



Connect Immune Research Call for Applications

Guidance for completing your application

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1. Introduction

There are more than 80 autoimmune conditions and it is estimated that over four million people in the UK live with an illness because their immune system does not work properly.

Research into immune-mediated inflammatory diseases (IMIDs), which include autoimmune and auto-inflammatory conditions, is often pursued in a disease-specific manner, according to clinical presentation, and focusing on later stages of disease. Emerging evidence suggests there are similarities across immune diseases in risk factors, immunological and mechanistic features, suggesting there are significant opportunities to drive forward our understanding of the root causes of individual diseases by encouraging research that works across, or learns from, other autoimmune conditions.

Over a series of workshops, JDRF, Arthritis Research UK, Wellcome and the MRC brought the research community together to discuss common mechanisms underlying these conditions and to catalyse new collaborations, research ideas and proposals in the area. At the last meeting, held February 2017, the immune condition research community explored and further defined five 'Grand Challenges' in this area, as well as identifying gaps and opportunities for future research. The grand challenges discussed at the meeting were: immunological tolerance, environmental impact on genetic predisposition, common mechanisms shared across immune conditions, toolkits, technologies and platforms, and therapeutics: translational perspectives.

Arthritis Research UK, JDRF and the MS Society propose to assist the autoimmunity research community to come together as a consortium to address these grand challenges. Together we will provide pilot funding to enable this community to work together closely and effectively. The funding will enable researchers to identify and develop research questions that can be tackled most effectively by collaborating across different conditions, and set out how these questions may be answered.

The formation of a consortium offers a framework for new non disease-specific collaborations, encourages further collaborations and partnerships, and establishes stronger foundation to apply for longer-term funding from global funders such as the MRC, Wellcome, industry, EU or other bodies.

The Award will for up to £150,000, for up to 18 months with an expected starting date in Autumn 2018. Salaries will not be provided for lead/staff on tenured position.

2. Eligibility criteria

This call is open to teams, with the lead applicant affiliated to a university, hospital or other recognised research institution in the UK. Individuals who are employed by, or whose salary derives from, a commercial organisation are not eligible to apply as lead applicant but may be included as a co-applicant.

The lead applicant should have previous experience of leading multi-disciplinary research and should be tenured for the duration of the award.

Co-applicants should have expertise in a number of autoimmune conditions and related research. Applications from researchers involved in immune condition research other than arthritis, type 1 diabetes and multiple sclerosis are welcome. However it will be important to show how the outputs from the award could lead to benefit patients with these conditions.

Multiple applications

We will accept an application that has been submitted to another funding body, however, please check the eligibility criteria of the other funding body before making an application.

3. How to apply

All applications must be submitted through the Arthritis Research UK online grant management system “Grant Tracker”.

Further details on how to register with Grant Tracker can be found on Arthritis Research UK’s [website](#).

The deadline for submission of applications is 4pm on Thursday 19 April 2018. No application will be accepted after this deadline. We strongly recommend that applicants allow sufficient time for submission before the deadline in order to obtain the necessary approvals from your research or finance office, and head of department.

For further enquiries on any aspect of your application, please email research@arthritisresearchuk.org or phone us on 0300 7900 403.

4. Note on the language

We recognise that specialist language will be required to accurately convey the detail of your proposal and, as such, sections that require technical detail will be labelled accordingly.

In addition to scientific review, applications will also be reviewed by lay people. They assess the quality of the patient involvement, the relevance to the call and potential for patient benefit. Lay sections should be written in appropriate non-technical language, these are important parts of the application and require careful consideration.

For more information on how to write a clear and informative lay summary please use the following resources:

- [INVOLVE plain English summaries](#)
- [The Plain English Campaign](#)

If you have further enquiries on the use of appropriate language, please email researchnetwork@mssociety.org.uk.

5. Guidance for completion of the application form

The sections to be completed in the application form are presented below please ensure you reference each section before completing the online form.

6. Project summary

Scientific title of research: The title should be descriptive. If relevant, please use PICO (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome) principals and include a project acronym.

Scientific abstract of research: The scientific abstract should include the purpose, study design and the potential application for results. The application will be shared with reviewers and the inclusion of sensitive/confidential information should be considered carefully. This section has a limit of 300 words.

Institution: Insert the name of the lead applicant's host organisation

Department: Insert the name of the lead applicant's host department

Address: Address of the host organisation

Phone number: Contact phone number of the lead applicant

Proposed start date: Expected start date of the award is by Autumn 2018

Proposed duration: Up to 18 months can be requested

Key words: Please enter up to six key words that describe your application.

7. Project details

Please complete the following fields providing details of the proposed project.

Please note that this entire section, including the "Facilities" box under Additional Project Details has a word limit of 5,000 words between all the boxes.

