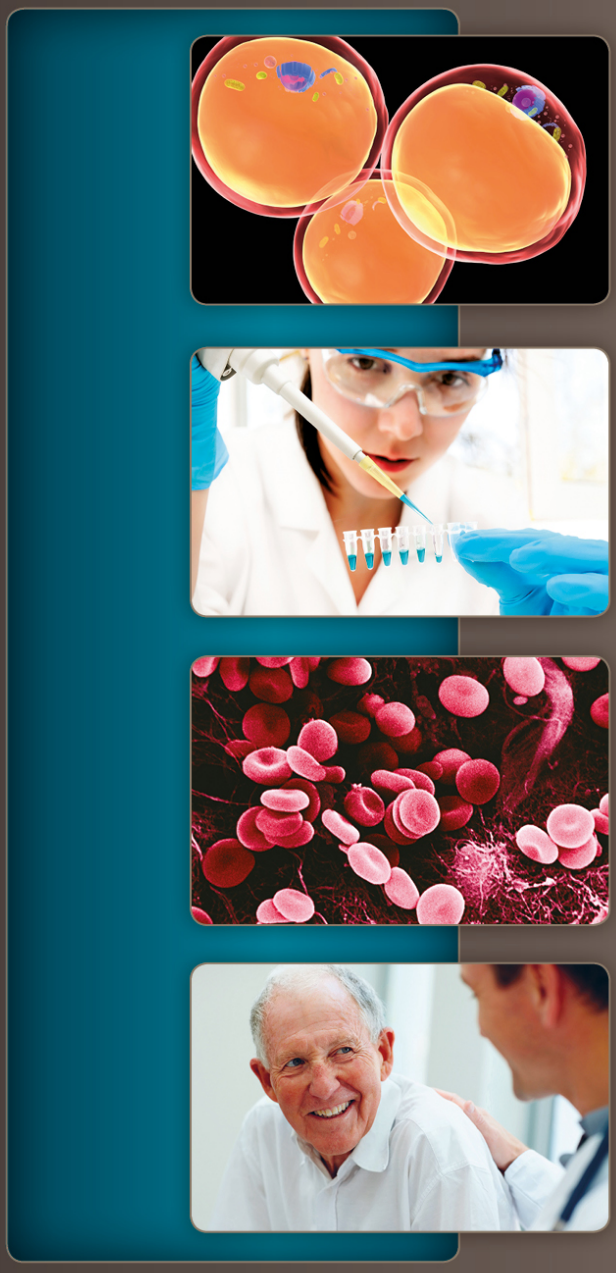
Fellowship Handbook for Applicants



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1 Introduction

MRC's fellowships support the development of talented individuals to strengthen the UK research base and enable the scientific community to respond effectively to current and future grand challenges in medical research.

The MRC has a leading national role in training researchers across a range of biomedical, clinical and health disciplines. At any one time, the MRC supports around 1,900 PhD students (including pre-doctoral fellows) and 200 post-doctoral fellows. Our aim is to:

- Train and develop the next generation of research leaders
- Support excellent individuals at critical points of their careers
- Help address national strategic research skills needs identified with partners

MRC fellowship awards are targeted to support talented individuals undertaking challenging projects in excellent research and training environments. As an MRC fellow, you can expect your university, MRC unit or institute to support your development in imaginative and effective ways.

This handbook covers areas which are specific to fellowships, but, where specifically indicated, please refer to the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders which covers areas applicable to both research and fellowship grants.

MRC fellowships support the following career stages:

Training Fellowships: Training and Consolidation:

- Clinical Research Training Fellowship

Transition to Independence:

- Career Development Award
- Clinician Scientist Fellowship

Transition to Leadership:

- Senior Clinical Fellowship
- Senior Non-Clinical Fellowship

Information about the suitability criteria for each scheme can be found on the Fellowships Page of the MRC website and in Annex 2.

2 How to apply

All applications must be submitted via the Joint Electronic Submission system Je-S.

When an application is submitted through Je-S it does not pass directly to the MRC, but to the research organisation's administration team who will then submit the proposal to the MRC.

All applications must be submitted through the lead research organisation where the fellow plans to undertake the fellowship, which in turn must be Je-S registered.

All applicants are strongly advised to contact the team responsible for proposal submissions at their research organisation to confirm how much time they will need to process the application and complete the submission process.

All applications must be submitted to the MRC via the UKRI Je-S system by 4pm on the advertised closing date. A list of current deadlines can be found at MRC Deadline Page. Applicants are advised to check the deadlines regularly as they may change.

Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

3 Who can apply

3.1 Applicants

MRC fellowships are personal awards for talented researchers to support key transition points in their careers. Many of today's leading biomedical and health researchers look back on their MRC fellowship as a significant stepping stone in developing their career.

We offer a range of fellowships to meet diverse needs, allowing training placements in the UK, abroad or in industry.

MRC Fellowships support:

- Individuals transitioning to the next level in their careers, normally through a change from an existing / current role
- Protected time to focus on your own research, shielded from other professional commitments. Clinicians can undertake clinical duties as part of their award
- Funding for a challenging research project **and** an ambitious programme of research training which offers accelerated personal and career development
- Progression towards fulfilling long term career goals, which includes an aspiration to strengthening the UK research base
- A clear commitment from the Research Organisation to supporting, developing and mentoring the fellow

The fellow must plan to be based at the lead organisation at which the award will be administered and all applicants are expected to demonstrate a commitment to strengthening the UK research base beyond the period of their fellowship. If the lead organisation changes once the application is submitted, the applicant should contact the MRC at fellows@mrc.ukri.org as soon as possible to discuss how they should proceed.

MRC is keen to support applicants returning to research following a career break or wishing to combine their training with domestic or professional clinical responsibilities. For further information, please see 4.11 ‘Equal opportunities’ and 4.12 ‘Part-time working’.

3.1.1 Responsibilities of the applicant

MRC expects all of the researchers it funds to adopt the highest achievable standards in the conduct of their research. This means exhibiting impeccable scientific integrity and following the principles of good research practice detailed in the MRC Good Research Practice Guidelines.

All researchers submitting a proposal to MRC must accept the UKRI Terms and Conditions of Research Council FEC Grants and MRC Terms and Conditions.

We also expect all stakeholders in fellowships to act in accordance to our Expectations of MRC Fellowships (Annex 1) and comply with the guidance in this handbook and the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders.

3.2 Research organisations

The lead organisation is responsible for administering the grant and must be one of the types of organisations listed below. The MRC are supportive of fellows who wish to spend

part of their fellowship carrying out research at a second academic centre, either within the UK or overseas, or with an industrial partner. See section 4.3 for further details.

- **Higher Education Institutions (including MRC University Units)**

All UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that receive grant funding from one of the UK higher education funding bodies are eligible to receive funds for research, postgraduate training and associated activities.

These bodies consist of Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DEL).

- **Independent Research Organisations**

A number of Independent Research organisations (IROs) are eligible to apply for funding. A full list of IROs, as well as the application process to become an IRO, can be found on the UKRI website. To submit a fellowship application an IRO must be eligible to apply for responsive mode funding. For MRC applications, IROs encompass NHS Trusts.

- **MRC Units and Institutes**

Applicants may apply for fellowships to be based at one of the MRC units or institutes if they are not currently employed by UKRI.

Applicants should justify their choice of host institution as part of their application.

Applicants currently employed by UKRI in one of MRC's units or institutes and proposing to hold their fellowship within the same MRC unit or institute, will only be considered under exceptional circumstances. Individuals in such cases are only eligible to apply if given prior written permission by MRC head office. Applications without prior approval will not be considered further. Permission must be sought by the unit Director (or a nominated deputy) on the applicant's behalf by emailing fellows@mrc.ukri.org at least two months prior to the submission deadline. The case for exception should:

- Demonstrate that a fellowship would lead to a substantial change in in the role of the applicant, with significant potential for research and career development.
- Confirm the source of funding for the applicant's current post within the unit. Permission to apply for a MRC fellowship will normally only be granted if the applicant's current post is supported by a grant or is a non-core funded supernumerary post (normally for at least twelve months).

3.2.1 Responsibilities of research organisations

By submitting a proposal to the MRC, a research organisation indicates their formal acceptance of the proposal, the UKRI Terms and Conditions, MRC additional terms and conditions (and any other terms and conditions specified in the award letter), and their approval of the salaries and resources sought.

Administrative authorities have responsibility for ensuring that the salaries and resources cited in the proposals are sufficient to undertake the proposed research, to attract sufficiently experienced and skilled staff, and represent good value for money. The salary requested should be in line with the level the research organisation would provide were the fellow appointed within their own pay structure.

Research organisations are expected to act in accordance with the Statement of Expectations in Annex 1.

4 Considerations before applying

4.1 Suitability criteria for fellowships

To be considered suitable, applicants must articulate why support via a fellowship is appropriate for their long term career goals and chosen career route[1] and clearly demonstrate that their skills and experience at the time of their application[2] match those of the relevant career stage in the applicant skills and experience table.

All applicants must familiarise themselves with the guidance for the relevant schemes before completing an application Annex 2 gives an overview of the schemes offered and their suitability requirements. Information relating to each of the fellowships can be found at http://www.mrc.ukri.org/skills-careers/fellowships/ and queries about any MRC fellowship scheme should be directed to fellows@mrc.ukri.org.

Where a proposal contains inter-disciplinary research applicants should consult the relevant Programme Manager via fellows@mrc.ukri.org well before the submission deadline to confirm whether the research fits within MRC's remit.

4.2 Time commitments during a fellowship

All MRC fellowship schemes provide competitive salaries, allowing fellows protected time to fully concentrate on their research, training and development and establish a competitive position by the end of the award. Fellows in receipt of full-time awards may spend up to six hours a week (pro-rated for part-time fellows) on other commitments (e.g. teaching, demonstrating, other funded projects) or undertaking up to two clinical sessions a week in the case of clinical fellows. Greater flexibility may be permitted during the second half of a fellowship. Existing fellows wishing to dedicate over six hours a week to non-fellowship activities must contact fellows@mrc.ukri.org to request permission prior to making any commitment.

4.3 Second centres and industrial partners

MRC is supportive of fellows who wish to spend part of their fellowship carrying out research at a second academic centre, either within the UK or overseas, or with an industrial partner to benefit from unique training opportunities. Applicants may spend up to twelve months of their award at a second organisation. Applicants intending to spend longer periods abroad should contact MRC at fellows@mrc.ukri.org before submitting a proposal.

All MRC fellowship schemes provide support for the costs incurred by undertaking training at a second centre, as detailed in section 5.1.11 of this guidance. All applications must be submitted via the lead host research organisation, which will remain responsible for the administration of the award during the fellow's period at another centre. Details of the second centre should be included in the Collaborations Explanation section of the proposal form and in the case for support (see sections 5.1.3 and 5.2.3 for details), and all associated costs clearly labelled as '2nd centre costs' in the Resources section of the form.

[1] this should be explained in the career intentions section, see section 5.1.3
[2] This should be made clear throughout the proposal and should particularly be addressed in the research experience section (see 5.1.2) and the applicant's CV.

4.4 Applicants for a Clinical Research Training Fellowship registered for a PhD or MD

Applicants who have already started a PhD, MD, or equivalent research degree may apply for a Clinical Research Training fellowship if at the proposed award start date they will not have been registered for that degree for more than twelve months (FTE). Applicants must clearly state any courses for which they are enrolled in their CV and should attach a letter of support from their research organisation's postgraduate office to confirm their registration date and the percentage of time for which they are registered. Such applicants may seek a standard three year award if they wish (pro-rated for part-time fellowships, minimum 50% of the fellow's time). The minimum period for a clinical research training fellowship is two years (pro-rata for part-time awards).

4.5 Applicants for fellowships expecting to receive their PhD

There are a number of early-career fellowships where applicants may apply without having their PhD, but where they expect to receive it by the time of their take-up of a fellowship. In this case, the prospective fellow must have obtained their PhD within the approved take-up period for the competition (advertised on the MRC website). Should the prospective fellow fail to obtain their PhD within the take-up period, the award will lapse; no extension will be permitted and they must re-apply. It is the responsibility of the fellow to provide documentary evidence of their PhD to the MRC at RFPD@mrc.ukri.org.

4.6 Overseas applicants

Post-doctoral applicants must comply with the Department of Employment requirements and hold a valid work permit where appropriate. Pre-doctoral fellowships are subject to the same eligibility criteria as MRC PhD studentships and therefore are only available to applicants currently resident in the UK who meet the residence eligibility criteria as set out in the student eligibility requirements page. Any queries should be addressed to the research organisation concerned.

4.7 Non-European Economic Area Applicants and Tier 1 Visas

Successful Career Development Award, Senior Non Clinical Fellowship, Clinician Scientist Fellowship and Senior Clinical Fellowship applicants who require a visa to work in the UK will be eligible to be considered under the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa route (https://www.gov.uk/tier-1-exceptional-talent). In line with the highly prestigious nature of the award, this visa route is designed for people who are internationally recognised as world leaders or potential world-leading talent in the fields of science and the arts and enables the holder to be both adaptable and flexible during their research in the UK.

The grant of any visa is always subject to the standard Home Office general grounds for refusal of a visa. UKRI is able to provide additional guidance regarding the appropriate evidence required to complete the visa application process under the Exceptional Talent visa. Please contact fellowtier1info@rcuk.ac.uk for further details.

4.8 Multiple submissions

Applicants may only have one fellowship proposal under consideration by MRC at any point, however, may simultaneously apply to other funders' fellowship schemes.

Applicants may not have simultaneous fellowship proposals under consideration by MRC and UKRI Fellowships schemes.

Where a proposal contains inter-disciplinary research, applicants should consult the relevant Programme Manager via fellows@mrc.ukri.org well before the submission deadline to confirm which Research Council is best placed to consider the proposal.

Applicants may simultaneously seek grant support for other projects, from MRC or other funders, while their MRC fellowship is under consideration, however;

- No part of the fellowship project may be under consideration as a grant proposal with any organisation while under consideration for an MRC fellowship award.
- Any funding secured from MRC or other funders must be in compliance with the MRC fellowship terms and conditions if awarded, including the time commitments conditions detailed in section 4.2.
- Applicants may not apply as principal investigator on a grant to MRC while simultaneously applying for an MRC fellowship (with the exception of Senior Fellowship applicants).

