Application and Case for Support Guidance – Outline Stage Proposals

Application Guidance

The outline application should be submitted through the Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system to the DFID/MRC/Wellcome Trust Global Health Trials Outline call by 16:00 British Summer Time on 1 October 2013.

When submitting your application through Je-S, you will be provided with the following drop down menus; please ensure that you select the following options:

- **Select Council:** MRC
- **Select Document Type:** Outline Proposal
- **Select Scheme:** MRC Jointly Funded Initiatives Outline
- **Select Call/Type/Mode:** MRC/DfID/Wellcome Global Health Trials Out September 2013

Guidance on setting up a Je-S account and on filling out the Je-S forms can be found at: https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/jesHandbook/jhHome.aspx.

Your outline application should consist of:

1. **Online Je-S form.** This will cover administrative and financial aspects for your application to MRC.

   Please note:
   - All costs incurred by overseas investigators should be entered as Exceptions.
   - All co-investigators should be registered on the Je-S system and added to the online application. There is a short delay between registration and the investigator being available on the system to add to the application, so please ensure registration is completed well in advance of the submission deadline.

2. **Case for Support.** The case for support should not exceed six sides of A4 plus one additional page of references (seven pages in total). Your Case for Support must be attached to your Je-S online application as a pdf. Please see further guidance on the content of your case for support below.

3. **CV and Publication list.** For each named co-investigator within the proposal a CV with a list of relevant publications should be provided. Each CV and publications list should not exceed three sides of A4 (two sides of A4 for CV and one side for publications).
All requested supporting documentation must be prepared using:

- Arial font, with minimum font size of 11 pt (excluding text on diagrams and the use of mathematical symbols).
- A minimum of single line spacing and standard character spacing must be used
- Margins must not be less than 2cm.

For further guidance about your proposal please refer to:

**Call Specification**
http://www.mrc.ac.uk/Fundingopportunities/Calls/Jointghtrials

**Je-S Helpdesk pages**
https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index.htm

**MRC Applicant Handbook**
http://www.mrc.ac.uk/Utilities/Documentrecord/index.htm?d=MRC001873

**MRC Terms and Conditions**
http://www.mrc.ac.uk/Fundingopportunities/Applicanthandbook/Grantcalls/Termsconditions/index.htm

**Clinical Trials Toolkit**
http://www.ct-toolkit.ac.uk/

**Joint Global Health Trials Scheme Case for Support Guidance (below)**
Case for Support – outline application

Introduction

Your case for support (a document including, amongst other things, your scientific proposals, details of the environment, people involved and references) needs to be attached to your Je-S application as a PDF document. You will need to prepare this document using a PDF writer such as Adobe Acrobat.

You will find general guidance for the preparation of your proposal in the MRC Applicants’ Handbook, which can be found on the MRC website: http://www.mrc.ac.uk/Utilities/Documentrecord/index.htm?d=MRC001873

Whilst the core principles outlined in the handbook should be taken into consideration please refer to the additional guidance below when completing your case for support for this scheme.

Each proposal is unique, and it is your responsibility to ensure that all the reasonable questions the panel need to address are answered in your proposal – especially if the plan or resources are unusual or complex.

Your proposal cannot be supplemented by further information after the submission deadline.

Please include relevant pilot data and ensure it is clearly described. At the outline stage it is important for the panel to be able to judge the feasibility of the proposed trial based on existing data.

Support is conditional on the host institution demonstrating that they are able to conduct the trial according to the standards set out in the MRC guidelines for good clinical practice in clinical trials (http://www.mrc.ac.uk/Utilities/Documentrecord/index.htm?d=MRC002416). For this scheme it is expected that the host institute will be the sponsor of the trial. Support will be conditional on obtaining and complying with all required ethical, legal and regulatory approvals before the trial commences.

The funders do not require ethical and regulatory approval to be in place at the outline proposal stage. If funding is awarded it will be the responsibility of the investigators and the host research organisation to ensure that all the appropriate ethics approval(s) are obtained and that no research requiring such approval is initiated before the necessary ethics approvals have been granted.

Guidance

Please consider the following requirements when preparing your outline case for support:

- Please complete the proposal in English.
- Your case for support should be no longer than six A4 sides, plus one extra for references. Proposals which do not conform to these page limits will be returned to the applicant as ineligible and will not be considered for funding.
- You must use Arial 11 point typeface.
- You must leave margins of minimum 2cms on all edges.
You may upload only one case for support document. Additional annexes are not permitted.

If you plan to include unpublished data, it must be included in the case for support. Manuscripts in press or submitted to journals should not be included.

Ensure all pages of each document are numbered.

Set out your scientific case under each of the headings specific to the guidance notes for this scheme (below).

All costs should be in British Pounds Sterling.

Proposals that do not comply with the above points, or that are seriously deficient in the information provided are likely to be returned to you unprocessed.

Please be concise, as you will have an opportunity to go into greater detail if we invite a full proposal.

When completing the Case for Support please bear in mind that the committee will also receive your Je-S proposal form which contains the Objectives, Summary and Impact Summary. You therefore do not need to repeat detail which is already contained in these sections.

Headings for your outline case for support:

1 Trial summary information

- Full title of the trial (no more than 150 characters)
  *Please use a title that is intelligible to trial participants as well as meaningful to scientific peers.*
- In which country(ies) will the trial take place?
- Duration in months
- What is/are the principal research question(s) to be addressed?

2. The Proposed Trial

*Please include relevant pilot data and ensure it is clearly described. At the outline stage it is important for the panel to be able to judge the feasibility of the proposed trial based on existing data.*

Give a brief summary of the proposed trial which should include information on and justification for:

- **Trial type**
  Prevention, screening, diagnostic, treatment, quality of life etc
- **Proposed trial design**
  Blinded? Number of arms? factorial/cluster? etc
- **Interventions**
  Be specific about the nature of the intervention so that it is clear to the panel exactly what will take place in the experimental and control arms
- **Target population**
  The procedure for randomising patients and any inclusion/exclusion criteria should be indicated. If randomisation is not being recommended as part of the trial design, a clear and informed justification of why it is to be excluded is required. Any proposed lower and upper age limits for trial participants should be justified on scientific grounds. Normally, for example, there should be no
upper age limit on recruitment. Similarly, exclusion on the grounds of gender should be justifiable on scientific grounds

- **Duration of treatment period and follow-up**
- **Overall trial timeline**
  Please provide realistic timetables for the completion of your studies. In addition to the need for a sound basis for the projected recruitment rate, adequate provision should be made for setting up and staffing the trials team, obtaining ethics approval for all participating centres, a start-up phase and similar activities.
- **Primary outcome measure**
  Justify clearly the outcome measures to be used
- **Economic, social, qualitative measures (if applicable)**
  - We do not require that quality of life measures are included as an outcome in all trials. However, you will need to justify fully why these measures are to be either included or excluded.
  - Where appropriate we encourage applicants to include health economics, social science and implementation research alongside trials, with the aim of providing information relevant for scale up
- **Sample size and potential power of the trial**
  Ensure that statistical aspects of the trial and the assumptions on which these are based (such as power calculations, sample sizes and effect sizes) are clearly explained and well-justified.
- **Participating centres**
  We encourage the involvement of community and patient advocate groups in all stages of trial development, with the aim of better trial design and greater acceptability of both the trial and its findings.

### 3. Why is this trial needed now and why is it needed in the proposed location?

- Please consider issues such as burden of disease and priority for the relevant local, regional and national health services etc.
- Please provide evidence from the medical literature, systematic reviews, professional and consumer consensus and pilot studies should be cited if available; include any on-going or planned studies elsewhere.

