

Hearing Research Launchpad Grant Opportunity

Guidelines for Applicants

Summary

This document guides you through the preparation and submission of an application for the Launchpad Grants in Hearing Research scheme for early-career, mid-career and established researchers. Successful applicants must be based at the University of Nottingham Hearing Sciences (including the Scottish section) for the duration of the award. Applications are welcome from researchers outside of the University of Nottingham, but they would be expected to move if successful.

This funding call was possible thanks to the generous support of the late Mrs Esme Dorothea Gray.

To find out more about supporting lifechanging medical research through a gift in your will, you can visit: <https://www.medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk/support-us/wills>

Deadline for Submission is 12:00 Thursday 07 September 2023

Applications must be submitted and approved by all signatories and the application received in its entirety by this deadline. All applications must be submitted via the Medical Research Foundation online grants management system (<https://medicalresearchfoundation.flexigrant.com/>). Paper application forms will not be accepted.

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 interview processes:

research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk Tel: 0207 395 2314.

Overview

The Medical Research Foundation is inviting applications from researchers at all career stages in the broad field of hearing research which enhances, or complements research being carried out at the department of Hearing Sciences at the University of Nottingham.

Research areas could include, but are not limited to:

- further understanding of the of the auditory system
- mechanisms underpinning hearing loss, tinnitus, or other auditory disorders
- the advancement or development of measurements, predictors, or outcomes for any type of hearing problem
- the advancement or development of treatment intervention approaches for any type of hearing problem
- understanding and reducing the impact of any type of hearing problem on health and well-being

Applications can be made to support an Early Career Researcher in their first research position, a mid-career researcher to make the transition towards independence, or an established researcher to carry out a pilot study. Applications will be assessed relative to the career stage of the applicant.

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 scheme is possible thanks to the support of our generous donors.

The Funding

Applicants applying for the research grants may apply for up to £100,000 to support their research, over a maximum of 18 months. There will be up to £500,000 available in this scheme.

Who can apply

This scheme is open to both UK-based and international researchers at eligible institutions (HEIs, Research Council research institutes, hospitals, and other independent research organisations). Applications from researchers outside of the University of Nottingham will be assessed equally to those currently based at the University of Nottingham, no preference will be given to either. However, **researchers must be based at the University of Nottingham Hearing Sciences for the duration of the award** and therefore if they are not currently based there would be expected to move.

Applicants must hold a PhD, DPhil or MD. PhD student who have not yet submitted their thesis but intend to do so by the end of October 2023 should contact the Medical Research Foundation to discuss their eligibility.

The University of Nottingham will not be providing salary support, any required salary should be costed into the proposal. The Medical Research Foundation will not usually cover the cost of visas but will consider this on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the Medical Research Foundation if you need to discuss visa costs.

This scheme is for early, mid-career and established researchers:

- Early-career researchers are those immediately post-doctorate, or with some postdoctoral experience, but have not begun to transition to research independence or lead their own team,
- Mid-career researchers are those with more extensive postdoctoral experience and in the process of, or ready for, transition to research independence,
- Established researchers will have already secured substantial research funds and/or have already established their own research group (e.g. Senior Lecturers, Professors, MRC and other funders' Senior Fellows).

Applicants will be assessed according to their career stage.

Please contact the Medical Research Foundation Research team if you are unclear about your eligibility (research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk).

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

Applicants will need to demonstrate productivity across past appointments relevant to their current career stage, an upward career trajectory and clear plans to establish their own research niche. The attributes needed to win support in this scheme are detailed at the [MRC webpages on skills needed to win support](#). Please see the relevant pages for 'early postdoctoral', 'transition to independence' or 'transition to leadership'

Established researchers, such as senior lecturers with permanent contracts, will need to justify why the proposal is innovative and for instance, needed to generate pilot data for future funding proposals and that

this cannot be achieved through other existing funding sources.

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.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Medical Research Foundation is committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants and aims to create an inclusive environment that encourages excellence in research through good equalities practice. Diversity is important to the Medical Research Foundation, 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.

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

Responsibilities of the Lead Research Organisation and the Principal Investigator

Lead Research Organisation

By submitting an application, a Lead Research Organisation (LRO), The University of Nottingham, 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 University of Nottingham Hearing Sciences at which the award will be administered.

