Dear applicants,

We have received a number of questions regarding the forthcoming MRC/BBSRC Global Challenges Research Fund: Networks in Vaccine R&D and thought it pertinent to share the answers of these with all applicants.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. When can the Networks start?

Once applicants have been notified of success, Networks can start with an earliest date of the 24th of April 2017. Please note that successful Networks must have started by the 1st of July 2017.

2. Do we need to list the network members?

No. The PI, CoI, Network Manager (if identified) must be named; as must the Network Management Board. In addition, these individuals should provide their CVs (maximum two sides of A4) and publications (maximum one side of A4).

Individual Network members do not need to be named; the MRC would envisage that the Network Management Board would broadly reflect the membership of the Networks. Applicants may wish to mention in the Case for Support a membership strategy for ensuring Network membership and could include examples of expertise offered by members.

3. Catalyst funds

Catalyst funds for allocation by the Network should also be requested; the amount should be indicated and justified in the “Justification of Resources” document. These funds can be used for a range of projects/activities including:

- Pump-Priming grants - feasibility studies; proof of concept studies; generation of preliminary data
- Method development; tool/technology development; desk-based studies
- Training / exchanges to learn new techniques.
- Network meetings

It is envisaged that these funds will help to support the development of new interdisciplinary partnerships and foster the development of new approaches.
between Network members. Justification should be provided on how these projects/activities have been prioritised and on how they are distinct and value adding to on-going activity, both within and beyond the network membership.

Pump-priming grants may be awarded to UK members at 80%, but to LMICs at 100%; this reflects our commitment to encouraging collaborations and applications from LMIC members.

If it is likely that you may use pump-priming funds for either animal or human biological sample use I would suggest ticking the yes box(es) on the relevant JeS tab. Whilst we are aware that Networks do not yet know which pump-priming projects will be funded, we would look to the Network to provide details on how those projects would be governed and monitored.

4. Exemplar projects.

These projects should not be typical research grant proposals which would normally come before the Infections and Immunity board at the MRC. Exemplar projects should illustrate the dynamic nature of the Networks and allow for evolving flexibility within the Network, whilst addressing specific scientific challenges identified through the network. Proposals should describe how these projects will be assessed and selected for funding; together with how the projects’ progress and outcomes will be measured. Some of the exemplar projects are anticipated to be prioritised for early activation, to help build Network momentum.

5. Future Network Activity

Applicants are advised to address the issue of on-going Network activity beyond the four year MRC/BBSRC funding span.

6. ODA Statement

The ODA Statement should be added to the Je-S system as a letter of support.

7. Number of attachments / figures

We will allow a maximum of four A4 attachments, two which could be used for science (data, figures or templates), one attachment for an organogram and one attachment for a Gannt chart. These should be uploaded under the attachment type “Letter of Support” – please provide a brief description of these attachments to assist the referees.

Enquires should be directed to: vaccinology@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk