BACKGROUND TO RESPONSIVE MODE

Throughout the year, you can apply for funding within one of the MRC’s science areas through the responsive mode funding scheme. Your application will be reviewed by the relevant research board:

- Infections and Immunity Board
- Neurosciences and Mental Health Board
- Molecular and Cellular Medicine Board
- Populations and Systems Medicine Board

Within this scheme you can apply for one of the following grant types:

- New Investigator Research Grant
- Programme Grant
- Research Grant
- Partnership Grant

For more information please see the link below: [http://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/how-we-fund-research/](http://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/how-we-fund-research/)

DEADLINES

Please see the MRC deadline page for details of deadlines for the Research Boards detailed above. The deadline for submission on JeS (by RS) will be 4pm on the day of the deadline. Your application must be with RS 5 working days ahead of the funder deadline. [https://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/deadlines/](https://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/deadlines/)

APPLYING TO MRC THROUGH YOUR DEPARTMENT AND RESEARCH SERVICES

Your department is likely to have an internal deadline ahead of the RS deadline so contact your departmental grants office as soon as possible to notify them of your intended application and to check the internal deadline. Your contact in your department will discuss your application with you and generate an accurate costing for your application using X5 (Oxford’s research costing and pricing tool). Once your application has been finalised they will send it through to RS for review and submission to the funder.

NEW INVESTIGATOR RESEARCH GRANTS

The RS notes below relate to New Investigator Research Grants and are intended to supplement the in-depth information provided by the MRC, detailed below. Please consult these documents when preparing your application.

[http://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/how-we-fund-research/new-investigator-research-grant/](http://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/how-we-fund-research/new-investigator-research-grant/)

In brief:

- Funding is usually for 3 years, but grants may be awarded for longer periods.
- Grants are aimed at senior Postdoctoral Researchers or individuals near the start of their first lectureship who are ready to become independent Principal Investigators. Applicants must have a PhD and between 3 and 10 years post-doctoral experience.
- To demonstrate their support for the proposal, the host research organisation is required to commit to funding a greater percentage of the applicant’s salary than for other schemes.

HOST INSTITUTION COMMITMENT

- ALL proposals must include a Head of Department Statement of Support which must be countersigned by the Vice Chancellor. Proposals without this statement will be rejected by the MRC. Please send a copy of your statement of commitment (signed by your Head of Department) to the Vice Chancellor’s
office well in advance (at least 10 working days) of the Research Board deadline to ensure this is signed in time for submission to the MRC.

- The statement should be uploaded to the JeS form as a letter of support but should be clearly differentiated from other letters by the document title.

- The statement of support must address the following points:
  - What steps the University will take to demonstrate its commitment to your career development: the suitability of the environment and the Institution’s commitment are significant factors in the Boards’ consideration of NIRG proposals
  - Evidence of the applicant’s supervisory experience
  - Whether there was an internal procedure for selecting or assessing NIRG applications at your institution
  - (If you are currently based outside of Oxford, or the department you are applying with) assurance that the department will be willing to host you for the duration of the award
  - (For applicants without permanent university posts) an assurance that the department will seriously consider you for a permanent position during the lifetime of the award
  - Confirmation of your starting salary (give the 100% figure)

- Ensure that you’ve used the NIRG-specific CV template for the applicant’s CV – available at: http://www.mrc.ac.uk/documents/pdf/new-investigator-research-grant-annex/

- Co-Investigators are only permitted if they bring extra expertise from an outside field. The applicant’s current supervisor or lab head should not be a co-investigator but if they are providing expertise to the project, the details of what they are providing can be included in the Case for Support. Other researchers may be included as named collaborators in the Case for Support, but CVs for them should NOT be included in the application.

- Applicants must include a declaration that they have created the research question and written the research proposal. This can be in the form of a letter which is uploaded as an attachment to the Je-S form, or as a paragraph included within the scientific case for support.

- Letters from project partners should be attached as ‘Letters of Support’ to the application (please see checklist below for further information). If a collaborator is from the same organisation as the PI or if they are simply providing expertise to the project, then they should be included in the Case for Support, but no letter of support should be attached.

### SCHEME-SPECIFIC TIPS

- Ensure that you’ve used the NIRG-specific CV template for the applicant’s CV – available at: http://www.mrc.ac.uk/documents/pdf/new-investigator-research-grant-annex/
- Co-Investigators are only permitted if they bring extra expertise from an outside field. The applicant’s current supervisor or lab head should not be a co-investigator but if they are providing expertise to the project, the details of what they are providing can be included in the Case for Support. Other researchers may be included as named collaborators in the Case for Support, but CVs for them should NOT be included in the application.

### GENERAL TIPS FOR MRC APPLICATIONS

#### JeS form

- Check whether your research topic falls within one of the MRC’s priority areas: (http://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/how-we-fund-research/highlight-notices/). If it does be sure to highlight this in your proposal.
- Attachments: adhere to page limits (see Annex 1 below); use font size 11 and Arial or equivalent font
- The applicant’s CV should be uploaded using the NIRG CV template, see checklist below for the link to this document. Other CVs can be free-text, and should be 2 pages long. Publications for all named researchers including the applicant should be uploaded as a separate document (1 page) for every named researcher.
- Pay special attention to contents of the Justification of Resources (JOR) (See Annex 1 below, for details). **Cross-check the JoR and the Je-S form for consistency.**
- **Impact:** The impact summary should detail ‘who’ will benefit and ‘how’ they will benefit from the impact, whereas the Pathways to Impact document (see Annex 1 for further information) should focus on ‘what’ you are going to do to ensure that the impact occurs.
MRC’s guidance for research using animals has recently changed. Please see the link below for information as to what needs to be included with your application (section 4).

For further guidance on completion of the Je-S form see: [https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index.htm](https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/Index.htm)

### Industry Collaborations
- Applications may include industrial collaborators as project partners (providing cash or in-kind contributions) – in this case you will be required to include a [MICA form](#) (see link below) and a [Heads of Terms](#) document with your full application. Research Services will assist with the Heads of Terms document, but we ask that you notify Research Services of your application (and the requirement for the Heads of Terms document) as soon as possible to ensure this can be prepared in time for the funder deadline. For further information on industry collaborations, and the MICA and Heads of Terms forms, please see the: [http://www.mrc.ac.uk/innovation/mrc-industry-collaboration-agreement-mica/](http://www.mrc.ac.uk/innovation/mrc-industry-collaboration-agreement-mica/)

### Financial Details
- Your departmental grants contact office will be able to advise on or assist with the financial details for your application form, based on the X5 costing (administrators should refer to the details below for further guidance on the costing for this scheme).

### Equipment
- Individual items of equipment valued under £10,000 (incl. VAT) should be included under “other DI costs” and will be funded at 80%.
- Individual items of equipment valued between £10,000 and £134,011 (incl. VAT) will only be funded at 50%. Make sure that the requirement for the equipment is fully justified in the Justification of Resources.
- Individual items of equipment costing more than £134,011 (incl. VAT) will only be funded at 50%. A two page business case will be required which is uploaded as an attachment to the proposal.

Research Services can advise on sources of matched funding as required.

For full equipment details, and required format for business cases see: [RCUK Guidance](#).

#### COSTING INFORMATION FOR THE DEPARTMENTAL GRANTS OFFICE

**X5**
- Ensure that the most up-to-date X5 rate files are used.
- Ensure that the external collaborator tab has been completed where necessary. Where collaborators are included in your proposal, and their costs are on our Je-S form, please ensure that written evidence from the collaborators’ institution is provided to Research Services stating the value of costs associated with their contribution.

**Salary**
- MRC will only pay up to 64% of the applicant’s salary for the hours worked on the grant and not the standard 80%.
- The amount of time attributed by the applicant to the NIRG project must be commensurate with career stage and academic responsibilities. More junior applicants would be expected to spend up to 100% of their time on the NIRG project, whereas more senior applicants may attribute fewer hours per week to the NIRG, at a minimum of 10 hours per week.
- The X5 and JeS form will need to be completed to reflect the MRCs funding pattern for this scheme. How to achieve this is outlined below:
  - On X5, complete the FTE level to reflect the amount of time the applicant will be spending on the grant, and complete the salary details as normal.
  - On the JeS form for ‘starting salary’ you should put 80% of the actual starting salary for the applicant (irrespective of time spent on grant). For the figure ‘Total cost on grant’ for the PI - go to the X5 price
screen, open up the DI staff line and find the FAC figure for the applicant. Put 80% of this value on the JeS form.
  o To ensure your X5 matches the total price on the JeS form, in the price tab on X5 change the ‘actual %’ box for the PI only to 64%.
  o It is also important that the confirmation of starting salary in the HoD statement of support confirms the applicant’s actual (100%) starting salary.

Inputting financial details into the JeS form

- For all academic/research posts, the increment date will be 1st October 2018; for technician posts this will be 1st August 2018. Clinical posts will increment on 1st April 2018.
- All Oxford facilities costs listed as a DI cost in X5 should be listed under the ‘Other DI costs’ section in JeS (not under the ‘Research Facilities/Equipment’ section).
- Equipment: Please see above for details regarding equipment funding for MRC
# Annex 1 – New Investigator Research Grants: Applicant Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Information</th>
<th>Max. Page Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eligibility</strong></td>
<td>Aimed at Senior Postdoctoral Researchers or individuals near the start of their first lectureship who are ready to become independent principal investigators; applicants must have a PhD and between 3 and 10 years post-doctoral experience.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Budget** | - Discuss with relevant Departmental contact and obtain X5 costing  
- Check that Je-S form Finance section matches the X5 costing | - |
| **Start Date** | Should be realistic (based on published funder decision dates), and should match that detailed on the X5 | - |
| **Salary** | - Ensure the applicant’s salary has been filled in correctly in the JeS form as per the guidance above.  
- Ensure the HOD statement of support confirms your 100% starting salary. | - |
| **Attachments** | All attachments must use non-serif font, i.e. Arial, min. size 11. A minimum of single line and standard character spacing with 2cm margins must be used. | See below |
| **Use of animals** | Ensure that you’ve adhered to the MRC’s policy for research involving animals in both your attachments and the JeS form. See section 4 of: https://www.mrc.ac.uk/documents/pdf/guidance-for-applicants-and-award-holders/ | - |
| **Project Partners** | Project partners must not be from the same organisation as the applicant. To qualify as a Project Partner, each party must be prepared to contribute something tangible to the project, and this must be detailed in the Project Partner section of the JeS form. If you are unable to estimate the value of their contribution please put ‘£1’ in the relevant section of the table on the JeS form. | - |

## Attachments - mandatory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Information</th>
<th>Max. Page Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **HoD statement of support** | - Signed by HoD and countersigned by Vice Chancellor  
- Addresses the requested points as outlined above | - |
| **Applicant’s declaration** | - Either included as a letter attachment or as a section in the case for support. | - |
| **Case for Support (CfS)** | - Ensure you have followed the NIRG criteria for Co-Investigators and collaborators. Are all collaborators named in the Case for Support (but not listed as co-Investigators and with no CVs provided)? | Total = 8 |
| **Justification of Resources (JoR)** | - **Fully justify** all costs except estates/indirect costs/Infrastructure Technicians. The justification should not just repeat the list of resources requested; explain why each is needed for the project.  
- Computing costs **must** be properly justified: explain both why they are required and why the department cannot meet these costs.  
- Give examples of the conferences you wish to attend and why these are most relevant to the project.  
- Animal usage must be fully justified - ensure you’ve adhered to MRC’s guidelines for justifying animals, available in the link below (section 4).  
- See section 2.5. of the link below for further information on the JOR | 2 |
Pathways to Impact
• Must not just repeat the impact summary. Must be specific to the project and contain steps which will be taken to ensure impact is achieved, including timelines.
• See section 2.6 of: https://www.mrc.ac.uk/documents/pdf/guidance-for-applicants-and-award-holders/ for more details.

Applicant’s CV
• Use the NIRG CV template: http://www.mrc.ac.uk/documents/pdf/new-investigator-research-grant-annex

Researcher CV(s)
• Required for Co-Is (if any), and named research staff (not required for named technicians). Do not include publications in CV documents.

Publications list(s)
• Required for PI, Co-Is, and named research staff (not required for named technicians). Should be uploaded as 1 separate attachment per named researcher.

Data Management Plan
• Length depends on type of research; please see https://www.mrc.ac.uk/documents/pdf/guidance-for-applicants-and-award-holders/ for further details.

Optional attachments – depending on content of application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project partner letter of support (LoS)</th>
<th>Required for each Project Partner. Must state the value of the Project Partner’s contribution and be on dated, signed and headed paper. The contribution listed must match that detailed in the JeS form. Must state the capacity in which the signatory is signing-off the listed contribution. Should be specific to the current application. • Please see above for details of MICA and Heads of Terms documents required for industry collaborations.</th>
<th>2 pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covering letter</td>
<td>• Use a covering letter to explain conflict of interest, requests not to use certain reviewers and, if the application is a re-submission, how the application differs from previous versions. <strong>The covering letter is not to be used for any details which should be included in other attachments, such as the case for support.</strong> • Can be used to include the applicant’s declaration.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other letters of support</td>
<td>• Other letters of support are not allowable.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>