



Medical  
Research  
Council

# Doctoral Landscape Awards in Medical Research

**Webinar – 4th December 2025**

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# Webinar Housekeeping



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recorded**



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Q&A box**



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**Slides, recording  
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# Overview

## 1 MRC priorities for training and careers

## 2 Doctoral Landscape Awards

- Who can apply
- What we're looking for
- Funding available
- Assessment process

## 3 Q&A session

# Training & Careers – refreshed priorities

## ■ Principles:

- **Embed & Enhance:** support **people and teams** through in all we do
- **Incentivise:** encourage & de-risk **clear, attractive** and **fluid career paths**
- **Coherent offer:** **flexible** support for **key transitions**



## 1. Prioritise early career transitions

- Seek to maintain PhD numbers & drive best practice for wider benefit
- Increase support & flexibility for clinical researchers
- Shift MRC Fellowships to support 'early independence'
  - MRC offer complementary to UKRI FLF

## 2. Target skill & career pathway gaps

- Address skills gaps:
  - Targeted co-funding of Focal awards
  - Embed capacity building in future strategic initiatives
- Incentivise & value diverse careers:
  - Widen fellowship eligibility to future methodological & technical leaders
  - Evaluate research grant team support
  - De-risk technical careers by trialling tapered salaries on infrastructure

## 3. Enable mobility

- De-risk inter-sector mobility:
  - embed flexibility in future large investments
- Support academic re-entry:
  - Localised flexible support for clinicians to enable research re-entry

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# MRC studentships portfolio



Doctoral Investment Framework

# UKRI Doctoral Landscape Awards

Support the UK's overall doctoral capability and capacity needs

Shaped to fit the needs of the relevant disciplines or sectors

Studentships tailored to meet the needs of the individual project

# UKRI Core Offer

## Support and student experience

A flexible, inclusive and supportive environment which optimises the student experience and the diversity of the student population to strengthen the quality of the research.

## Research skills and methods

Holistic approach to doctoral training and development integrating in-depth subject knowledge, research and methodological skills, and wider technical development opportunities.

## Professional and career development

Globally competitive researchers, able to use their skills to thrive across a range of sectors and careers.



# Scheme objectives

- Support the development of a highly skilled workforce equipped to address medical research and innovation challenges across a range of careers.
- Advance current understanding and generate new knowledge.
- Support a diverse doctoral community, which includes addressing areas of underrepresentation.
- Enhance collaboration and knowledge exchange within and between academia and other sectors.

# Who can apply

## Project Lead

- Eligible for UKRI funding
- Principal host for students
- ONE application per organisation

# Who can apply

## Project Lead

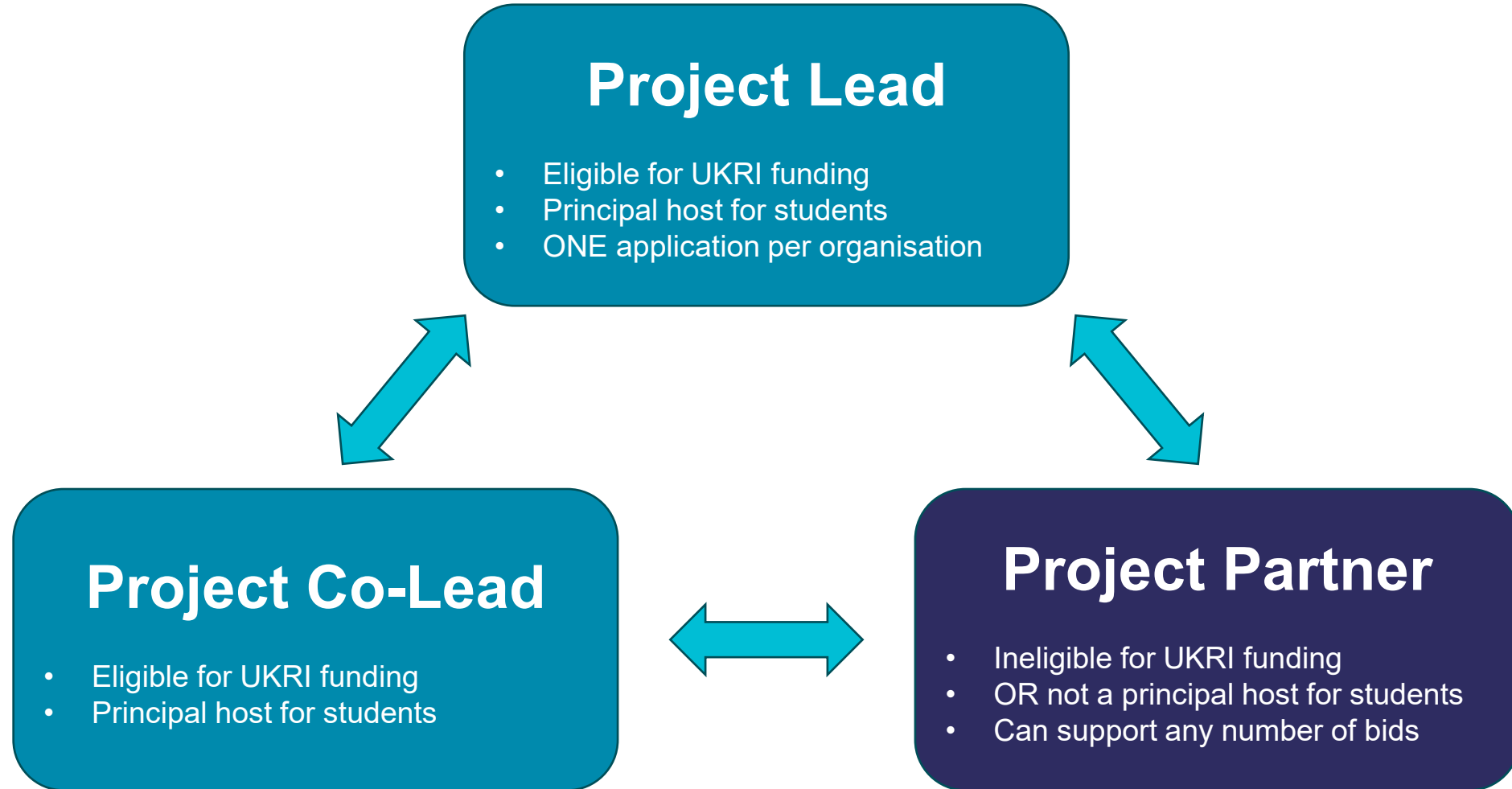
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## Project Co-Lead

