Experimental Medicine Challenge Grant call: Frequently Asked Questions

General

1. Can I submit research which has previously been submitted to an MRC Research Board or Panel and was not funded?
   Applications previously declined by the MRC or another Research Council will not be considered by the MRC within 12 months (from the date of submission to the original Research Council, as either an outline, Expression of Interest or full application) unless substantially revised.

2. How much funding is available under this initiative?
   Up to £10M (80% FEC) is available under this call. The EMCG call will support a range of award scales (cost and duration), from smaller, focused, more exploratory and highly innovative projects (based e.g. on an intellectually sound hypothesis but perhaps lacking extensive pilot data), to large programmatic awards based on a more substantial evidence.

3. What is the expected duration of the grants under this initiative?
   Depending on the nature of the research it is expected that most grants would be between 3-5 years.

4. Will the application attract full economic costs (FEC)?
   The proposals should be costed on the basis of the full economic costs (FEC) necessary to deliver the research. If a grant is awarded, the MRC will typically fund 80 per cent of the FEC and the RO(s) must agree to find the balance of FEC from other resources.

5. When will I be informed if my application was successful?
   Full applications are expected to be considered by the panel in February 2019, and feedback will be given shortly after.

6. How do I apply?
   Outline, and full, applications must be submitted using the Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) System. Applicants should refer to the general guidance for applicants (on Je-S Help) and MRC standard terms and conditions. Please note the full applications are by invitation only, following the assessment of outline applications.

7. Is there an Expression of Interest or Outline stage?
   All applicants must submit an outline application via the Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) System. Please refer to the “Guidance for Applicants” for further information on submission of an outline application.

8. When is the deadline for submission of the outline applications?
   The deadline for outline applications is 4pm on 31st May 2018. Applicants must submit their proposals using the outline application form via the Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) System by 4pm on deadline date. The outline form is part of the outline application on Je-S: please see MRC Guidance for Applicants for further details on the application process and requirements. Please bear in mind that all proposals have to be submitted via your Research Organisation’s Administrative department. Please ensure they have sufficient time to complete their parts of the proposal before the MRC deadline.

9. Can I create my own case for support document as I would for a normal research grant?
   No, only applications that use the outline application form will be accepted.

10. Can I include annexes in my application?
    Applicants may only include the attachments, as separate documents, outlined in the
11. How are proposals assessed?

Outline applications will be assessed by an independent review panel, based on:

- Fit to EMCG call remit
- Rationale & potential
- Research strategy
- Quality and skills of the research team & environment

If successful at outline stage, applicants will submit full proposals which will be sent out for international peer review and assessed by an independent review panel convened by MRC. This panel will make the final funding decisions. Full proposals will be assessed on the standard criteria for an MRC research grant, plus the additional EMCG-specific criteria detailed in the call specification.

12. Will I need to complete a MICA form?

MICA forms will not need to be completed for the outline stage. If an industrial partner is collaborating on the grant applicants will need to submit a MICA and signed Heads of Terms with the full application. Please refer to the additional guidance for submitting MICA proposals.

13. Will I need to have regulatory/ethical approval?

The MRC does not require ethics permissions and regulatory approvals to be in place when you submit an application. However, given that research involving human subjects or requiring the use of human tissue/organs may raise various ethical and regulatory issues, applicants will be required to demonstrate that they have adequately considered these matters.

Early discussions with regulatory/approval bodies are advised to ensure that all requirements can be met in a timely manner. Once an application is successful, it is the responsibility of the host institution to ensure that the appropriate ethics and regulatory approval has been obtained and that no research requiring such approval is initiated before it has been granted. Please refer to EMCG Guidance for Applicants page for more information.

14. How will you let me know if my application has been successful?

The Principal Investigator will be notified of the decision by email communication.

15. Will you publish a list of the awards that are made?

Following the funding decisions, a list of awards will be made available on Gateway to Research.

16. If my query is not answered by the FAQs, or I have a scientific query regarding my application, who do I contact?

For scientific queries please email the Programme Manager for Experimental Medicine: Rebecca.barlow@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk
For other queries please contact: Experimental.Medicine@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk
EMCG Remit

1. Are there any scientific areas that are outside the remit of this initiative?
   The following are out of remit for this initiative:
   - Full translational programmes developing or evaluating new pharmacological interventions (these are however within the wider MRC remit, see the MRC DPFS scheme);
   - Observational studies involving no experimental challenge. Proposals which are predominantly descriptive are unlikely to be shortlisted;
   - Applications solely limited to screening chemical libraries, investigating the mechanism of action of novel compounds or dosing strategies.

2. If my application doesn’t fit the call remit, what options do I have?
   If your application does not fit the remit of this call, but is within the broader sphere of MRC interest, then you may apply via other normal funding mechanisms. Please see Funding opportunities for more information.

3. Will proposals involving preclinical animal work be considered?
   The focus should be on understanding human disease through experimental investigation in humans. While projects may include a small element of non-human work (if informed by or informing the work in humans), the focus of the project should be on human participants.

4. Do proposals need to focus on a therapeutic intervention?
   The experiment does not need to test a therapeutic intervention. While all proposals need to involve an experimental challenge (for example, pharmacological, immunological, behavioural, physiological, psychological or infectious), proposals investigating disease pathways and mechanisms, novel targets or those focused on linkage to disease are also well within the remit of the EMCG.

5. If my query is not answered by the FAQs, or I have a scientific query regarding my application, who do I contact?
   For scientific queries please email the Programme Manager for Experimental Medicine: Rebecca.barlow@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk
   For other queries please contact: Experimental.Medicine@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk