



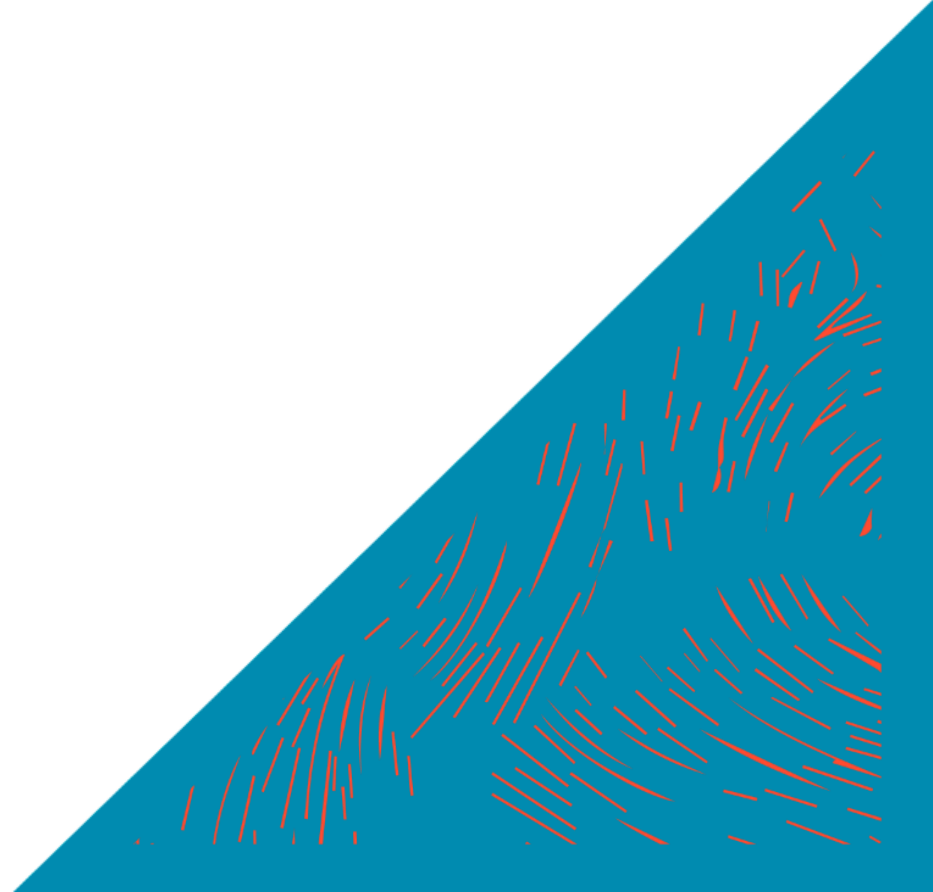
Medical
Research
Council

Securing funding

Dr Jennifer Anderson

Medical Research Council

May 2022



Overview

MRC strategy and remit

Overview of MRC funding schemes

What makes a good application?

How to get help and advice



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MRC strategy and remit



UK Research and Innovation

- National funding agency investing in science and research in the UK
- Executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)
- Brought together the seven disciplinary research councils, Research England, which is responsible for supporting research and knowledge exchange at higher education institutions in England, and the UK's innovation agency, Innovate UK.
- Largest single public funder of R&I. 2020-2021 UKRI budget £9bn

