



Adolescent Skin Disorders

Research Project Funding Opportunity

Guidelines for Applicants

Summary

This document guides you through the preparation and submission of an application for the Adolescent Skin Disorders Research Grants for established researchers.

The application form can be downloaded from:

<https://www.medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk/grants/adolescent-skin-disorders-funding>

Deadline for Submission is 12:00 Wednesday 20 October 2021

Applications must be submitted and approved by all signatories and the application received in its entirety, by this deadline. You will not be able to submit applications after this deadline. We recommend that you submit your application in advance of the deadline so that any technical issues can be resolved in good time.

The Medical Research Foundation is committed to making this application accessible to all by offering assistance where needed. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Research Team if you have any questions or concerns about the application or interview processes:

research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk Tel: 0207 395 2416.

Overview

The Medical Research Foundation is inviting applications from established researchers who are seeking to progress in the field. The grant aims to support research that will increase understanding of the mechanisms underpinning adolescent skin disorders, improve diagnosis and treatment, and/or impact on future outcomes.

Young people and adolescents are particularly affected by skin disorders, and the experience during adolescence can have long-term psychological and physical effects. Whilst adolescent skin disorders are prevalent, there are limited effective treatment options available.

Research grant applications within the broad field of adolescent skin disorder research are welcomed from researchers in an established role, seeking to develop their leadership and progress in the field. Research areas could include, but are not limited to:

- understanding of the biological mechanisms involved in adolescent skin disorders
- the development of treatment approaches for adolescent skin disorders
- understanding and reducing the impact of adolescent skin disorders on health and well-being

Adolescent skin disorders include but are not limited to acne, eczema, psoriasis, rosacea, alopecia and vitiligo. The Medical Research Foundation is keen to support collaborative and multidisciplinary research as appropriate. Applications investigating the co-morbidities associated with adolescent skin disorders and precision/stratified medicine approaches are encouraged to apply.

The following topics are not within the scope of this competition: skin cancer, shingles, wound healing and scarring that is not a result of a skin disorder, skin disorders as a result of neglected tropical disease, and large-scale treatment development (e.g. clinical trials).

The Funder

The Medical Research Foundation is an independent charitable foundation. Formed by the Medical Research Council (MRC) over 90 years ago, we grow and nurture people and ideas wherever we see research opportunities with great potential.

The research supported in this competition is possible thanks to the support of our generous donors.

The Funding

Applicants applying for the research grants may apply for up to £500,000 to support their research, over a maximum of a 5-year period. There will be up to £2,000,000 available across this competition and the concurrent mid-career fellowship funding call in adolescent skin disorders.

Who can apply

This competition is open to all UK-based researchers at eligible institutions (UK HEIs, Research Council research institutes, hospitals, and other independent research organisations). Applicants must hold a PhD, DPhil or MD and be an established researcher with a record of securing research funding. It is expected that applicants will be in a permanent post, leading their own group, and will have made the transition to independence.

Applicants will need to demonstrate productivity across past appointments and an upward career trajectory. The skills needed to win support in this competition are detailed at <https://mrc.ukri.org/skills-careers/skills-needed-to-win-support/> under the heading “transition to leadership”.

Applicants who do not meet the eligibility criteria will not have their proposal assessed.

Only one application will be accepted per applicant, though individuals can hold more than one Medical Research Foundation grant at any one time. Please contact the Foundation if you currently hold a Medical Research Foundation grant.

Responsibilities of the Lead Research Organisation and the Principal Investigator

Lead Research Organisation

By submitting an application, a Lead Research Organisation (LRO) indicates their formal acceptance of the proposal, approval of the salaries and resources sought and, if the application is successful, acceptance of the terms and conditions of a Medical Research Foundation award.

Administrative authorities have responsibility for ensuring that salaries and resources cited in the proposal are sufficient to undertake the proposed research, attract sufficiently experienced and skilled staff and represent good value-for-money.

Principal Investigator (PI)

The PI is responsible for the intellectual leadership of the research project and for the overall management of the research. They will be the Medical Research Foundation's main contact for the proposal. There can only be one PI on any proposal.

The PI must be based at the LRO at which the award will be administered.

Key dates

- Deadline for submission: 12:00 Wednesday 20 October 2021
- Shortlisting notification – request for rebuttals: February 2022
- Deadline for rebuttal: March 2022
- Funding decision: March 2022
- Feedback on funding decision: March 2022

Application form

Section 1: Applicant details

There can only be one lead applicant. Any researchers who wish to be considered as applicants, in addition to the lead applicant, should be named as co-investigators.

Any other individuals involved in the application can be listed as collaborators unless they will be employed on the grant, in which case they should be named as staff members. Collaborators will need to provide a signed declaration on letter-headed paper confirming that they have consented to co-operate in the research project and explaining the role they will play.

Section 2: Project abstracts

Please adhere to the word limit for each of the sections.

List the main objectives of the proposed research project in order of priority.

The scientific summary should be written in a form understandable to an academic audience or specialist reader.

The lay abstract should be written in a form understandable to members of the public (e.g. current or potential supporters) who are not specialists in the field of adolescent skin disorders research. Please indicate the key scientific objectives and challenges of the research and any potential medical/clinical implications.

These abstracts will be used for external communications about the award and should therefore not contain specific details of any sensitive information.

Section 3: Case for Support: proposed research project

Provide details of the proposed research project, making reference to how the work will move the field forward and also contribute to the development of others. References, diagrams, tables or charts, and justification of samples sizes (including sample size calculations, where appropriate, or a justification for why these have not been included) can be included within the text or as an appendix. The Case for Support and appendices should not exceed 10 A4 pages PDF format (size 12 Arial font).

The detailed Case for Support for the research project should include the following information:

1. **Background** – provide relevant background information that is needed to understand the wider context of your application. Explain the need for research in this area and the rationale of the lines of research planned. Give sufficient details of other past and current research to show that the aims are scientifically justified and to show that the work will add distinct value to what is already known, or in progress.

Justify the research either through its importance for human health, or its contribution to relevant areas of basic biomedical science.

2. **Hypothesis and objectives** – describe the main hypotheses to be investigated, details of the objectives and how they will be achieved.
3. **Study design** – describe the experimental approaches and methodology for the research in detail (for example giving and explaining sample sizes, methods of recruitment and trial designs). It is not necessary to describe each experiment, but sufficient detail is required to show why the research is likely to be competitive.
4. **Timelines and milestones** – give timelines for the research with major milestones and deliverables.
5. **Potential problems and contingency plans** – highlight any potential risks and identify procedures that can be put in place to deal with them.
6. **People** – outline how each of the investigators named in the proposal would work together and outline other major collaborations important for the research. Detail productivity from previous appointments/research funding and demonstrate how the award will promote the applicant's trajectory towards research independence. Where appropriate, explain how the grant will contribute to the applicant's career and also the development of others.
7. **Environment** – describe how the scientific or clinical environment(s) in which the research will be conducted will promote the delivery of the proposed research. Explain how the research will benefit from facilities provided by the Research Organisation. Describe any clinical, commercial, or organisational dependencies necessary to support the research, or to help translate it into practice.
8. **Ethics & Research Governance** - describe the ethical issues arising from any involvement of people, human samples or personal data in the research proposal. Give details of how any specific risks to human participants will be controlled, and of any new animal research the funding would be supporting. Describe the ethical review and research governance arrangements that would apply to the proposed research.
9. **Exploitation and Dissemination** – describe plans to disseminate the findings of the research. Is the proposed research likely to generate commercially exploitable results? Other than publication in peer reviewed journals, indicate how any results arising from the research will be disseminated to promote or facilitate take-up by users in the health services.

The Medical Research Foundation expects that before work commences on any research, the Principal Investigator will have ensured in collaboration with the lead research organisation that all appropriate regulatory approvals are in place. These could include those relating to human participation, radiation, genetic manipulation, animals, stem cells, personal safety and health and safety.

The Medical Research Foundation expects that research involving animals will comply with [UK regulations](#) and the research is planned and conducted according to the [3Rs](#).

If the project involves the use of animals, please provide confirmation of personal licences for all members of staff involved in the proposed animal research. In addition, please confirm the relevant project licence covers the proposed work.

Please provide a Data Management Plan (DMP) to detail how you will collect, store, curate, and manage data, including how it will be shared and any open access requirements.

Please use the template provided. Where substantial data is generated from the research, the DMP will be more in depth and therefore likely to be 2 or 3 pages long, for studies generating smaller amounts of data, DMPs will be short i.e. less than half a page in total.

Section 4: Financial Schedule

The Medical Research Foundation will meet the full direct costs of research. Direct costs are those that will arise from the conduct of the research project and can be charged as the cash value spent and can be supported by an auditable record. Like all medical research charities, the Medical Research Foundation does not meet the indirect costs of research.

Applications should be costed at today's prices and inflation should not be included.

It is expected that the PI will be in an established post for the duration of the grant, and as such will not require full salary support (percentage contributions may be costed).

Applications can include requests for the costs of:

- Research staff (who will directly support the research proposal) including annual pay-scale increments but excluding predicted annual pay awards and overheads *i.e.* the apprenticeship levy
- Research consumables and minor equipment
- Access charges for specialist equipment or services
- Travel costs of the PI or members of staff travelling between multi-centre research sites or for scheduled collaborator meetings relating to the project.
- Animals and animal husbandry
- Conference travel and subsistence
- Open access publishing costs (up to £6,000 for grant durations of a three-year minimum)
- Research equipment
- Any other direct costs of the proposed research

Medical Research Foundation research grants will not fund:

- Any directly allocated costs *i.e.* estate costs and costs of shared resources such as staff and equipment.
- Any indirect costs necessary for underpinning research but which cannot be allocated to individual projects (including but not limited to bench fees, computing and information support, general maintenance and other infrastructure costs, HR and recruitment costs etc.)
- Patient care, NHS treatment or NHS support costs associated with clinical research, which are met through other sources of funding.
- Cost of public engagement in science work
- Other costs associated with dissemination of research findings.

Justify the budget requested and provide details of any costs to be met through other funding sources.

Section 5: Recommended and Excluded Reviewers

Please suggest up to three experts to review the application. These individuals should not be: i) closely associated with the proposed project or any related work; ii) collaborators/co-applicants on any active or recent grants; iii) have published with the lead applicant in the past five years; or, iv) previous mentors/supervisors of the lead applicant. We cannot guarantee that we will approach these experts for an

assessment of the applications.

Please provide the names of up to three reviewers that you do not wish to review the application due to potential conflicts of interest.

Section 6: Applicant CV

Please include with the application a two-page academic CV for each of the applicants and co-applicants. Applicants may find the following UKRI fellowship [CV template](#) of use as guidance.

Section 7: Authorisation and Declarations

Please provide the details of the person at the lead Research Organisation responsible for the administration of funds. Should you be successful and win grant support, we will need to know who to contact about the financial arrangements and other contractual agreements.

Please provide the details of the Head of Department of the Lead applicant.

All declarations should be signed by the appropriate persons prior to the submission of the application.

Application check list

Please ensure that you have all the following documentations before submitting your application:

- Completed adolescent skin disorders research grant funding application form
- Case for Support (section 3)
- Data management plan
- Two-page CV for lead and co-applicants
- Any other relevant documentations (i.e. Collaborator letters)

Please clearly label all attached files and ensure that all relevant documents are suitable and present.

If you have any questions about any aspects of the application process, please contact a member of the Medical Research Foundation's team: research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk Tel: 0207 395 2416.

Applications must be submitted electronically to research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk prior to the closing date. We will acknowledge receipt of your application within two days of the submission deadline.

Along with the acknowledgment of receipt of your application, we will also send you an Equality and Diversity monitoring form. The Medical Research Foundation is undertaking monitoring of Equality and Diversity in order to work towards improving diversity and inclusion measures within our grant application processes. Your response to this survey is optional, but highly valuable to us.

Appendices

Scoring Matrix for Reviewers

Score Indicators	Score
Exceptional – Top international programme, or of exceptional national strategic importance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Scientific Quality and Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Crucial scientific question or knowledge gap or area of strategic importance to the UK – Highly original and innovative research questions – Novel methodology and design – Potential for high health and/or socioeconomic impact – Outputs will be internationally unique and of value across the adolescent skin disorders field – Very high likelihood of successful delivery ■ Scientific Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Outstanding leadership, with evidence of supporting and developing junior researchers (track record, team, environment, and collaborators) ■ Justification of Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for high return on investment (resources requested, likelihood of project delivery, anticipated knowledge generation) – Appropriate staff time allocated to deliver project (Principal investigators and co-investigators) ■ Other: Ethical and/or governance issues are fully considered 	6
Excellent – Internationally competitive and leading edge nationally, or of national strategic importance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Scientific Quality and Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Crucial scientific question or knowledge gap or area of strategic importance to the UK – Original and innovative research questions – Includes novel methodology and design – Potential for high health and/or socioeconomic impact – Outputs will be internationally significant and of value across the adolescent skin disorders field – Very high likelihood of successful delivery ■ Scientific Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Excellent research leadership with evidence of supporting and developing junior researchers (track record, team, environment, and collaborators) ■ Justification of Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for high return on investment (resources requested, likelihood of project delivery, anticipated knowledge generation) – Appropriate staff time allocated to deliver project (Principal investigators and co-investigators) ■ Other: Ethical and/or governance issues are fully considered 	5
Very High Quality – Internationally competitive in parts	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Scientific Quality and Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Very important scientific question or knowledge gap or area of strategic importance to the UK – Original and innovative research questions – Robust methodology and design (innovative in parts) – Potential for high health and/or socioeconomic impact – Outputs will be internationally significant in part (leading edge nationally) and of value across the adolescent skin disorders field – Very high likelihood of successful delivery ■ Scientific Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Excellent research leadership (track record, team, environment, and collaborators) ■ Justification of Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for significant return on investment (resources requested, likelihood of project delivery, anticipated knowledge generation) – Appropriate staff time allocated to deliver project (Principal investigators and co-investigators) ■ Other: Ethical and/or governance issues are fully considered 	4
High Quality	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Scientific Quality and Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Worthwhile scientific question or knowledge gap or a valuable scientific resource – Interesting research questions in part – Methodologically sound study – Potential for reasonable health and/or socioeconomic impact – Outputs of reasonable value across the adolescent skin disorders field – High likelihood of successful delivery ■ Scientific Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Strong research leadership (track record, team, environment, and collaborators) ■ Justification of Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for significant return on investment (resources requested, likelihood of project delivery, anticipated knowledge generation) – Appropriate staff time allocated to deliver project (Principal investigators and co-investigators) ■ Other: Ethical and/or governance issues are well considered (may be scope to strengthen management of the project) 	3
Good Quality	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Scientific Quality and Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Worthwhile scientific question or knowledge gap or a valuable scientific resource – Limited research questions – Methodologically sound study but areas require revision – Potentially valuable outputs across the adolescent skin disorders field – Reasonable likelihood of successful delivery ■ Scientific Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Appropriate research leadership, with limited evidence of supporting and developing junior researchers (scope to strengthen team, environment, and collaborators) ■ Justification of Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potentially more limited return on investment (resources requested, likelihood of project delivery, anticipated knowledge generation) – Resources broadly appropriate to deliver the proposal ■ Other: Ethical and/or governance issues are adequately considered 	2
Poor Quality	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Scientific Quality and Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Poorly defined question – Methodologically weak study – Limited likelihood of new knowledge generation ■ Scientific Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Poor research leadership, no evidence of supporting and developing junior researchers ■ Justification of Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potentially poor return on investment ■ Other: Ethical and/or governance issues are not adequately considered 	1
Ineligible for funding	0

Scoring Matrix for Expert Review Panel

Score Indicators	Fundable
10. Exceptional – Top international programme, or of exceptional national strategic importance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Highly original and innovative – Novel methodology and design – Outstanding research leadership (track record, team, environment, and collaborators are amongst the best in a broad field; excellent evidence of supporting junior researchers) ■ Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Crucial scientific question or knowledge gap – Potential for high health and/or socioeconomic impact – Internationally unique resource of value to many disciplines ■ Productivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for high return on investment – Very high likelihood of successful delivery (risks well managed) 	Fundable
9. Excellent – Internationally competitive and leading edge in most areas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Original and innovative – Novel methodology and design – Excellent research leadership (track record, team, environment, and collaborators e.g. among the best in a specialist area; excellent evidence of supporting junior researchers) ■ Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Crucial scientific question or knowledge gap – Potential for high health and/or socioeconomic impact – Internationally significant resource of value to many disciplines ■ Productivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for high return on investment – Very high likelihood of successful delivery (risks well managed) 	Fundable
8. Very High Quality – Internationally competitive and leading edge nationally	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Original and innovative – Robust methodology and design (innovative in parts) – Excellent research leadership (track record, team, environment, and collaborators; good evidence of supporting junior researchers) ■ Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Crucial scientific question or knowledge gap or area of strategic importance to the UK – Potential for high health and /or socioeconomic impact – Resource of value to many disciplines ■ Productivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for significant return on investment – Very high likelihood of successful delivery (risks well-managed) 	Fundable

7. High Quality – Leading edge nationally and internationally competitive in parts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Innovative – Robust methodology and design (innovative in parts) – Strong research leadership (track record, team, environment, and collaborators; good evidence of supporting junior researchers) ■ Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Key scientific question or knowledge gap or area of strategic importance to the UK – Potential for significant health and/or socioeconomic impact – Valuable scientific resource ■ Justification of Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for significant return on investment – High likelihood of successful delivery 	Fundable
6. High Quality – Leading edge nationally, but not yet internationally competitive	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Methodologically robust study – Good research leadership (track record, team, environment, and collaborators; some evidence of supporting junior researchers) ■ Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Worthwhile scientific question or knowledge gap – Justifiable scientific resource – Potential for reasonable health and/or socioeconomic impact ■ Productivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Resources appropriate to deliver the proposal – High likelihood of successful delivery 	Fundable
5. Good Quality – Nationally competitive	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Methodologically sound study but areas require significant revision – Leadership not optimal (track record, scope to strengthen team and/or collaborators; environment; some evidence of supporting junior researchers) – Poorly defined question ■ Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Worthwhile scientific question with potentially useful outcomes – Moderate likelihood of contributing to new knowledge generation ■ Productivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Resources broadly appropriate to deliver the proposal – Good likelihood of successful delivery 	Not fundable
4. Potentially Useful – With significant weaknesses	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Methodologically sound study (approach or study design requires significant revision) – Some Leadership potential (track record/environment not optimal; limited evidence of supporting junior researchers) ■ Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Contains potentially useful ideas but requires major revision – Moderate likelihood of successful delivery ■ Productivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Resources inappropriate to deliver the proposal – Unlikely to significantly contribute to new knowledge generation 	Not fundable
3. Potentially Useful – With major weaknesses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Question poorly defined – Methodologically weak study – Poor leadership ■ Productivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Unlikely to contribute to new knowledge generation 	Not fundable
2. Poor quality science, bordering on unacceptable	Not fundable
1. Unacceptable quality or has serious ethical concerns	Not fundable
0. Ineligible for funding	Not fundable