

MRC-Medical Research Foundation

Self-harm and eating disorders Research and Pilot grants FAQs

What is the main difference between a research grant and a pilot award?

Research Grant: awards may be for up to three years and up to £500,000 MRC/MRF contribution. Proposals should comprise focused research projects that will increase our understanding of self-harm and/or eating disorders. Research grants are suitable for focused research projects with defined preliminary data and a clear hypothesis. They can be used to support method development and refinement.

Pilot awards: awards may be for up to two years and up to £250,000 MRC/MRF contribution. Proposals should aim to initiate new scientific partnerships across disciplines and new research activities, focused on discovery science. Pilot grants are suitable for proof of principle work only where no or partial preliminary data is available. Due to the nature of pilot projects, these grants offer more flexibility and can be used to get supporting data required to reach a clear hypothesis.

What areas of research are eligible for this call?

All areas of discovery research relevant to self-harm and/or eating disorders will be considered and applicants are encouraged to explore how awards could be used to develop interactions across different subject areas and disciplines. Proposals should aim to investigate the aetiology and underpinning mechanisms of self-harm or eating disorders, including the underlying bio-psycho-social mechanistic and environmental drivers, in children, adolescents and young adults.

What is the MRF/MRC definition of self-harm?

Self-harm includes intentional self-injury and self-poisoning regardless of suicidal or non-suicidal intent. This therefore includes deliberate, self-inflicted destruction of body tissue and for purposes not socially sanctioned, includes behaviours such as cutting, burning, biting and scratching skin.

What is the MRF/MRC definition of eating disorders?

Eating disorders are syndromes characterised by significant disturbances in eating behaviour and by distress or excessive concern about body shape or weight. Presentation varies, but eating disorders often occur with severe medical or psychiatric comorbidity (Cleveland Clinic Centre).

Can a PI apply for both a research grant and a pilot grant?

No. Individuals may be the Principal Investigator on only one application for this call.

Can I be a Co-I on another application if I am planning to apply as PI?

Yes. Principal Investigators may act as a Co-Investigators on any number of applications. However, please note that the assessment will consider the level of engagement of Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators with the research and their capacity to meet these requirements.

Can I apply for a New Investigator Research Grant for this call?

Early career researchers are encouraged to apply to this call. However, applicants may only apply for a research grant or a pilot grant.

If you are interested in applying for a New Investigator Research Grant, you may be eligible to apply to the Neuroscience and Mental Health Board (NMHB). Please contact the office to discuss your proposal.

Is a MICA form necessary if industry partner(s) are involved?

Yes, a MICA form should be completed if there are industrial partners, and this should be submitted along with the application.

Will the awards attract Full Economic Costing (FEC)? At what rate?

Yes, the awards will be costed at 63 per cent FEC. This call is a joint initiative between the Medical Research Council and the Medical Research Foundation. The Foundation is a registered charity and as such its funding is not subject to FEC. Applications will therefore be awarded at 63 per cent FEC, which is determined by the weighted average of the proportion of FEC which is notionally recovered by universities from charity funding (55%) and the rate paid by the MRC (80%) in proportion to their respective contributions to the common funding pot. Further income may be recoverable via the Higher Education Institute's arrangements for charitable support.

The proposals should be costed based on the full economic costs (FEC) necessary to deliver the research. If a grant is awarded, the MRC will fund 63 per cent of the FEC and the RO(s) must agree to find the balance of FEC from other resources.

Due to a constraint with Je-S system, it is not possible to adjust the MRC contribution from 80 per cent to 63 per cent in the '% MRC contribution' column of the 'Financial Resources' table on the electronic application forms. Applicants are advised to prepare their costing based upon the Full Economic Cost (100 per cent FEC) values.

For example

- £250,000 MRC contribution at 63 per cent is equivalent to a full economic cost of £396,825.40.
- £500,000 MRC contribution at 63 per cent is equivalent to a full economic cost of £793,650.80.

Are there any restrictions on the use of funds?

The awards are intended to be flexible - giving scope to support the early career development of new PIs or the new analysis of existing datasets. The funding is **not** intended to support the continuation of existing research grants or groups, staff between posts/funding (i.e. as "bridging" funds), or MSc or PhD studentships.

How do I apply for a grant?

All applications must be submitted using the Research Councils' Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) System (<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/>). Applicants should refer to the general guidance for applicants (on Je-S Help) and MRC standard terms and conditions.

Je-S will present applicants with the options to apply for the Research Grant or the Pilot Grant as follows:

- Research Grant - Medical Research Foundation self harm and eating disorders June 2018
- Pilot Grant - Medical Research Foundation self harm and eating disorders June 2018

Applicants should refer to:

The standard MRC guidance for applicants (<https://mrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-applicants/2-the-application/#2.1>) if they wish to apply for a Research Grant.

The MRC-MRF 2018 application guidelines and assessment criteria (<https://mrc.ukri.org/documents/pdf/mrc-mrf-2018-application-guidelines-and-assessment-criteria/>) if the wish to apply for a Pilot Grant.