosis Association (TSA) is the only UK based charity dedicated to providing support and information to those with Tuberous Sclerosis Complex (TSC) and their families as well campaigning for improved funding for vital treatments and services.

A major strand of its work is to support and fund research with the aim of finding a cure for the condition.

For more information about the organisation's research strategy, research funding opportunities and the projects it supports visit: [the research pages of the TSA website](#).

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## **How to apply**

Before applying, you should read the information on the application process in the [guidance for MRC fellowship applicants](#).

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

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: fellowships, FEC
- call: career development award Apr 2023

You can find advice on completing your application in the [Je-S handbook](#).



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

The career development award opens twice a year, closing in April and September.

If you need advice on your suitability for an MRC fellowship scheme, email your CV using the [fellowship CV template](#), to [fellows@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:fellows@mrc.ukri.org)

You must also include:

- a one-page project outline
- list of your publications
- description of how you meet the [skills and experience needed for this scheme](#)

## Resubmissions and other applications

You may apply to any MRC fellowship scheme no more than twice, even if you change your proposal.

You should allow at least a year between submissions whether applying to the same or a different scheme.

You are allowed to apply for fellowship funding from other funders or research organisations at the same time. However, you may not have simultaneous fellowship proposals under consideration by MRC and UKRI fellowship schemes.

You must list any current applications in the 'other support' section of the Je-S form and mention your MRC application in any applications to other funders. For further information, see [section 2.8 of the guidance for MRC fellowship applicants](#).

If you want to reapply within a year you should request permission from the relevant programme manager before resubmission by emailing [fellows@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:fellows@mrc.ukri.org)

## Applying for a jointly-funded fellowship

To apply for joint funding, you must include the joint funding form as part of your cover letter. Download the [jointly-funded fellowship form](#).

Joint funding does not alter the assessment process. We will offer all jointly funded fellowships under standard MRC terms and conditions, except where the co-funder has specified extra terms and conditions.

If you apply for a jointly funded award that is not available for any reason, we will automatically consider you for a standard MRC fellowship instead.

## Industrial partner information

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](#).

Each project partner must provide a project partner letter of support, a maximum of two pages on headed paper or a PDF of an email. The letter must:

- be an integral part of the application
- focus on the proposal it accompanies which includes the requirement to include a project partner letter of support.

Full details of the content the project partner should include in their letter of support, are provided in [section 2.2.6 of the MRC guidance for applicants](#).

## MRC industry collaboration framework

If your application involves the collaboration of one or more industrial partners, you should review the information published within the [MRC industry collaboration framework \(ICF\)](#) to decide if you should submit your application under the ICF.

After reading the ICF information, if you decide that your application will include industry collaboration, you will need to include the following within your application for each collaborating industry partner:

- [ICF form](#)
- [ICF company partner letter of support](#)

The completed ICF form should be uploaded to the Je-S attachments section using the 'MICA form' document type. Please type 'Industry Collaboration Framework form' in the description box.

The company letter of support must use the available template and be uploaded to the relevant project partner entry you are required to add to your Je-S application.

## Further guidance

For more information on the application process, see:

- [grant application checklist: eight checks to do before you submit](#)
- [12 top tips for writing a grant application](#)
- [fellowship application myth-busting](#)

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## 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 or we may decide not to approach any of your nominated reviewers.

## Criteria

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**

We will assess the importance of the questions, or gaps in knowledge, that are being addressed.

## **Scientific potential**

We assess what the prospects are for good scientific progress.

## **Resources requested**

We will consider whether the funds requested are essential for the work. And whether the importance and scientific potential justify funding on the scale requested.

We will assess whether the proposal represents good value for money.

## **Further information related to our assessment criteria**

For more information about our assessment criteria read our [detailed assessment criteria for each fellowship type](#).

## **Decision**

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

## **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 [MRC fellowship assessment process](#).

Read an [overview of the MRC peer review process](#).

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## Contact details

### Get help with developing your proposal

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.

### Ask about this funding opportunity

Email: [fellows@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:fellows@mrc.ukri.org)

Include 'CDA' in the subject line.

We aim to respond within 10 working days.

### Get help with applying through Je-S

#### Email

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

#### Telephone

01793 444164

#### Opening times

[Je-S helpdesk opening times](#)

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## Additional info

### The Global Talent visa

Career Development Award holders are eligible for a Global Talent visa under the 'exceptional promise' category for future research leaders.

Find out more about the [Global Talent visa](#).

### Differences between a Career Development Award and a New Investigator Research Grant (NIRG)

The NIRG aims to support individuals seeking to transition to independence through their first grant as a principal investigator and clear host institution support.

The time spent on the NIRG should be combined with a portfolio of other activities, such as:

- teaching

- administration duties
- other time spent in faculty
- time spent on other research grants
- clinical duties

This list is not exhaustive.

A career development award is a personal award that aims to support individuals seeking to transition to independence through protected research time and an ambitious programme of research training and personal career development.

You cannot apply concurrently for a career development award and a NIRG. Given both awards support the transition to independence, you cannot apply for a NIRG if you have held a career development award and vice versa.

## Supporting documents

[Guidance for MRC fellowship applicants](#)

[Guidance for reviewers on career breaks and flexible working](#)

[MRC fellowships CV template](#)

[Jointly-funded fellowship form](#)

[Research disruption caused by COVID-19 pandemic \(see section 2.2.3.6\)](#)

[MRC data management plan template](#)

[Guidance on attachments, including the data management plan](#)

[Guidance on NHS costs](#)

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## Timeline

○ **24 February 2023 9:00am**

Opening date

○ **19 April 2023 4:00pm**

Closing date

○ **September 2023**

Shortlisting decision meeting

○ **17 to 18 October 2023**

Funding decision meeting

○ **Within 10 working days of funding decision meeting**

Informed of funding decision

○ **4 August to 13 September 2023**

Future round open for applications

☐ **23 February to 17 April 2024**

Future round open for applications

☐ **2 August to 11 September 2024**

Future round open for applications

## Guidance on good research

[Good research resource hub](#)

<b>Opportunity status:</b>	Closed
<b>Funders:</b>	<a href="#">Medical Research Council (MRC)</a>
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Is this page useful?