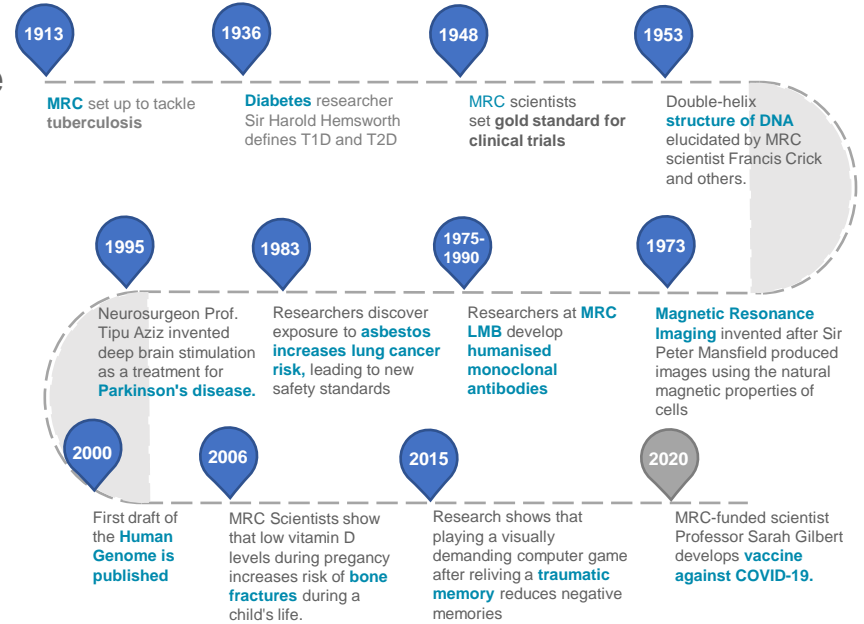


**UK Research
and Innovation**

Medical Research Council (MRC)

MRC's mission:

- Encourage and support research to improve human health
- Produce skilled researchers
- Advance and disseminate knowledge and technology to improve the quality of life and economic competitiveness of the UK
- Promote dialogue with the public about medical research



Who and What we Fund

We fund individuals and teams of researchers based at:

- UK Higher Education Institutions
- Independent Research Organisations
- NHS Organisations
- Research Council Institutes
- International Research Organisations (Global Health Opportunities)
- Public Sector Research Establishments

Grants fund a proportion of the research Full Economic Cost (FEC) – usually 80%

Includes any eligible and justified cost required for the research:

- Salaries
- Consumables and travel
- Equipment
- Overheads & estates (calculated using TRAC method)





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MRC funding schemes



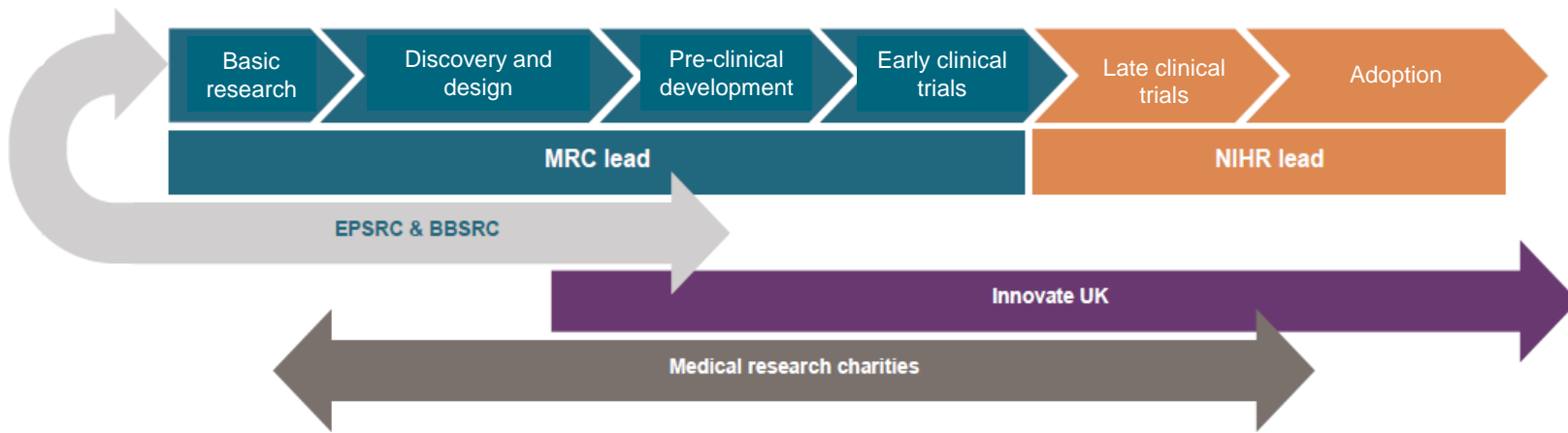
MRC's remit and partners

Basic research to early clinical trials:

- Underpinning & aetiological
- Prevention
- Detection and diagnosis
- Treatment development & evaluation
- Phase 1 & 2 trials

Other funders/partners:

- Government departments, especially health
- Other Research Councils
- Medical Charities
- Industry
- Innovate UK



MRC's remit and partners

Basic research to early clinical trials:

- Underpinning & aetiological
- Prevention

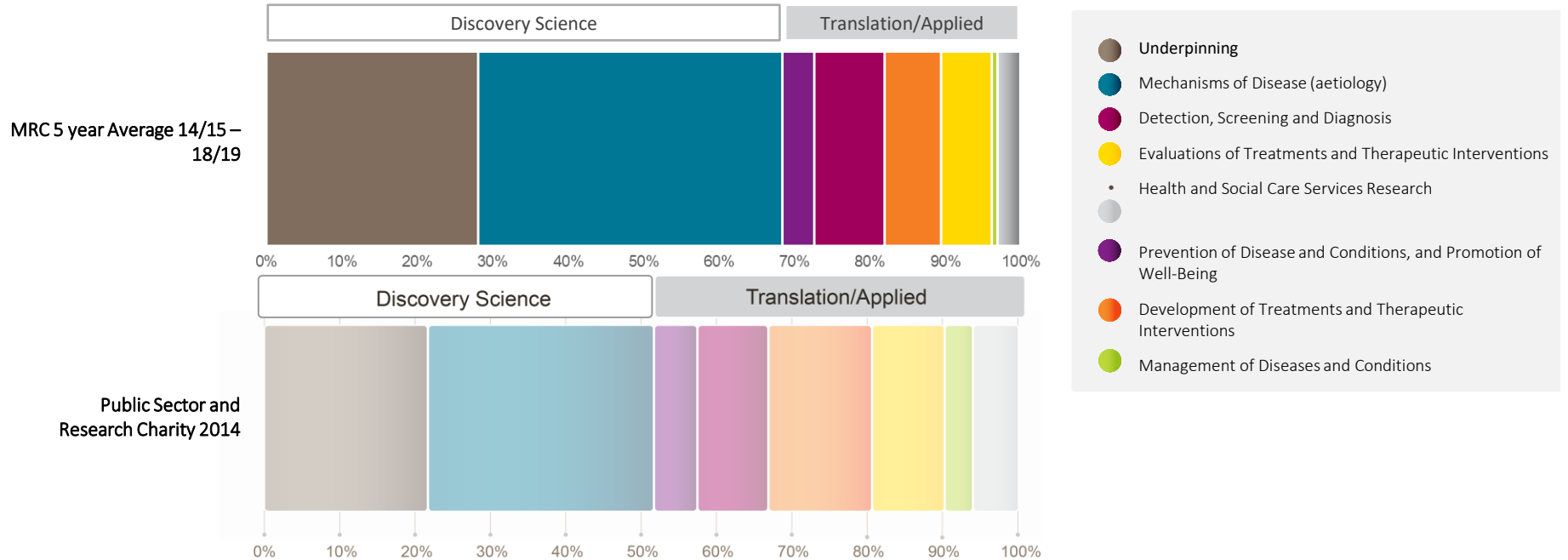
Other funders/partners:

- Government departments, especially health

Before writing a research proposal, you can contact MRC to ask if your research is within its remit. It's a good idea to do this if your research is interdisciplinary or not clearly within MRC's research areas.