Any fellowship or grant submissions under consideration at the time of application should be noted in the 'Other Support' section of the proposal form.

4.9 Resubmissions

Resubmissions must include substantive amendments from the original submission, which should be detailed in the cover letter. Applicants may submit to any one MRC fellowship scheme only twice, regardless of the extent of changes to the proposal.

Applicants should allow at least a year between submissions whether applying to the same or a different scheme. Applicants wishing to reapply within a year should request permission from the relevant programme manager prior to resubmission by contacting fellows@mrc.ukri.org.

4.10 Equal opportunities

As part of the MRC's equal opportunities policy, equal consideration will be given to applicants returning to research following a career break and those with flexible working arrangements. There are no age limits for any of our schemes.

The MRC also sponsors at least two Daphne Jackson Fellows a year which are aimed at people returning to research after a career break and offer an opportunity to re-establish scientific credentials whilst retraining and renewing skills that are essential for a future career. For full details, please refer to the Daphne Jackson Trust webpage.

4.11 Part-time and flexible working

The MRC is very supportive of applicants wishing to combine their research training with domestic responsibilities or to meet professional clinical requirements (see below), and all our fellowship awards may therefore be held on a part-time basis or within flexible working arrangements. Normally at least 0.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) must be dedicated to the fellowship and the value of a part-time award may be requested on a pro rata basis (not exceeding the full-time equivalent of the Fellowship scheme period). For example, a three year fellowship on a full-time basis would equate to a 6 year

fellowship with the fellow working 0.5 FTE, but the value of the award would remain the same.

Examples of applicants who may need to apply for a part-time award to continue professional clinical responsibilities include GPs, midwives, nurses and members of allied health professions. Medically qualified applicants may not apply for a part-time award in order to continue higher specialist training during the fellowship. As part of a full-time award, medically qualified fellows may continue to undertake up to two clinical sessions a week. Applicants should contact the MRC Fellows team at fellows@mrc.ukri.org if their speciality would require a greater time commitment to clinical duties.

5 The application

The application has a number of components; the Je-S electronic proposal form, mandatory attachments, and optional attachments as listed below.

The Je-S electronic proposal form and the documents listed below are mandatory

- CV
- List of Publications
- Case for Support
- Justification of Resources
- Pathways to Impact
- Data Management Plan
- Head of Department Statement

The following types of attachment should be included if relevant:

- Letters of Support
- Covering Letter
- MICA Form
- Heads of Terms

Guidance is provided on each of these attachment types in section 5.2. All attachments should be completed in 11 point Arial typeface. Applications will not be accepted where smaller typefaces or narrow versions of the typeface have been used.

Further information on the common reasons for applications being returned to research offices can be found on the MRC website, funding guidance for applicants.

5.1 The Je-S proposal form

5.1.1 Project details

Details of the lead research organisation, the project title, start date and duration should be entered on this page. Applicants may also enter their own reference number for ease of grants management.

Only one research organisation may be entered in this section. If the proposal involves a second academic/industrial/overseas centre, details should be entered in the Collaborations Explanation section of the form and in the research environment overview in the case for support (see sections 5.1.3 and 5.2.3). Further details may also be included in the mentors' section of the form, or in the Project Partners section if they will be making a financial or in-kind contribution to the project. (see sections 5.1.17 and 5.1.13).

The project title should be no more than 150 characters and reflect the aim of the project.

The start date should be realistic and would normally be between one and six months after the date of the decision making meeting. The dates of all forthcoming panel meetings are available on the MRC's deadlines page.

5.1.2 Fellow details

The fellow's salary is awarded as a directly incurred cost as all MRC fellowship schemes provide support for 100% of the fellow's contracted working time. Fellows are able to dedicate six hours a week to other activities (or undertake two clinical sessions a week in the case of clinical fellows) as part of a full-time award. The salary requested should be in line with the level the research organisation would provide were the fellow appointed within their own pay structure. Salaries for pre-doctoral fellowship applicants will be paid up to, but not including NHS consultant level and should be appropriate for a training fellowship.

The total salary requested should be calculated to include provision for anticipated salary increments and promotions, such that the salary at the end of the award is in line with the research organisation's career structure for a researcher with equivalent experience. Salary increments should exclude indexation as this is calculated post-award. Once the grant is awarded **no** additional requests can be made for supplementary salary costs.

The **Qualifications and Experience** section must be completed and should include any relevant qualifications, the type and duration of any fellowships previously or currently held, and any research degrees (e.g. MPhil/MD/PhD) obtained or for which the applicant is already registered. Clinical Research Training Fellowship applicants must indicate if they are already registered for a research degree, including the type of degree, registration date and percentage of time dedicated if registered part-time in order to demonstrate they meet the criteria detailed in section 4.4. Applicants already registered for a degree must include a letter from their postgraduate research office confirming the date and terms of registration which should be attached to the application as a letter of support.

In the **Research Experience** section, applicants should specify the post-doc research experience they have had to date, clearly demonstrating how their research experience matches that of the relevant career stage in the applicant skills and experience table.

Applicant employment history should not be entered here, but should be entered in a CV attachment instead (see section 5.2.1).

5.1.3 Objectives

The Objectives section comprises three sub-sections; **Objectives**, **Career Intentions**, and **Collaborations Explanation**. The sections have character limits of 4000, 4000 and 2000, respectively, including spaces and returns.

The **Objectives** section should summarise the project's aims and may also illustrate links with the Career Intentions and the Technical Summary sections.

Applicants should indicate the reasons for applying for the fellowship in the **Career Intentions** section (see MRC vision for fellowship support) and outline their short- and long-term research and career intentions. In the case of medically qualified applicants this section should include details of how they will balance their research and clinical commitments and plans for the completion of specialist training. Applicants should detail how they meet the skills and experience required for a given scheme throughout the proposal and should particularly be addressed in the **Research Experience** section (see 5.1.2) and the applicant's **CV**,

The **Collaborations Explanation** section should highlight any significant national and international collaborations, both commercial and academic. Plans to spend time at a second academic organisation or industrial partner should be outlined in this section. A letter of support from each collaborator indicating their willingness to support the project in the manner described in this section must be submitted with the application. Collaborators' CVs are not required and should not be uploaded.

5.1.4 Summary and technical summary

Sharing information and knowledge about MRC's research portfolio is central to the Council's mission and consequently the Summary and Technical Summary of MRC awards are published. During the preparation of these sections, applicants should bear in mind that they will subsequently be publicly available, along with the applicant's name and institution, if the application is successful.

The **Summary** section should be used to provide a plain English summary of the research proposed in language that can be understood by a non-academic audience, explaining the context of the research, its aims and objectives, and its potential applications and benefits. The section is limited to 4000 characters, including spaces.

The **Technical Summary** should comprise a scientific abstract of the proposed research, detailing the aims, objectives, methodology, scientific and medical opportunities of the study. The section is limited to 2000 characters, including spaces and returns.

5.1.5 Academic beneficiaries

This section should summarise how the proposed research will contribute to knowledge, both within the UK and globally. This should include how the research will benefit other researchers in the field, identify academic beneficiaries in other disciplines and outline how the results of the proposed research will be disseminated to these beneficiaries. The section is limited to 4000 characters, including spaces and returns.