Apply for support to become an independent researcher in a medical research field.

Your research can focus on any area of Medical Research Council (MRC)'s remit to improve human health.

You must:

- have a PhD or equivalent
- show evidence of career progression
- show clear plans for developing as a leader in your area of research

There is no limit on the amount of funding you can apply for.

We will fund your salary and project costs for up to five years. We will fund 80% of the full economic cost.

You may choose to apply for joint funding from one of the collaborating organisations.

This is an ongoing funding opportunity. Application rounds close every April and September.

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## Who can apply

Before applying for funding, check the [Eligibility of your organisation](#).

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) has introduced new role types for funding opportunities being run on the new UKRI Funding Service.

For full details, visit [Eligibility as an individual](#).

## Who is eligible to apply

To be eligible to apply for the career development award you must:

- have completed a PhD or equivalent
- have the skills and experience that match those of the 'transition to independence' career stage in the [MRC applicant skills and experience criteria](#), such as showing evidence of career progression and productivity across past appointments
- have your own research plans that do not significantly overlap with those of your current group leaders or proposed sponsors
- have the support of an [eligible research organisation](#)

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There are no eligibility rules based on age or years of postdoctoral experience.

## International applicants

Applications are welcomed from applicants of all nationalities, including those not currently based in the UK. This is subject to the fellowship being hosted by an eligible research organisation.

## Who is not eligible to apply

You are not eligible to apply if:

- you have applied for this MRC fellowship within the last year
- you have applied for this MRC fellowship twice before
- you have applied for another UKRI fellowship and your application is being assessed
- you have applied for an MRC new investigator research grant and your application is being assessed
- you have held an MRC new investigator research grant, because that award also supports the transition to independence
- you have previously held a comparable fellowship from any organisation

You cannot hold a salaried position and a fellowship at the same time. If you are awarded a fellowship, you will need to give up the permanent position for the duration of the fellowship or change to a proleptic appointment.

If you want to retain an existing position and combine this with research funding, we recommend you look at one of [our grant funding opportunities](#) instead.



# Equality, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants. We encourage applications from a diverse range of researchers.

We support people to work in a way that suits their personal circumstances. This includes:

- career breaks
- support for people with caring responsibilities
- flexible working
- alternative working patterns

Find out more about [equality, diversity and inclusion at UKRI](#).

We are supportive of you wishing to combine your research training with caring responsibilities. All of our fellowship awards may be held on a part-time basis or within flexible working arrangements.

[Read our policy on part-time and flexible working](#)

## Further fellowship guidance

Further information related to all aspects of the fellowship application process, can be found in the [MRC guidance for fellowship applicants](#).

If you're unsure whether you are eligible to apply, email [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org) before beginning your application.

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## What we're looking for

### Scope

The aim of the fellowship is to support talented researchers who have gained a higher research degree to:

- lead their own research plans
- establish their own research team
- make the transition to independent researcher

We welcome applications from across all areas of our remit to improve human health. This may range from basic studies with relevance to mechanisms of disease, to translational and developmental clinical research.

Our science areas include:

- infections and immunity
- molecular and cellular medicine
- population and systems medicine
- neurosciences and mental health

- translation
- global health
- methodology
- public health

You can explore [MRC's areas of scientific remit](#).

We also welcome applications for interdisciplinary approaches or research that will address global health issues and benefit those living in low and middle-income countries.

We may consider requests to fund new longitudinal population studies through an MRC fellowship award, but you must have approval from the longitudinal population studies strategic advisory panel (LPS-SAP) before you apply for the fellowship. Read the [process and timeline for LPS-SAP approval](#).

## Requirements

You must be able to:

- explain why a fellowship is the best way to support your long-term career goals and chosen career path to become an independent researcher in a medical research field
- describe how a fellowship would help you to move to the next level in your career through a step change in your current role
- show how your skills and experience match those of the transition to independence career stage in our [applicant skills and experience criteria](#)

You also must be able to identify at least one sponsor, who:

- is a senior member of the department where you are applying to host your fellowship
- acts as a supporter for the application and the fellowship, but does not have a supervisory role
- has expertise in the research area and acts as guarantor for the quality of the proposed work, suitability of you as a fellowship candidate and the quality of training and development you will receive
- additional sponsors can be named if necessary to support all areas of the proposed work and may be from other organisations

## What the fellowship gives you

This fellowship provides a competitive salary, giving you the chance to concentrate fully 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, or other funded projects.

[Read MRC's guidance on research staff development](#)

We may allow greater flexibility on the time dedicated to non-fellowship activities during the second half of a fellowship. Email the programme manager at

[support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org) to discuss your plans.

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

For more information on the background of this funding opportunity, go to the Additional information section.

## Duration

The career development award provides support for up to five years. We expect you to take advantage of the full five years' funding available. However, we understand that plans for the later stages of a fellowship will not be as defined as the initial years.

If you are intending to apply for a shorter period, you should contact the programme manager at [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org) before applying.

These periods are based on full-time equivalents. You may hold an award 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 interview.

## Funding available

There is no limit to the amount of funding you can request. Your application must be for an amount that:

- is appropriate to the project
- you can justify in order to deliver the objectives of the proposed research

We will fund 80% of the full economic cost (FEC) and 100% of permitted exceptions.

Find out more about [full economic costing](#).

## What we will fund

The career development award will cover the cost of your salary.

The fellowship will also provide funding for:

- support for other posts such as research and technical staff
- research consumables
- equipment
- travel costs
- training activities
- data preservation, data sharing and dissemination costs
- estates and indirect costs
- [NHS research costs](#), when they are associated with NHS studies

The award will also support a period of research overseas, at a second UK research organisation or in industry, whichever is most appropriate. We encourage

successful applicants to take advantage of these opportunities to establish collaborative networks and cross-sector development.

You may spend up to 12 months of your award at a second organisation. Applicants intending to spend longer periods overseas should contact us at [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org) before applying.

Sponsor costs can only be requested in exceptional circumstances and must be justified, the request should not exceed 5% of their time, or a total of 5% FTE across all sponsors if more than one is named. The associated cost should be entered as a directly allocated staff cost.

