

## Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases (GACD)

Call for research proposals: **prevention and management of chronic lung diseases**

Call focus: **implementation research**

Regional focus: **low- and middle-income countries**

## How to apply to the UK Medical Research Council

This guidance is for applicants wishing to apply to the UK Medical Research Council in response to the GACD call for research proposals for implementation science research for the prevention and management of chronic lung diseases in low and middle income countries.

This guidance supplements the MRC Handbook for Applicants and Grantholders: <http://www.mrc.ac.uk/documents/pdf/guidance-for-applicants-and-award-holders/>.

Please consult the MRC Handbook for Applicants and Grantholders for information such as preparing the budget for your proposal.

This present document provides additional information specific to the GACD prevention and management of chronic lung diseases call for proposals. Where guidance in the present document differs from that in the MRC Handbook for Applicants and Grantholders, you should follow the guidance in this present, scheme specific, document.

This GACD call funds partnership working between UK researchers and researchers based in low and/or middle income countries. The Principal Investigators applying for this call must be hosted by a UK institution which is eligible for UK Medical Research Council funding. However, the expectation is that projects will be collaborative endeavours, with shared scientific and intellectual leadership. All projects submitted must include co-investigators from the low or middle income country(ies) where the work will take place.

Please refer queries to Alex Harris: [mrc-gacd@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk](mailto:mrc-gacd@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk).

If your query relates to whether the topic of your proposal fits the remit of this funding scheme, please contact Jill Jones, Programme Manager for Global Health Strategy, +44 (0) 20 7395 2207, [jill.jones@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk](mailto:jill.jones@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk) cc [mrc-gacd@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk](mailto:mrc-gacd@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk).

**For this scheme, you will firstly need to submit an outline proposal.**

### **Eligibility information**

Please refer to the MRC Handbook for Applicants and Grantholders for full details of eligibility requirements. In summary:

Principal Investigators must be based at a UK institution which is eligible for MRC funding. UK investigators receive MRC funding at 80% of the Full Economic Cost, which includes direct and indirect costs.

It is not permitted for the same person to be Principal Investigator on more than one proposal submitted to this call.

Co-investigators can be based in the UK or overseas.

- If the co-investigator is based in one of the following GACD partner countries, then your proposal may be eligible for co-funding between the UK and other GACD partner countries: **China, India and South Africa**. If your co-investigators are based in one of these countries, it is essential that you contact [mrc-gacd@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk](mailto:mrc-gacd@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk) as soon as possible so that we can discuss potential co-funding arrangements. Please include your name, your research institution, your co-investigators' names and research institutions, the intended title of your project and an estimation of the costs that would be required for each investigator.
- The UK MRC will also welcome proposals with co-investigators based in low or middle income countries not in the GACD partnership. MRC can fund 100% of their direct costs and up to 20% of their direct costs as indirect costs.
- If the co-investigator is based in a high income country not in the GACD partnership they can be included in the proposal and can claim 100% of essential direct costs but cannot claim any indirect costs. However there is a strong expectation that most of the costs will go to low and middle income country partners, so we recommend that you keep costs claimed by non-UK high income country partners to a minimum.

## To submit your outline proposal you will need to:

- A1. Complete the online Je-S form**
- A2. Upload your Outline Case for support**
- A3. Upload your CVs (including publication lists) of investigators**

When completing all of these documents, please refer to Section **A4 assessment criteria** for this scheme.

Your proposal should be submitted by 16:00 British Summer Time on Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

The assessment panel will meet approximately 2 months after the deadline and you will receive notification of whether you are invited to submit a full proposal within a fortnight of that meeting.

If you are invited to submit a full application you will be provided with a guidance document for completion of your full application. You may also be provided with panel feedback notes for you to take into consideration when preparing your full application.

### *A1. The online Je-S form*

The online Je-S form is where you enter administrative information about the investigators, a summary of costings and summary information about the proposed project and its potential impact. Please access the Je-S form well in advance of submitting your proposal so that you can see exactly what information is required for this section.

Accessing Je-S: <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx>

The Je-S Helpdesk can assist with any technical problems completing your application. Their contact details are available here:

<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/index.htm#pages/JeSHelpdesk.htm>

When submitting your application through Je-S you will be provided with the following drop down menus. Please select the following options:

Select Council: MRC

Select Document Type: Outline Proposal

Select Scheme: Standard Outline

Select Call/Type/Mode: GACD Respiratory Out 2015

All co-investigators should be registered on the Je-S system and added to the online application. There is a delay between registration and the investigator being available on the system to add to the application, so please ensure that registration is completed well in advance of the submission deadline. For this call co-investigators can 'self-register' their Research Organisation on Je-S. To self-register please follow the links

available through the Je-S log in page:

<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx>

As well as entering information about the investigators on Je-S there is an option to enter Project Partners. Project Partners are defined in the Je-S system as organisations that are participating in the research project but are not requesting funding from the project. Project Partners are partners who would, instead of receiving funding, be themselves providing cash or in-kind contributions. For instance, they might be a pharmaceutical company who have agreed to provide drugs that are required for the project. **The only letters of support required at this stage of the process are letters of support from Project Partners.** It is not essential to have Project Partners included in your application.

## *A2. Outline case for support*

Your Case for Support is a document including your scientific proposal, details of the research environment, people involved and references. Your Case for Support should indicate how your proposal fits the call specification for this scheme.

The outline Case for Support should not exceed five sides of A4 plus one additional page of references (six pages in total). Please use:

- Arial font with a minimum size of 11pt (excluding text on diagrams and mathematical symbols)
- A minimum of single line spacing
- Standard character spacing
- Margins of no less than 2cm.

Please number all pages of the Case for Support.

Please complete the proposal in English and use British Pounds Sterling for all costs.

Additional annexes are not permitted. You do not need to submit letters of support at the outline stage except for Project Partners (see section A1 for more information on Je-S Project Partners).

If you plan to include unpublished data it must be included in the Case for Support. Manuscripts in press or submitted to journals should not be included.

Your proposal cannot be supplemented with further information after the submission deadline.

Please use the following headings when preparing your outline Case for Support:

### **1. Project summary information**

- Full title of the project (no more than 150 characters)
- In which country(ies) will the project take place
- Duration in months
- Total amount requested
- Principal implementation research question(s) to be addressed

## **2. *Project description***

Please describe the methodology to be used. Please ensure that you cover the following points:

- Where will the research take place?
- Who will the research participants be and why?
- What are your research plans to address those questions?
  - Give details of the study design and techniques that will be used and why.
  - Enough detail must be given to show why the research is likely to be competitive in its field.
  - Please explain why your chosen methodology is the most appropriate to address your research question.
- Please ensure that you have clearly described the interventional approach and the rationale for that approach.
- Please describe any preliminary and feasibility data that informs the approach taken.
- If the research involved data collection or acquisition you must demonstrate that you have carried out a datasets review, and state why currently available datasets are inadequate for the proposed research.
- What is the proposed timeline?
- How will you evaluate the outcome of the study?

## **3. *Rationale for the study***

Please indicate how your project fits the objectives and scope of the call specification.

Why is the study needed now and in the proposed location? Please consider issues such as burden of disease and priority for the relevant local, regional and national health services.

What gaps in existing knowledge will be addressed by the study and why is addressing those gaps using an implementation research approach important?

What evidence is there that the answer to your research question is needed and wanted by relevant users, for instance, policy makers?

## **4. *Research project team and engagement strategies***

Please indicate the level and nature of involvement of multidisciplinary research teams, clinical and non-clinical health workers, civil society, industry, policy and decision makers and patient and community groups.

What policymaking partners or other stakeholders will be involved?

Please describe how the project will have relevant community engagement by individuals, communities and/or organisations who are the intended beneficiaries of the research.

Please describe how the team of investigators incorporate the range of discipline and experience necessary to carry out the study.

### 5. *How will the results of this study be used?*

What changes might be implemented as a result of this study?

Who will make those changes happen and how?

Might the results be generalizable beyond the immediate research setting?

What are the planned knowledge translation strategies?

How will scale up be addressed?

### 6. *Financial Information*

Are other funding partners involved? Who are the partners and what is the status of the discussions?

In addition to the costings you have provided on Je-S, please provide a breakdown of the funding request per institution using the below table.

Organisation name	Total project costs (GBP)	Total cost requested from this scheme (GBP)*

\* UK institution costs are calculated at 80% of the Full Economic Costs. Costs incurred outside of the UK are 'Exceptions' and can be claimed at 100%. Please see the MRC Handbook for Applicants and Grantholders for further information on preparing costings for your grant application.

### 7. *Proposal history*

Has an application for funding for this project been submitted previously to the MRC or another funding organisation?

If so, please indicate the status of the previous application.

### A3. *CVs (including publication lists) of investigators*

Please submit a maximum of 3 pages per investigator: 2 pages CV and 1 page publication list.

**Please compile all of the documents into one pdf file and include the documents in the same order as the investigators are listed on your Je-S application form.** Each publication list should immediately follow its corresponding CV.

#### *A4. Assessment Criteria:*

Information on the MRC's approach to peer review is provided in the MRC Reviewers Handbook.

The assessment panel for this scheme will consider whether outline applications are of world-class standard (being intellectually innovative, well-focused and methodologically sound), and whether the research has the potential to make a real improvement to health outcomes in low and middle income countries.

For this scheme, peer reviewers will be asked to comment on the following criteria in assessing the proposals.

- i) Relevance and Quality of Project
- ii) Quality of Team
- iii) Project Implementation Plans
- iv) Potential Impact

##### Criterion One: Relevance and Quality of Project

- Proposal fits well within the objectives and scientific remit set out in the call.
- Strong scientific rationale for pursuing the questions or gaps in knowledge that are being addressed. Success is likely to lead to significant new understanding that is relevant for scientists and knowledge users. Applicants are aware of complementary research underway elsewhere.
- Proposed methods are appropriate and feasible to answer the study question(s) and are considered best in the international field of implementation research.
- Proposal is innovative
- Intervention has been adequately described.
- Ethical issues have been considered

##### Criterion Two: Quality of Team

- Multidisciplinary team members have established a high quality track record in related fields of proposed research and pertinent to implementation science and they have the right balance of expertise given goal(s) of research project.
- Each country participating in the project must have a named principal investigator.
- Early career investigators are part of the team and strong training plan for research capacity-building is included.
- Demonstrated engagement of decision-makers.
- Identify stakeholders such as decision-makers and service delivery partners and include them on the research team.
- Demonstrable engagement with relevant patient and community groups.

##### Criterion Three: Project Implementation Plans

- Major scientific, technical or organisational challenges been identified, and realistic plans to tackle these are outlined.
- Proposed intervention strategies are relevant to the socio-political, cultural, legislative and economic contexts of the study settings.
- Inequities and equity gaps, including gender, have been taken into account in the design of an implementation strategy.

- Appropriate measures of evaluation have been included. Programmes that are able to track long-term clinical, policy and/or health system outcomes are strongly encouraged.

Criterion Four: Potential Impact

- Project appropriately leverages existing programmes and platforms (e.g. research, data, delivery platforms)
- The potential for scaling up intervention strategies has been considered. For example, applicants could address affordability for users and the financial implications for implementing organisations and funders or might assess scalability to various socio-political contexts.
- Projects are designed to inform practice, programmes and/or policy development and/or refinements.
- Describe how health economic dimensions will be assessed such as cost-effectiveness of proposed intervention and its scalability.
- Where appropriate project demonstrates alignment with relevant international and/or national commitments.