If attaching a figure in the attachments section, please ensure you include a figure legend within the text here to reference the figure.

Background and purpose of proposed investigation

Please include the following information in this section:

- The aims and objectives of the project and how the work is relevant to the aims of this call.
- A literature review of existing published work appropriate to the level of work and amount of funding being sought. If your review is extensive please submit this as an attachment at the end of your online application. Please see 'attachments' for information on how to do this.
- The hypothesis or research question underpinning the study.

Detailed plan of investigation and scientific procedures: Outline the proposed programme of work to include clear work packages, methodology and milestones. Information that should be included in this section:

- a brief outline of the consortia composition (expertise and track record across the full range of relevant disciplines)
- arrangements for the management of the consortia. Please consider, for example:
 - Plans for regular communication or meetings amongst consortium members and how this will be administered and decisions governed
 - Plans for publication/authorship or other appropriate recognition of the consortium members in outputs
- where applicable research design and methodology, this should include a statistical plan measures to reduce bias, justification for the proposed sampling strategies, sample size calculation, methods of data collection, analysis and outcome measures

- data management and data sharing plans (to include making the data discoverable and the process for data sharing)
- how will the consortia address one or more of the identified Grand Challenges, and what are the expected outcomes
- how have patients been involved in developing the application and what will be their involvement through the stages of award
- A Gantt chart/timetable can be submitted using the attach documents at the end of the application form.

Justification for support requested

Justify all the support requested, the role of each member of staff and the intended use of each piece of equipment. In the case of equipment, specify where it is to be located and give details of the expertise available for its use and maintenance. If similar equipment is already available in the department (or is otherwise accessible) please state this and explain why it cannot be used for this project.

8. Additional Project Details

Facilities: Describe the facilities available to support delivery of the project. Please include any commitment from the host organisations here.

Previously submitted: Has this or a related application currently or previously been submitted elsewhere?

If a similar application has been submitted please provide further details about the application, where it has been submitted and the outcome or date of expected outcome.

Intellectual Property (IP): If appropriate, please provide information on whether the proposal is likely to produce new IP (maximum 500 words), how the new IP will be managed (maximum 500 words) and if there is existing IP associated with the proposal (maximum 500 words).

IP means patents, copyright, trademarks, trade names, service marks, domain names copyrights, moral rights, rights in and to databases (including rights to prevent the extraction or reutilisation of information from a database), design rights, topography rights and all rights or forms of protection of a similar nature or having equivalent or the similar effect to any of them which may subsist anywhere in the world, whether or not any of them are registered and including applications for registration of any of them. Where appropriate explain how you will engage with your Technology Transfer/Enterprise Office. For further enquiries on any aspect of IP, please email research@arthritisresearchuk.org.

Industrial Support: Indicate if the application involves any external commercial organisation (including collaborations and donations). If the proposal includes industrial support provide further details of the commercial partner. Please refer to AMRC [guidelines](#) and provide contact details, details of the support/collaboration and any conflicts of interest.

9. Lay Case for support

The Lay Case for Support section of all successful applications will be made publicly available, and may form the basis of a press release or be used for fundraising and marketing activities.

Lay Title: The title should be descriptive and written in plain English.

Lay abstract: This should outline: the background to the problem; the aims and purposes of your proposal and why they are important; a plan of the proposed project; and the relevance to potential patient benefit. This section should be completed in lay language and has a limit of 50-100 words.

Background: Please provide a summary of background information and research in support of the application in light of the question and approach to address. It should outline past and current research, highlighting the applicants' own contribution.

Questions (Aims and purpose): What are the questions you hope to answer and why?

Experimental plan: Give a brief overview of how you intend to answer your research question(s), including details of what methods of recruitment or experimental models you will use (e.g. human cells, animal models, clinical samples, patient and/or education research studies) and how the research will be managed.

Importance: Explain why this particular study is important

Relevance: Why is your proposal relevant to the aims of the call?

Novelty: how is this research different to what has been done before by your research group and others?

Potential for benefit: How will the outcomes of the project lead to clinical, patient and societal benefits and what are the likely timescales to benefit?

10. Lead applicant

The lead applicant is the individual who will lead the programme of work and be responsible in ensuring the conditions of award are met. They must be based in a UK university, hospital or recognised academic research institute in the UK.

The lead applicant must open the application form on grant tracker and add the other key personnel who can then add information.

The details displayed in the application form for the lead applicant are those that are stored on Grant Tracker. To amend your details, please save and close this application and visit the "Manage My Details" section. When you have finished editing your details, you can return to the application where they will automatically show.

Basic information: Please ensure all fields marked with a red dot are completed (these are compulsory fields).

Update CV:

Degrees/Qualifications - please add any degrees or professional qualifications that you hold and feel would aid your application.