## What we will not fund

- costs for PhD studentships
- publication costs
- funding to use as a 'bridge' between grants
- costs for mentors

## Joint funders

We collaborate with royal colleges and charity funders to offer jointly-funded career development awards.

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.

We are inviting applications for the following jointly-funded career development award opportunities.

- Blood Cancer UK
- The Borne Foundation
- DEBRA
- Multiple Sclerosis Society
- Parkinson's UK
- Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
- Tuberous Sclerosis Association
- Diabetes UK
- Kidney Research UK

We will offer all jointly funded fellowships under standard UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and MRC terms and conditions, except where the co-funder has specified additional terms and conditions.

See additional information for further details of the joint funders.

## Team project partner

You may include team project partners that will support your fellowship through cash or in-kind contributions, such as:

- staff time

- access to equipment
- sites or facilities
- the provision of data
- software or materials

Each project partner must provide a statement of support. If your application involves [industry partners](#), they must provide additional information if the team project partner falls within the [industry collaboration framework](#).

Find out more about [subcontractors and dual roles](#).

## Who cannot be included as a team project partner

The individual named as the contact for the project partner organisation cannot also be a named applicant, such as those with a role of fellow or any other named member of staff.

## Supporting skills and talent

We encourage you to follow the principles of the [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#) and the [Technician Commitment](#).

## International collaboration

UKRI is committed in ensuring that effective international collaboration in research and innovation takes place with integrity and within strong ethical frameworks. Trusted Research and Innovation (TR&I) is a UKRI work programme designed to help protect all those working in our thriving and collaborative international sector by enabling partnerships to be as open as possible and as secure as necessary. Our [TR&I Principles](#) set out UKRI's expectations of organisations funded by UKRI in relation to due diligence for international collaboration.

As such, if you are applying for UKRI funding, you may be asked to demonstrate how their proposed projects will comply with our approach and expectation towards TR&I, identifying potential risks and the relevant controls you will put in place to help proportionately reduce these risks.

Further guidance and information about TR&I, including where you can find additional support, can be found on [UKRI's website](#).

Find out about [getting funding for international collaboration](#).

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## How to apply

We are running this funding opportunity on the new UKRI Funding Service. You cannot apply on the Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system.

You are responsible for completing the application process on the Funding Service, but we expect you to consult with sponsors and any project partners and mentors

throughout the application process for advice.

Only the lead research organisation can submit an application to UK Research & Innovation (UKRI).

If the lead research organisation is an NHS organisation, check it is available in the Funding Service. You are encouraged to check this early as there may be additional steps for the organisation to be set up before you can apply.

To apply:

Select 'Start application' near the beginning of this Funding finder page.

1. Confirm you are the fellowship applicant.
2. Sign in or create a UKRI Funding Service account. To create an account, select your organisation, verify your email address, and set a password. If your organisation is not listed, email [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org). Please allow at least 10 working days for your organisation to be added to the Funding Service.

You will be prompted to select the organisation you are applying with to host the fellowship before you start your application. If you are not currently based at that organisation, ensure the research office are aware of your application.

3. Answer questions directly in the text boxes. You can save your answers and come back to complete them or work offline and return to copy and paste your answers. If we need you to upload a document, follow the upload instructions in the Funding Service. All questions and assessment criteria are listed in the How to apply section on this Funding finder page
4. Send the completed application to your research office for checking. They will return it to you if it needs editing.
5. Your research office will submit the completed and checked application to UKRI.

Watch our [research office webinars about the new UKRI Funding Service](#).

## Deadline

We must receive your application on 13 September 2023 by 4.00pm UK time. You will not be able to apply after this time.

Make sure you are aware of and follow any internal institutional deadlines.

You will not be able to apply after the funding opportunity has closed. We will not consider late applications.

Following the close of the funding opportunity, your application cannot be changed and applications will not be returned for amendment. If your application does not follow the guidance, it may be rejected.

## Personal data

### Processing personal data

We will need to collect some personal information to manage your funding service account and the registration of your funding applications.

We will handle personal data in line with UK data protection legislation and manage it securely. For more information, including how to exercise your rights, read our [privacy notice](#).

If you apply for a jointly funded fellowship, MRC as part of UKRI will need to share the application and any personal information that it contains with the joint funder so that they can participate in the assessment process. For more information on how the joint funders use personal information, visit their websites.

## Publication of outcomes

We will publish the outcomes of this funding opportunity at [Board and panel outcomes – MRC](#).

If your application is successful, we will publish some personal information on the [UKRI Gateway to Research](#).

## UKRI Funding Service: section guidance

### Summary

Word count: 550

In plain English, provide a summary we can use to identify the most suitable experts to assess your application.

We may make this summary publicly available on external-facing websites, so make it suitable for a variety of readers, for example:

- opinion-formers
- policymakers
- the public
- the wider research community

### Guidance for writing a summary

Clearly describe your proposed work in terms of:

- context
- the challenge the project addresses
- aims and objectives
- potential applications and benefits

### Core team

List the key members of your team and assign them roles from the following:

- specialist
- professional enabling staff (assign your sponsors this role)
- research and innovation associate
- technician



- fellow

Only list one individual as fellow.

You must list at least one sponsor and assign them as professional enabling staff. Mentors should not be listed in the core team.

Find out more about [UKRI's new grant roles](#).

## Vision and Approach

Word count: 10

Create a document that includes your responses to all criteria. The document should not be more than six sides of A4, single spaced in paper in 11-point Arial, or equivalent sans serif font, with margins of at least 2cm. You may include images, graphs, tables.

You can have an additional page for a diagrammatic workplan, plus an optional additional page for reproducibility information. If optional pages are completed the maximum length of the document is eight pages. If you do not want to provide optional information, or it is not relevant to your application, you must limit the length of your document accordingly and not use optional pages for anything other than the specified purpose.

For the file name, use the unique UKRI Funding Service number the system gives you when you create an application, followed by the words 'Vision and Approach'.

Save this document as a single PDF file, no bigger than 8MB. Unless specifically requested, please do not include any personal data within the attachment.

If the attachment does not meet these requirements, the application will be rejected.

The Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply.

Question: What are you hoping to achieve with and how will you deliver your proposed work?