### 4. How will the results of this trial be used?

*When completing this section please bear in mind that the panel will also receive a copy of the Impact Summary completed as part of your Je-S form. Please use this section to provide additional information on how the results of the trial will be used.*

- What changes might be implemented as a result of the study?
- What impact will the results have on clinical practice or our understanding of the proposed intervention or underlying disease?
- Will the results of the trial be generalisable beyond the immediate research setting in a way that will maximise the impact of the results?

### 5. Trial management

- Who will be the trial sponsor?
  *In most instances we would expect the principal investigator’s host institution to be the trial sponsor.*
Does the team of investigators proposed incorporate the range of disciplines and experience necessary to carry out the study?

Will you be working with a clinical trials unit /office? Please give details.

Has adequate statistical advice been sought and incorporated?

Has adequate advice been sought and incorporated on other health services research issues (e.g. health economics and quality of life) if they are to be addressed?

**Good clinical practice**

The funders require that all funded trials are run according to the MRC Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice in Clinical Trials.

The previous experience of the host institution in participating in trials to similar standards as those of the MRC Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice in Clinical Trials will be taken into consideration at the evaluation stage.

The sponsor is the individual, or organisation (or group of individuals or organisations) that takes responsibility for confirming there are proper arrangements to initiate, manage, monitor, and finance a study. We would usually expect the sponsor to be the Principal Investigator’s Host Institution. If the sponsor will be a different organisation, please provide a rationale for this decision in your proposal.

The funders will not act as sponsor to the funded trials, unless the PI’s Host Institution is an MRC Unit or Institute, in which case MRC would normally be the sponsor.

At the full application stage we will need a letter of agreement from the sponsor.

**Ethics**

The funders do not require ethical approval to be in place at the outline proposal stage. If funding is awarded it will be the responsibility of the investigators and the host research organisations to ensure that all the appropriate ethics approval(s) are obtained and that no research requiring such approval is initiated before the necessary ethics approvals have been granted.

**Trial Managers**

In most cases, you will need to consider appointing a trial manager for the study, who will be responsible for:

- The overall efficient day-to-day management of the trial
- Compliance with the protocol
- Secure randomisation process
- Swift recruitment
- Efficient data management
- Problem identification and resolution
- Distribution and maintenance of trial materials in all centres
- Budget control
- Production of annual progress reports

Investing in recruiting individuals with appropriate experience and training where necessary is essential if the principal or coordinating investigators are to deliver the trial to time and to budget.

6. **Trial Partners**
• Is a commercial or other organisation being approached for the supply of the intervention (experimental and control). For each what status are discussions/arrangements?
• Are other funding partners involved/anticipated to be involved? Which? For each - what status are any discussions/consideration?
• Are other partners key to the success of this trial e.g. Health Ministry? If so, for each what is status of discussions/agreements?

7. Financial Information

• Please provide a breakdown of the funding request per institution as per the below table. Including a total estimated cost of the trial and the total estimated cost requested from this funding scheme, bearing in mind that UK institution costs are calculated at 74 per cent of the Full Economic Costs and the “Exceptions”, those incurred outside of the UK, are calculated at 100%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant organisation name</th>
<th>Total amount (GBP)</th>
<th>Total amount requested from this scheme (GBP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant Organisation 1 (please enter name)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant Organisation 2 (please enter name)</td>
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<td>Etc.</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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• Please provide a brief summary and justification of the core items of expenditure that you factored in to the calculation for the total cost of the trial.
• Are you requesting the full amount from this funding source, or would other funding sources contribute to the study? What is status of any other funding contribution?

8. Proposal History

Has an application for funding for this trial been submitted previously to DFID, MRC, the Wellcome Trust or another funding organisation?

If so, please indicate the status of the previous application. We are not able to accept resubmissions of proposals that have already been considered under this scheme. If you have substantially changed a previous proposal and wish to discuss whether it might be eligible, please contact jointglobalhealthtrials@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk.