The UK’s Medical Research Council (MRC) is administering this call on behalf of the UK Nutrition Research Partnership for health and disease (UK NRP). It will use MRC procedures and this document therefore refers to MRC and UKRI web pages.

**Who can apply**

Applications for UK NRP Collaborative Awards must be multidisciplinary and bring different people together, including new players with no track-record or previous association with nutrition research. Collaborative Awards may cover the spectrum from basic science to more applied research, as relevant to the challenge.

The aim is to build a diverse research community and to develop linkages between a range of academic disciplines and other sectors (e.g. public or third sector organisations, local authorities or industry) as appropriate to the chosen nutrition research challenge.

The following paragraphs set out the eligibility criteria for outline stage UK NRP Collaborative Award applicants, at individual, collaborative and institutional levels and their responsibilities.

**Eligibility to apply**

Standard MRC eligibility criteria apply for Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators. The Principal Investigator and the Co-Principal Investigator (i.e. the leaders of the collaboration) must be eligible UK-based applicants from organisations eligible to receive Research Council funding.
Further information on the definition of eligible organisations can be found in the MRC guidance for applicants and at the UK Research and Innovation website: https://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/

We will consider proposals from any UK-based researcher who can demonstrate that they will set up and manage the proposed collaboration and be actively engaged in achieving its objectives. Researchers from overseas institutions may be included in a proposal as a key Co-Investigator where this adds value to the collaboration. Applicants will need to justify this in their application and the majority of the award must be held by eligible UK institutions.

The Principal/Co-Principal Investigators and key Co-investigators supported on open-ended or fixed-term contracts may apply for these grants. The Principal/Co-Principal Investigators may request funds to cover their salary costs for the time spent on setting up and managing the collaboration. These costs should be reasonable and not constitute a significant proportion of the funds requested in the proposal.

Where a Principal/Co-Principal Investigators is expected to retire during the course of the Collaborative Award, the proposal must state who will take over responsibility at the point of their retirement.

Applicants may be the Principal Investigator (PI), Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) and key Co-investigators on only one application for a Collaborative Award. However, other players (core members and collaborators/partners) may be involved in any number of applications provided they have the capacity to meet these commitments. This needs to be considered before applying and not after the publication of successful proposals.

Industry partners
Industry partners may join the collaboration where this add value, for example in terms of access to expertise, technologies and tools, certain population groups or environments, materials or funding.

Governance
The UK NRP expects all of the Collaborative Awards it funds to adopt the highest achievable standards in the conduct of their activities. This means exhibiting impeccable scientific integrity, being transparent with the public; and following the principles of good research practice (as detailed in the MRC Good Research Practice Guidelines of 2000).

All applicants submitting a proposal must accept the UKRI and MRC Terms and Conditions.

Partners
The terms of the relationship with partners from other sectors must be determined early in a proposal’s development and relevant agreements put in place by the start of the award. Partnership arrangements should ensure transparency relating to the operation and management of the award, its key partnerships, and in the generation, analysis, management and dissemination of data/results (including if these are negative). Consideration should also be given to issues such as: relative responsibilities, governance arrangements, indemnity,
intellectual property rights, reporting, access to data and samples, ethics, data protection and data security.

**Industry partners**
Academic-industry partnerships are acceptable where these add value and meet the MRC principles for collaborative working with industry (see below). This may be for example in terms of access to expertise, where the applicants are able to demonstrate that the participation of the proposed member will improve the impact and outputs of the new interdisciplinary research community in relation to the challenge. Please note that commercial exploitation may be an outcome of a successful partnership but the creation of the partnership will never have that as the primary aim. Industry partners will be expected to meet their own costs and are not expected to request MRC funding to participate.

**With respect to collaboration with industry, investigators should refer to the [MRC Industry Charter](#) for working with the commercial sector.**

At the full application stage, applicants working with industry partners will be required to detail plans for the academic-industry partnership, complete the [MRC Industry Collaboration Agreement (MICA)](#) and declare any conflicts of interest. Further guidance on these additional documents will be provided to those who are invited to submit a full proposal. Clear governance arrangements and agreements are also mandatory for the full application stage.

**Responsibilities of research organisations and heads of departments**
All applications, including outlines, must be approved by the appropriate Administrative Authority (e.g. the lead institution’s Finance Officer) and Principal Investigator’s Head of Department, on behalf of the host institution, to indicate its formal acceptance of the proposal, the terms and conditions of a UK NRP Collaborative Award if made; and their approval of the resources sought. A letter of support from the host institution indicating its approval should be included as part of the outline application.

Administrative Authorities and Heads of Departments have responsibility for ensuring that resources cited in the proposals are sufficient to form the proposed collaboration and allow the activities proposed to be performed to the highest standards.

**Financial support**

Each Collaborative Award will be up to a total MRC contribution of £600k (£750k FEC) over a maximum duration of 3 years (or, exceptionally, £600k over a shorter period of time if a case is made).

These awards can be used flexibly to support a range of relevant and justified activities, and should be used in such a manner as to best carry out the research. The MRC expects applications to demonstrate the maximum research impact from funding. Evaluating the success of the Collaborative Awards will inform any future phases of funding.
Conditions of Award
These grants are ‘UK NRP’ awards, funded by the MRC in partnership with NIHR and BBSRC and successful applicants will be expected to acknowledge funding in this manner. Awards will be administered by the MRC and be subject to the UKRI terms and conditions. Details of the UK Research and Innovation Terms and Conditions are available online:
https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/grant-terms-and-conditions/
https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/post-award-guidance/

In addition to standard terms and conditions for grants and providing annual returns in Researchfish:

i) Collaborative Award members will be required to attend a progress meeting at the end of the first year of funding. This meeting will include UK NRP representatives and facilitate networking between members of each Collaborative Award.

ii) Collaborative Award holders will also be required to provide a short annual report detailing achievements, planned activities and allocation of funding. This report may form part of the meeting papers for the progress meeting.

How to apply

Outline Applications
To submit an outline proposal, applicants must complete the UK NRP Collaborative Award: Outline Case for Support Form, and submit this (in the required formats) together with required appendices. A later section of this guidance advises applicants on how to complete the UK NRP Collaborative Award: Outline Case for Support Form.

Outline applications will be assessed by an Expert Review Panel. Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined will not be progressed further through the assessment process.

Deadline Dates for Submission of Outline Proposals

| Closing date for outline applications | 31 July 2018 16:00 |

No late applications will be accepted

Contacts
If you have a query about the scientific aspects of your proposal, please contact the UK NRP Programme Managers:
Dr Karen Finney  karen.finney@mrc.ukri.org  or
Dr Clara Fons      clara.fons@mrc.ukri.org

To discuss your eligibility or any other non-scientific queries please contact email
UKNRPCOA@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk

Please note that the decisions of the Expert Review Panel will be final
and that the MRC reserves the right to amend the application process.
Guidance for Completing the UK NRP Collaborative Award: Outline Case for Support Form

Please note that the language used should be accessible to readers and reviewers from widely different disciplines and backgrounds.

Section 1: Summary of UKNRP Collaborative Award research objectives, plans and costs
Careful consideration should be given to the name, for example a strong brand aligned to a unique identity should enhance the role that the UK NRP collaboration can play in the nutrition research landscape.

1.1) Title of the Collaboration (max. 150 characters):
Please provide a concise title for your proposed collaboration.

1.2) Summary (max. 200 words):
Please provide a non-confidential summary of the Collaborative Award research objectives, describing the scientific rationale and how your proposal aligns to the aims of the call.

1.3) Collaborative Award duration and cost:
Proposed start date: Should be from 1 April 2019 onwards
Proposed duration of award: 36 months. Exceptionally, a case may be made for less than 36 months where this can be justified.
Total cost: Please detail the requested total cost which should not exceed £600k (£750k FEC) in total.

1.4) Contribution to the Collaborative Award (in cash or in-kind) from other sources (max. 150 words):
Please briefly summarise any confirmed or potential contributions (in cash or in-kind) from host institutes and other partners to the collaboration.

1.5) Keywords:
Please provide any relevant keywords associated with your proposal (include: disease areas, research disciplines, users involved, industry type(s)). Applicants should refer to Medical Subject Headings (MESH terms) for appropriate keywords [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/).

Section 2: Collaborative Award Leads and initial membership
A successful collaboration will need to have an identified active core management team representing a critical mass with complementary skills. Each core member should have defined objectives and roles within the Collaborative Award.
Members should represent expertise and experience from more than one subject area as appropriate to the objectives of the collaboration– these might include representatives from industry, local public health organisations, other policy areas, health and non-health practitioners, research and technology organisations; and small and medium-sized enterprises. Attention should also be given to diversity on Collaborative Award management boards and in the broader membership.
A summary of the roles and allowable costs associated with the Collaborative Award members can be found at Annex 1 of this guidance document.

2.1) Principal Investigator:
Please provide the name, post held, department, institution and email address details for the Principal Investigator. Indicate the main discipline for the PI. Estimate the number of hours per week to be spent on the Collaboration Award.

2.2) Co-Principal Investigator:
Please provide the name, post held, department, institution and email address details for the Co-Principal Investigator. Indicate the main discipline for the Co-PI (which should be different from the PI). Estimate the number of hours per week to be spent on the Collaboration Award.

2.3) Track record of the applicants (max. 250 words):
Please provide a brief description of the Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigators track record of research and/or funding.

2.4) Key Co-Investigators:
Please provide the name, institution and email address for each Co-Investigator. Ideally there should be no more than 6 key Co-Investigators.

2.5) Role and contribution of the key Co-Investigators (max. 300 words):
Please provide a brief description of the essential expertise and contribution provided by each of the key Co-Investigators.

2.6) Other Collaborative Award members and partners:
Please provide the name, organisation/company and email address for each of the other members of partners involved in the proposal, including any industry partner(s).

Note: The outline case for support form allows for 10 other core members and partners. Should have more than 10 other members and partners, a separate table (one side A4 max) clearly titled 2.6 Other Members and Partners cont. should be submitted with your completed outline proposal form (as the last page), with the details cross referenced to the form and submitted in the same format.

Section 3: Rationale for the collaboration (max. 500 words)
- This places your proposed collaboration in the wider context. It is an opportunity to say why there is a need to build a new community now.
- Explain why it is a new and innovative collaboration in the proposed area. What is the niche and unique selling point for the proposed collaboration? How might it contribute to providing a step change in the field?
- There may be little previous work in the area(s) of the collaboration, in which case the applicants should set out the known knowledge in the disparate disciplines that are being drawn together to develop new approaches to an important nutrition research challenge.
- Any proposed Collaborative Award bid should show an awareness of other existing activities, be complimentary to these, and demonstrate real 'added value'.
Section 4: Collaborative Award vision and planned activities
Applicants should explain how they will assemble the collaboration and provide adequate reassurance on its management and operation, longer-term goals and generation of novel ideas.

Each collaboration should demonstrate the added value that UK NRP Collaborative Award funding will bring. We would expect collaborations to co-develop their ideas with relevant users (e.g. policy makers, Industry providers and professionals), consider how best to capitalise on emerging technologies, big data and discovery research; support methodological innovation; and engage with industry in the business of nutrition. Applicants should be encouraged to be innovative and think creatively about the range of activities that could support the delivery of the collaboration’s goals.

4.1) Summary of the nutrition challenge identified and purpose of the proposed collaboration (max. 250 words):
This is an opportunity to provide more depth and detail relating to your proposed challenge. Although collaborations are exploratory and are expected to contribute to addressing a challenge rather than solving it, they should start with clearly defined and measurable objectives and a well-defined purpose which will engage and encourage membership.

4.2) Please explain why the members and partners of the Collaborative Award are appropriate to the delivery of its aims? (max 200 words):
What important contributions are the key members and partners making to help deliver the aims of the collaboration?

4.3) Strategy for the use of the pump priming funds. Please provide a high-level summary of planned activities, and approaches to generate pilot data around your nutrition challenge (max 1000 words). Your description should include some exemplar pilot/feasibility studies.

4.4) Plans for wider engagement and outreach (max. 150 words):
Please provide plans for outreach and expanding the collaboration during the period of the award to further strengthen the research community in the challenge area. Describe any planned linkages with other nationally and internationally relevant activities.

4.5) Plan of how the collaboration will be sustained (max. 250 words):
This should include examples of research activities planned for the first 12 months of the UK NRP collaboration and a more general idea of activities for the remainder of the Collaborative Award.

Section 5. Knowledge exchange and Results Dissemination (max. 250 words)
This should include the collaboration’s approach to knowledge exchange and how its outcomes will be communicated. Communication will be important and Collaborative Awards must encourage engagement and share information, including academic publications.
Section 6. Management and monitoring of progress
6.1) How the Collaborative Award will be managed (max. 300 words):
Please describe how the collaboration will be managed fairly and transparently, including the governance for use of pump priming funds, particularly for small pilot awards. How will the most appropriate opportunities be identified and selected for funding by the collaboration? How will decisions be taken quickly while maintaining high standards?

While the PI will be ultimately responsible for the administration of the grant and collaboration arrangements, they should work on this with the Co-PI and a team of key Co-investigators which should reflect the cross-disciplinary nature of the collaboration. The proposal should clearly explain the division of roles between the PI and the rest of the leadership team.

6.2) Milestones of progress (150 words):
Targets and performance indicators should be given which will allow the collaboration to be evaluated. For the full application, applicants will need to be specific about these but it will enhance the likelihood of progressing beyond the outline to demonstrate clear thinking at this stage.

Section 7. Collaborative Award costs
7.1) High-level justification of the sum requested (max. 250 words):
Please provide an estimate of total RC cost and brief justification the funding requested under the following headings: Collaborative pump-priming research activities; Investigators’ salaries; Travel and subsistence; Administrative support; Other costs.

Additional appendices
Any documentation that has not been specifically requested in the call guidance or on the webpage should not be submitted and will not be reviewed as part of your outline application.

Applicants should note that they are permitted to submit the following appendices, together with the completed outline case for support, as part of a bookmarked Pdf (see instructions for applicants at the top of the outline case for support form):

- A letter of support from the host institution indicating its approval of the outline application. (Additional letters of support are not required at the outline stage)
- An organogram showing key Collaborative Award components/players (1 side of A4 max)
- A Gantt chart/timetable detailing relevant milestones (1 side of A4 max)
A summary of the roles and costs associated with Collaborative Award members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Administration of Collaborative Award funds</th>
<th>Salary cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Investigator (PI)</td>
<td>Co-leader of the Collaboration</td>
<td>PI’s HEI will receive the Collaborative Award funding for distribution as set out in proposal.</td>
<td>Can request funding for time dedicated to setting up and managing the collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI)</td>
<td>Co-leader of the Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Can request funding for time dedicated to setting up and managing the collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will be from a different discipline to the PI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Co-Investigator (Co-I)</td>
<td>Experienced investigator with a clearly definable research leadership role central to the collaboration – may provide expertise or access to resources vital to the feasibility of the Collaboration. Part of the Collaborative Award Leadership team</td>
<td></td>
<td>It is anticipated that in most instances no contribution to their salary will be requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Collaborative Award members and partners (Eg. public or third sector organisations, local authorities or industry (as and where appropriate))</td>
<td>May provide cash or in-kind assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td>No contribution to salary should be requested</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where resources are requested for investigator time the proposal should outline the input of each of the named investigators and justify why the stated time commitment is necessary for the collaboration.