5.1.6 Communications plan

Plans should be outlined for engagement, communication about the research and dissemination of its outcomes with the research community and, where appropriate, with potentially interested wider audiences. The MRC attaches great importance to the communication of research findings both within and beyond the academic community. The section is limited to 4000 characters, including spaces and returns.

5.1.7 Impact summary

The summary should address the following two questions:

Who will benefit from this research? Summarise who is likely to be interested in or to benefit from the proposed research, both directly and indirectly. It may be useful to think of beneficiaries as 'users' of the research outputs, both immediately and in the longer term. Beneficiaries must consist of a wider group than that of the investigators' immediate professional circle carrying out similar research, and should include any:

- Commercial private sector beneficiaries

- Policy-makers within international, national, local or devolved government, government agencies or regulators who would benefit from this research
- Beneficiaries within the public sector or third sector, including museums, galleries and charities
- Beneficiaries within the wider public

How will they benefit from this research? Describe the relevance of the research to these beneficiaries, identifying the potential for impacts arising from the proposed work. Consider how the research has the potential to contribute to the nation's health, wealth or culture, for example:

- Fostering global economic performance, and specifically the economic competitiveness of the UK
- Increasing the effectiveness of public services and policy
- Enhancing quality of life, health and creative output
- The likely potential impacts and their importance
- Realistic timescales for the benefits to be realised
- Research and professional skills staff on the project will develop

The section is limited to 4000 characters, including spaces and returns.

5.1.8 Other support

List any funding received in the last three years, including details of the project title, funder, amount, duration and whether the funding has been awarded or is under consideration. Only funding secured by the applicant as principal or co-investigator should be listed; supervisors and sponsors awards should not be included.

Fellowship applications may be considered simultaneously by certain funders. Please refer to section 4.8 for details.

Contributions from project partners should not be entered here. See section 5.1.13 for guidance on project partners.

5.1.9 Related proposals

If the proposal is a continuation or resubmission of a previous application, provide details of the previous submission in this section. For resubmissions a brief (<100 characters) reason for resubmitting the proposal may be included. A more detailed description of the amendments since the original submission may be included in the cover letter. Section 4.9 summarises the eligibility considerations relating to resubmissions.

5.1.10 Staff

Co-investigators are not permitted in fellowships applications. Where required (and if the terms of the fellowship allow) support for researchers, technicians and other staff may be requested. Support for students may not be requested.

Clinical Research Training Fellowship applicants should not request staff costs. In exceptional circumstances where the delivery of the project requires the incurrence of additional staff costs, these must be requested within the £20,000 per annum Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) and the need for additional staff must be fully detailed in the justification of resources (section 5.2.4).

The salary requested for each member of staff should reflect the full anticipated cost during the lifetime of the award, including any anticipated promotions and salary increments to ensure that the costs requested are as accurate as possible. Indexation should not be included as this is calculated post-award. Once the grant is awarded, no additional requests can be made for supplementary salary costs. CVs should be attached to the application for any named researchers; named technicians and other staff do not need to provide a CV.

Sponsors and supervisors are not expected to request funds to support their time as part of a post-doctoral fellow's application. In exceptional circumstances this may be appropriate; if requested, their contribution to the project should be detailed in the justification of resources and the request should not exceed 5% of their time (or a total of 5% FTE across all sponsor/supervisors if more than one is named). The associated cost should be entered as a directly allocated researcher cost. Clinical Research Training Fellowship applicants may request costs to support supervisors' time or PhD fees but not both. In either case the request must be within the £20,000 per annum limit (see section 5.1.11.2 for details).

Staff may be entered as directly incurred and directly allocated. The salary of any staff whose contribution to the project can be supported by an auditable record for the duration of the fellowship should be requested as directly incurred. Any directly incurred staff (whether full or part-time) who are not contracted to work 100% of their time on the fellowship project will be required to maintain timesheets or project records for auditing purposes. Funding for staff whose time will not be exclusively dedicated to the project and whose contribution will not be supported by an auditable record should be entered as directly allocated.

Fellows planning to spend time at a second centre overseas may request support for 100% of the cost associated with any overseas staff salaries. Please refer to section 3.3 of the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders and contact RFPD@mrc.ukri.org for advice on requesting exceptional costs.

5.1.11 Resources

5.1.11.1 Full Economic Costing for Fellowships

All research grant proposals and post-doctoral fellowship applications are costed on the basis of Full Economic Costs (FEC), with the exception of pre-doctoral Clinical Research Training Fellowships (see Section 5.1.11.2). 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. Fellows planning to spend time at a second centre overseas may request support for 100% of the costs associated with any overseas research and staff salaries. Please refer to section 3.3 of the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders and contact RFPD@mrc.ukri.org for advice on requesting exceptional costs.

Universities and other Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) will use Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) methodology to calculate FEC. Other research organisations can apply for full economic costs provided that the methodology they adopt has been validated by the Research Councils as appropriate and robust.

5.1.11.2 Pre-doctoral Clinical Research Training Fellowships

Pre-doctoral Clinical Research Training Fellowships comprise support for the fellow's salary plus funding of up to £20,000 per annum. This may be used to support the costs of the project, including consumables, travel costs, and PhD fees. Since April 2013, publication costs may not be requested.

Pre-doctoral fellowships are not subject to Full Economic Costing (FEC). Estates and Indirect Costs are therefore not payable, and awards are made at 100% of the requested funding.

Certain costs may be requested in addition to the £20,000 per annum:

- the costs incurred by undertaking training at an overseas centre/second UK centre/industry placement (see section 4.3).
- the purchase and maintenance costs of animals. Any other related costs, such as project license costs, consumables, or other experimental costs must be requested within the £20,000 per annum limit.
- costs for healthy volunteer studies not supported by local clinical research networks.

Only these costs can be applied for above the £20,000 per annum limit. Proposals requesting costs outside these limits will not be considered.

There is no limit to the funding that can be requested to meet these costs, but requests should be reasonable and explained in the justification of resources attachment. The former type should be clearly noted as '2nd centre costs' in the Resources section of the application form.

5.1.11.3 Travel and subsistence

Funds for travel and subsistence for the fellow and any staff working on the project, including any overseas costs, should be entered in this section. The cost and destination of each travel item should be entered in the form and should be justified in the Justification of Resources. All costs associated with placements at an overseas centre, second UK research organisation or industry partner should be labelled '2nd centre cost' within the description in the Destination and Purpose field.

All travel must occur between the start and end date of the award and should be costed by the most suitable and economical means at current prices with no allowance for inflation. Subsistence rates, both UK and overseas, should be those applicable within the host research organisation.

If the project includes a period overseas of six months or more, costs for fares, baggage, medical insurance and rent of reasonable accommodation should be included and an overseas living allowance may be requested. In general, a request of up to 11% of the Fellow's salary is considered a reasonable contribution towards the cost of living overseas. Travel costs for a spouse and/or children may be requested if the fellow intends to spend over six months abroad and their family will accompany them for the whole period.

5.1.11.4 Equipment

Any item over £10,000 (including VAT) should be requested as an equipment cost. Please refer to the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders for full details about what should be included in this section.

5.1.11.5 Other directly incurred and directly allocated costs

Any item less that £10,000 (including VAT) is classed as a consumable. Consumables explicitly identifiable as arising from the conduct of a project should be entered as directly incurred other costs. Any costs arising from resources used by the project that are shared by other activities should be entered as directly allocated other costs.

Applicants may no longer request funds for publication costs. These are now funded by UKRI by means of a block grant to eligible research organisations. Please refer to section 3.7 of the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders for further information.

NHS costs should be entered as directly incurred other costs. See section 3.5 of the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders for further details.

If the fellow plans to undertake a placement at an overseas centre, second UK research organisation or industrial partner, any associated costs should be labeled as '2nd centre costs' in the Description field. If the Fellow plans to spend six months or more at an overseas research organisation, the associated research costs may be requested and in most cases will be paid at 100%. Please refer to section 3.2.5 of the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders and contact RFPD@mrc.ukri.org for advice on requesting exceptional costs.

5.1.11.6 Research facilities / existing equipment

This section should identify any funds charged to the project to access shared research facilities and equipment. Items entered under this heading will require their use, but not the associated cost, to be justified in the justification of resources (see section 5.2.4).

5.1.11.7 Animal costs

The costs associated with the purchase, breeding and maintenance of each species of animal used should be entered in this section. The Animal Research and Animal Species sections of the form must be completed if the proposal uses animals (see section 5.1.16).

5.1.11.8 Research council facilities

This section should be completed if the project requires access to facilities supported by the Research Councils. A drop-down list of facilities is included in the Je-S form. The applicant should confirm prior to submitting the proposal that the establishment is able to provide the required facilities.

5.1.11.9 Estates and indirect costs

Estates and indirect costs will be calculated by the research organisation and the agreed rates can be obtained from their finance department or research office. The costs should

be entered as single annual figures (£ total pa for the project) and do not need to be justified in the justification of resources.

Those research organisations which have not developed their own rates should use the default rates which can be found at:
http://www.hefce.ac.uk/funding/finsustain/trac/default/.

Estate costs may include building and premises costs, basic services and utilities, lease/rent rates, insurance, cleaning/porters/security/safety costs, staff facilities, and any clerical staff and equipment maintenance not already included as either a directly incurred or directly allocated cost.

Indirect costs are non-specific costs charged across all projects based on estimates that are not otherwise included as directly allocated costs. They may include general office and basic laboratory consumables, library services/learning resources, typing/secretarial support, finance, personnel, public relations and departmental services, central and distributed computing and the cost of capital employed (including redundancy). The costs of ethics reviews and infrastructure technicians can be included under this heading.

Estates and indirect costs at second centres

If the fellow plans to spend time during their fellowship at a second UK centre, overseas, or undertaking an industrial placement estates and indirect costs will continue to be payable to the lead research organisation if this period is less than six months (per absence).

For a period of six months or more, indirect costs will continue to be paid to the lead research organisation. Estates costs will not be payable to the lead research organisation for the period of the fellow's placement, however a contribution to the second centre's costs may be requested as described below, and the total figure for estates costs requested should be adjusted accordingly. The MRC will not make direct payments to the second centre, either in the UK or overseas; this must be arranged through the lead research organisation.

If the fellow plans to spend six months or more at a second UK research organisation, the lead research organisation should request estates costs on behalf of the second centre for the duration of the fellow's training period there at the second centre's agreed rates for estate costs.

If the fellow plans to spend six months or more at an overseas centre a contribution to the centre's estates and indirect costs can be requested as directly incurred other costs. These can be requested at 100% (contact RFPD@mrc.ukri.org for advice on requesting exceptional costs). The estates and indirect costs associated with overseas locally employed research staff in developing countries may also be requested as other directly incurred costs at 100%.

5.1.12 Project partners

Details of any collaborating researchers or organisations (other than the lead research organisation) that will make specific contributions to the project should be listed in this section. The organisations may be from the UK or overseas, and the contributions may

be financial or in-kind. In-kind contributions may include staff time, access to equipment, sites or facilities, or the provision of data, software or materials. The financial value of the contribution should be included on the Je-S form. Where the input is important to the project but has no significant financial value, a nominal sum of £1 may be entered as the value of the contribution.

Each project partner should provide a letter of support which must be on headed paper, dated and signed and which should confirm the organisation's commitment to the proposed project, detail the nature of the collaboration and the value of the project partner's contribution, and identify the relevance and possible benefits of the proposed work to the project partner.

Where the project partner (whether an individual or organisation) is responsible for recruitment of people as research participants and/or providing human tissue, then list them as a project partner on the proposal form and enter a nominal sum of £1 for the value of the contribution. Details should be included in the case for support and a letter of support must be attached to the application which includes the following information:

- That the project 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

Where the project partner is industrial, applicants must follow the guidance relating to MRC Industrial Collaborative Awards (MICAs) as outlined in section 5.2.10 and on the MICA section of the website, including a MICA form and a signed Heads of Terms with the application.

5.1.13 Sponsors

The Sponsors section must be completed for **all** fellowship applications.

In the case of pre-doctoral fellowships this section should be completed by the applicant's supervisor(s) and each supervisor must also complete the supervisor CV template and attach this to the application.

For post-doctoral fellowships this section should be completed by at least one senior member of the department who has academic responsibility for the fellow. In this case the sponsor is not expected to fulfil a supervisory role during the award, but act as a supporter for the application. The sponsor should have expertise in the scientific area of the application and will act as guarantor for the quality of the proposed research, suitability of the candidate and level of training and development the department will provide.

An entry should be included for each sponsor, detailing:

- The sponsor's name
- In what capacity they have known the applicant (250 character limit)
- How long they have known the applicant
- Their views on the applicant's scientific ability and suitability for the fellowship scheme for which they are applying (3000 character limit)

- The number of academic staff in the proposed department.
- Details of the support, training and skills that the department will provide, including an overview of how the candidate's research area fits within the department's priorities (4000 character limit)

All sponsors can be set up as an Editor with View and Edit Rights so they can complete their own details if required. The applicant should ensure sufficient time is allowed for the sponsor(s) to complete their parts of the form before the submission deadline.

5.1.14 Classifications

The classification sub-sections should be completed to indicate the type of fellowship application, the applicant's clinical speciality and sub-specialty (non-clinicians should select 'Not Applicable'), whether the project involves the development of technology for clinical use, the research setting, and whether the project will use human biological samples or stem cells.

5.1.15 Ethical information

The Ethical Information sub-sections should be completed to give details of any human participation, research using animals, genetic and biological risk, and ethical committee approvals required. Section 5 of the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders provides further guidance on this section of the Je-S form.

Applications that include the use of animals should be prepared after careful consultation of Section 4 of the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders to understand the information that must be included when describing the experimental design and planned analyses.

Applicants for clinical fellowship schemes must also complete the 'Honorary Clinical Contract and Clinical Details' section.

- Applicants who are not clinically qualified should answer 'No' to the question 'Would an Honorary Clinical Contract be sought?' and enter 'NA' or '0' in the subsequent required fields.
- Clinically qualified applicants (including doctors, nurses, midwives, and allied health professionals) should indicate what level of HCC they will seek or their reasons for not seeking one, using the fields to outline how they plan to maintain their clinical skills during the tenure of the award. Applicants are also required to detail the number of 'Clinical Sessions/Programme Activities' they are planning to undertake per week during the duration of the Fellowship, the percentage of their time they propose to spend on clinical work and what percentage of that time will be directly relevant to their research project. As described in section 4.2, clinical applicants are able to spend up to 2 sessions a week on clinical duties as part of a full-time award.

Applicants for the Career Development Award or Senior Non-clinical fellowship schemes are not required to complete the HCC section and it is not included in the forms for these schemes.

5.1.16 Mentors

A mentor is someone who provides independent career advice and is distinct from a sponsor or supervisor. Where a mentor is listed on the application a letter of support should be included detailing the support they will provide. A mentor's time cannot be included in the costings for the proposal.

5.1.17 Reviewers

Up to three independent reviewers can be nominated in this section. Nominated reviewers should be experts in the research field and/or be able to provide an expert view on the value and benefits of the research proposal to users. Reviewers should not be nominated from research organisations connected to the proposal or where any possible conflict of interest may arise.

5.2 Attachments

All attachments should be completed in 11 point Arial typeface, with a minimum of 2cm margins. Applications will not be accepted where smaller or narrow typefaces have been used.

5.2.1 CV

The applicant and any named researchers should submit a CV. Applicants should use the CV template available here. No other CVs should be submitted unless you are applying for a Clinical Research Training Fellowship (CRTF), in which case the CRTF supervisor CV template should be completed also. CVs may be a maximum of two sides of A4.

Details of sponsors or supervisors should be included in the Sponsors' section of the form and they should not submit a CV except if applying to the Clinical Research Training Fellowship (as detailed above) or in exceptional cases where salary support is requested. In this case they should complete the Sponsors' section of the form and attach a CV.

The CV should outline the employment history. It should state the applicant's current research organisation and salary and include details of any career breaks, specifying the duration of any breaks in months. A summary should be given of formal training and qualifications, including any training and qualification being undertaken at the time of submission, and any prizes and memberships of professional bodies should be noted.

Applicants for pre-doctoral fellowships who are registered for a higher degree must provide a letter from their postgraduate office confirming their registration date and the percentage of time for which they are registered.

5.2.2 List of publications

The applicant's recent publications should be included as a separate 'List of Publications' attachment, which may be a maximum of 1 page of A4.

The MRC welcomes the inclusion of preprints in publication lists. For more information please see our website 'MRC supports preprints'.

5.2.3 Case for support

The Case for Support should summarise:

- Importance: explain the need for research in this area and the rationale for the particular lines of research planned.
- Research Plan: describe the aims and objectives of the proposed research. Give details of the general experimental approaches, study designs, and techniques you will use. It is not necessary to describe each experiment, but enough detail must be given to show why the research is likely to be competitive in its field.
    - Highlight plans which are particularly original or unique.
    - Describe all human studies and animal experiments.
    - Explain how new techniques or particularly difficult or risky studies will be tackled, and outline alternative approaches should these fail.
    - Identify where access to facilities or resources will be required. Give sufficient detail to demonstrate the benefit to the project.
- Research Environment and Development Opportunities: detail the specific training and scientific considerations which led to the choice of proposed host department (up to one page). Describe the special features/facilities of the research training environment in the host institution/s. If this is a department where the fellow has been based for a year or more, include details of the reasons for remaining. If the proposal involves a clinical trial please refer specifically to the training arrangements and benefits available/in place in the proposed department.
- Include any details of work that will take place as part of the proposed fellowship at a second UK or overseas centre.
- Key references must be included in the case for support within the specified page limit and may not be uploaded as a separate list of publications attachment. Citations must be in 11 point Arial font and include sufficient information for reviewers to easily locate the articles listed (e.g. First author name et al, Title, Journal. Year, Volume, Pages.) but there is no house style which needs to be followed.

The page limits for the case for support for each fellowship type are as follows:

Career stage	Scheme	Maximum length (A4) pages)
Training Fellowships: Training and Consolidation	Clinical Research Training Fellowship (CRTF)	4
Transition to Independence	Career Development Award (CDA)	6
Transition to Independence	Clinician Scientist Fellowship (CSF)	5
Transition to Leadership	Senior Clinical Fellowship (SCF)	8
Transition to Leadership	Senior Non-Clinical Fellowship (SNCF)	12

In general, for Training and Consolidation and Transition to Independence fellowships, approximately 25% of the case for support should explain the importance of the project and detail preliminary data, 50% should outline the research plan, and 25% should describe the research environment, development opportunities and key references. For Transition to Leadership fellows, a larger proportion of the case for support should be dedicated to describing the research plan.

5.2.3.1 Case for support: Reproducibility and statistical design annex

A one page annex may be included in addition to the page limits above to provide additional detail of the reproducibility and statistical design aspects of the proposal (beyond that contained in the main case for support), or if the project includes a clinical trial to provide detail on the trial. This must be included as a clearly marked annex at the end of the main case for support, entitled '*Reproducibility and statistical design'* annex.

The use of this annex is **strongly advised** where the proposal includes a clinical trial or the use of animals and/or human participants, or where the methodology/experimental design proposed is particularly novel. All applicants are encouraged to use this annex to provide any important information relating to reproducibility, methodology and statistical

and experimental design. Please note that you are not required to duplicate information presented elsewhere in the application.

In many instances this section may include statistical power calculations based on justifiable and explicit assumptions about the anticipated size and variability of the experimental effects. If statistical power calculations are not given, applicants should provide a principled explanation of the choice of numbers. Power calculations can be used to calculate the minimum sample size required so that one can be reasonably likely to detect an effect of a given size, or to calculate the minimum effect size that is likely to be detected in a study using a given sample size. In general, explanations based solely in terms of 'usual practice' will not be considered adequate. An overview of the planned statistical analyses and their relation to the choice of sample size should be included. Where appropriate, the use of figures, tables and/or diagrams is encouraged.

This annex is solely for the provision of information pertaining to the clinical trial or methodology and experimental design of the proposed research and is not to be used as a continuation of the main body of the case for support. It may not exceed one page in length and standard formatting guidance applies. Applications not adhering to these conditions will be returned unprocessed

Examples of areas this annex should address are outlined in Annex 3.

5.2.4 Justification of resources

Cross Council guidance on how to write a justification of resources (JoR) is available on the Je-S Help Pages or in section 2.2.4 of the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders.

The role of the JoR is to aid reviewers when assessing proposals so that they can make an informed judgement on whether the resources requested are appropriate for the research proposed. All items requested in the proposal need to be justified in the JoR. The JoR is a mandatory attachment and may be no more than two sides of A4 in 11 point Arial typeface.

5.2.5 Pathways to impact

This is a mandatory attachment and may be up to two sides of A4 in length. Activities which will promote potential economic and societal benefits should be described, along with specific actions that will be taken to ensure that the potential beneficiaries identified in the Impact Summary (section 5.1.7) have the opportunity to benefit from the research.

More detailed guidance is available in section 2.2.5 of the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders.

5.2.6 Data management plan

The Data Management Plan (DMP) is a mandatory attachment and should be submitted on the DMP template available at https://mrc.ukri.org/documents/doc/data-management-plan-template/.The DMP should demonstrate how the applicant will meet, or already meets their responsibilities for research data quality. It should refer to any

institutional and study data policies, systems and procedures and be regularly reviewed throughout the research cycle.

The maximum length is three sides of A4, though for less complex research the DMP may be as little as a quarter of a page of A4. If any section is not relevant to the proposal 'not applicable' should be entered. More detailed guidance is available in section 2.2.8 of the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders.

5.2.7 Head of Department's supporting statement

This is a mandatory attachment and must be from the Head of the Department which will host the fellow. In this statement the Head of Department should summarise:

- how long they have known the applicant
- the applicant's suitability for an MRC fellowship
- the suitability of the project for the research training and career development of the candidate
- why the centre is appropriate for the work proposed, including the commitments the department will make to mentor and support the fellow

5.2.8 Letters of support

All letters of support should be dated, signed and on headed note paper, and a maximum of two sides of A4. The following types of letters of support may be submitted:

Mentor's supporting statement: If a mentor is included on your application form a letter of Support from the mentor must be attached detailing the mentoring arrangements.

Previous Head of Department's supporting statement: If you have recently moved department or plan to undertake your fellowship at a different department to your current affiliation, an additional supporting statement should be uploaded from your previous/current Head of Department.

Second centre's supporting statement: A supporting statement from the industrial partner or second research organisation Head of Department should be included if a second centre is involved in the fellowship.

Project partners and collaborators' supporting statements: Project partners should provide a letter of support as detailed in section 5.1.13 of this guidance. Collaborators may provide letters of support to indicate the time and resources they are prepared to commit where these are critical to the project. If a partner or collaborator will be providing clinical samples for the project the letter should confirm their willingness to provide the samples and that they have the appropriate ethical approval to cover the proposed research (see section 5.1.13).

Degree registration: Applicants for pre-doctoral fellowships who are registered for a higher degree must provide a letter from their postgraduate office confirming their registration date and the percentage of time for which they are registered.

Support for NHS costs: Projects which will incur NHS costs should attach a letter of support from the relevant Health Trust and also attach a NHS Costs Proforma. See section 3.5 of the Guidance for Applicants and Award Holders for full details.

5.2.9 Cover letter

A covering letter may be included as part of an application. It should be no more than 2 x A4 pages using 11 point Arial. The covering letter may be used to cover details such as Conflicts of Interest, names of conflicted experts who should not be used as referees and if the application is a resubmission, details of how this application differs from that submitted previously. It MUST NOT be used to cover anything which should be included in the Proposal Form, Case for Support or other required attachments.

5.2.10 MRC Industrial Collaboration Agreement (MICA) forms and Heads of Terms

Any research proposal involving a collaboration with one or more industrial partners (contributing either in cash or in kind) is handled by MRC as a MICA. MICA is not a scheme in itself, but a mechanism to support the establishment of an agreement between academic and industry research partners.

Each proposal that involves such industrial collaboration will need to include a MICA form and also a Heads of Terms, which will need to be signed by each collaborator to confirm that they are willing to collaborate for the duration of the study. See the MICA section of the MRC website for further guidance relating to these attachments.

6 Protection of confidentiality

The MRC recognises that applicants are required to submit personal and confidential material as part of their proposal. Consequently the MRC's assessment is confidential to ensure that sensitive information provided either in the application, or at another stage of the peer review process is protected appropriately and to ensure the free and frank exchange of views at the heart of scientific peer review. The MRC expects that all applicants extend a similar duty of confidence to any confidential or sensitive material provided to them by the MRC.

The MRC also uses the Government Protective Marking scheme on all documents and emails when appropriate. The purpose is to highlight the 'value' of potentially sensitive data/information to those who receive material from the MRC and to provide a common baseline for safeguarding information. Details are available on the MRC Protective Marking Scheme page.

7 Open source software

The Government policy on Open Source Software (OSS) is available from the e-Government Unit of the Cabinet Office. Further information is available from The Open Source Initiative.

Publicly funded R&D projects which aim to produce software outputs should specify a proposed software exploitation route at the start of the project. At the completion of a project, the software should be exploited either commercially or within an academic community or as OSS. Note that the policy on exploiting R&D software does not apply to software developed in the area of defence, national security or law enforcement. It also does not apply to software developed by Trading Funds.

8 Post award considerations

8.1 Resources and opportunities

Any enquiries relating to fellowships may be directed to fellows@mrc.ukri.org.

8.1.1 AMS mentorship scheme

Early Career and Transition to Independence MRC fellows are eligible to join the Academy of Medical Sciences (AMS) established mentorship scheme. This unique programme provides one-to-one mentoring by Academy fellows and offers a range of career development opportunities for biomedical researchers across the career grades. Further details, including events and workshops hosted by the Academy, can be found at http://www.acmedsci.ac.uk/careers/mentoring-and-careers/. All queries concerning the scheme should be directed to mentoring@acmedsci.ac.uk.

8.1.2 Applying / working on other grants

In the first half of their fellowship, non-clinical fellows can work as co-investigators or researchers on other grants as long as the total time dedicated to non-fellowship activities (other projects, teaching etc.) is less than six hours a week for full-time fellows (pro rata for part-time fellows) and it does not compromise their fellowship project and training. Clinical fellows may undertake two clinical sessions a week as part of a full-time award, and the total time dedicated to non-fellowship activities including clinical sessions must be less than 20%. If a fellow in the second half of their fellowship wishes to dedicate more time to such non-fellowship activities than the above limits permit, they should contact fellows@mrc.ukri.org to request permission prior to making any commitment.

8.2 Post-award amendments

Enquiries regarding the following should be sent to PAA@mrc.ukri.org. The MRC website guidance on managing your award should be consulted for further information.

8.2.1 Supplementary salary costs

8.2.1.1 Maternity / Paternity / Adoption / Parental leave pay

Fellows (and staff funded 100% of their contracted time by the grant) are entitled to the same maternity, paternity, adoption and parental leave pay as any other employee at the research organisation at which they are employed and MRC will meet any additional costs incurred as a result. See GC9 of the UKRI Grant Terms and Conditions.

8.2.1.2 Promotions and pay rises

The salary requested for each member of staff at the time of application should reflect the full anticipated cost during the lifetime of the award, including any anticipated promotions and salary increments. It is the fellow's and Research Organisation's joint responsibility to ensure that the costs requested are as accurate as possible. Once the grant is awarded, additional requests for supplementary salary costs will not be considered.

8.2.2 Extensions

8.2.2.1 Maternity / Paternity / Adoption / Parental extensions

Fellows requiring leave for any of the above reasons should inform MRC as soon as they know the date on which the leave will commence. If there are no other staff funded under the grant, the fellow should raise a grant maintenance request via Je-S for the grant to be suspended. When the fellow returns from their leave, they should inform MRC by submitting a further grant maintenance request to initiate the reactivation and extension of the award. Payments will then recommence and the grant will be extended by the period for which leave was taken.

While a grant is suspended no payments will be made to the research organisation and no expenditure should be incurred in respect to the grant during this period; therefore suspension is only possible if alternative arrangements are made for other staff funded by the grant for the duration of the suspension.

8.2.2.2 Sick leave

For periods of absence by the fellow (or staff funded 100% of their contracted time by the grant) for 3 months or longer, an extension can be requested via a grant maintenance request on Je-S.

8.2.2.3 Non-recruitment of staff

An extension may be requested to compensate for delays in the recruitment of staff employed on the grant. A Grant Maintenance request should be raised in Je-S, and details should be included to demonstrate the impact of the delays on the project and that the Fellow has attempted to mitigate their impact as far as possible.

