DFID/MRC/Wellcome Health Systems Research Initiative

Foundation Guidance: Call 7

1. Important information

We anticipate that Foundation Grants will have a duration of no longer than 24 months. The size of a grant may vary but a general guideline would be up to £200,000 FEC. However, grants exceeding this value will still be considered if the costs are fully justified. Applicants wishing to exceed this should contact the office to discuss prior to applying, not doing so may lead to an application being rejected. The purpose of a Foundation Grant is to conduct preliminary studies needed before a Research Grant proposal can be designed or to explore innovative health systems topics, under researched areas or creative approaches that have the potential to be developed further.

All projects must have a Principal Investigator (PI) based at either a UK Research Organisation (RO) or a RO in a Low- or Middle-Income Country (LMIC). It will be the ROs hosting the successful PIs that receive the funding and manage distribution of the funding to any Co-Investigator RO. PI's from High Income Countries (HICs) outside the UK are not eligible to apply for this scheme.

MRC administer the call for proposals on behalf of the funders and so all applications should be submitted to the MRC and will be awarded according to UKRI Terms and Conditions.

General information about how to apply to the MRC can be found in the MRC Guidance for Applicants: https://mrc.ukri.org/documents/pdf/guidance-for-applicants/

Where guidance in the present document differs from that in the MRC Guidance for Applicants, you should follow the direction in this present, scheme specific, document.

The application/review process in summary:

Foundation Grant proposals will undergo a 1-stage assessment process:

- Foundation Grant call opens on Je-S: 27th February 2020
- Foundation Grant application deadline: 16:00 BST Thursday 28th May 2020
- Panel meeting of academic experts: October 2020
- Decisions to be relayed: November 2020

Queries should be sent to HSRI@mrc.ukri.org

2. Who can apply?

The intellectual challenge should be the determining factor when configuring appropriate partnerships and collaborations. Proposals must demonstrate equitable partnerships in line with the UK Collaborative on Development Research 'Building Partnerships of Equals' report, this includes demonstrating clear leadership roles across the proposed partnership. The balance of intellectual leadership and costs between high income countries and LMICs will be considered in the assessment of proposals.

Principal Investigators:

This call differs from the standard MRC rules as for this call Principal Investigators (PI) can be based either in the UK (as per usual MRC rules) or in an LMIC. The PI's are responsible for the intellectual leadership of the research and for the overall management of the project. The PI will be the funding agencies' main contact for the proposal.

Projects with PI's from LMICs are strongly encouraged and all proposals must include Co-Investigators (Co-I's) from the LMIC in which the research is taking place. For LMIC led proposals, funding is not dependent on the involvement of a UK-based research organisation.

Applicants without experience of UK funding are encouraged to seek mentorship or guidance on grant writing from colleagues with experience of winning UK funding.

For administrative purposes when completing the Je-S form, you will only be able to list one PI. While there is formally only one PI, you can make it clear in your Case for Support that the scientific leadership is shared and that in this respect, the applicants listed are Co-Principal Investigators.

It is not permitted for the same person to be PI on any more than two proposals submitted to this call.

Co-Investigators

The PI's may be supported by a number of Co-I's named on the application. A Co-I assist the PI in the management and leadership of the research project.

All UK and International PI's and Co-I's must have verified Je-S Accounts and must be added to the Je-S form under "Co-Investigator". Please see section 7 'Creating a Je-S account' for information on how to add an organisation on Je-S.

Project Partner/s

A Project Partner is an organisation or individual who is providing substantial contribution to the project and will not take any funds out of the project. Therefore, any persons already named on the proposal (e.g. as PI, Co-I or Named Researcher), should NOT also be included as a Project Partner. The contribution and involvement of project partners should be acknowledged in the project partner section of the application form and described in detail in the case for support, where the whole team and their skills/expertise and responsibilities should be set out for the benefit of assessors.

Please note:
- Project partners do not need to be based at an eligible RO or have a verified Je-S account.
- Each project partner must provide a letter of support.
- If the project partner is from industry, applicants must follow the guidance relating to the MRC Industry Collaboration Agreement (MICA). The level of contribution expected from the industrial partner depends on the intellectual property arrangements between the academic and industrial partners. Please refer to MICAs for further information.

For further guidance regarding Project Partners, please see Section 1.3.4 of MRC's Guidance for applicants.

Subcontractors

Please note the role of a subcontractor is distinct from a project partner. Subcontractors should not be named as part of the project team. They carry out a specific piece of work on behalf of the investigators on a fee-for-service basis, with no potential claim as an inventor over any arising intellectual property (IP). Details of any subcontracts should be specified in the Case for Support and fully justified in the Justification of Resources.

Research Organisation Eligibility

UK PI's **must** be based at one of the following:

- Higher Education Institutions
- Independent Research Organisation (IRO)
- UK Government Funded Organisation (other than MRC funded Units and Institutes)
- MRC Units/Institutes
- University Units (former MRC Units)

For further information on UK eligibility for research funding see eligibility.

LMIC PI's **must** be based at one of the following:
- Higher Education Institutions

- Non-profit Research Institutions

The PI must be employed by an institution that is legally registered in the UK or LMIC. PIs cannot be based in a high income country outside the UK.

Many non-UK institutions and some UK organisations will not currently be recognised to hold UK Research and Innovation grants. Lead institutions which are not currently recognised will have to obtain recognition (further eligibility and financial checks) before any grant can be confirmed. In order to minimise administrative burdens and costs to both applicants and funders, formal recognition will only be pursued if the grant is successful.

If you are unsure about your organisation's eligibility, please consult the Programme Manager, by contacting: HSRI@mrc.ukri.org.

3. Required documents for Foundation Applications

Only applications submitted through Je-S will be recognised: https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/

Applications must be submitted by the PI or their research organisation on behalf of the research team. Foundation applications must include the following:

- A completed application form on Je-S: All investigators **must** be included. This form reflects the project costs so please include **all** costs, UK or otherwise. See 'Costs' section for clarification.
- A jointly prepared Case for Support (see additional guidance below) must be uploaded as a Word or PDF attachment.
- CV's and publication lists must be uploaded for all named investigators as a Word or PDF attachment.
- Justification of resources for the total costs requested for the project
- Data Management Plan
- Gender Equality Statement
- ODA Compliance Statement
- Signed letter(s) of support

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. If you exceed the maximum page length or attach extraneous documents, we may reject your application or return your application to you for amendment.

The online Je-S form requests information such as administrative details of the Investigators, financial information and summaries of your research. We recommend that applicants access the Je-S form well in advance of the deadline so that they can see the specific information that they will need to enter and can ensure that they and their Co-Is are registered on the system. It is fine to copy information between your PDF attachments and the Je-S form where there is overlap in information requested.

Attachments

Mandatory Attachments	Conditions
Case for support	4 sides of A4 (plus 1 for references)
CVs	2 sides of A4 per person

Publications	1 side of A4 per person
Justification of Resources	2 sides of A4
Data Management Plan	3 sides of A4
Gender Equality Statement	1 side of A4 - Upload to Je-S using Letter of Support option
ODA Compliance Statement	1 side of A4 - Upload to Je-S using Letter of Support option
Optional Attachments	**Conditions**
Letters of Support	2 sides of A4 per letter (mandatory from project partners)
Covering Letter	2 sides of A4 per letter

4. Case for Support scheme specific guidance

Your Case for Support is a document including your scientific proposal, details of the research environment, people involved and references. Your Case for Support should indicate how your proposal fits the call specification for this scheme. Please use the following headings:

Research Project summary information

- Full title of the project (no more than 150 characters)
- In which country(ies) the project will take place
- Duration in months
- Total amount requested from this funding scheme
- Principal health systems research question to be addressed

Health Systems relevance and importance: why is this research needed now and in this proposed location?

What evidence is there that the answer to your research question is needed and wanted by relevant users, for instance, policy-makers, research users and decision makers.

Please consider issues such as burden of disease and priority for local, regional and national health systems and how this research will strengthen local health systems. Proposals must outline why the research is important to the particular LMIC context and engage with context specific academic and non-academic stakeholders. You must demonstrate knowledge of relevant health systems empirical literature, particularly from LMICs where relevant and propose how this research may contribute to this literature. Please ensure that the proposal clearly addresses a health system research question rather than, for example, only evaluating the effects of a specific health service intervention.

Theoretical Framework

Please describe how your research questions and methodologies are embedded within a suitable theoretical framework with reference to relevant scholarly literature. This framework could draw from any of the appropriate disciplines (economics, sociology, anthropology, political science etc.) and should demonstrate an understanding of theories and concepts that are relevant to your research focus. Where appropriate, proposals should also outline what contribution this research will make to an advance in theoretical knowledge.

Project and methodology description

1. If your Foundation Grant is intended to obtain information needed to undertake a well-informed full-scale research project, it is essential that you clearly articulate how this Foundation Grant will lead to specific further research and why this would be important.
2. If your research intends to explore possible health system innovations, under-researched areas or creative approaches that have the potential to be developed further, proposals should also either have practical applications or, for conceptual proposals, be able to demonstrate their potential for practical application.

Foundation Grant holders will not be automatically awarded funds for a full-scale research project upon completion of their grant.

Please describe your research plans, ensuring that you cover the following points:

- What specific questions will be addressed by the Foundation Grant? Enough detail must be given to show why the research is likely to be competitive in its field
- Who are the target populations?
- If the research involves data collection or acquisition you must demonstrate that you have carried out a datasets review, and explicitly state why currently available datasets are inadequate for the proposed research.
- What is the proposed timeline?
- How will you evaluate the outcomes of the study?

If your methodology is an RCT, please contact HSRI@mrc.ukri.org to discuss the eligibility of your study for this scheme. While RCT's are accepted it will be important to demonstrate how your proposed work is embedded in and relates to the wider health system in the proposed context. Applicants should note that the Medical Research Council (MRC), Department for International Development (DFID), the National Institute for Health Research and Wellcome currently fund a scheme for randomised controlled trials (RCTs) in LMICs. For further information please visit the webpage for this scheme: https://mrc.ukri.org/funding/science-areas/international- and-global-health-research/funding-partnerships/joint-global-health-trials/

Research project team

- How does the team of investigators incorporate the range of discipline and experience necessary to carry out the study?
- To what extent is this application led and/or informed by LMIC researchers?
- Please ensure budget breakdowns between high income and LMIC researchers are appropriate with the aims of the scheme.
- Where numerous investigators are involved, applicants should consider appropriate management structures/advisory groups.
- How can the host institution demonstrate that it has the facilities and resources available to manage the study?

Capacity building

Please outline any plans for capacity building including, but not limited to:

- opportunities for mutual learning among all those involved in the project, for example, about the subject of the research, the context where it is being conducted, engagement with policy-makers and managers, research management

- co-design of research and implementation

- working collaboratively, across countries, disciplines and across practice-research boundaries

- field-based research methods training for less experienced staff

- opportunities for staff to author/co-author journal and conference papers and participate in national and international conferences

- providing mentoring to improve the capacity of less experienced researchers to generate new knowledge and attain policy impact

- building organisational capacity (for example in management, financial, communications)

- institutional capacity-building where relevant (such as the incentive structures, the political and regulatory context and the resource base in which research is undertaken and used by policymakers).

Successful proposals will also demonstrate a strong understanding of the local research context and ensure the research programme does not undermine local research capacity.

Research impact: How will the results of this study be used?

- What changes might be implemented as a result of the study?

- Who will make those changes happen and how?

- Might the results be generalizable beyond the immediate research setting?

- Please describe how this research will engage with in-country actors such as academic and non-academic stakeholders and policy makers. Research engagement strategies should reflect stakeholder priorities and any interventions that require government buy-in should demonstrate engagement with public sector actors.

Ethics

It is essential that applicants describe the ethical considerations that have informed the proposed research. Details of the ethical review and research governance arrangements that would apply to the proposal must be described.

Financial Information

- Are other funding partners involved? Who are the partners and what is the status of the discussions?

- In addition to the costings you have provided on Je-S, please provide a breakdown of the funding request per institution using the below table.

Organisation name	Total project costs (GBP)	Total cost requested from this scheme (GBP)*

* UK institution costs are calculated at 74% of the Full Economic Costs. Costs incurred outside of the

UK are 'Exceptions' and can be claimed at 100%.

Proposal History

Has an application for funding for this project been submitted previously to DFID, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), MRC, Wellcome or another funding organisation? If so, please indicate the status of the previous application. If your project has been previously submitted to DFID, ESRC, MRC or Wellcome please contact the MRC in advance of submission to request approval for a resubmission. Please include in your e-mail a description of how you have revised the project design since your last submission, and, if you previously received feedback, please include a response to each feedback point.

5. Other Attachments

CVs and publications list

Please submit a maximum of 3 pages per investigator: 2 pages CV and a 1 page publication list.

Please compile all the documents into one PDF file and include the documents in the same order as the investigators are listed on your Je-S application form. Each publication list should immediately follow its corresponding CV.

We must receive a seperate CV and Publications List for each of the following:

- Principal Investigators
- Co-investigators
- Named individual research staff

Please see Section 2.2.1 and Section 2.2.2 of the MRC's Guidance for Applicants for the full details on the requirements for CVs and Publications.

Justification of Resource

Justification of Resource is a mandatory document and should aid reviewers when assessing whether the funds requested are appropriate.

Please see Section 2.2.4 of the MRC's Guidance for Applicants for the full details on the requirements for the Justification of Resources attachment.

Data Management Plan

A Data Management Plan is mandatory document and should demonstrate how the PI will meet with responsibilities for research data quality, sharing and security.

Please see Section 2.2.8 of MRC's Guidance for Applicants for the full details on the requirements for the Data Management Plan attachment

Gender Equality Statement (Upload to Je-S using the Letter of Support option)

Official Development Assistance provided by UKRI must comply with the requirements of the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014 which states, the "desirability of providing development assistance that is likely to contribute to reducing poverty in a way which is likely to contribute to reducing inequalities between persons of different gender".

To comply with the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014, applications must provide a Gender Equality Statement, outlining how applicants have taken meaningful yet proportionate consideration as to how the project will contribute to reducing gender inequalities. This must be no longer than a one page and is a mandatory attachment.

Applicants are required to address the below criteria, with an understanding that, depending on the nature of their research and innovation, not all questions will be applicable.

Criteria to address while considering gender impact:

- Have measures been put in place to ensure equal and meaningful opportunities for people of different genders to be involved throughout the project? This includes the development of the project, the participants of the research and innovation, and the beneficiaries of the research and innovation.
- The expected impact of the project (benefits and losses) on people of different genders, both throughout the project and beyond.
- The impact on the relations between people of different genders and people of the same gender. For example, changing roles and responsibilities in households, society, economy, politics, power, etc.
- How will any risks and unintended negative consequences on gender equality be avoided or mitigated against, and monitored?
- Are there any relevant outcomes and outputs being measured, with data disaggregated by age and gender (where disclosed)?

Further guidance for applicants on Gender Equality Statements is available [here](#).

ODA Compliance Statement

Research funded through this call will form part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA), as defined by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

An ODA compliance statement is required to explain how your proposed research is compliant. It should be a maximum of **one-page A4** and be attached as attachment type: **Letter of Support.**

The ODA compliance statement should answer the following questions:

1. Which country/ countries on the OECD DAC list of ODA recipients (DAC list) will directly benefit from this proposal and are these countries likely to continue to be eligible to receive ODA for the duration of the research? Please refer to the DAC list for information about countries that will be considered for graduation at the next review.
2. How is your proposal directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of these countries? Please provide evidence of the development need and articulate how the proposed activity is appropriate to address this need.
3. How do you expect that the outcome of your proposed activities will promote the economic development and welfare of a country or countries on the DAC list?
4. What approach(es) will you use to deliver development impact within the lifetime of the project and in the longer-term? Please consider the potential outcomes, the key beneficiary and stakeholder groups in the DAC list country/ countries and how they will be engaged to ensure opportunities for

them to benefit and to enable development impact to be achieved.

Please note: this document should make clear the ODA relevance of the proposed research without reference to other documents in the proposal (i.e. Case for Support, Pathways to Impact). It should also include meaningful project specific detail. Proposals that do not articulate clearly the ODA relevance of the research throughout their application will be rejected prior to peer review.

