

Funding opportunity template

This template is for publishing funding opportunity information for applicants on the [UKRI funding finder](#).

Lead time: submit your funding template through the [web helpdesk portal](#) **10 days** ahead of your intended publication date. This lead time also applies to pre-announcements.

If you would like help completing this template, please speak to the web team by creating a ticket on the [web helpdesk portal](#).

Before starting, read the Source article on [publishing funding opportunities on the website](#) and the [UKRI content style guide](#).

To publish an overview of your strategic research area, theme, initiative or programme, use the [areas of investment and support template](#).

Process

To get a funding opportunity live in the funding finder:

1. Complete the relevant sections of this template. Each box relates to a section of the [funding opportunity page](#). We have provided guidance, and in certain sections standard text, based on our user research of what information is important to include.
2. A content editor in the web team will review the template. They will:
 - agree a schedule with you for review and publishing
 - proofread to make sure it aligns with the [UKRI content style guide](#) and web best practice
 - ensure the right content is in the right section
 - check that any document downloads don't contain crucial information that should go on the web page or duplicate web page content
 - update the formatting of the text for better web readability
 - share the content with you to check for factual accuracy and give a final sign off.
3. Once signed off, a content editor will:
 - build the final text in the funding finder in our back-end system
 - schedule and publish the opportunity on the agreed date
 - send you a link to the live opportunity on the website.

Page title for funding opportunity

- say what it is – try to use a descriptive term at the start of the title if possible, keeping the English plain
- keep it snappy, using everyday terms people will search for
- avoid internal language, acronyms and jargon
- this is the title of the page, not the official funding opportunity title.

Character limit: 65 characters with spaces

Researching ME/CFS: highlight notice

Key details for the funding finder listing

These are some high-level fields that show your opportunity 'at a glance', for when our user is [browsing through the funding list](#). It's not the main details of your funding opportunity – that will come later.

Funders involved

- list any UKRI councils involved – put the lead funder first
- list the full names of co-funding external agencies – add them in the exact order they need to display on the listing.

MRC

Type of funding

Place an 'X' in the appropriate field:

X	Grant	X	Fellowship
	Loan		Other

Funding available

- these fields are numeric and GBP only
- you don't have to complete all fields, just the ones most relevant for your scheme.

Total fund amount (indicative)	
Minimum amount per application	
Maximum amount per application	

Start application link

Provide a link to the application portal. This will populate the [dark blue 'Start application' box under the summary table](#). The URL will navigate applicants to the page when they click on the box.

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Key dates / timeline

Here's an [example of how a timeline looks on a funding opportunity page](#).

Open and closing date fields are compulsory but if you don't know them:

- opening date can be a date or 'To be confirmed'
- closing date can be a date, 'To be confirmed', or 'Open – no closing date'.

Add more lines to the table below with any other significant dates related to the opportunity such as webinars, panel meetings, decision or start dates:

- these dates are a free text field, so can be flexible. For example, we can input spanning days, weeks or months, or 'To be confirmed'
- break down outline or full stage where applicable.

Event	Date	Time (UK time)
Opening date	01 May 2003	
Closing date	Open – no closing date Closing dates throughout the year, usually September, January and May Depending on the grant or fellowship you apply for	

Summaries

Applicants want to know a few bits of information when they're browsing opportunities before clicking into one. Only when they think it may be relevant to them, do they then go into the details.

User research has shown that the following information is most important to applicants when deciding whether to apply for funding or not:

- what the funding is for
- who the opportunity is for
- the percentage of full economic costs that will be funded
- the duration of funding.

We distinguish between two summary types:

- one for the [finding finder listing page](#) – like a Google search results snippet
- one for the [top of the funding opportunity page](#) – displays just below the key info table.

300 character summary

The 300 character summary is for the [finding finder listing page](#).

Please follow our standard pattern and adapt where appropriate.

Apply for funding to research myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME), also known as chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS).

600 character summary

The 600 character summary is for the [top of the funding opportunity page](#). It should have the same information as the 300 with more detail added.

Please follow our standard pattern and adapt where appropriate.

Apply for funding to research myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME), also known as chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS).

You can get the funding through any:

- grants from MRC research boards
- MRC fellowships

We would particularly welcome proposals within MRC remit that address one or more of the research areas identified by the [ME/CFS Priority Setting Partnership for ME/CFS research](#):

- Post-exertional malaise
- Use of existing drugs for other conditions
- Diagnosis
- Autoimmunity
- ME/CFS Sub-types
- Post-infective cause
- Neurological symptomology
- Genetics
- Severe ME/CFS
- Mitochondrial dysfunction
- Oxygenation dysfunction

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

The main funding opportunity spec – the accordions

This is the main funding opportunity content. Each section below aligns with a [section an opportunity page](#). Start writing from the 'Who can apply' section, and add content in the relevant sections, ensuring that you're not duplicating text.