Employment – Please list your present and last position held as a minimum. Please list any further positions that you feel would aid your application.

Publications - Please list your most important research publications up to a maximum to 10 that you feel would aid your application. Full author citations are required.

Research Grants – Please list all current grants held.

11. Co-applicants

Co-applicants are individuals who will have had intellectual input into the application and are expected to be involved in the project. All co-applicants are expected to make a substantive contribution to the delivery and management of the activities described in the application. For further details on how to enter a co-applicant see:

<http://www.arthritisresearchuk.org/research/information-for-applicants/applying-for-a-grant/how-to-apply.aspx>.

If you wish to add a co-applicant that is based outside the UK please contact Arthritis Research UK's research department.

Patients or service users who are named co-applicants should include in their CV a summary of any knowledge, skills and experience relevant to their role in the application.

Please add details of all co-applicants involved with the project. You will be able to select individuals who already have an account with Arthritis Research UK. Individuals who do not have an account will be asked to register and will be sent details via an automated email.

12. Pre-Award Administrators

Pre-award administrators are individuals who can enter data into an application on behalf of the lead applicant and is also the point of contact person for administrative issues. Their details will not appear explicitly on the completed form.

Please enter all of the administrators required for this application.

13. Collaborations

Collaborators are individuals who are named in the body of the application who supply research materials, specific expertise or access to patients, but will not be involved in the day-to-day execution of the research.

Please list any collaborations that are not listed as co-applicants. To enter a collaborator select add collaboration and enter the name of the collaborator, their institution and details of the collaboration into the box.

Please attach their signed collaboration letter of support in the attachments section.

14. Signatories

Enter the details of the signatories required to sign-off the application. The head of department and, finance officer OR research officer details should be completed. The signatories' approval must be obtained prior to the deadline, for your application to be fully submitted by the deadline.

All signatories **MUST** firstly confirm their willingness to act in this capacity.

All signatories **MUST** then sign-off the application to ensure the application is submitted before the deadline

Finance Officer

- Check all financial details are entered correctly and any salary details are in accordance with a recognised pay model or the host institutions own salary scales
- Penultimate approver of the application

Head of Department

- Ensuring the proposal is scientifically sound and addresses the aims of the call
- Final approver of the application. Only once the Head of Department has approved an application will you be able to submit it.

A diagram detailing the submission process and signatory approval stages can be downloaded from the Arthritis Research UK [website](#).

15. Scientific References

Please list all references that you feel will aid your application.

Please cite reference in full including full title and all authors. Incorrect format may impede processing of your application.

16. Grant Information

List all current awards held by the co-applicants.

Those on the Lead Applicant's CV will be added automatically. Please note that we only require one entry per award, where awards are held by more than one applicant please enter the names of all the award holders listing the Lead Applicant first.

17. Impact

Please describe how your research will impact the lives of people affected by autoimmune conditions.

What will be the impact of your proposed project (both in the short and long term): We wish to understand the potential impact of your research both in the short and longer term. Our ultimate aim is to deliver clinical impact as quickly as possible to improve the lives of people affected by autoimmune conditions. Your response should focus on the impact to these people rather than just academic outputs.

What would need to happen after this grant (if successful) to realise this long-term impact: We are aware that several additional steps and significant follow on funding may be required in order to deliver longer term impact. Please describe the expected outputs and outcomes of this project and provide brief details of these subsequent steps you intend to take (including proposed funders and funding schemes, or plans to fund future work through licencing or exploitation) in order to realise patient benefit.

18. Finance and costs

Finance summary: Please complete the relevant financial detail within each of the following categories:

- Staff members (salaries)
- Animals (total)
- Expenses/consumables (total)
- Apparatus/Equipment (total)

Full economic costing

In line with other UK medical charities, the Funders do not provide funds for administrative costs or overheads, and funds directly incurred costs only. Ineligible costs include directly allocated costs and indirect costs:

- Directly Allocated Costs – shared costs, based on estimates and do not represent actual costs on a project-by-project basis, such as:
 - Investigators: the time spent by tenured lead applicants (Chief Investigators) and co-applicants
 - Estates
 - Other Directly Allocated: the costs of shared resources, such as staff and equipment
- Indirect Costs – necessary for underpinning research but cannot be allocated to individual projects, and cover computing and information support, central services, general maintenance and other infrastructure costs.

Please note the lead applicant must hold a tenured position for the duration of the award.