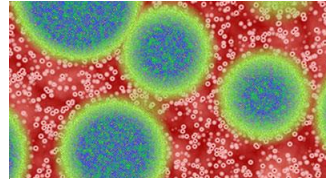
Funding for Discovery Science and Applied Research



Remit, programmes and priorities

Supports research in the following areas:

- infections and immunity
- population and systems medicine
- molecular and cellular medicine
- neurosciences and mental health
- global health research
- clinical and translational research
- methodology development



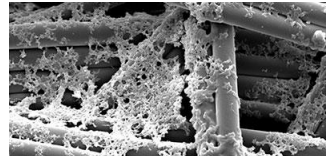
**Infections &
Immunity**



**Populations &
Systems Medicine**



**Applied Global
Health**



**Molecular & Cellular
Medicine**



**Neuroscience &
Mental Health**

Cross cutting panels

Translation: Exp Med, DPFS, EME

Methodology: BMBR

Training & Career Development



Research Boards

- Infections and Immunity
- Molecular and Cellular Medicine
- Neurosciences and Mental Health
- Population and Systems Medicine
- Applied Global Health

Translation

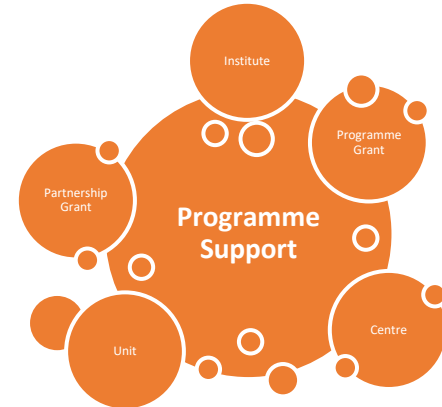
- Developmental Pathway Funding Scheme
- Experimental Medicine

Methodology

- Better Methods, Better Research

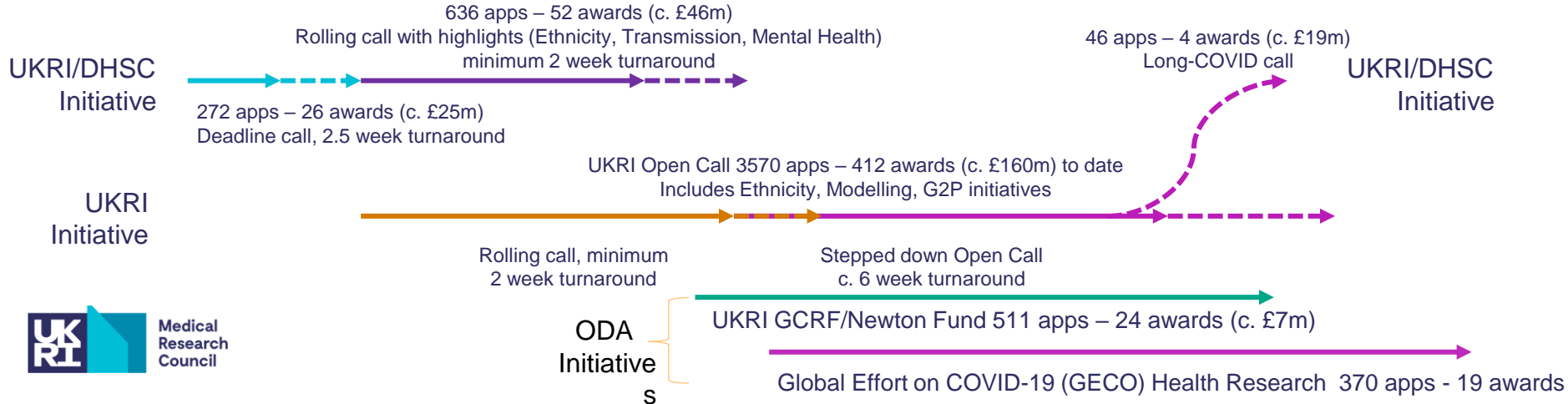
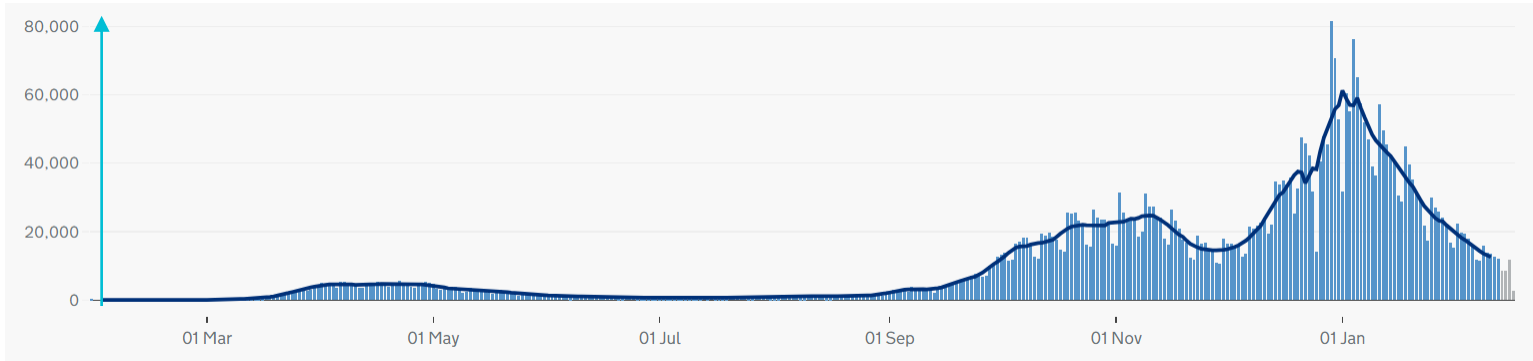
Training & Career Development