Key dates

- Deadline for submission: 12:00 Thursday 07 September 2023
- Funding decision: November 2023 – the Foundation reserves the right to include an interview if the Expert Review Panel considers this necessary
- Feedback on funding decision: December 2023
- Anticipated start date January – June 2024

Review and selection

Review and selection process

Applications will be assessed by an Expert Review Panel, consisting of independent scientific experts in hearing sciences. Applications will be assessed on their scientific quality and impact, and the applicant's suitability for transition to their next career stage. 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 hearing research and scientific progress.

For Early Career Researchers the Expert Review Panel will consider how the award would support the applicant in the early stages of their research career, equipping them for a career in research post-PhD or as they become a more established post-doctoral researcher.

For Mid-career researchers, the Panel will assess how well the award would support the applicant as they prepare to move towards independence or if they have already made the transition to independence, how the award will further support them establish their independent research group.

For Established researchers, the Panel will evaluate how the award would support the applicant's transition towards research leadership, this could include how any data generated would support future funding applications and how the researcher has contributed to the career development of Early Career Researchers.

Scoring ranges used by the Expert Review Panel can be found in the Appendix.

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 or the Medical Research Foundation 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

Awards made through this scheme will follow standard Medical Research Foundation [Terms and Conditions](#). The Foundation'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 Foundation 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 Foundation reserves the right to vary these Terms and Conditions.

Application guidance notes

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 Tel: 0207 395 2314

Completing the Narrative CV

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.

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 Foundation is committed to helping mitigate this as much as possible through our grantmaking policies and practices, we are 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Application form question guidance

Section 1: Principal Investigator details

There can only be one lead/principal investigator. Additional project Co-Investigators can be included in the sections 3-6. A maximum of four Co-Investigators can be included. All funds need to be associated with the University of Nottingham, therefore salary cannot be claimed by Co-Investigators outside the University of Nottingham.

Any other individuals involved in the application can be listed as collaborators in section 6, 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.

Contribution to career development

Please describe how the award would provide opportunities for you to develop your professional research

career and progress your research, relevant to your career stage.

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 who wish to claim salary need to be based at the University of Nottingham. Co-Investigators do not need to be restricted to Hearing Sciences, multi-disciplinary projects are welcome.

Section 6: Research Proposal

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

The lay title and summary 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 hearing loss or tinnitus research.

Please indicate the key scientific objectives and challenges of the research and any potential medical, clinical or societal implications.

These abstracts will be used for external communications about the award and should therefore not contain specific details of any sensitive information, such as patient details or personal information.

Case for Support: proposed research project

Provide details of the proposed 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 and appendices for applications should not exceed 3 A4 pages PDF format (size 12 Arial font, 2 cm margins).

The detailed Case for Support should include the following information:

- Title
- Briefly describe your research and explain how this proposed study complements and enhances it
- Describe the expertise of the team, research environment and how the team is qualified to carry out the research
- Describe the research plans for this Launchpad grant
- Ethics and research governance
- Justification of resources requested - Describe what resources are being requested and explain how these funds will be used

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. **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.
7. **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.
8. **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.

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](#).

Collaborators

Please provide details of any additional collaborators on the project. This does not include individuals already identified as Co-Investigators. 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.

Sponsor Letter of support

A letter of support should be provided by project sponsor. Applicants should identify a project sponsor at the University of Nottingham who can agree to host and/or support the project and provide relevant resources as required for the successful completion of the project. The project sponsor should be a senior academic within Hearing Sciences at University of Nottingham and an expert in your field of research.

These letters are intended to supplement your application and explain why you merit consideration for a Launchpad grant, your contribution to the scientific field and how grant would offer a unique opportunity to advance your research and career. Sponsors should state their relationship to you and include their opinion of your research independence, the importance of your contribution to the research field to date and your career potential. The referee might also comment on the originality and appropriateness of your research, its relationship to other work on-going within the field of study as well as beyond, and, if appropriate, the facilities available to carry out your future research.

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. A Data Management Plan (DMP) is 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 1000 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.

Section 7: Use of Animals in Research

The Medical Research Foundation expects that before work commences on any research, the Principal Investigators will have ensured in collaboration with the Lead Research Organisations 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.

Section 8: 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 [Using human samples in research](#) and [Human Participants in Research](#) for further direction on research involving human participants in countries outside of the UK.

Section 9: 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.

Section 10: Funding requested

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 UK medical research charities, the Medical Research Foundation does not meet the indirect costs of research in the UK.

Applications should be costed at today's prices and inflation should not be included. Applicants currently based outside the University of Nottingham should contact the research team for advice on costings.

PIs on the project may include salary support to protect their time whilst working on the grant.

Applications can include requests for the costs of:

- Salary support for the lead applicants
- Research staff (who will directly support the research proposal) including annual pay-scale increments but excluding annual pay awards and employment overheads *i.e.* the UK 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 £3,000 for grant durations of 18 months)
- Research equipment
- Any other direct costs of the proposed research

Medical Research Foundation grants will not fund:

- Any directly allocated costs *i.e.* estate costs and costs of shared resources such as staff and equipment in the UK Research Organisation
- Any indirect costs necessary for underpinning research in the UK Research Organisation 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.).

- Collaborators' salaries
- PhD studentships
- Patient care, UK NHS treatment or UK 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.

Sections 11-13: Authorisation and Declarations

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

- Principal Investigator
- Research Administrator

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 applicants' responsibility to ensure that approval of the application by the Lead Research Organisations is completed before the closing date.

Applicants

Lead applicants are required to report any conflicts of interest. Each lead applicant is required to declare that they will abide by the Medical Research Foundation's Terms and Conditions and will be actively engaged in the proposed research.

Research Administrators

Research Administrators 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.

This section should be completed by individuals at the Lead Research Organisation responsible for the administration of funds. They will be contacted regarding financial arrangements and other contractual agreements, if your application is successful.

Appendices

Scoring Matrix for Expert Review Panel

Score Indicators	Fundable
10. Exceptional – Top international programme, or of exceptional national strategic importance	
■ Quality – Highly original and innovative – Novel methodology and design – Outstanding research career progression and potential (excellent contribution to knowledge generation, engagement with wider research community, development of individuals) ■ Impact – Crucial scientific question or knowledge gap – Potential for high health and/or socioeconomic impact – Internationally unique resource of value to many disciplines ■ Productivity – 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	
■ Quality – Original and innovative – Novel methodology and design – Excellent research career progression and potential (excellent contribution to knowledge generation, engagement with wider research community, development of individuals) ■ Impact – Crucial scientific question or knowledge gap – Potential for high health and/or socioeconomic impact – Internationally significant resource of value to many disciplines ■ Productivity – 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	
■ Quality – Original and innovative – Robust methodology and design (innovative in parts) – Excellent research career progression and potential (excellent contribution to knowledge generation, engagement with wider research community, development of individuals) ■ Impact – 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 – 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	
■ Quality – Innovative – Robust methodology and design (innovative in parts) – Very good research career progression and potential (good contribution to knowledge generation, engagement with wider research community, development of individuals) ■ Impact – 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 – Potential for significant return on investment – High likelihood of successful delivery	Fundable
6. High Quality – Leading edge nationally, but not yet internationally competitive	
■ Quality – Methodologically robust study – Good research career progression and potential (good contribution to knowledge generation, engagement with wider research community, development of individuals) ■ Impact – Worthwhile scientific question or knowledge gap – Justifiable scientific resource – Potential for reasonable health and/or socioeconomic impact ■ Productivity – Resources appropriate to deliver the proposal – High likelihood of successful delivery	Fundable
5. Good Quality – Nationally competitive	
■ Quality – Methodologically sound study but areas require significant revision – Research career progression and potential not optimal (scope to strengthen contribution to knowledge generation, engagement with wider research community, development of individuals) – Poorly defined question ■ Impact – Worthwhile scientific question with potentially useful outcomes – Moderate likelihood of contributing to new knowledge generation ■ Productivity – Resources broadly appropriate to deliver the proposal – Good likelihood of successful delivery	Not fundable
4. Potentially Useful – With significant weaknesses	
■ Quality – Methodologically sound study (approach or study design requires significant revision) – Some research career progression and potential	Not fundable

■ Impact – Contains potentially useful ideas but requires major revision – Moderate likelihood of successful delivery ■ Productivity – Resources inappropriate to deliver the proposal – Unlikely to significantly contribute to new knowledge generation	
3. Potentially Useful – With major weaknesses	
■ Quality – Question poorly defined – Methodologically weak study – Poor leadership ■ Productivity – 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