Tips for writing your content

Remember not all users will be experts in the subject, so:

- refer to the UKRI content style guide when drafting your content
- use clear, concise English
- explain technical language
- spell out acronyms.

Break your content down by using:

- subheadings
- short sentences
- paragraphs
- bullet pointed lists
- numbered steps.

The language we use shouldn't be a barrier to access. For example, people with disabilities such as dyslexia and autism, or people with English as a second language, might struggle to understand jargon and idioms (such as 'blue sky thinking').

Who can apply

Include:

- who is eligible to apply

- where they need to be working – within an organisation, or country
- any specific experience or qualifications they need
- who they can collaborate with, such as researchers, businesses, overseas collaborators
- who is not eligible.

You must meet the criteria for the specific funding opportunity you are applying to. Eligibility is normally based on your suitability to lead or work on a research proposal and the research organisation or business where the work is intended to take place.

More information on eligibility, including eligible research organisations, can be found [here](#).

To get advice on suitable funding opportunities, contact psmb@mrc.ukri.org.

What we're looking for

Include:

- the type of projects you would want to fund – provide information that will help applicants to focus their application
- what UKRI wants to see in applications, including any strategic areas or key themes that will be considered
- other factors, such as what they can apply for (overseas travel, feasibility studies)
- when applicants should aim to start their project
- any specifics about full economic costs or rules on how funding is spent
- any exclusions or projects you will not fund.

Do not include the history of the fund or how it came into being – this goes in 'Additional information'.

Building our portfolio of ME/CFS research has been a high priority for MRC for a number of years. This highlight notice, which has been in place since 2003, seeks to encourage high-quality funding applications to any of our research board grant or fellowship opportunities.

[MRC research strategy and funding history for ME/CFS](#).

Research areas

In 2022, MRC co-funded an [ME/CFS Priority Setting Partnership](#) to identify the Top 10+ ME/CFS research priorities. The partnership was led by people with ME/CFS, their carers and clinicians, and facilitated by non-profit making initiative, the James Lind Alliance.

We would particularly welcome proposals within MRC remit, that address one or more of the research areas identified by the ME/CFS Priority Setting Partnership:

- What is the biological mechanism that causes post-exertional malaise (symptoms caused or made worse by physical, mental or emotional effort, which can be delayed) in people with ME/CFS? How is this best treated and managed?
- Which existing drugs used to treat other conditions might be useful for treating ME/CFS, such as low dose naltrexone, or drugs used to treat Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS)?
- How can an accurate and reliable diagnostic test be developed for ME/CFS?
- Is ME/CFS caused by a faulty immune system? Is ME/CFS an autoimmune condition?
- Are there different types of ME/CFS linked to different causes and how severe it becomes? Do different types of ME/CFS need different treatments or have different chances of recovery?
- Why do some people develop ME/CFS following an infection? Is there a link with long-COVID?
- What causes the central and peripheral nervous systems (brain, spinal cord and nerves in the body) to malfunction in people with ME/CFS? Could this understanding lead to new treatments?
- Is there a genetic link to ME/CFS? If yes, how does this affect the risk of ME/CFS in families? Could this lead to new treatments?
- What causes ME/CFS to become severe?
- How are mitochondria, responsible for the body's energy production affected in ME/CFS? Could this understanding lead to new treatments?
- Does poor delivery or use of oxygen within the body cause ME/CFS symptoms? If so, how is this best treated?

Multidisciplinary teams and partnerships

Research proposals should consider how to:

- increase capacity in ME/CFS research
- address the need for multidisciplinary teams to tackle the significant research challenges in this area.
- Involve persons living with ME/CFS in developing ME/CFS research proposals

MRC will usually fund costs for a wide range of research team members (e.g., PI, Co-I, postdocs, technicians, statisticians, technologists, methodologists etc.), to support capacity building and team science across career stages and pathways.

Research proposals may involve partnerships between ME/CFS researchers and established, leading investigators working in relevant areas, but who are new to the ME/CFS field. MRC will usually fund costs toward international research partners if they provide expertise not available in the UK.

MRC encourages (but does not require) applicants to work in partnership with other funders where appropriate. Depending on the project, applicants may wish to seek cash or in-kind support from charitable or industrial partners.

Please see the [MRC Guidance for Applicants](#) for full details on what can be included in your application.

Research proposals should consider including appropriate Public and Patient Involvement and Engagement (PPIE), including (but not limited to) consultation and engagement with persons with ME/CFS and/or their representatives at all stages of project development. Please see [Public engagement – UKRI](#) for more information.