### What the assessors are looking for in your response

For the Vision, explain how your proposed work:

- is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
- has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
- is timely given current trends, context and needs
- impacts world-leading research, society, the economy or the environment

Within the Vision section we also expect you to:

- identify the potential direct or indirect benefits and who the beneficiaries might be
- identify potential improvements in human or population health, whether through contributing to relieving disease or disability burden, improving quality of life, or providing benefit to the health service or health-related industry

- outline your plans for engagement, communication and dissemination about your research and its outcomes with the research community and, where appropriate, with potentially interested wider audiences

For the Approach, explain how you have designed your work so that it:

- is effective and appropriate to achieve your objectives
- is feasible, and comprehensively identifies any risks to delivery and how you will manage them
- uses a clearly written and transparent methodology, if applicable
- summarises the previous work and describes how you will build on and progress this work, if applicable
- will maximise translation of outputs into outcomes and impacts
- demonstrates how your research environment will contribute to the success of the work, in terms of the place and relevance to the project

Within the Approach section we also expect you to:

- provide a detailed and comprehensive project plan of training and development to support career advancement, including milestones and timelines in the form of a Gantt chart or similar (additional one-page A4)
- demonstrate access to the appropriate services, facilities, infrastructure, or equipment to deliver the proposed work
- explain the specific training and research considerations which led to the choice of host department
- describe the special features or facilities of the research training environment in the host organisation that will benefit you
- if this is where you have been based for a year or more, explain your reasons for remaining
- explain who you intend to collaborate with at the host organisation and your plans for wider research collaborations. Project partner details should be provided only in that section
- include details of work that will take place as part of the proposed fellowship at a second UK or overseas centre, if applicable
- specify population groups in relation to their diversity characteristics and the proposed analysis, following the MRC embedding diversity in research design policy, if applicable
- if applicable, show how you will use both sexes in research involving animals, tissues and cells. If you are not proposing to do this, a strong justification is required

You have the option to provide additional information about reproducibility and how you will ensure reliability and robustness of your work, such as further details of statistical analyses, methodology and experimental design.

The reproducibility information should be a clearly identified page in your vision and approach document. We expect you to seek professional statistical or other relevant advice in preparing your response, which may include:

- experimental approach to address objectives
- sample and effect sizes

- planned statistical analyses
- models chosen, for example animal model or cell line

Refer to the [MRC guidance for applicants, section 2.2.3.5 ‘Reproducibility and statistical design’](#) for further information, examples and online tools.

If your proposed work involves animals, and you provide information on animal sample sizes and statistical analyses in the vision and approach document, you should not duplicate it in the ‘Research involving the use of animals’ section, specifically within the experimental design and statistical framework section of the template. Use the ‘Research involving the use of animals’ section to provide information on the rationale for using animals, choice of species, welfare and procedure severity.

## Section: career progression

Word count: 700 words

Question: Why is the proposed work, the environment it will be conducted in, and the support provided by the host organisation the right way to develop your career?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Ensure that you have identified:

- career progression goals appropriate to the fellowship funding opportunity
- necessary support to enable you to transition, change and grow to the next career stage and achieve your stated career progression goals
- how the proposed work will provide a feasible and appropriate trajectory for you to acquire additional skills, like leadership, communication and management skills

## Applicant capability to deliver

Word count: 1,500

Question: Why are you the right individual to successfully deliver the proposed work?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Evidence of how you have:

- the relevant experience ([appropriate to career stage](#)) to make best use of the benefits presented by this funding opportunity to develop your career
- the right balance of skills and aptitude to deliver the proposed work, or feasible plans to develop these
- contributed to developing a positive research environment and wider community

The word count for this section is 1,500 words, 1,000 words to be used for R4RI modules and, if necessary, a further 500 words for Additions.

Use the Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI) format to showcase the range of relevant skills you have and how this will help to deliver the proposed

work. You can include specific achievements and choose past contributions that best evidence your ability to deliver this work.

Complete this section using the following R4RI module headings. You should use each heading once, see the UKRI guidance on R4RI. You should consider how to balance your answer, and emphasise where appropriate the key skills each team member brings:

- contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge
- the development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships
- contributions to the wider research and innovation community
- contributions to broader research or innovation users and audiences and towards wider societal benefit

## **Additions**

Provide any further details relevant to your application. This section is optional and can be up to 500 words. You should not use it to describe additional skills, experiences, or outputs, but you can use it to describe any factors that provide context for the rest of your R4RI, (for example details of [career breaks](#) if you wish to disclose them).

Complete this as a narrative. Do not format it like a CV.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) has introduced new role types for funding opportunities being run on the new UKRI Funding Service.

For full details, see [Eligibility as an individual](#).

## **References**

Word count: 1,000

List the references you have used to support your application.

**What the assessors are looking for in your response**

Include all references in this section, not in the rest of the application questions.

You should not include any other information in this section.

We advise you not to include hyperlinks, as assessors are not obliged to access the information they lead to or consider it in their assessment of your application.

If linking to web resources, to maintain the information's integrity, include persistent identifiers, such as digital object identifiers, where possible.

You must not include links to web resources to extend your application.

## **Section: Head of department statements**

Word count: 10

Question: Provide your head of department supporting statements.

**What the assessors are looking for in your response**

Provide evidence that the host organisation for your fellowship is committed to helping you realise your full potential in terms of establishing yourself as a research and innovation leader, including how they will support you and ensure your time commitment to the fellowship is protected.

A signed letter of support must be provided by the head of the department where you are applying to host your fellowship and uploaded to the application. This letter of support should include:

- name and position of the person providing the statement
- how long they have known you
- their assessment of your suitability for an MRC fellowship
- their assessment of the suitability of the department for your project and your research training and career development
- the commitments the department will make to support you, such as laboratory space, access to equipment, facilities and PhD students

Additional letters of support may also be required, from:

Second centres: if a second centre is involved in your fellowship application, you must also include an additional letter of support from the industrial partner or second research organisation head of department, confirming their commitment to support you.

Previous head of department: if you have recently moved department or plan to undertake your fellowship at a different department to your current affiliation, an additional letter of support should be included from your previous or current head of department, with their assessment of your suitability for an MRC fellowship.

Create a PDF document that combines all your letters of support. Each letter should not be more than two sides of A4, single spaced in paper in 11-point Arial (or equivalent sans serif font) with margins of at least 2cm.

The Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply.

## **Section: Sponsors**

Word count: 3,000

Question: Provide details of your sponsors and their support.

### **What the assessors are looking for in your response**

A statement must be provided by at least one sponsor who is a senior member of the department where you are applying to host your fellowship and who will have academic responsibility for you. Other sponsors can be named if necessary to support all areas of the proposed work and may be from other organisations.

A sponsor is not expected to fulfil a supervisory role during the fellowship, but they act as a supporter for the application and the fellowship.

A sponsor should have expertise in the research area of the application and will act as guarantor for the quality of the proposed research, suitability of you as a fellowship candidate and the quality of training and development you will receive.

An entry should be included for each sponsor, detailing:

- the sponsor's name and current position
- in what capacity they know you

- how long they have known you
- their views on your research ability and suitability for this fellowship
- measures of research activity where you will be based, such as the number of academic staff
- the suitability and quality of the support, training and skills that you will receive, including how your research area fits with the priorities of the research environment

A sponsor statement should be up to 1,000 words, only use the full word count if you have multiple sponsors.

## **Section: Mentors**

Word count: 500

Question: How will you be mentored during the fellowship?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Explain your proposed mentoring arrangements.

If a mentor has been identified, they should be named in the response to this question and provide a statement of support detailing how they will support you.

## **Project partners**

Word count: 1,000

Provide details of any project partners' contributions, and letters or emails of support from each named partner.

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Download and complete the [Project partner contributions template \(DOCX, 52KB\)](#).

Each letter or email you provide should:

- confirm the partner's commitment to the project
- clearly explain the value, relevance, and possible benefits of the work to them
- describe any additional value that they bring to the project

The UKRI Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply. If you do not have any project partners, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Ensure you have prior agreement from project partners so that, if you are offered funding, they will support your project as indicated in the contributions template.

For audit purposes, UKRI requires formal collaboration agreements to be put in place if an award is made.

Do not provide project partner letters of support from host research organisations.

If your application includes industry project partners, you will also need to complete the Industry Collaboration Framework (ICF) section.

Find out more about [ICF](#).

## **Section: Industry Collaboration Framework (ICF)**

Word count: 1,500

Question: Does your application include industry project partners?

### **What the assessors are looking for in your response**

If industry collaboration does not apply to any of your project partners, or you don't have any project partners, simply add 'N/A' into the text box.

If your research project involves collaboration between an academic organisation and an industry or company, you are likely to need to follow the industry collaboration framework and answer this question, check using the [ICF decision tree](#).

By 'industry or company' we mean an enterprise that puts goods or services on a market and whose commercial activities are greater than 20% of their overall annual capacity.

The assessors are looking for information relating to the nature, goals and conditions of the collaboration and any restrictions or rights to the project results that could be claimed by the project partner.

Find out more about [ICF](#), including:

- collaboration agreements
- definitions of basic or applied research
- internationally based companies
- subsidy control
- Intellectual property (IP) arrangements
- fully flexible and gated contributions
- the ICF assessment criteria

In addition to the project partner information completed in the previous section, confirm your answers to the ICF questions in the text box, repeat this process for each ICF project partner:

1. Name the industry or company project partner considered under ICF.
2. Indicate whether your application is either basic research or applied research.
3. Explain why, in the absence of the requested UKRI funding, the collaboration and the planned research could not be undertaken.
4. State whether your application is under the category of either fully flexible contribution or gated contribution, based on the IP sharing arrangements with the ICF partner.
5. Outline the pre-existing IP or 'background IP' that each project partner, including the academic partner, will bring to the collaborative research project and the terms under which project partners may access these assets.



6. Outline the IP or 'foreground IP' that is expected to be developed during the collaborative research project and briefly outline how it will be managed, including:
  - which project partners will own this IP
  - what rights project partners will have to use academically-generated foreground IP during and after the research project, for internal research and development or for commercial purposes
  - any rights of the academic partner to commercialise the foreground IP (including foreground IP generated by project partners)
7. Outline any restrictions to dissemination of the project results, including the rights of the project partner to:
  - review, approve or delay publications, including the time period associated with such rights
  - request or require the removal of any information.
8. Declare any conflicts of interest held by the applicants in relation to the project partners and describe how they will be managed.
9. If applicable, justify collaborating with an overseas industry or company under ICF.

Failure to provide the information requested for industry partners under ICF could result in your application being rejected.

You are recommended to discuss the goals and conditions of any collaboration with an industry or company project partner with your university technology transfer or contracts office before applying.

## Facilities

Word count: 250

Does your proposed research require the support and use of a facility?

**What the assessors are looking for in your response**

If you will need to use a facility, follow your proposed facility's normal access request procedures. Ensure you have prior agreement so that if you are offered funding, they will support the use of their facility on your project.

For each requested facility you will need to provide the:

- name of facility, copied and pasted from the [facility information list \(DOCX, 35KB\)](#)
- proposed usage or costs, or costs per unit where indicated on the facility information list
- confirmation you have their agreement where required

If you will not need to use a facility, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

## Section: Data management and sharing

Word count: 1,500

Question: How will you manage and share data collected or acquired through the proposed research?

### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Provide a data management plan which should clearly detail how you will comply with MRC's published data management and sharing policies, which includes detailed guidance notes. Provide your response following the MRC data management plan template.

The length of your plan will vary depending on the type of study being undertaken:

- population cohorts; longitudinal studies; genetic, omics and imaging data; biobanks, and other collections that are potentially a rich resource for the wider research community: maximum of 1,500 words
- for all other research, including less complex, the plan may be as short as 500 words

### Ethics and responsible research and innovation (RRI)

Word count: 500

Question: What are the ethical or RRI implications and issues relating to the proposed work? If you do not think that the proposed work raises any ethical or RRI issues, explain why.

### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Demonstrate that you have identified and evaluated:

- the relevant ethical or responsible research and innovation considerations
- how you will manage these considerations

If you are collecting or using data, identify:

- any legal and ethical considerations of collecting, releasing or storing the data including consent, confidentiality, anonymisation, security and other ethical considerations and, in particular, strategies to not preclude further re-use of data
- formal information standards with which your study will comply

### Genetic and biological risk

Word count: 700

Question: Does your proposed research involve any genetic or biological risk?

### What the assessors are looking for in your response

In respect of animals, plants or microbes, are you proposing to:

- use genetic modification as an experimental tool, like studying gene function in a genetically modified organism
- release genetically modified organisms
- ultimately develop commercial and industrial genetically modified outcomes

If yes, provide the name of any required approving body and state if approval is already in place. If it is not, provide an indicative timeframe for obtaining the required approval.

Identify the organism or organisms as a plant, animal or microbe and specify the species and which of the three categories the research relates to.

Identify the genetic and biological risks resulting from the proposed research, their implications, and any mitigation you plan on taking. Assessors will want to know you have considered the risks and their implications to justify that any identified risks do not outweigh any benefits of the proposed research.

If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

## **Research involving the use of animals**

Word count: 10

Question: Does your proposed research involve the use of vertebrate animals or other organisms covered by the Animals Scientific Procedures Act?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you are proposing research that requires using animals, download and complete the [Animals Scientific Procedures Act template \(DOCX, 74KB\)](#), which contains all the questions relating to research using vertebrate animals or other Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 regulated organisms.

Save it as a PDF. The Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply. If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

## **Conducting research with animals overseas**

Word count: 10

Question: Will any of the proposed animal research be conducted overseas?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you are proposing to conduct overseas research, it must be conducted in accordance with welfare standards consistent with those in the UK, as in [Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research, page 14](#).

Ensure all named applicants in the UK and overseas are aware of this requirement. Provide a statement to confirm that:

- all named applicants are aware of the requirements and have agreed to abide by them
- this overseas research will be conducted in accordance with welfare standards consistent with the principles of UK legislation
- the expectation set out in Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research will be applied and maintained

- appropriate national and institutional approvals are in place

Overseas studies proposing to use non-human primates, cats, dogs, equines or pigs will be assessed during [NC3Rs review](#) of research applications. Provide the required information by completing the template from the question 'Research involving the use of animals'.

For studies involving other species, select, download, and complete the relevant Word checklist or checklists from this list:

- [Additional questions on the use of rodents overseas \(DOCX, 50KB\)](#)
- [Additional questions on the use of rabbits overseas \(DOCX, 50KB\)](#)
- [Additional questions on the use of sheep overseas \(DOCX, 51KB\)](#)
- [Additional questions on the use of goats overseas \(DOCX, 48KB\)](#)
- [Additional questions on the use of pigs overseas \(DOCX, 52KB\)](#)
- [Additional questions on the use of cattle overseas \(DOCX, 58KB\)](#)
- [Additional questions on the use of \*Xenopus laevis\* and \*Xenopus tropicalis\* overseas \(DOCX, 58KB\)](#)

Save as a PDF. If you use more than one checklist, save it as a single PDF.

The Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply. If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

## Research involving human participation

Word count: 700

Question: Will the project involve the use of human subjects or their personal information?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you are proposing research that requires the involvement of human subjects, provide the name of any required approving body and whether approval is already in place.

Justify the number and the diversity of the participants involved, as well as any procedures.

Provide details of any areas of substantial or moderate severity of impact.

If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

## Research involving human tissues or biological samples

Word count: 700

Question: Does your proposed research involve the use of human tissues, or biological samples?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you are proposing work that involves human tissues or biological samples, provide the name of any required approving body and whether approval is already in place.

Justify the use of human tissue or biological samples, specifying the nature and quantity of the material to be used and its source.

If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

## **Resources and cost justification**

Word count: 1,000

Question: What will you need to deliver your proposed work and how much will it cost?

### **What the assessors are looking for in your response**

Justify the application's more costly resources, in particular:

- project staff
- significant travel for field work or collaboration (but not regular travel between collaborating organisations or to conferences)
- any equipment that will cost more than £10,000
- any consumables beyond typical requirements, or that are required in exceptional quantities
- all facilities and infrastructure costs
- all resources that have been costed as 'Exceptions'
- support to work at a second centre in the UK or overseas
- support for training activities
- support for public and patient involvement and engagement
- support for preserving, long-term storage, or sharing of data
- NHS research costs, when they are associated with NHS studies
- animal costs, such as numbers that need to be bred or maintained and to achieve high welfare standards
- support for sponsors, which must not exceed 5% of their time

Assessors are not looking for detailed costs or a line-by-line breakdown of all project resources. Overall, they want to be assured that:

- all resources are appropriate
- the project will make optimal use of resources to achieve its outcomes

## **Section: Clinical research in the NHS, public health or social care**

Word count: 250

Question: Will your research take place in an NHS, public health or social care setting?

### **What the assessors are looking for in your response**

If not, enter 'N/A' into the text box.

Researchers applying for clinical research in the NHS, public health or social care need to complete a Schedule of Events Cost Attribution Tool (SoECAT) to be eligible for the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Clinical Research Network (CRN) portfolio. This is the route through which support and excess treatment costs are provided in England.

You must answer 'Yes' and complete and upload a SoECAT if you are applying for clinical research funding, and:

- you will carry out your research in the UK
- it is intended for the NIHR CRN portfolio; this may include studies in a social care or public health setting
- the research requires approval by Health Research Authority (England) or its equivalents in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales
- your research will use NHS resources

You must complete a SoECAT even if you don't think your clinical research will involve excess treatment costs (ETCs).

See [MRC guidance 3.5.1 on who needs to complete a SoECAT](#).

If you are applying for clinical research in the NHS, public health or social care and don't think you need to complete a SoECAT, answer 'Yes' and explain why a SoECAT is not necessary.

We want to know that you have taken the appropriate steps for the full costs of your research to be attributed, calculated and paid.

We want to see the expected total resources required for your project, such as ETCs, to consider if these are appropriate.

## How to complete a SoECAT

SoECAT guidance can be found on the NIHR website.

These are the steps you need to take:

1. Contact an Attributing the costs of health and social care Research & Development (AcoRD) specialist as early as possible in the application process.
2. Complete an online SoECAT. Excel versions of the form have been discontinued. If you don't have an account for NIHR's Central Portfolio Management System (CPMS) you will need create and activate one. See the user guide for instructions.
3. Request authorisation of your SoECAT.
4. Once authorised convert the 'Summary' page from the 'Funder Export' as a PDF and upload it to your application.

Applications that require a SoECAT but have not attached the SoECAT funder export summary may be rejected.

Contact [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org) if you have questions about the UKRI aspects of this process or have concerns that your SoECAT may not be authorised in time for the application deadline.

## Section: Related applications

Word count: 500

Question: Is this application related to another application to MRC or other funding organisation?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If not, enter N/A.

If yes, explain how this new application is related to the other application.

You are allowed to apply for fellowship funding from other funders or research organisations at the same time as this application. If the related application was submitted to another funder you should identify the name of the funder and when you applied.

If this is a resubmission, include the reference number of your previous MRC application. Describe how this application differs from the previous application and how feedback on the previous application has been considered and acted on.

You may only apply twice for any MRC fellowship, regardless of the extent of changes to the application. Changing your organisation or project does not reset your number of previous applications.

## Section: Joint Funders

Word count: 20

Question: Are you applying for a jointly-funded fellowship?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If not, enter N/A into the text box

If you are applying for a jointly-funded fellowship we want to know the name of the joint funder. If applicable, select your joint funder from the below list and copy it in the text box:

- Blood Cancer UK
- The Borne Foundation
- DEBRA
- Multiple Sclerosis Society
- Parkinson's UK
- Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
- Tuberous Sclerosis Association
- Diabetes UK
- Kidney Research UK



By selecting a joint funder, you agree to us sharing this application and your personal information with the chosen joint funder or funders.

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## How we will assess your application

### Assessment process

We will assess your application using the following process.

#### Peer review

We will invite experts to review your application independently, against the specified criteria for this funding opportunity.

You will not be able to nominate reviewers for applications on the new UKRI Funding Service. Research councils will continue to select expert reviewers.

We are monitoring the requirement for applicant-nominated reviewers as we review policies and processes as part of the continued development of the new UKRI Funding Service.

#### Shortlisting

An expert panel will review the comments and scores for each application. Shortlisted applications will go to an interview panel who will make a funding recommendation.

If your application passes the shortlisting stage, we will invite you to interview and send you the reviews. You can respond to the review comments in your interview.

If your application is not shortlisted, we will send you the review comments as feedback. You will not be able to respond to the comments.

We aim to communicate decisions within ten days of the shortlisting panel meeting.

#### Interview

For shortlisted applications, an expert interview panel will conduct interviews with you after which the panel will make a funding recommendation.

Interviews with the non-clinical training and career development panel will usually last 25 minutes. We will contribute towards the cost of your return travel, modest subsistence costs and reasonable additional family care costs.

We expect interviews to be held on 26-27 March 2024.

MRC will make the final funding decision.

#### Timescale

We aim to complete the assessment process within six months of receiving your application.

## Feedback

If your application was discussed by a panel, we will give feedback with the outcome of your application.

We will let you know as soon as possible after we have made a final decision about your application. This is usually within 10 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 the reviews as feedback.

Find out more about the [MRC fellowship assessment process](#).

Read an overview of the [MRC peer review process](#).

## Principles of assessment

We support the [San Francisco declaration on research assessment \(DORA\)](#) and recognise the relationship between research assessment and research integrity.

Find out about the [UKRI Principles of Assessment and Decision Making](#).

We reserve the right to modify the assessment process as needed.

## Sharing data with co-funders

If you have applied for a jointly-funded fellowship, we will need to share the application, including any personal information that it contains, with the joint funder so that they can participate in the assessment process.

For more information on how a joint funder uses personal information, visit their website.

## Assessment of jointly-funded fellowships

Joint funding does not alter the assessment process.

If you apply for a jointly funded fellowship that is not available for any reason, we will automatically consider you for the standard MRC fellowship instead.

## Assessment criteria

The criteria we will assess your application against are:

- vision of the project
- approach to the project
- career progression
- your capability to deliver the project, related to the [skills and experience needed to win support at this career stage](#)
- support for the applicant

- resources requested to do the project
- ethical and responsible research and innovation considerations of the project

We will take into account any career breaks, flexible working and changes in discipline when assessing your career progression and capability to deliver the project.

Find details of assessment questions and criteria under the 'Application questions' heading in the How to apply section.

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## Contact details

### Get help with your application

For help on costings and writing your application, contact your research office. Allow enough time for your organisation's submission process.

### Ask about this funding opportunity

Email: [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org)

Phone: 01793 547490

Our phone lines are open:

- Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5:00pm
- Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

### Sensitive information

If you or a core team member need to tell us something you wish to remain confidential, email the UKRI Funding Service helpdesk on [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org)

Include in the subject line: [the funding opportunity title; sensitive information; your UKRI Funding Service application number].

Typical examples of confidential information include:

- individual is unavailable until a certain date (for example due to parental leave)
- declaration of interest
- additional information about eligibility to apply that would not be appropriately shared in the Applicant and team capability section
- conflict of interest for UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to consider in reviewer or panel participant selection
- the application is an invited resubmission

For information about how UKRI handles personal data, read [UKRI's privacy notice](#).

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## Additional info

### Background

#### Differences between a Career Development Award and a New Investigator Research Grant (NIRG)

The NIRG aims to support individuals seeking to transition to independence through their first grant as a project lead (formerly principal investigator) and clear host institution support.

The time spent on the NIRG should be combined with a portfolio of other activities, such as:

- teaching
- administration duties
- other time spent in faculty
- time spent on other research grants
- clinical duties

This list is not exhaustive.

A career development award is a personal award that aims to support individuals seeking to transition to independence through protected research time and an ambitious programme of research training and personal career development.

You cannot apply concurrently for a career development award and a NIRG. Given both awards support the transition to independence, you cannot apply for a NIRG if you have held a career development award and vice versa.

### Joint Funders

#### Blood Cancer UK

Blood Cancer UK is a community dedicated to beating blood cancer by funding research and supporting those affected.

