FAQs: UK-Brazil Neglected Infectious Diseases Partnership

This FAQ document is for applicants wishing to apply to the UK Medical Research Council in response to the UK-Brazil Neglected Infectious Diseases Partnership call.

This guidance supplements the MRC Handbook for Applicants. Please consult the MRC Handbook for Applicants for information such as preparing the budget for your proposal.

This present FAQ document provides additional information specific to this call. Where guidance in the present document differs from that in the MRC Handbook for Applicants, you should follow the guidance in this present, scheme specific, document.

It is important that applicants read the below document as it includes important additional information that is not covered in the call text. It is also important that your Brazilian colleagues are aware of guidance provided by CONFAP/CNPq.

Funding

Are there limits on the funding I can request?

In total, up to £4.4m will be made available for this initiative (up to £2.2m on the UK side with the equivalent resources matched by the Brazilian funders).

The funders hope to support approximately 8-12 research projects in total.

UK funding will be provided to the UK HEI. The MRC would be happy in principle for funding to be spent on activities in Brazil which are outside of the funding available from the Brazilian partner (assuming the Brazilian funders are happy with this). If this is requested it must be identified and justified in the proposal. For further details of MRC funding, please refer to the MRC Handbook for Applicants.

Will my award be made with the Full Economic Costing (FEC) framework?

Yes, the UK costs are awarded within the FEC framework. If a grant is awarded the MRC will provide funding at a rate of 80% of the FEC and the research organisation(s) must agree to fund the balance of the FEC for the project from other resources.
How should costs associated with travel or subsistence be allocated?

There are no specific rules regarding travel and subsistence costings for proposals. In international collaborations there is a precedent for the country sending a researcher to pay for the airfare and the country hosting to pay for accommodation, but there is no specific requirement. As with all costs, a clear explanation will be necessary to justify all travel and associated costs.

What travel costs can be claimed?

Travel costs should be based on the most suitable and economical form of travel. All train travel should be by standard class and any flights should be at the economy rate. All applicants should actively seek best value for money where it is practical and feasible. For further information, please see section 5.1.1.2 of the MRC Handbook for Applicants.

Both funding agencies are willing to provide funding for workshops and meetings that are fully justified.

How to apply

How do I apply as the UK Principal Investigator?

In order to identify peer reviewers and convene assessment panels, it is important that researchers indicate their intention to submit, please refer to the call text for more information.

Applications from the UK Principal Investigator to the MRC must be submitted through the RCUK Joint electronic-Submissions system (Je-S).

The online Je-S form and guidance can be accessed here: https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Je-S2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx

To create an application you will need to log into your personal Je-S account and then

- Select Documents on the Left Side of the Screen
- Select New Document near the top of the screen
- Select Council: MRC
- Select Document Type: Standard Proposal
- Select Scheme: Research Grant
- Select Call/Type/Mode (optional): UK-Brazil Neglected Infectious Diseases Partnership May 2015
- Select ‘Create Document’ option
Do all investigators need to be registered on Je-S?

Yes. For any submission through the UK Research Council online submission system which is used by the MRC, **ALL named investigators** (Principal Investigator and all Co-Investigators) must be registered users. For this initiative, that includes all named UK and Brazilian investigators. Easy instructions to register are available here (PDF, 473KB).

For help with using Je-S please contact the Je-S helpdesk:

Email: JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk

Phone: +44 (0)1793 444164

Je-S website: [https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx](https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx)

**How do I add the Brazilian Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators to the Je-S form?**

The Je-S form only allows there to be 1 Principal Investigator on a grant. Although in reality grants under this scheme will have two Co-PI's: both for UK and Brazilian partner, for the purposes of completing the Je-S form, please enter the UK PI on to the system as the PI. Please add the Brazilian PI on to the Je-S form as a Co-Investigator.

**Please note:** that while the Brazilian Investigators must be recorded on the Je-S form their costs must not be input. Please add all Brazilian Co-Investigators on to the form as below to ensure their costs are not captured:

**From the document menu select Co-Investigator option.**

**Select 'Add New Co-Investigator Item'**

1. Choose the Select option (Je-S Person Search pop-up window appears). Search for and select the Co-Investigator from the search results. **Please note:** Uncheck the tick box so you search for people outside of the lead organisation.

2. Select Yes option
3. Select ‘No’ as the person will not be an MRC/ESS Staff Member.

4. Indicate the total number of hours the Brazilian partner Co-Investigator will be working on the project. Please note; must be a minimum of 1.

5. Cost Type (defaults to Directly Allocated), leave as DA.

6. Indicate 1 as the salary rate. Please note if the Co-I wishes to indicate their annual salary then this should be converted to sterling.

7. Contracted Hours per week E.G. if the Co-I’s overseas institution contract is fulltime then they should indicate 100. If they have a part-time contract at their RO, please indicate the appropriate % depending on their actual contract.

8. Number of hours charged should be 0 (zero).

9. Select the calculate button (cost estimate will be 0). All the costs associated with the international partner PI and CoI’s will be recorded on the international costs proforma.

