



# Child and Adolescent Eye Health Research

Collaborative Research Grant  
Funding Opportunity

Guidelines for Applicants:  
Full Application

## Summary

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This document guides you through the preparation and submission of an application for the Child and Adolescent Eye Health Research Grants.

The Medical Research Foundation will manage the application submission process for this funding call.

Full applications will be by invitation only. Applicants who have not submitted an Expression of Interest application will not be able to submit a full application.

All applications must be submitted via our online grants management system (<https://medicalresearchfoundation.flexigrant.com/>). Paper application forms will not be accepted.

### Deadline for Submission:

**12:00 Tuesday 13 February 2024**

We advise that you prepare your application in good time to allow for your Research Organisation's checks and approvals to take place in accordance with its internal timelines. 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 review processes:

Email: [research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk](mailto:research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk), Tel: 0204 581 2422 or 020 4581 2402

## Overview

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The Medical Research Foundation and Moorfields Eye Charity are inviting applications from researchers who are seeking to progress the field of Child and Adolescent Eye Health. The collaborative research grants aim to support research that will increase understanding of the mechanisms underpinning the full spectrum of eye health and disease in children and adolescents, including new methodologies, new or improved diagnosis, and treatments and cures.

Childhood and adolescent eye diseases and visual loss are associated with reduced wellbeing, increased need for educational support and ongoing eye problems into adulthood and later life. Investments have been made in adult eye conditions resulting in significant improvements in diagnostics and treatment options but research into child and adolescent eye disease remains an area of important investment. This funding call aims to support new research and research collaborations in this area, with the aim of bringing new research approaches to the field.

- Research grants of **up to £300,000 over 3 years will be available.**
- Applications are welcomed from researchers at all levels of seniority. We would particularly welcome collaborative grants led by the full spectrum of researchers working in the field, to allow multi-disciplinary and multi-professional projects. Expertise should be drawn from different research areas and professionals, allowing for collaboration between basic scientists, clinicians, optometrists, orthoptists and other allied health professionals.
- These grants cannot be used to fund PhD Studentships.
- The remit of the call will be the full spectrum of eye diseases and conditions usually seen in children or adolescents. Applications will be encouraged in common causes of vision loss to address areas where

there is a large impact on people's quality of life, but little progress has been made. Applications are not encouraged with a sole focus to conduct a genetics or genomics study, however, projects where genetic or genomic studies are carried out by collaborators or form part of the proposal, rather than the main focus, will be considered within scope.

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## The Funders

**The Medical Research Foundation** is an independent charitable foundation. Formed by the Medical Research Council (MRC) over 100 years ago, we grow and nurture people and ideas wherever we see research opportunities with great potential.

The research we fund is only possible thanks to the incredible generosity of our donors. This competition has been made possible by donations from the estates of Barbara Sofia Formi, Anne Catherine Burdon, Caroline Louise Stacey Pike, and Herman Spooner.

**Moorfields Eye Charity** is the main fundraising and grant making organisation for Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and its academic partner the UCL Institute of Ophthalmology. It's support enables Moorfields and UCL to provide world-leading eye care, research and education from the Oriel centre benefiting patients across the UK and globally.

If you would like to support this and other life-changing research you can make a donation or find out about other ways to get involved through the Medical Research Foundation's website: [medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk/](http://medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk/) or through Moorfields Eye Charity's website: [moorfieldseyecharity.org.uk/help-us-save-childrens-sight](http://moorfieldseyecharity.org.uk/help-us-save-childrens-sight).

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## The Funding

Applicants may apply for up to £300,000 to support their research, over a maximum of a 3-year period. There will be at least £1,700,000 available across this competition.

Research grants will be either jointly funded by both the Medical Research Foundation and Moorfields Eye Charity, or funded solely by the Medical Research Foundation if no component is based at Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust/UCL Institute of Ophthalmology. This will have no impact on the decision-making process, funding decisions will be based solely on quality and scientific merit of the application.

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## Who can apply

This competition is open to all UK-based researchers, clinical academics and allied health professionals at eligible institutions (UK HEIs, Research Council research institutes, hospitals, and other independent research organisations).

The focus of the research should be in the UK. International Co-Investigators and Collaborators can be included in the application, but the majority of the funds and research should be UK based.

Applications will be considered from researchers at all levels of seniority. Proposals that aim to build capacity through the next generation of researchers are encouraged; costs relating to postdoctoral salary, training and collaboration development in the UK and internationally are permitted. Applications led by multi-professional collaborations, for example basic scientists, clinicians and allied health professionals, are strongly encouraged to apply.

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

Only one application will be accepted per lead applicant, though individuals can hold more than one

Medical Research Foundation or Moorfields Eye Charity grant at any one time. Please contact the Foundation if you currently hold a Medical Research Foundation grant.

If you have any queries about your eligibility for the scheme, please contact the research team via email at: [research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk](mailto:research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk).

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## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Medical Research Foundation and Moorfields Eye Charity are committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants and aim to create an inclusive environment that encourages excellence in research through good equalities practice. Diversity is important to the Medical Research Foundation and Moorfields Eye Charity, and we are working to ensure that the ways in which we fund research embraces a diversity of thought, people, geographical locations and ideas.

We strongly encourage applications from under-represented groups including female and ethnic minority researchers, and researchers with disabilities or long-term health conditions. We will support our researchers and their teams to work flexibly and in a way that meets their personal circumstances. Guidance on the Medical Research Foundation flexible working policies can be found in our [Terms and Conditions](#). Please contact the Research Team if you have any questions about flexible working: [research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk](mailto:research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk).

The Medical Research Foundation and Moorfields Eye Charity encourage lead applicants to consider the diversity of the research team, as well as area of expertise, when inviting Collaborators to support their application.

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## 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 and any additional T&Cs in the resulting award letter.

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.

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## Key dates

- Deadline for Expression of Interest submission: 12:00 Wednesday 15 November 2023
- Invite to Full Application: 15 December 2023
- Deadline for Full Application submission: 12:00 Tuesday 13 February 2024
- Shortlisting notification – request for rebuttal: June 2024
- Deadline for rebuttal: Early July 2024

- Funding decision: July 2024
- Feedback on funding decision: August 2024

## Review and selection

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### Review and selection process

Applications will be externally peer reviewed and then assessed by an Expert Review Panel, consisting of independent scientific experts in the field. Applications will be assessed on their scientific quality and impact, the collaboration, and the potential for impact on the field. The Expert Review Panel will take into account career stage and contributions of the applicants as well as the proposed use of funds. The Expert Review Panel will also consider the potential of the proposed research to lead to future research and funding, impact on child and adolescent eye diseases research, understanding and scientific progress.

The Medical Research Foundation and Moorfields Eye Charity encourages applications from researchers that have included Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) in the proposal design and/or over the course of the proposed research.

### Confidentiality

The proposal and any additional details submitted will be sent 'in confidence' to reviewers and the Expert Review Panel. While assessing proposals, our experts may sometimes need to consult with colleagues, in confidence, about individual applications.

### Declarations of Interest

If a proposal presents a potential conflict of interest for any of the Expert Review Panel, Moorfields Eye Charity Scientific Advisory Panel or either organisation's Boards of Trustees or teams, the individual with a conflict will not be involved in the discussion of the application and in the decision-making process.

### Terms and Conditions of Award

Jointly funded awards made through this competition will follow standard Medical Research Foundation [Terms and Conditions](#) with additional terms relevant to Moorfields Eye Charity. Awards funded only by Medical Research Foundation will follow standard Medical Research Foundation Terms and Conditions. The Joint Funder's Terms and Conditions spell out the responsibilities of the Principal Investigator and the Lead Research Organisation. The Principal Investigator and the Lead Research Organisation are required to indicate their formal acceptance of the application, their acceptance of the terms and conditions, and the approval of the salaries and resources sought in the application. The Funders may add additional conditions to an award to reflect the particular circumstances and requirements of the funding, or the nature of a particular award. Acceptance of an award constitutes acceptance of both the core conditions and any additional conditions. The Funders reserve the right to vary these Terms and Conditions.

## Application guidance notes

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The information provided in this section provides guidance on completing the application form on the Medical Research Foundation online grants management system (<https://medicalresearchfoundation.flexigrant.com/>). Guidance is provided within the system itself and this additional guidance will also be available on our [website](#).

Please clearly label all uploaded 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.

