NIHR Imperial Biomedical Research Centre (BRC)

CALL FOR INFECTION and ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTNCE PILOT PROJECTS

Deadline: 5pm Friday 13ᵗʰ October 2023 by email to m.gunaratnam@imperial.ac.uk

The NIHR Imperial BRC Infection and AMR Theme has funding available to support small pilot projects, up to £50,000 that align to the Themes Core Objectives.

1. Scope and Criteria

Proposals will be assessed against the following key criteria:

- Will the proposed work help deliver clinical and biomedical research that meets the Theme objectives?

i) To develop improved approaches to preventing infection (potentially supported by human challenge studies)
ii) To identify new diagnostic markers to determine viral/bacterial infection and novel means for rapid diagnosis
iii) To evaluate the impact of rapid diagnostics on clinical pathways
iv) To identify novel therapeutic agents and better ways to use existing therapeutics

- Are the financial expenditure plans achievable within the time period?
- Does the proposal provide evidence for operational readiness (e.g. ethics, consents, samples, staff in place) so that expenditure can begin rapidly?
- What outcomes will be delivered as a result of this funding?

Additional criteria that will be considered:

- Proposals should be scientifically sound and innovative
- Proposals should be aligned to one or more of the Theme's objectives
- Proposals should aim to deliver benefits to the NHS and its patients, ideally working with patients
- Plans should be sufficiently realistic and detailed to deliver the proposed outputs
- Are there any risks to delivery and how have these been mitigated?
- Track record & performance in acknowledging the BRC in prior publications
- Cross-BRC Theme and cross-Department/Faculty engagement is encouraged
- Lay language when answering questions 6,7 and 8 as these questions will be scored by theme Community Partners
- Pilot studies suitable to generate future funding are encouraged
- Small grants to convene meetings, etc will be considered if clearly aligned to theme objectives and/or will help deliver impact

In addition to the theme's primary objectives, in future the theme is looking to develop:

- Studies in social care settings
- Studies using remote monitoring/diagnostic approaches
- Projects relevant for pandemic preparedness

Applications from early career researchers are encouraged, particularly if they are likely to support future funding opportunities.

Total funding for this call is in the region of £250K, value for money will be considered closely in applications

2. Project Costings

- Ideally, proposals costs should be developed using WorkTribe, but where capacity is not available indicative costs should be provided (a worktribe will be required if funded, and costs will be reviewed at this time). Depts should select internal Scheme and costings will need to have been agreed in outline by the relevant Department (an e-mail signifying this will suffice).
- The WorkTribe record should be attached to your application.
- Budgets need to be broken down into financial years (Apr-Mar)
- Applicants are reminded to consider and include any costs that may need to be incurred within partner Trusts to deliver proposals (particularly around the use of the iCARE Trusted Research Environment).
- Projects will be funded for a maximum of 24 months starting no earlier than 01 December 2023
- Any salary costs requested should not duplicate resources already provided for by the BRC
- New posts are unlikely to be recruited in time to deliver significant value and therefore will not be supported.
- Costs for meetings may be included in the applications
- Eligible costs may include salary support and consumables. Animal costs and equipment costing more than £5K are ineligible.
- These awards will not support any estate costs, indirect costs or PI time.
- Projects must adhere to all BRC contractual terms and conditions.
- External collaboration and the use of external samples and datasets are permitted. However, all expenditure must be incurred within the Imperial BRC (College or ICHT).

3. Eligibility

Any clinical academic member of staff with an employment contract with either Imperial College London , Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust may apply, Chelsea and Westminster Foundation Trust and Northwest . In summary:

- o College substantive employee who has a clinical affiliation with ICHT or any of the other NHS Associate Partners in our application.

- o Substantive employee of ICHT or any of the other NHS Associate Partners WITH an honorary research contract with the College. In this case they can apply for pilot project funding with a college-substantive employee as co-investigator (this enables us to manage the funds with a clear line of accountability through a P code with a partner budget for NHS Associate Partner). As project work is expected to take place within the NIHR Imperial BRC, a *substantive employment association with Imperial College London is required in these cases*.

- o We wouldn't consider eligible anyone who is a substantive employee of ICHT or any of the other NHS Associate Partners WITHOUT an honorary research contract with the College.

Notes:

In general, priority will be given to junior and mid-career applicants. All applicants must hold a contract of employment which extends to at least the end of the proposed project and all applicants must have secured departmental approval prior to submission.

Applications likely to accelerate impact of existing work or lead to larger grant submission in future will be prioritised.

4. Application Review

The deadline for submission of proposals is 13th October , 2023. Proposals will be assessed by a sub-group of the Infection and AMR Executive Committee. Applications will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria outlined above. Key dates are as follows:

18th September, 2023	Call launch
13th October, 2023	Deadline for submission of proposals
1st November,2023	Shortlisting and funding decisions meeting
15th November, 2023	Notification of successful proposals
1st December, 2023	Earliest Project Start Date

5. Reporting & Monitoring Requirements

Successful awardees will be required to show evidence of expenditure beginning as indicated within the proposal plan. If progress and/or expenditure is deemed unsatisfactory, continuation of funding may be terminated and funds re-allocated.

A brief final report showing outputs and deliverables achieved with this funding will be expected within 1 month of project end date.

6. Acknowledgement of BRC Funding

BRC funding includes an assessment of publications acknowledging the centre. Investigators should routinely included the wording " XX is supported in part by the NIHR Biomedical Research Centre of Imperial College NHS Trust" in **ALL** publications. Failure to acknowledge the BRC can result in funding being withdrawn.

7. Enquiries

General enquiries relating to the scope and objectives of this call should be directed to the Theme Leads Graham Cooke and Wendy Barclay.