- Clinical
- Non-Clinical
- Clinical Academic Research Partnerships
- Doctoral Training Partnerships



UKRI Research and Innovation Response

WHO PHEIC



ChAdOx1 nCov-2019 Vaccine



Department of Health & Social Care



UK Research and Innovation

Continuous Positive Airways Pressure device



Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council



Medical Research Council

Coronavirus: Sewage study could predict second Covid-19 peak

By Caroline Evans
BBC News

5 May 2020

Coronavirus pandemic

It is not the first time the university's School of Natural Sciences has used sewage to track infection.

Analysing sewage could help scientists predict a second peak of Covid-19 up to two weeks before people become symptomatic.

A team from Bangor University has been looking at samples from water treatment works across Wales in a bid to trace how many people have been infected.

The team has previously tracked norovirus through the sewage system.

People start to shed the virus symptoms.



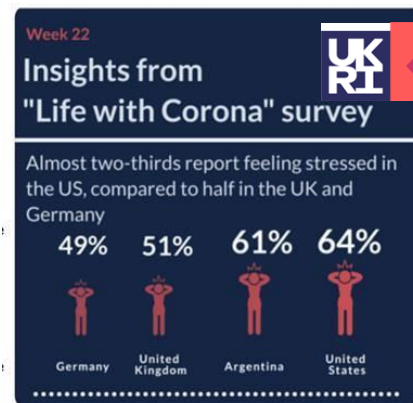
Natural Environment Research Council

National COVID-19 Wastewater-Based Epidemiology Surveillance Programme

Nursing Narratives



Arts and Humanities Research Council



Economic and Social Research Council

Life with Corona project measures global experience of pandemic

Funding opportunities for COVID-19 related research

All COVID-19 funding is now through Research Council specific business as usual routes rather than a centralised dedicated approach

MRC recently launched a COVID-19 partnership opportunity: 'Build on existing COVID-19 infrastructure, partnerships and resources'

- Want to secure the legacy of the COVID-19 response
- Open to applications from groups already working together as part of the COVID-19 response to either 'sustain and grow research capability addressing SARS-CoV-2' or to 'reposition to enable innovative discovery science in other relevant areas, potentially addressing endemic disease, antimicrobial resistance or broader epidemic preparedness, providing a basis for future research-focused funding applications.'

IIB Board opportunity for 'Research underpinning epidemic preparedness'

- Judged in competition with other applications in the same round but receive a strategic uplift within score



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What makes a good application?



An application will fail because:

Scope and importance

- Unfocused, overambitious project
- Unoriginal, pedestrian approach

Clarity of research question(s) and how they will be answered

- No clear hypothesis or not hypothesis-driven
- Methodology not sufficiently detailed, not consistent with hypothesis

Feasibility

- Centre has no international standing in research area
- Lack of infrastructure / facilities
- Lack of preliminary data / key risks not considered

Career progression

- Training element incomplete / unclear; poor training environment
- Unclear how the fellowship will position you
- Lack of ownership of the project – we do expect Fellows to be well supported
- Right person, wrong project & vice versa! Or wrong supervisory team

Case for Support

- Importance:
 - What is the rationale for the proposed research? Include preliminary data if appropriate
- Research plan:
 - Describe aims and objectives
 - Give details of experimental approaches, study designs, techniques you will use
 - Highlight original/unique plans
 - Describe all human and animal experiments
 - Explain how risks will be mitigated
 - Identify required facilities/resources
- Research environment and development opportunities
 - What are the skills you need to acquire and how will you acquire them?
- Make use of the one page Reproducibility and Statistical Design annex

Things to check before you apply

- Funder's remit and interests
- Are you eligible
- Choose the right scheme (contact the MRC for advice)
- What information and documents are needed – SoECAT (if using NHS resources), MICA (if collaborating with industry)
- Page limits, font sizes etc.
- Deadlines

You will submit your application to your research organisation that will do the final checks and then submit to the funder. **Your research organisation will need time to do this** – plan ahead for this. Ask your research organisation how much time they need.

Start early! Everything takes longer than you think!



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Need Advice?



Sources of Advice

Funder

- Website
- Email

Experienced colleagues and collaborators

- Past evaluation committee members
- Grant applicants
- Mentor

University Grants Office

- Support with budget
- Preparing an application

UKRI Good Research Resource Hub

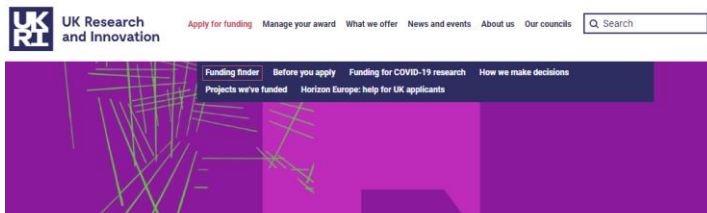
- Guidance, policies and standards on research ethics and integrity, open research and responsible innovation

NIHR Research Design Service

NC3Rs



How to find funding



Funding council

- AHRC
- BBSRC
- ESRC
- EPSRC
- Innovate UK
- MRC
- NERC
- Research England
- STFC
- UKRI-wide

Funding type

- Fellowship
- Grant
- Loan
- Other

Opportunity status

- Open
- Closed
- Upcoming

[Filter](#)

Funding finder

[Sort by publication date
\(newest first\)](#)

[Sort by opening date
\(oldest to newest\)](#)

[Sorted by closing date
\(oldest to newest\)](#)

24 opportunities found using the current filters

Infections and immunity new investigator

Apply for funding to:

- research infections and immunity
- take the next step towards becoming an independent principal investigator.

You must have:

- a postgraduate degree
- the support of a host research organisation eligible for MRC funding.

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	Medical Research Council (MRC)
Funding type:	Grant
Publication date:	17 December 2021
Opening date:	16 February 2022
Closing date:	11 May 2022 16:00 UK time

Infections and immunity programme

Apply for funding for a programme of research focused on infections and immunity.

You must be based at a UK research organisation eligible for MRC funding. This includes MRC units and centres.

You must have:

www.ukri.org/opportunity

Contacting the MRC

Research grants, programme grants, partnership grants &

NIRGs: Contact research boards directly (www.ukri.org/about-us/mrc/contact-us/) e.g. IIB@mrc.ukri.org

- Board remit
- NIRG eligibility

Fellowships: fellows@mrc.ukri.org

- Remit
- Eligibility
- Career Stage Advice

Helpful things for us to answer your query:

- Subject line – Scheme Name (CDA etc)
- CV (template on MRC Website)
- List of relevant publications
- 1-page project outline
- Description of how you meet the skills and experience required for the relevant scheme



MRC Application Guidance

[Home](#) > [Medical Research Council \(MRC\)](#) > [Guidance for applicants](#) > 2. What to include in your application

2. What to include in your application



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Contents

- **2.1 The proposal form**
- 2.2 Attachments
- 2.3 Research council facilities
- 2.4 Application checking – common reasons for returning applications to research offices
- 2.5 Peer review

2.1 The proposal form

The proposal form provides a summary of the whole project.

The main headings include the following (further guidance is available through the Je-S help text provided for each section):

[Guidance for applicants](#)

- 2. What to include in your application
 - [2.2 Attachments](#)
 - [2.3 Research council facilities](#)
 - [2.4 Application checking – common reasons for returning applications to research offices](#)
 - [2.5 Peer review](#)
- [Guidance for applicants PDF](#)
- [1-1.6 Check if you're eligible for funding](#)
- [1.7 How to submit your](#)

MRC Guidance for Applicants:

<https://www.ukri.org/councils/mrc/guidance-for-applicants/>

MRC Assessment Criteria:

www.ukri.org/councils/mrc/guidance-for-reviewers/peer-reviews/overview-of-mrc-review-process/

MRC science areas and contacts:

www.ukri.org/councils/mrc/remit-programmes-and-priorities/

Gateway to Research (UKRI funded research):

GtR.ukri.org

Video Resources:



Available via the MRC website on the CRTF scheme page



5 Short videos available covering the CRTF scheme and application process, tips for preparing your proposal, the 3P's criteria and a mock interview

<https://mrc.ukri.org/skills-careers/fellowships/clinical-fellowships/clinical-research-training-fellowship-crtf/>



<https://www.youtube.com/user/MRCcomms/videos>

MRC Blog – Relaunched Aug 21

12 top tips for writing a grant application



Related content

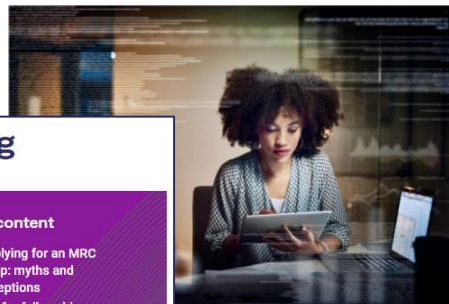
- ⇒ Read the MRC guidance for applicants
- ⇒ Find out how to contact the relevant Programme Manager

 **Andrew Crawford**
Populations and Systems Medicine
Board Programme Manager for
Endocrinology and
Cardiometabolic Medicine, MRC

18 August 2021

Building grant writing skills can help you secure funding. Updated by popular demand: how to master the application process and make your grant stand out.

Grant application checklist: eight checks to do before you submit



Related content

- ⇒ Guidance for applicants
- ⇒ 12 top tips for writing a grant application

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 **Professor Frances Mair**
MRC Clinical Training and Career
Development Panel

6 October 2021

Worried that career breaks or staying put in one organisation will be held against you applying for an MRC fellowship? We confront four common misconceptions.



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Thank you



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