Email: [research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk](mailto:research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk) Tel: 0204 581 2422 or 020 4581 2402.

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## Submitting CVs

Lead applicants are required to submit a CV using the Medical Research Foundation Résumé for Researchers CV template. A word version of the template is available on our [website](#) and within the online application form.

The Résumé for Researchers is an open-source template which has been developed by The Royal Society as a tool to more broadly evaluate researchers, particularly at the early career stages. The template has been adopted and adapted by the Medical Research Foundation as it supports the Foundation's approach of considering a wider view of contribution to the research landscape, at all career stages, not based solely on publication record.

Applicants are encouraged to provide examples of their impact outside of publications lists, although these should still be provided. Examples such as collaborative working, effective leadership, coaching and mentoring as well as inspiring others are welcomed.

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### Career progression disruptions and Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant and variable impact on researchers' careers across the world. The Medical Research Foundation is committed to helping mitigate this as much as possible through our grantmaking policies and practices. The Foundation is pleased to support the UK Academy of Medical Sciences Cross-funder COVID-19 memory statement as co-signatories; please see [our website](#) for further details.

There is a dedicated space within the CV template to detail how your career progression has been impacted by COVID-19. Additionally, guidance will be given to our Expert Reviewers and Panel Members so that they are able to take these impacts on an applicant's career into account when they are making funding recommendations.

Applicants are also provided with space to detail any other career disruptions (e.g. parental leave, ill health) that may have impacted their progression. Please only share details that you are comfortable with being shared with the Panel and do not include identifying information about third parties.

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### Contribution to knowledge generation

This section can be used to explain how you have contributed to the generation of new ideas and hypotheses and which key skills you have used to develop ideas and test hypotheses. It can be used to highlight how you have communicated your ideas and research results, both written and verbally. It can include a small selection of outputs, with a description of why they are of particular relevance and why they are considered in the context of knowledge generation. Outputs can include (but is not limited to) open data sets, software, commercial, entrepreneurial or industrial products, clinical practice developments, educational products, policy publications, evidence synthesis pieces and conference publications that you have generated. Where outputs have a digital object identifier (DOI) please only include this.

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### Contribution to the development of individuals

This section can be used to highlight expertise you provided which was critical to the success of a team or team members including project management, collaborative contributions, and team support. It can include your teaching activities, workshops or summer schools in which you were involved (for undergraduates and post-graduates as well as junior colleagues), and the supervision of students and colleagues. It can be used to mention mentoring of members in your field and support you provided to the advancement of colleagues, be it junior or senior. It can be used to highlight the establishment of collaborations, from institutional (maybe interdisciplinary) to international. It can be used to describe where you exerted strategic leadership, how you shaped the direction of a team, organisation, company or institution.

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### Contribution to the wider research community

This section can include various activities you have engaged in to progress the research community. It can be used to mention commitments including editing, reviewing, refereeing, committee work and your contributions to the evaluation of researchers and research projects. It can be used to mention the organisation of events that have benefited your research community. It can highlight contributions to increasing research integrity, and improving research culture (gender equality, diversity, mobility of researchers, reward and recognition of researchers' various activities). It can be used to mention appointments to positions of responsibility such as committee membership and corporate roles within your department, institution or organisation, and recognition by invitation within your sector.

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### Contribution to broader society

This section can include examples of societal engagement and knowledge exchange. It can include engagement with industry and the private sector. It can be used to mention engagement with the public sector, clients and the broader public. It can be used to highlight positive stakeholder feedback, inclusion of patients in processes and clinical trials, and other impacts across research, policy, practice and business. It can be used to mention efforts to collaborate with particular societal or patient groups. It can be used to highlight efforts to advise policy-makers at local, national or international level and provide information through the press and on social media.

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## Application form question guidance

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### Section 1: Principal Investigator details

There can only be one Lead/Principal Investigator. Additional project Co-Investigators can be included in the sections 2-5. A maximum of four Co-Investigators can be included. Additional Co-Investigators or Collaborators not listed in the Expression of Interest can be added to the application form.

Any other individuals involved in the application can be listed as collaborators in the following sections, 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.

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### Section 2-5: Co-Investigator details and career summary

Please provide career history details of up to four Co-Investigators. A Co-Investigator is a person who assists the Principal Investigator in the management and leadership of the research and is named as such in the application. Co-Investigators will be required to submit a standard 2-page CV, If the CV's are not within these limits, the application will be returned.

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## Section 6: Lay Case for Support

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 eye health in children and adolescents. This section may be reviewed by lay and scientific experts.

For more information on how to write a clear and informative lay summary please use the following resources:

- [INVOLVE plain English summaries](#)
- [The Plain English Campaign](#)

1. **Lay Title:** The title should be descriptive and in a lay language.
2. **Lay Abstract:** This should outline: the background to the problem; the aims and purposes of your proposal and why they are important; a brief experimental plan; and potential patient benefit.
3. **Background:** Briefly and clearly explain the context of your research, the particular area(s) that your proposal seeks to address and the need for further understanding or treatment options. Please avoid going into great detail of the condition in question unless it is rare.
4. **Hypothesis and aims:** What are the questions you hope to answer and why?

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## Section 7: Research proposal

The scientific abstract should be written in a form understandable to an academic audience.

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.

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### Case for Support

Provide details of the proposed collaborative research project. 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 for applications should not exceed **8 A4 pages** PDF, including appendices and references (size 12 Arial font, 2 cm margins, references can be in size 8 Arial font, or DOI list). If the Case for Support is not within these limits, the application will be returned.

The detailed Case for Support 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 collaborative



research project in detail (for example giving and explaining sample sizes, methods of recruitment and trial designs). It is not necessary to describe each experiment (if relevant), but sufficient detail is required to show why the research is likely to be competitive. Where human participants are involved, consideration should be given to how diversity factors such as sex, ethnicity and age are included and accounted for in the study design.

It is strongly encouraged that projects include opportunities for training and development of early-career researchers, such as new postdoctoral researchers.

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 Organisations. 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.

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#### Gender dimension of research

The Medical Research Foundation expects that applicants will consider the gender dimension of their research proposal. Gender dimension in this instance refers not to the diversity of the research team (which should also be considered), but the sex and gender component of the experimental design that involves human participants, animal studies, human and animal tissues, and cell lines.

Sex refers to the biological attributes of humans and animals, such as genes, chromosomes, hormone levels and reproductive organs. Sex can be referred to as male, female and intersex in humans or hermaphrodite in animals.

*Gender* refers to the social and cultural attributes of human behaviour. How individuals refer to gender will vary depending on social and cultural context and this can also vary over time.

Applicants should include the following information:

1. How the biological variable of sex will be taken into account in the experimental design with regards to research methods, data analysis and interpretation, and dissemination of findings.
2. How the socio-cultural variable of gender will be taken into account in the experimental design with regards to research methods, data analysis and interpretation, and dissemination of findings.

3. How the impact of the findings may affect different sex and genders differently.

If sex and or gender do not need to be taken into account, applicants will need justify why. For instance, the Medical Research Foundation expects that both sexes of animals will be used in animal experiments as the default, and that cost or previous published data are not sufficient justifications to use only one sex.

Please refer to the [MRC guidance on sex and gender in experimental designs](#).

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#### Collaborative team

The awards are intended to support collaborative teams and multi-professional approaches.

The benefits of an award to a collaborative team should be described, including the individual roles of the Co-Is and Collaborators. The potential impact of the collaboration and its future beyond the lifetime of an award should be considered.

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#### Collaborators

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.

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#### 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.

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#### Data Management Plan

The Medical Research Foundation is committed to ensuring that the knowledge and discoveries which result from our funded research are available freely and immediately to everyone. Data Management Plan (DMP) will be required to detail how you will collect, store, curate, and manage data, including how it will be shared and any open access requirements.

Where substantial data is generated from the research, the DMP will be more in depth and therefore likely to be up to 1500 words long. For studies generating smaller amounts of data, DMPs will be short i.e. 200-500 word in total.

The [MRC Policy and Guidance on Sharing of Research Data from Population and Patient Studies](#) is a useful reference for data relating to studies involving human participation.

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### Section 8: Use of Animals in Research

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, regardless of which country the research is carried out in,](#) and the research is planned and conducted according to the [3Rs](#).