ODA Transparency and Reporting

As part of the government's commitment to ODA transparency and in line with DfID ODA reporting requirements, UKRI is responsible for publishing information about UKRI ODA grants including project titles and summaries via the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) registry and via DfID's national statistics. The purpose of publishing information via the IATI registry is to make information about ODA easily accessible to governments, stakeholders and other relevant groups in beneficiary countries. All UKRI funded projects from this programme will be published in this way. Please therefore write your project title and summary in such a way that they are meaningful and accessible to non-specialist audiences, following publication. We would be grateful if you would ensure that the project title and summary are written in plain English and avoid the use of jargon, acronyms, puns and plays on words. Please also make clear in your project title and summary how your project is ODA compliant, for example by identifying the development challenge(s) being addressed, the aims of the project and the beneficiary countries.

Letters of Support

Letters of support can be included in the application where available. These letters should come from relevant academic and non-academic stakeholders such as local or national government authorities, and other public sector actors. Each project partners (e.g. industrial partners, NGOs) must provide a project partner letter of support. Each letter of support should be no longer than **2 pages A4**.

Please see Section 2.2.7 of the MRC's Guidance for Applicants for the full details on the requirements for Letters of Support for Project Partners.

Covering Letters

A Covering Letter may be included within the application but should not be used to include any details that should be included in the proposal form, case for support or other attachments.

Please see Section 2.2.6 of the MRC's Guidance for Applicants for further details of what can be included in a covering letter.

6. Assessment Criteria

The following criteria will be used by the Panel in assessment of the applications:

Research Quality
- Scientific Rationale: novelty, importance and timeliness of the research and whether this is

likely to lead to new understanding;

- Has the proposal outlined a need and justification for the proposed research area and situated the work within an existing body of literature?
- Has the proposal demonstrated engagement with relevant theoretical frameworks?

Impact

- Will this research generate evidence on how to strengthen and improve health systems for people living in LMICs?
- Has this research used a health systems approach to inform the delivery of evidence-based interventions or structural changes? Proposals must demonstrate how interventions relate to and affect wider elements of a health system such as governance, financing, health workforce, information systems, service delivery etc.
- Will this research provide evidence that is of direct relevance to decision makers and practitioners in the field?
- Has the proposal identified potential barriers to uptake of the research outcomes in the setting and proposed plans to overcome these?
- Has this proposal identified key factors relevant to the potential scalability of the research?

Research Management and People

- The suitability of the investigator group including track record(s) of the individuals in their field(s) and whether they are best-placed to deliver the proposed research.
- How have team members from different disciplines been included and how has their variety of input been embedded in the approach to research?
- The management strategy proposed, including equitable access to any shared resources and sufficient capability and time commitments of senior staff to steer and oversee the research.
- Links with local research/health institutions and involvement of investigators from LMIC countries;
- Have opportunities for research capacity building been embedded into research plans?

Methodology

- The feasibility of experimental plans, statistics, methodology and design, including provision of sample size calculations, strategies to avoid bias, and preliminary data where appropriate;
- Is the design of the study is appropriate to answer the question?
- Is the timeline realistic and achievable?
- Has the methodology been underpinned by a relevant theoretical or conceptual framework?

Ethics

- Comments on ethical and/or research governance issues, including whether proposed research is ethically acceptable and the appropriateness of ethical review and research governance arrangements.

Data Management Plan

- Is there a sound plan for managing the research data, taking into account the types, scale and complexity of data being (or to be) managed and also the likely long-term value for further research including by sharing data.

Resources Requested

- Does the proposed research demonstrate good value for money?

- Are the funds requested essential and justified by the importance and scientific potential of the research?

7. Creating a Je-S account

All proposals submitted to this scheme are required to include investigators based in the LMIC where the research will take place.

All Overseas ROs/Institutes and individual applicants (PI and Co-Is), are required to be registered on the Je-S system.

Therefore, both UK organisations and overseas organisations are encouraged to contact the Je- S helpdesk at least two weeks before the call deadline of the 28th of May 2020, so we can ensure that the overseas organisation (either Lead or Non-lead), has been correctly added to the Je-S System. Any delays could mean the proposal being rejected because of late submission.

Please login to your Je-S account using the username and password you have chosen (if you do not have a Je-S account, or have forgotten your password, please see the guidance provided further below). https://jes.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Logout.aspx

- New Je-S Users: In order to gain access to the Je-S System, Create an Account.
- Je-S users having problems successfully completing login to their Je-S account: Retrieve User Name / Password.
- Select **'Documents'** from left hand menu list from your Je-S account home page
- Select **'New Document'** from within the Functions/create section of your documents page

8. Creating your Je-S application:

- Select Council: **MRC**
- Select Document Type: **Standard Proposal**
- Select Scheme: **MRC Jointly Funded Initiatives Full**
- Select Call/Type/Mode (optional): **Joint Health Systems Research Initiative Call – Foundation May 2020**
- Select **'Create Document'** option

Please telephone Je-S Helpdesk on: +44 (0)1793 444164 should you require any assistance with the Je-S System.

Please complete the administrative, summary and financial information as requested by the online Je-S form. The following information provides guidance on specific sections of the Je-S form which we note that applicants frequently required further assistance with.

Entering costs in Je-S

UK research will be funded at 74% of the Full Economic Cost (FEC). Research incurred by overseas ROs and investigators is eligible to be funded at 100% of FEC. Please see section 5. Resources – Full Economic Costing in the Guidance for Applicants for information on FEC.

Funding for non-UK research institutions that have not previously received funding from MRC will be dependent on further eligibility and financial checks, to be conducted if the proposal is selected for funding. For further advice on eligibility, please contact HSRI@mrc.ukri.org.

The screenshot below is taken from Je-S which will summarise the costs entered for your proposal. **It is important that before submitting your proposal that costs are checked.** All costs outside the UK must be entered as Exceptions. Costs related to the UK elements of the proposal (if applicable) must be entered as either directly incurred, directly allocated or indirect costs. Please read on for more detail on the funding available.

Funding available:

Costs	Funding available
Research costs: Staff – directly incurred post	Yes
Staff – directly allocated posts (e.g. UK PI and Co-I time)	Yes
Other research costs (including equipment, consumables)	Yes
Exceptions: Overseas Staff/Research costs & up to 20% indirect costs	Yes
Studentships (PhD)	No
Travel and subsistence for exchange/mobility activities	Yes
Cost of workshops, meetings etc.	Yes

Please note that research teams should consider the breakdown of budgets between UK/high income costs and LMIC project costs keeping in mind the aims of the call.

Directly Incurred and Directly Allocated are all UK Staff and Research costs (Travel, Consumables etc.), relevant to the project.

Indirect costs should be entered for UK ROs included in the project and should not include any overseas costs. Instructions on how to calculate and input indirect costs for LMIC investigators is

provided below.

Exceptions: This heading should include all Overseas staff and Research costs (consumables, travel, up to 20% allowance for LMIC indirect costs, etc.).

Direct (salary) Costs:

Lead/PI's & Co-I's, can be based in the UK or an LMIC and should be costed as per usual MRC funding rules. LMIC PI's & Co-I's can claim 100% of their direct costs (direct costs = the total salary costs for each 'Investigator'). These overseas costs should be entered as Exceptions and claimed at 100%.

Indirect (infrastructure) Costs:

MRC will also allow LMIC institutions to request a maximum of 20% indirect costs as a contribution to the overseas institution infrastructure cost's that would be incurred by the overseas organisation(/s) involved in the project. These indirect costs are calculated by adding all Investigator direct costs together and dividing this total cost requested by 5 (to calculate the 20% total).

Example (LMIC institution indirect costs):

LMIC PI total salary costs for the project = £20,000, LMIC Co-I (1), total salary costs for the project = £15,000, LMIC Co-I Travel & Subsistence + Fieldwork costs = £15,000.

With all these above overseas costs being requested as 'Exceptions' (100%), the total costs claimed would equal £50,000. 20% of these total costs would equal £10,000 indirect costs.

MRC will expect these indirect costs to be requested as 'Exceptions' (100%) and detailed within the 'Exceptions' section of the 'Resource Summary' section of the Je-S form.

Co-investigators

Co-Is can be based in the UK (these costs should be included as either Directly Allocated or Directly Incurred, depending which is relevant for each individual) as per usual MRC funding rules or in an LMIC as per usual MRC funding rules. LMIC Co-I's can claim 100% of their direct costs and up to 20% of costs as indirect costs (for further guidance on these direct and indirect costs, please see the guidance above).

Co-Is can be based in high-income countries outside of the UK as per usual MRC funding rules. They can claim 100% of their direct costs but no indirect costs. These should be included within the Exceptions cost section.

However, as the scheme is intended to fund work in LMICs, high- income country applicants are advised to keep their costs claimed to a minimum.

Costing guidelines

For overseas PI's and Co-I's all travel and subsistence costs can be claimed at 100%. UK based

researchers can only claim 74%, even if they are travelling to a LMIC for the project.

For overseas institutions, all other exceptional costs associated with the overseas organisation should be claimed under the appropriate fund heading **as "exceptions"** and entered as "Other Directly Incurred Costs". These include consumables, consultancy fees, field work fees, equipment (under £10,000) and subcontracting.

Indirect and Estates Costs cannot be claimed by investigators in a high-income country based outside of the UK.

Project Partner/s

A Project Partner is an organisation or individual who is providing substantial contribution to the project and will not take any funds out of the project. Therefore, any persons already named on the proposal (e.g. as PI, Co-I or Named Researcher), should NOT also be included as a Project Partner.

For further guidance please see the MRC Guidance for applicants at https://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/

9. Data Protection for Guidance

Privacy Notice

All personal data provided to the MRC as part of UK Research and Innovation via the Je-S form will be processed in accordance with current UK data protection legislation. Please see Je-S terms and conditions for guidance on how personal data collected from applicants is used (https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index). Further information on how we use personal data can also be found in the UK Research and Innovation Privacy Notice (https://www.ukri.org/privacy-notice/).
Information on the terms and conditions that guide the general management of funded grants can be found in the MRC's Guidance for Applicants (https://mrc.ukri.org/documents/pdf/guidance-for-applicants/).

What will be shared and with whom?

As the Global Health Systems Initiative scheme is a jointly funded scheme, information will be shared between the partners, the Department for International Development (DFID), the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Medical Research Council (MRC) and Wellcome.

The data that you provide will be held securely in accordance with the MRC IT and Records Management policies. It will be retained in accordance with the Medical Research Council's disposition schedule for the following schedules:

Business process	Record type	Retention
10.1 Grants	Grant programme policy file	Permanently
10.1 Grants	Grant programme board agenda, minutes and papers (e- volume/CD)	Permanently

10.1 Grants	Grant programme board assessment feedback	Permanently
10.1 Grants	Grant programme board administration and correspondence	3 years
10.1 Grants	Triage meeting agendas, minutes and papers	Permanently
10.1 Grants	Triage decision spreadsheet	Permanently
10.1 Grants	Application processing statistics and summaries	20 years
10.1 Grants	Successful applications	20 years
10.1 Grants	Unfunded applications (unsuccessful, withdrawn, not accepted)	3 years
10.1 Grants	Grant summary record (Siebel etc.)	Permanently
10.6 Research Management	Clinical trials oversight and monitoring information (incl. protocols and annual reports)	Permanently
10.6 Research Management	Research management administration	3 years
10.6 Research Management	Systems training	1 year
10.6 Research Management	Information Systems	1 year
10.6 Research Management	Induction material	1 year
10.6 Research Management	Council Operating	1 year
10.6 Research Management	Interfaces with other	7 years
10.6 Research Management	Research Portfolio files	Permanently
12.1 Strategy	Research strategy	7 years
12.1 Strategy	Internal working groups	7 years
12.2 Evaluation	Corporate reports (scorecard,	Permanently
12.2 Evaluation	Data analysis and reporting	Permanently
12.2 Evaluation	Commissioned evaluation	Permanently

Further information can be found on the MRC Records Management Policy
https://mrc.ukri.org/documents/pdf/records-management-policy/

The retention periods cited are those in force at the time of writing and are subject to change due to periodic revision of the Medical Research Council's disposition schedule. Information about the retention periods currently in force may be obtained from the Medical Research Council by emailing Corporate@mrc.ukri.org The data provided may also be aggregated and anonymised for the purposes of reporting and analysis.