Since 1960, we've invested over £500 million in blood cancer research, transforming treatments and saving lives.

We welcome applications from clinicians and non-clinical academics in any area of blood cancer research.

We offer joint funding opportunities with MRC administered through the clinician scientist fellowship and career development award opportunities.

If you have any questions about the fellowship, please contact our research team via [research@bloodcancer.org.uk](mailto:research@bloodcancer.org.uk) or take a look at the [Blood Cancer UK website for funding opportunities](#).

For further information on the charity and its work please visit [Blood Cancer UK's website](#).

## **DEBRA**

Each year, one clinical development award will be awarded jointly by MRC and DEBRA.

DEBRA is the largest UK funder of epidermolysis bullosa (EB) research. To support continued growth of EB research, we are committed to building a strong community of highly trained, innovative researchers with a clear career pathway into and through EB research.

DEBRA will be there to provide support at every stage: to attract, retain and support existing researchers and to bring new researchers into the field. This will ensure we inspire the next generation of EB researchers to become leaders of a future where no one suffers with EB.

Our new strategy puts patient outputs front and centre, with a focus on translational research that will have a positive impact on those with EB today. Our ambition is to find and fund treatments to lessen the day-to-day impact of EB, and cures to eradicate EB.

If you wish to discuss the fellowship or your proposed research area, please contact Dr Sagair Hussain, Director of Research at DEBRA:

[sagair.hussain@debra.org.uk](mailto:sagair.hussain@debra.org.uk)

For more information about the charity and our research strategy visit the [DEBRA website](#).

## **Diabetes UK**

Diabetes UK is leading the fight against the UK's biggest and growing health crisis. Our vision is a world where diabetes can do no harm and we fight diabetes through support, information, campaigning and research. As part of our research ambitions, we're committed to attracting new research talent and retaining expertise so that we are growing the next generation of the future leaders.

We are partnering with MRC on a suite of research training fellowships to help grow investment in diabetes research careers. These include:

- clinical research training fellowship
- clinical scientist fellowship
- senior clinical fellowship
- career development award
- senior non-clinical fellowship

We will jointly fund up to one fellowship annually across these funding opportunities. We will consider high quality applications into any aspect of diabetes and its related complications.

For further information regarding the charity's work, including the research strategy, please visit the Diabetes UK website.

## Multiple Sclerosis Society

Up to one fellowship is awarded each year under this opportunity, aimed at researchers who are involved in treating patients and who wish to pursue research into understanding and treatment of multiple sclerosis.

For more information about the charity visit: [Multiple Sclerosis Society](#).

## Parkinson's UK

Up to one fellowship is awarded each year under this opportunity, jointly funded by Parkinson's UK and MRC.

Parkinson's UK is focused on finding new and better treatments for Parkinson's and, one day, a cure. It is also keen to fund research that improves quality of life in the shorter term.

As part of a jointly funded award, fellows would be required to submit annual and final reports to the charity and to submit grant evaluation data to Researchfish annually.

Grant holders are also asked to host up to two engagement activities with people affected by Parkinson's.

[Find out more about Parkinson's UK research](#)

## Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

Founded in 1996 and now with about 17,500 members across the world, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) trains and educates paediatricians throughout their careers to the highest professional standards.

It also promotes research and child health policy in the UK and worldwide.

Its mission is to transform child health through knowledge, innovation and expertise. Its vision is a healthier future for children and young people across the world.

The Children's Research Fund has been established to grow child health research capacity in the UK and to reverse the decline in the number of paediatric academics and researchers.

We welcome applications from clinicians and non-clinical academics in any area of child health research.

We offer joint funding opportunities with the MRC administered through the clinical research training fellowship, clinician scientist fellowship, and career development award opportunities.

For further information on the charity and its work visit [Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health \(RCPCH\)](#)

Email: [research@rcpch.ac.uk](mailto:research@rcpch.ac.uk)

## The Borne Foundation

The Borne Foundation supports research into pregnancy and the factors and conditions that may lead to preterm birth.

They fund research programmes and projects that examine the biological processes of pregnancy and childbirth to understand changes in the maternal environment and their significance, and the mechanisms involved in normal and abnormal labour.

For further information regarding Borne and its work visit: [The Borne Foundation](#).

## **Tuberous Sclerosis Association**

The Tuberous Sclerosis Association (TSA) is the only UK based charity dedicated to providing support and information to those with Tuberous Sclerosis Complex (TSC) and their families as well campaigning for improved funding for vital treatments and services.

A major strand of its work is to support and fund research with the aim of finding a cure for the condition.

For more information about the organisation's research strategy, research funding opportunities and the projects it supports visit: [the research pages of the TSA website](#).

## **Webinar for potential applicants**

We will hold a webinar on 26 July 2023. This will provide more information about the funding opportunity and a chance to ask questions.

[Register for the webinar](#)

## **Global Talent visa**

Career development award holders are eligible for a [Global Talent visa](#) under the 'exceptional promise' category for future research leaders.

## **Research disruption due to COVID-19**

We recognise that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major interruptions and disruptions across our communities. We are committed to ensuring that individual applicants and their wider team, including partners and networks, are not penalised for any disruption to their career, such as:

- breaks and delays
- disruptive working patterns and conditions
- the loss of ongoing work
- role changes that may have been caused by the pandemic

Reviewers and panel members will be advised to consider the unequal impacts that COVID-19 related disruption might have had on the capability to deliver and career development of those individuals included in the application. They will be asked to consider the capability of the applicant and their wider team to deliver the research they are proposing.



Where disruptions have occurred, you can highlight this within your application if you wish, but there is no requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption

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## Timeline

- **24 February 2023 9:00am**  
Opening date
- **19 April 2023 4:00pm**  
Closing date
- **September 2023**  
Shortlisting decision meeting
- **17 to 18 October 2023**  
Funding decision meeting
- **Within 10 working days of funding decision meeting**  
Informed of funding decision
- **4 August to 13 September 2023**  
Future round open for applications
- **23 February to 17 April 2024**  
Future round open for applications
- **2 August to 11 September 2024**  
Future round open for applications

## Guidance on good research

[Good research resource hub](#)