10. Select the ‘Save’ to save the information. Section should then validate (green tick instead of red circle with cross).

**How does the Brazilian Principal Investigator apply?**

Brazilian Principal Investigators must submit an identical case for support (“Projeto de pesquisa”) written in English to CNPq ([http://picc.cnpq.br/efomento/form/47-559](http://picc.cnpq.br/efomento/form/47-559)) available from May the 15th or – if the PI is from São Paulo State - submit to through the SAGE and should observe its eligibility rules as described at the FAPESP’s guidelines ([http://www.fapesp.br/9397](http://www.fapesp.br/9397)).
Where do I record my Brazilian PI and Co-I’s costs?

These costs should be recorded on the “UK-Brazil Joint Funding Summary” form but not on the JeS form.

This should be uploaded as a .pdf document onto the JeS system in the attachments under ‘Letters of Support’. Please ensure you title the document “UK-Brazil Joint Funding Summary” so it is easily identifiable.

Which documents are mandatory to attach to my JeS application and which are optional?

All applications consist of a number of components. The following are mandatory:

- A completed Je-S form
- CV and publications for UK and Brazilian PI’s and Co-I’s (2 pages CV and 1 page publications uploaded separately)
- A jointly prepared Case for Support (8 pages including references)
- Justification of Resources (2 pages).

*The justification of resources should be focused primarily upon providing justification for the UK costs. Of the two pages, no more than half should be allocated to providing a brief overview of the justification for the Brazilian costs.*

- Pathways to Impact (2 pages)
- Data Management Plan (up to 3 pages)
- UK-Brazil Joint Funding Summary

If your project contains animal research:

- An animal research letter of support, addressing the points detailed below (2 pages)

If your project contains human participants/tissue and the UK RO will not responsible be for the recruitment of the research participants/human tissue:

- A ‘Human Participation’ letter, addressing the points detailed below (2 pages)

The following are optional:

- A covering letter (2 pages)
- Letters of support (2 pages), please see below for more information.
**What is a Letter of Support?**

Letters of support are not required from co-investigators or other organisations requesting funding. Letters of support are only needed from organisations entered on the Je-S form as ‘Project Partners’. A Project Partner is an organisation which contributes in cash or in kind to the project but which is not requesting any money. Therefore a Project Partner cannot be based at the Co-Investigator or Principal Investigator’s institutions.

**What should my start date be in the JeS System?**

As stated in the call text, due to the tight timescales and funding restrictions of the Newton Fund, the proposed start date on the JeS system must be before 15th January 2016. The grants must be no longer than three years long.

Please note that in order to start the grant, the start confirmation must be submitted by 15th January 2016 (shorter than the standard 42 days for Research Council grants). Please refer to [http://www.mrc.ac.uk/documents/pdf/guidance-for-applicants-and-award-holders/](http://www.mrc.ac.uk/documents/pdf/guidance-for-applicants-and-award-holders/) for information on what the starting procedure entails; please ensure that you inform the relevant support staff in your organisation of this requirement to ensure the project starts on time.

**Is it ok if the Brazilian applicants do not start their grant on the same day?**

Yes
Eligibility

What is ODA?

The Newton Fund forms part of the UK’s Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment which is monitored by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). ODA funded activity focuses on outcomes that promote the long-term sustainable growth of countries on the OECD Development Assistance Committee. Newton Fund countries represent a sub-set of this list.

For more information on ODA please refer to the RCUK Newton Fund Guidance.

How do I know if my project is ODA compliant?

All projects funded through the Newton Fund must be Official Development Assistance (ODA) compliant. The most important aspect to remember when developing your project is that the primary purpose of ODA is the economic development and/or welfare of the developing country. For further information please see the ODA guidance.

What formal qualification should the PI have?

The minimum formal qualification required from a UK Principal Investigator is a graduate degree, though it would normally be expected that an applicant would have been awarded a PhD.
Ethics

Are there any additional ethical requirements for international collaborations?

Any research involving humans/human tissue and/or animals must comply with legislation in both the Brazil and the UK, and must also comply with relevant policies and guidance of the MRC and CONFAP.

It is the absolute responsibility of the PI and the RO to ensure that appropriate ethical approval is granted and adhered to, and that no research requiring ethical approval is initiated until it has been granted.

The Ethical Information sub-sections of the Je-S form should be completed to give details of any human participation, research using animals, genetic and biological risk, and ethical committee approvals required. Section 8 of the MRC Handbook for Applicants has recently been updated to reflect amendments to this section of the Je-S form.

Applicants must be clear in their applications as to which country the proposed research involving humans and/or animals will take place and must complete the Ethical Information section for research taking place in either country.

The Principal Investigator/ Research Organisation must be prepared to furnish the MRC with a copy of the ethical approval, and any correspondence with the committees, if requested.

Can I propose research involving humans?

Yes.

MRC current policy for research involving humans to take place overseas (http://www.mrc.ac.uk/news-events/publications/research-involving-human-participants-in-developing-societies/) is that for research to be undertaken internationally, both local and UK ethical approval is required.

It is important to ensure that any research involving humans, whether in the UK or Brazil is recorded on the JeS form.

All research involving human participants must be undertaken in accordance with relevant policies and guidance.

The MRC provide useful UK-relevant information on page 43 of the Handbook for Applicants.

Researchers should ensure equivalent up-to-date information relevant to ethical and legislative requirements in Brazil is determined and addressed in any application.
For clinical studies involving human participants and/or patients in the UK or overseas, appropriate consent must be obtained.

Where the Brazilian partner or another third party (ANY organisation other than the UK RO) is responsible for recruitment of people as research participants and/or providing human tissue, details should be included in the case for support and a **letter of support MUST be attached to the application**. The letter of support should be titled ‘Human participation’ and include confirmation of the following:

- That the international partner has agreed to recruit the participants/provide tissue
- That what is being supplied is suitable for the research being undertaken
- That the quantity of tissue (where relevant) being supplied is suitable, but not excessive for achieving meaningful results

The letter of support must be an integral part of the application (as an attachment) and must focus on the proposal it accompanies.

**Can I propose research involving animals?**

Yes.

Applicants must comply with relevant MRC policies and guidance.

For any projects involving animal research we require a signed letter from the UK and Brazilian applicant, addressing the points outlined below and confirming that the research proposed will meet both UK and Brazilian standards. Please also ensure any proposed animal research, whether in the UK or Brazil is included on the JeS application.

Applicants must ensure that all of the proposed research, both in the UK and in Brazil, will comply with the principles of the MRC and other UK funders’ common guidance on **“Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research”**.

In particular, UK Institutions should be aware of the following aspect of the guidance relating to research or collaboration outside the UK:

“When collaborating with other laboratories, or where animal facilities are provided by third parties, researchers and the local ethics committee in the UK should satisfy themselves that welfare standards consistent with the principles of UK legislation (e.g. the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986), and set out in this guidance, are applied and maintained. Where there are significant deviations, prior approval from the funding body should be sought and agreed.”

Investigators proposing the use of animals should provide an additional letter including the following information:

- a signed statement that:
  - they will adhere to all relevant national and local regulatory systems in the UK and relevant partner country
o they will follow the guidelines laid out in the *Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research* document and ensure that work is carried out to UK standards
o before initiation of the proposed research work, appropriate approvals from Institutional and/or central animal ethics committees will be obtained for experimental protocols to be adopted in their projects. Successful proposals may be expected to provide copies of these permissions before funding is released.

- Details on where the animal research will take place (UK or overseas) and through which funder the resources are being sought. Applicants should include confirmation that animal welfare standards at these institutions meet the requirements outlined above.

- All applicants are required to comply with Section 2: ‘Use of Animals’ of the MRC Applicants Handbook. Applicants should detail in the letter any additional information which was not included in the proposal document but which is pertinent to the animal research proposed and which the funders should be aware of.

CONFAP guidance:

“*Brazilian researchers conducting animal testing in Brazil must comply with “Lei 11.974 de 2008 (Lei Arouca)” and with the normative resolutions provided by National Council for Animal Testing Control (CONCEA).”*

**My animal research is taking place in Brazil. Do I need to record this on my UK JeS form?**

Yes, it is important that any animal research taking place, whether in the UK or Brazil, is captured. For information on completing the animal research in the JeS System please refer to the applicant’s handbook, section 8.2.4.1 and 8.2.4.2
How will Intellectual Property (IP) be managed?

Ownership of IP generated during the project and rights to exploitation, as well as any costs regarding management of IP, are expected to be agreed between the collaborating research organisations before the research begins.

Agreements must not conflict with RCUK, CONFAP or CNPq terms and conditions. Any agreements in place between a research organisation and their respective funding organisation must be adhered to, including the sharing of IP costs or benefits. Any IP sharing agreements in place between a research organisation and their national funding body would be expected to apply only to the IP share of that research organisation.

Material Transfer

Can materials be transferred between institutions?

Collection and exchange of material may occur between collaborating institutions, as necessary, in strict compliance with the legislation in effect in both countries

Collaboration Agreement

Do we require a Collaboration Agreement?

The funding agencies will not request to see a collaboration agreement. However, as the research projects will be carried out by multiple research organisations and project partners, the basis of collaboration, including ownership of intellectual property (IP) generated during the project and rights to exploitation, and costs of IP management (which is not an eligible cost to MRC), it would be advisable to set out in a formal collaboration agreement between the research organisations involved. The terms of collaboration should of course not conflict with MRC and CONFAP terms and conditions.

Arrangements for collaboration and/or exploitation must not prevent the future progression of academic research and the dissemination of research results in accordance with academic custom and practise and the requirements of the funding bodies. A temporary delay in publication is acceptable in order to allow commercial and collaborative arrangements to be established.

Details of key issues included in the Collaboration Agreement, for example management of IP, should be detailed in the ‘Governance and IP’ section of the grant application form.