- Eligible for UKRI funding
- Principal host for students

# Who can apply



# What we're looking for



- Alignment with MRC's remit – research into human health and disease, from fundamental discovery science through to early translation.



- A scientifically excellent training environment with sufficient high-quality research capacity and infrastructure to deliver training across all areas of the proposed programme.



- A coherent training programme which will support students to undertake their individual research projects alongside innovative cohort-level training.



- Access to wider training opportunities to support all aspects of their professional development and career progression



- Embedding of evidence-based EDI principles and practices across the programme.



- Effective governance arrangements across partners including approaches that ensure the programme will be student-led.

- A commitment to openly sharing best practice



# Collaborative studentships

**Collaborations between academic host and non-academic partner that provide students with experience of a distinct research environment**

## **Non-academic partners must:**

- provide co-supervision
- host the student for a minimum of three months during their PhD.
- meet any costs incurred by the student when visiting and working within their establishment
- make a significant contribution of no less than 20% and up to a maximum of 50% of the total notional studentship costs. SMEs are exempt

# Funding available

| Funding header                         | Value per studentship |
|--|-----------------------|
| Stipend                                | £92,231*              |
| Fees                                   | £23,467*              |
| Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) | £20,000               |
| Travel and subsistence                 | £1,200                |
| <b>Total funding</b>                   | <b>£136,898</b>       |
| Programme Management                   | £2,000                |

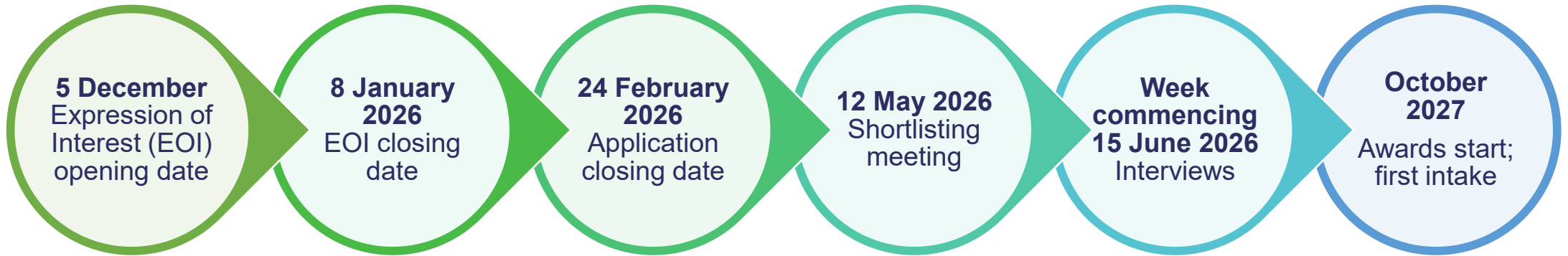
~200 notional studentships in total per year

# Assessment Criteria

- **Vision** – What will this training investment achieve? How will this support UK capability and capacity needs?
- **Approach** – How will your doctoral training programme support your vision?
- **Positive culture and environment** – How will you create and maintain an inclusive and supportive culture and environment for all those involved?
- **Capability to deliver** – Who will lead and drive delivery of this application's vision
- **Partnerships and governance** – How will the training grant be governed, and partnerships/relationships supported and managed, to maximise benefit and minimise risk?
- **Flexible fund** – How will your use of flexible funding benefit the doctoral training programme and those it supports?



# Assessment Process



## Expression of interest will request:

- Project lead details
- A list of the research organisations you anticipate being part of your DLA proposal.



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# Questions?



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Funding Policy & Operations