If the project involves the use of animals in the UK, 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. UK Home Office licences will only be required when research involving animals is being conducted within the UK. If your research involves animal use outside of the UK, complete the relevant questions regarding national and local ethical approval for animal research and describe how your research complies with UK animal procedure regulations.

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## **Section 9: Human participation and ethical approval**

If the project involves the use of human participants and/or organs, tissues or cells relevant to The Human Tissue Act 2004 (England, Wales and N. Ireland) and The Human Tissue (Scotland) Act 2006 in the UK, please detail the relevant ethical approvals.

If ethical approval is required for the research proposal, please provide details of the relevant approvals.

If your research involves the use of human participants and/or organs, tissues or cells outside the UK, please provide details in the relevant questions. Describe how your research complies with relevant UK regulations. Applications involving human participants in countries outside of the UK may be subject to additional ethical implications.

Please see the MRC guidance related to [Human Participants in Research](#) for further direction on research involving human participants in countries outside of the UK.

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## **Section 10: Intellectual property**

Please detail any intellectual property that this project will generate, either during or beyond the lifetime of the award. Please include details of any existing background intellectual property that will need to be used and/or modified and plans for ownership of this intellectual property.

If intellectual property is likely to be generated, a letter of support will be required from your departmental IP Manager/Head of Technology Transfer Unit.

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## **Section 11: Funding requested**

The full directly incurred costs of research will be met. Directly incurred 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 and Moorfields Eye Charity do not meet most directly allocated costs or the indirect costs of research.

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

Applications can include requests for the costs of:

- Lead applicant salary including annual pay-scale increments but excluding predicted annual pay awards and overheads for lead applicants who do not have tenured University positions
- The salary of lead applicants or co-investigators where it is necessary for them to be "bought out" to contribute to the research, for example NHS clinicians. This does not usually apply to academic teaching time
- 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 publishing costs (up to £6,000 for grant durations of a three-year minimum)
- Public and Patient Engagement work that is directly relevant to the delivery of the proposed research
- Any other direct costs of the proposed research

Research Grants will not fund:

- Any directly allocated costs i.e. estate costs and costs of shared resources such as staff and equipment.
- Percentage contributions to PI or Co-I salary, unless to 'buy out' time for research as described above
- Collaborator salary
- PhD studentships
- 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
- Generic 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. This award is to support a collaborative project. However, funds will be awarded to the Lead Research Organisation to support all parties.

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## Sections 12-14: Authorisation and Declarations

Authorisations and/or declarations are needed from the following application participants:

- Principal Investigator
- Research Administrator
- Head of Department

Participants should be invited to complete their sections of the application by following the instructions under the participants tab on the Application Summary page. Please check which email address they would like to use, as they may already be registered on Flexi-Grant and mistakes may lead to a delay in processing the application.

Applicants can keep track of the progress of submission completion status on the Application Summary page. Applicants can issue a reminder email to the invited participants through the participants tab on the Application Summary page. If the instruction email from the Medical Research Foundation has not been received please: a) double check the accuracy of the email address supplied on the application form; b) advise the intended recipient to check their spam filters/junk folders; c) contact the Medical Research Foundation with an alternative email address for the recipient. The Medical Research Foundation is happy to help where possible but cannot be held responsible for automated emails that are not received due to address errors or spam filters.

All declarations must be signed by the appropriate persons prior to the submission of the application. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that approval of the application by the Lead Research Organisation is completed before the closing date.

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### Principal Investigator

The Principal Investigator is required to report any conflicts of interest and is required to declare that they will abide by the Funder's Terms and Conditions and will be actively engaged in the proposed research.

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### Research Administrator

A Research Administrator at the Lead Research Organisation should be invited to approve the application ("Administrative Authority"). They must be someone with delegated authority at the Lead Research Organisation, where the award will be held. This may be someone within the research office, Faculty administration, or other administrative or management role. The approver must be someone with the authority to confirm that the potential award can be hosted within their organisation and assure the proposed budget is appropriate and eligible for the scheme.

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### Head of Department

The Head of Department must provide a statement of support and authorise the application confirming that the potential award can be hosted within their organisation and that there is the capacity to deliver the proposed research. The Head of Department should state how the applicant will be supported to focus on their proposed research, for example by being released from competing duties such as teaching or administrative commitments. Additionally, they should provide details of the resources that the department will commit to the applicant should the application be successful.

Before inviting the Head of Department to participate in completion of the application form, applicant is advised to ensure that their Head of Department is willing and available to provide a confirmation of support prior to the deadline. Incomplete confirmations will mean that an application cannot be submitted and will be deemed ineligible.

It is the responsibility of the lead applicant to inform the Head of Department of the deadline and liaise with them to ensure that they have received their invitation with instructions to participate in completion of the application.

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### Application submission

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](mailto:research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk) Tel: 0204 581 2422 or 020 4581 2402.

# Appendices

## Scoring Range for Peer Reviewers

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

<b>Very High Quality – Internationally competitive in parts</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Scientific Quality and Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Very important scientific question or knowledge gap or area of strategic importance to the UK</li> <li>– Original and innovative research questions</li> <li>– Robust methodology and design (innovative in parts)</li> <li>– Potential for high health and/or socioeconomic impact</li> <li>– Outputs will be internationally significant in part (leading edge nationally) and of value across the child and adolescent eye health field</li> <li>– Strong multi-disciplinary collaborative group to support the proposal</li> <li>– Very high likelihood of successful delivery</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Scientific Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Excellent research leadership (track record, team, environment, and collaborators)</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Justification of Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Potential for significant return on investment (resources requested, likelihood of project delivery, anticipated knowledge generation)</li> <li>– Appropriate staff time allocated to deliver project (Principal investigators and co-investigators)</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Other: Ethical and/or governance issues are fully considered</li> </ul>	4
<b>High Quality</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Scientific Quality and Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Worthwhile scientific question or knowledge gap or a valuable scientific resource</li> <li>– Interesting research questions in part</li> <li>– Methodologically sound study</li> <li>– Potential for reasonable health and/or socioeconomic impact</li> <li>– Outputs of reasonable value across the child and adolescent eye health field</li> <li>– Good multi-disciplinary collaborative group to support the proposal</li> <li>– High likelihood of successful delivery</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Scientific Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Strong research leadership (track record, team, environment, and collaborators)</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Justification of Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Potential for significant return on investment (resources requested, likelihood of project delivery, anticipated knowledge generation)</li> <li>– Appropriate staff time allocated to deliver project (Principal investigators and co-investigators)</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Other: Ethical and/or governance issues are well considered (may be scope to strengthen management of the project)</li> </ul>	3
<b>Good Quality</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Scientific Quality and Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Worthwhile scientific question or knowledge gap or a valuable scientific resource</li> <li>– Limited research questions</li> <li>– Methodologically sound study but areas require revision</li> <li>– Potentially valuable outputs across the child and adolescent eye health field</li> <li>– Adequate multi-disciplinary collaborative group to support the proposal</li> <li>– Reasonable likelihood of successful delivery</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Scientific Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Appropriate research leadership, with limited evidence of supporting and developing junior researchers (scope to strengthen team, environment, and collaborators)</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Justification of Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Potentially more limited return on investment (resources requested, likelihood of project delivery, anticipated knowledge generation)</li> <li>– Resources broadly appropriate to deliver the proposal</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Other: Ethical and/or governance issues are adequately considered</li> </ul>	
<b>Poor Quality</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Scientific Quality and Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Poorly defined question</li> <li>– Methodologically weak study</li> <li>– Limited likelihood of new knowledge generation</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Scientific Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Poor research leadership, no evidence of supporting and developing junior researchers</li> <li>– Poor multi-disciplinary collaborative group to support the proposal</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Justification of Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Potentially poor return on investment</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Other: Ethical and/or governance issues are not adequately considered</li> </ul>	1
<b>Ineligible for funding</b>	
	0



## Scoring Range for Expert Review Panel

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

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Productivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Resources inappropriate to deliver the proposal</li> <li>– Unlikely to significantly contribute to new knowledge generation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>3. Potentially Useful – With major weaknesses</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Question poorly defined</li> <li>– Methodologically weak study</li> <li>– Poor leadership</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Productivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Unlikely to contribute to new knowledge generation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Not fundable</b>
<b>2. Poor quality science, bordering on unacceptable</b>	<b>Not fundable</b>
<b>1. Unacceptable quality or has serious ethical concerns</b>	<b>Not fundable</b>
<b>0. Ineligible for funding</b>	<b>Not fundable</b>