Eligible costs within an application:

- Annual increments must be included which should be based on the host institutions' own salary scale, including London weighting if appropriate
- London weighting allowance will be payable at the rate appropriate to each host institution
- The percentage of inflation used must be included in the application and be in line with the most recent pay award agreed by the Institution and no more than 2%.
- Requests for external consultancy costs should be included in expenses
- Training and supervision of staff costs by non-tenured applicants within the project must be justified

- Costs for the purchase and maintenance of laboratory animals can be applied for. Studies involving animals must provide adequate details on the number, species, strain and associated costs of animals to be used
- Fully justified items of equipment of up to £30,000 can be requested, requests for items of equipment with a cost greater than £5,000 must be supported by an estimate
- Access charges for use of specialist equipment may be applied for within expenses
- Any requests for computers must be fully justified and integral to the success of the project
- Open access charges.

Ineligible costs within an application

- Costs relating to staff recruitment and relocation costs
- Student tuition fees
- Personal license fees and home office license
- Good clinical practice (GCP) training
- Funding to provide maintenance of equipment
- Office stationery costs unless required for the project and justified accordingly
- Indemnity insurance

AcoRD

Applications that propose research conducted with human subjects within a health or social care setting should be formulated in line with Department of Health Guidance "[Attributing the costs of health and social care Research & Development \(AcoRD\)](#)". The Funders will only fund Directly Incurred Research Costs and applicants should ensure that they have consulted their local NIHR CRN, where appropriate, to discuss NHS Support Costs and NHS Trust Management to discuss Treatment Costs before submission.

Justification: Justification for expenses/consumables and apparatus/equipment must be provided. This section has a limit of 300 words.

19. Time Allocation

Please enter the amount of time spent by the lead applicant and each co-applicant in research overall and this project in particular.

20. Ethics

Please only complete this section if applicable to your application.

The [Department of Health](#) requires that research involving patients, service users, care professionals or volunteers, or their organs, tissue or data, is reviewed independently by a Research Ethics Committee (REC) to ensure it meets ethical standards (Favourable Ethical Opinion).

Please tick the box if Favourable Ethical Opinion is required for this research from an NHS Research Ethics Committee.

If Favourable Ethical Opinion is not required please enter justification for not needing it.

If Favourable Ethical Opinion is required please tick the box if it is already in place for this research and attach the final letter from the REC in the attachment section.

If Favourable Ethical Opinion is required but not yet in place, please provide the approximate date Favourable Ethical Opinion will be applied for or when the outcome will be known.

21. Animal ethics

Please only complete this section if applicable to your application.

The funders are committed to the principles of reduction, replacement and refinement in animal studies and sign up to the Association of Medical Research Charities position on animal research (<http://www.amrc.org.uk/our-work/animal-research>).

Please tick the box if the project involves the use of experimental animals or other organisms covered by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act.

Select the maximum severity of the procedures involved.

Indicate if the project involves a protected species (non-human primate, cats, dogs or equidae).

Indicate if the relevant Home Office project and personal licences have been obtained.

If you do not hold the relevant Home Office licence, please state when you expect to obtain them.

Justification for the use of animals: Please justify the use of animals, the species and techniques proposed and the number of animals to be used per experiment. Please include details of sample size calculations and statistical advice sought for the number of animals required to reach statistical significance.

There should be sufficient information to allow for a robust review of any applications involving animals. Further guidance is available from the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs) <http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/responsibility-use-animals-bioscience-research>, including an online experimental design assistant to guide researchers through the design of animal experiments: <http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/experimental-design-assistant-eda>.

Replacement, reduction and refinement (3Rs) of animal experiments: Indicate if the proposed research lead to the advancement of the 3Rs (replacement, refinement or reduction in the use of animals) and how it will do this. Further information on the 3Rs is available from the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs) <https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/the-3rs>.

22. Attachments

Only text can be added to the fields of the online application form. Where additional files are required they can be uploaded in this section.

The maximum combined file size cannot be more than 7Mb.

Attachments will either be appended to the PDF or they will be referenced from the PDF and included as separate files according to the following rules:

- Image files (JPG and GIF format) will be appended within the PDF.
- For Microsoft Word files, you have the option to either append them or include them as separate files, by default they will be appended. (Please note: Docx files are not currently supported for embedding and will be included as separate files).
- Excel and other file types (e.g. PDF, PPT) will be included as separate files and listed in an appendix.

End – Submitting your application

To complete the application process, the final steps are listed below.

1. Select Validate form

This will check that you have completed all sections within the application. Also, that your co-applicants have confirmed and approved their role(s).

2. Click Save then close

After completing these steps you will be taken to the details page of your application. The submit application button on the right-hand side of the page should be available.

3. Click Submit

Once you have submitted your application an automated email will be sent firstly to your research or finance officer, once they have approved the application a second email will be sent to your head of department. It is only upon your head of department's approval that the application is finally submitted to Arthritis Research UK. This must be completed by 16:00.

You will receive an automated email containing an acknowledgement that we have received your application. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your application, please contact us on 0300 7900 403, allowing for sufficient time prior to the deadline.