8.2.2.4 Exceptional circumstances

Extensions can be requested for exceptional unforeseen delays. A grant maintenance request should be raised via Je-S, detailing the impact of the delays on the project and the steps taken to mitigate the delays. Before submitting an exceptional extension fellows should contact MRC at PAA@mrc.ukri.org to discuss their circumstances.

8.2.3 Transfers

If a fellow wishes to transfer to another research organisation they should notify MRC at fellows@mrc.ukri.org to discuss the facilities and support the new research organisation will offer with the relevant Programme Manager. For early-career fellowships, assurance will be required that adequate supervision is in place.

If the organisation the fellow is transferring to is eligible to hold MRC grants and is able to provide a suitable environment a grant maintenance request should be submitted via Je-S. The first research organisation will reconcile the grant up to the point of transfer and the remaining funds will be transferred as a new award to the second research organisation, which will then need to accept the award in the normal way. Once the grant has transferred the fellow should check Je-S to confirm that the end date has been extended to reflect any delays caused by this process.

Annex 1: UKRI Statement of Expectations for Research Fellowships and Future Research Leaders

UKRI Research Councils fund fellowships and future research leaders to:

- attract excellent researchers into excellent UK research environments
- develop research leaders for the future UK national capability
- drive forward innovative areas of research

UKRI want to ensure that the individuals funded as fellows or future research leaders are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly complex, collaborative, interdisciplinary, mobile, global research environment.

For the purpose of this statement the term 'fellow' includes individuals funded through fellowships or future research leaders grants.

Expectations of Research Organisations

- Research Organisations (ROs) should recognise and value RC fellows, who are outstanding individuals who have won personal, competitive awards and who add to the reputation of the RO, the RCs and the United Kingdom.

- ROs should ensure that fellows are recognised and valued as an essential part of their research workforce and are integrated into the RO and the host department, whilst ensuring that they are able to maintain the independence and focus of their personal research programme.

- ROs should provide fellows with assistance and support in ensuring success for the fellowship, and their professional, career and leadership development. This includes, but is not limited to:
    - guidance and training on setting up a research group, building partnerships and collaborations, or with public engagement.
    - contact with a named individual (e.g. mentor) who will help the new fellow rapidly access resources at the Research Organisation through knowledge of appropriate processes and systems.
    - access to career development support and advice to enable future career transitions.
    - Support for any proposed leadership activities.

Expectations of Fellows or Future Research Leaders

- To proactively manage their broader career and personal development as well as their fellowship:
    - engaging actively with their Research Organisation as their employer and making active use of mentoring.
    - using their fellowship to take opportunities to develop themselves as a potential
    - leader in research, e.g. through network building, collaborative work in the UK or abroad, or in partner organisations in the private, public and civil society sectors.
    - maximising the impact of their research, not only through excellence in academic publication, but also through appropriate translational, communication and public engagement activities.

- To take an active role in the wider research community for example supporting UKRI peer review

- To act as an UKRI ambassador, where opportunities arise, throughout and following their Fellowship, attending and contributing to UKRI events (especially those for fellows), feeding back their views and experiences to UKRI when appropriate.

- To support the professional and career development and success of researchers within their group department and discipline.

- To acknowledge the support of UKRI Research Councils in any publications, posters, presentations etc. arising from their research and provide information about their fellowship and its outputs through the Research outputs systems and when requested.

UKRI Research Councils will:

- Award fellowships to outstanding individuals undertaking excellent research projects in excellent research and training environments.

- Provide, through the fellowship award, funding for a high quality research project and an ambitious programme of research training, personal development and leadership activities.

- Value fellows as important members of the UKRI wider research community.

Annex 2: Suitability criteria for MRC fellowships

Fellowship	Applicants	Skills and Experience applicants should demonstrate at time of application.
Training Fellowships: Training and Consolidation		
Clinical Research Training Fellowship (CRTF)	Clinicians in specialty training who want to embark on a dual academic-clinical career by undertaking a PhD. A post-doctoral arm of the scheme is available for clinicians who undertook a PhD early in training (usually 5 years ago or more) and who have not been research active since.	Training
Transition to Independence		
Career Development Award	Applicants are normally expected to hold a PhD and should be seeking to transition to independence.	Transition to independence
Clinician Scientist Fellowship	Clinicians who have gained a PhD/DPhil/MD who are looking to transition to independence	Transition to independence
Transition to Leadership		
Senior Clinical Fellowship	Clinicians who have gained a PhD/DPhil/MD who are looking to become research leaders	Transition to Leadership
Senior Non-Clinical Fellowship	Applicants will hold a PhD/DPhil and be proven independent researchers with a track record of excellence in their scientific field	Transition to Leadership

Annex 3: Additional Reproducibility and statistical design annex

A one page annex is strongly advised to be used to provide any important information relating to reproducibility, methodology and statistical design or, if the project includes a clinical trial, to detail the trial. This annex can be included in addition to the page limits in section 5.2.3. This must be included at the end of the main case for support and clearly marked as 'Reproducibility and statistical design annex'.

Examples of key considerations in applications

- Measures for avoidance of bias (e.g. blinding, randomisation)
- Number of experimental and control groups and sample size per group
- How the sample size was calculated, showing power calculations and including justification of effect size[3]
- Overview of the planned statistical analyses in relation to the primary outcomes to be assessed
- Frequency of measurements/interventions to be used
- Circumstances in which power calculations are not appropriate to determine sample size

Examples of key considerations in clinical trials

The need for a trial

- What is the problem to be addressed?
- What are the principal research questions to be addressed?
- Why is a trial needed now?
- References to any relevant systematic reviews
- How will the results of this trial be used?

The proposed trial

- What is the proposed trial design?
- What are the planned trial interventions?
- What are the proposed practical arrangements for allocating participants to trial groups?
- What are the proposed methods for protecting against other sources of bias?
- What are the planned inclusion/exclusion criteria?
- What is the proposed duration of treatment period?
- What are the proposed outcome measures?
- How will the outcome measures be measured at follow-up?
- What is the proposed sample size?
- What is the planned recruitment rate?
- How will recruitment be organised
- Are there likely to be any problems with compliance?
- What is the likely rate of loss to follow-up?
- How many centres will be involved?
- Detail planned analyses: Are there any planned subgroup analyses? What is the proposed frequency of analyses?
- Will the trial address any economic issues?
- In what way(s) have consumers contributed to developing/delivering the study?

[3] The applicant should provide sufficient information such that sample size/power calculations could be replicated

Trial management

- What are the arrangements for day to day management of the trial?
- What will be the responsibilities of the fellow?
- What will be the responsibilities of the staff employed on the fellowship?
- What will be the roles of the named collaborators?
- Who is the trial statistician?
- If there will be a Trial Steering Committee (TSC), what are the arrangements?
- Details of participating centres
- Any formal and/or informal training in trials methodology that will be provided
- Any similar trials currently being carried out
- How early termination of the study (e.g. on safety or feasibility grounds) and failure to complete the study in the period of the award will be dealt with.

Financial details of the trial

- The approximate NHS costs (both excess treatment costs and service support costs) that will be incurred
- Whether the relevant provider has been notified.