How to apply

Include:

- an overview of the systems applicants will use
- how applicants can submit an application
- the deadline
- details of any specific documents or attachments they need to provide.

Please follow our standard pattern and adapt where appropriate.

MRC has a wide array of funding options available to support biomedical researchers and innovators, whatever their career stage. An overview of the support provided can be found [here](#).

If you are considering submitting an application, please first contact psmb@mrc.ukri.org who can advise you on suitable funding opportunities.

You can search the [UKRI funding finder](#) against the following MRC schemes where the ME/CFS highlight notice is relevant:

- **Project, Programme, Partnership and New Investigator Research Grants from MRC research boards:** Population and Systems Medicine, Molecular and Cellular Medicine, Infections and Immunity and Neurosciences and Mental Health.
- **MRC fellowships:** Career Development Awards, Senior non-clinical fellowship (SNCF), Clinician Scientist Fellowships (CSF), Senior clinical fellowship (SCF), MRC/NIHR Clinical Academic Research Partnerships (CARP), Clinical research training fellowships (CRTF)

[Find MRC funding opportunities](#)

You should apply directly through the existing funding opportunity that is most relevant to your science area and career stage.

How we will assess your application

Include:

- assessment criteria
- the process their application goes through
- when they should expect to hear from you (for example, if they should expect a decision xxx weeks after the meeting)
- the option to nominate peer reviewers, if applicable.

All applications received under this highlight notice will be assessed by the relevant MRC research board or panel through [MRC's standard assessment procedure](#). For more information on MRC's peer review process, please see [Carrying out a peer review – MRC – UKRI](#)

Building our portfolio of ME/CFS research has been a high priority for MRC for a number of years. To help encourage high-quality research applications in this area, applications submitted under the ME/CFS highlight notice will receive **prioritisation for funding** against other applications attaining the same median ranking score (in the score category in which not all the applications can be supported, given the available budget). The funding decision making process is as follows:

At Triage/Shortlisting:

- in the initial evaluation of an application, only the intrinsic research quality of the submission, as determined using the MRC's [assessment criteria](#), will be considered.

At funding meetings:

- All applications under review are ranked by their [median score](#).
- Given the available budget, a cumulative commitment line is drawn, starting with the highest median score, to determine which grants can be funded
- Where the available budget can fund some, but not all of the applications which have the same median score, the funding Board/Panel members determine which applications should be supported, taking into account quality, likely impact and fit to MRC's strategic priorities and **highlight notices**.

Contact

Include:

- details that are directly relevant to the opportunity
- contact for internal queries as well as who should appear on the public page.

Don't include contact details in other sections. This section is clearly labelled and repeating them elsewhere uses up precious space and can lead to confusion or inconsistencies.

Please follow our standard pattern and adapt where appropriate.

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

Dr Sherie Wright, Programme Manager for Population and Respiratory Health

Email: psmb@mrc.ukri.org

Get help with applying through Je-S

Email

jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org

Telephone

01793 444164

Opening times

[Je-S helpdesk opening times.](#)

Additional information

If relevant, include:

- any links to a wider programme or area – so we can include a link to this funding opportunity in [our areas of investment and support](#). You should not duplicate the information here but add in the links to the relevant programmes so we can ensure this funding opportunity automatically appears as a listing on the right pages
- additional schemes that may support the application
- the following sentence if applicable: *International researchers and specialists who are named, or have their position listed, on a successful grant may be eligible for the [Global Talent Visa](#)*

- anything else you want to communicate that's outside the other sections.

In 2020 MRC and the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) jointly funded the £3.2 million [DecodeME](#) study, which is the world's largest genome-wide association study of ME/CFS. DecodeME aims to identify genetic differences that may indicate underlying causes or increased risk of developing the condition.

[MRC research strategy and funding history for ME/CFS](#)

The MRC is not able to broker new research partnerships on the part of applicants as we do not have the resources to do this.

Supporting documents

Provide a list of specific documents that applicants need to submit to you or through Je-S. For example:

- an expression of interest form
- an equality impact assessment form.
- Je-S guidance.

You can indicate where they need to be linked to in the text throughout, but we will also list them together in 'Additional information' under a subheading named 'Supporting documents'.

Related content

Provide links to supplementary information. You can include links to:

- guidance on the use of animals or a facility
- a workshop or programme page that will give the user more context.

These will be in the blue 'Related content' box on the right-hand side of the page.

Related opportunities

If relevant, provide links to upcoming and future rounds, or a related funding opportunity.

These will be in the [blue 'Related opportunities' box on the right-hand-side of the page.](#)

[MRC research strategy and funding history for ME/CFS](#)