**NIHR Imperial Biomedical Research Centre (BRC)**

**CALL FOR IMMUNOLOGY PILOT PROJECTS**

**Deadline: 1700h Friday 14th July 2023** by email toantonia.gould@imperial.ac.uk

The NIHR Imperial BRC Immunology Theme has funding available to support small pilot projects, up to £30,000 that align to the Themes Core Objectives.

**1. Scope and Criteria**

**Proposals MUST align to the Immunology Theme core research areas:**

The Theme focuses on diseases relevant to our local population grouped into: (i) antibody-mediated disorders; (ii) thrombo-inflammation; (iii) glomerulonephritis and (iv) renal transplantation. Specifically:

* Precision medicine for immune thrombocytopenia (ITP): Improved diagnostics; treatment pathways; and biomarkers of clinical outcome.
* Precision medicine for Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE): Improved diagnostics; treatment pathways; and biomarkers of clinical outcome.
* Identify molecular signatures of relapse in Giant Cell Arteritis (GCA).
* Antiphospholipid antibody syndrome (APS). Assessment of endothelial dysfunction in APS as a correlate of outcome.
* Defining the clinical utility of renal pathology biomarkers in Glomerulonephritis: e.g., IgA nephropathy (IGAN), Minimal Change Disease and Membranous Nephropathy through novel analysis of kidney biopsies
* Optimise outcome in renal transplantation. use of high-resolution HLA typing, biopsy and peripheral blood transcriptomics, biopsy spatial transcriptomics/proteomics and digital pathology to stratify patients according to risk of rejection.

**Additional criteria that will be considered:**

* Are the financial expenditure plans achievable within the time period, is any matched funding available?
* Does the proposal provide evidence for operational readiness (e.g. ethics, consents, samples, staff in place) so that expenditure can begin immediately?
* What outcomes will be delivered because of this funding?
* Proposals should be scientifically sound and innovative
* Proposals should aim to deliver benefits to the NHS and its 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

**2. Project Costings**

* Proposals costs should be developed using WorkTribe. 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) – carryover across financial years is not automatic so ensure to profile the budget accurately.
* Applicants are reminded to consider and include any costs that may need to be incurred within ICHT to deliver proposals (particularly around the use of the iCARE Trusted Research Environment).
* Projects will be funded for up to 24 months
* Salary costs are not supported.
* Eligible costs may include consumables and facility access charges. 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 or Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust may apply. 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.

As well as ICHT, applications are eligible from Imperial College London substantive employees who are attached to either Chelsea & Westminster NHS Foundation Trust or The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust. Project work must take place within the NIHR Imperial BRC and therefore a substantive employment association with Imperial College London is required in these cases.

Cross-BRC Theme and cross-Department/Faculty engagement is supported.

**4. Application Review**

The deadline for submission of proposals is 1700h Friday 14th July 2023 to antonia.gould@imperial.ac.uk. Proposals will be assessed by the Immunology Executive Committee. Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria outlined above. Key dates are as follows:

Monday 22nd May 2023 Call launch

Friday 14th July 2023 Deadline for submission of proposals

Friday 4th August 2023 Notification of successful proposals

Monday 4th September 2023 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 3 months of project end date.

**6. Acknowledgement of BRC Funding**

All publications arising from BRC-funded work (either fully or in-part) must [acknowledge support](https://imperialbrc.nihr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Acknowledgments-Leaflet-current.pdf) by the NIHR Imperial BRC. Failure to do so 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 Matthew Pickering matthew.pickering@imperial.ac.uk and Nichola Cooper n.cooper@imperial.ac.uk