



Guidance for applicants

Please refer to our Terms and Conditions and Research Strategy when completing your application. These, along with information about the call, can be downloaded from the Help – Support Documents quick link on the online application portal homepage, or from the Help – Support Documents drop-down item in the top right-hand corner of any webpage when you are logged in.

To apply you should submit the following:

1. An application using our online application form, by **3pm on Monday 18 July 2022**.
2. A signed copy of the scientific application by email, which can arrive up to three weeks after the submission deadline.

Applications will not be accepted after the submission deadline.

The following points should be considered when submitting your application:

- If you wish to apply for a Muscular Dystrophy UK research grant please be aware that the principal investigator must hold a contract that extends beyond the duration of the grant at an institution approved by Muscular Dystrophy UK. Muscular Dystrophy UK will only fund UK-based research although international collaboration is encouraged.
- If you currently hold a Muscular Dystrophy UK-funded project or studentship grant, you may still apply.
- Each applicant can submit up to one application. Multiple applications will not be accepted.
- We welcome applications from early-career researchers. Researchers should have a research degree e.g. PhD or MD OR, if an allied health professional, should have a postgraduate degree (PhD, MPhil or Masters degree) and/or demonstrate significant experience with trial procedures, conducting research and monitoring its progress.

Remit

- Muscular Dystrophy UK welcomes applications that will have a benefit for individuals with nemaline myopathy.
- It is important for applicants to view their research strategically and explain how this proposed research fits with the charity's [Research Strategy](#) in answer to the relevant question in the application form.

When completing the online form:

- Please complete all sections of the application form. Mandatory fields are marked with an asterisk.
- You may find it easier to draft the questions offline and copy and paste them into the online form when complete. Please note that when copying and pasting from Word, formatting (such as italics, bold, underlining) will be lost, but paragraphs will be kept.
- Word limits must be adhered to.
- Uploaded files must be in pdf format.
- You can save your application at any time and come back to complete it later. You can also download a pdf of your application at any point.

If you still have questions please contact the Research Team at researchgrants@musculardystrophyuk.org.

Guidance for completing an online project grant application form

In Smart Simple, please go to My Profile and complete the required fields. This information will then be used to auto-populate the relevant fields in your grant application(s). Submissions cannot be completed unless the required fields in your profile are complete. For future grant calls you will be prompted to review your My Profile information to ensure it is up to date.

People

Co-applicant details

To add a Co-applicant the Principal Investigator (the Applicant) must have the Co-applicant's PIN. To get a PIN, the Co-applicant must register, log into Smart Simple and complete the My Profile section where the PIN can be found. The Principal Investigator should enter the PIN to assign the Co-applicant to the grant application. The Co-applicant will be able to view the application and make changes, but only the Principal Investigator can submit the form.

Co-applicants can view the application by selecting the Grants and Applications tab from the home page and selecting the Associated Applications tab in the Draft Applications section.

Please ensure you enter the number of hours the Co-applicant will be dedicating to the project.

Collaborators

Please enter the details of all collaborators in the table provided; a letter of collaboration is required from each one. Please use the filename format, 'Letter-of-collaboration-[FirstInitial-surname]' to name the files and upload them in pdf format. The letters can be uploaded using the upload buttons.

Proposed researcher

If the proposed researcher is known please enter their details.

Project Summary

Start date

You will receive the outcome of your grant application in late December 2022. The expected start date of the project should therefore not be before February 2023.

The grant should start within six months of the award date.

Project length

Up to 36 months' support is available at this time.

Condition

In this call we will only accept applications to study nemaline myopathy.

- Select "congenital myopathy" from the primary condition pull-down menu
- Select "nemaline myopathy" from the condition sub-type pull-down menu

The Proposal

Background to the proposal (1000 words)

The study should align with the design and outcomes that were discussed and agreed at the [250th ENMC workshop in 2019](#). Please note, we are only able to fund principal applicants who are based in the UK. Nevertheless, it is important that there is a harmonised approach across the field and applications should include international communication and/or collaboration. We strongly encourage the implementation of an agreed core protocol in addition to an agreed way to manage data sharing (taking into account UK GDPR, GDPR and HIPA).

Please describe why this study is important. Please put this in context of other ongoing research and describe the collaborations that will facilitate this research including how you will ensure that there is national and international harmonisation of approaches.

Hypothesis or reasoning (500 words)

As part of this section, please provide concise bullet points of the objectives of your research.

Methods of research including overall study design (1500 words)

Applications should include multiple outcome measures (and where possible include multi-system measures) to be of maximum value to researchers and industry. Ideally the study would provide robust prospective data and, if possible, should have scope to collect patient reported outcome measures (PROMs).

As part of this section, please include:

- Justification for the measures to be used
- Justification for the frequency of data collection/visits to the clinic
- Details of how you will ensure data quality
- Recruitment plans
- Inclusion/exclusion criteria

Timescales and milestones (500 words)

Gantt chart

Detailed justification of financial support (500 words)

Supplementary information

Please use this section to upload supplementary information or data relevant to the grant proposal, e.g. figures, tables, timescales. Files must be in pdf format.

Finance

The Summary of Financial Support Requested table should include all costs being requested from Muscular Dystrophy UK for this project. Please refer to information about the call for guidance on the amount of funding that can be requested.

You can apply for any combination of salary and consumables. Nationally awarded salary increases will only be allowed if they have been provided for in the grant application. Reasonable allowance for such increases whether known, pending or anticipated must be included and justified in the grant application. Up to £600,000 is available to support this work.

Finance: Exclusions

- Travel costs can only be requested if the travel is an integral part of the project; this must be clearly demonstrated in the grant application.
- We do not cover the costs of attending scientific meetings or society membership and these should not be included in the application.
- We will not cover recruitment costs.
- We do not fund computer equipment unless integral to the project
- We do not fund equipment costs unless integral to the project. We expect laboratories to provide and maintain equipment for general use and only under specific circumstances where specialist equipment is required will we consider providing funding
- We will not cover publication costs.

Clinical research requiring HRA approval

For all clinical research that needs Health Research Authority (HRA) approval (refer to [criteria for HRA approval](#)), a [Schedule of Events Costs Attribution Template](#) (SoECAT) must be completed, approved and submitted with the grant application. Only clinical research needs HRA approval. For researchers carrying out clinical research outside of England, please contact our grants helpline at researchgrants@musculardystrophyuk.org for guidance.

You will need the assistance of a local AcoRD specialist to complete and approve the SoECAT form. For further information see the [NIHR website](#).

We strongly recommend that you contact your local AcoRD specialist as soon as you know you are planning a piece of clinical research, to allow sufficient time for completion and approval of SoECAT before the grant application deadline.

The SoECAT is being trialled as a way of addressing past challenges of getting excess treatment costs paid efficiently and on time, with the aim of streamlining clinical research in

the NHS ([read more about](#) excess treatment costs, the SoECAT form and guidance for completing it). Having this information at the point of application will allow MDUK to accurately assess the costs associated with the study.

Please note that MDUK is a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC)

If you have any questions please contact us. You can also get assistance with your research application from the NIHR CRN and the [Research Design Service](#).

When the form has been completed and approved it can be uploaded to the application form. Please save each tab of the SoECAT as a PDF and upload the files. Note that we only need the 'Study Information' and 'Summary of cost attribution' tabs of the SoECAT form at the point of submission. Please upload these as pdfs along with your application. The final, approved copy must be submitted by email to researchgrants@muscular dystrophyuk.org no later than three weeks after the submission deadline.

Intellectual Property

Please refer to our Terms and Conditions for information about intellectual property and ensure that the conditions are met if the proposed research is likely to lead to patentable or commercially exploitable results.

Lay Application

All grant applicants are required to complete a lay application in order to provide an overview of the proposed work. This will be assessed by Muscular Dystrophy UK's Lay Research Panel. The Panel does not receive the scientific application and therefore the lay application should act as a stand-alone piece. Failure to provide sufficient and understandable information in the lay application could lead to rejection of the application. The lay application should accurately reflect the content of the scientific application. This will be assessed by members of the Muscular Dystrophy UK Research Team, and you may be asked to make changes should the two applications differ.

The Panel meets and discusses all the applications and their relevance to and impact on people with a muscular dystrophy or related neuromuscular condition. Their recommendations will be presented to the Medical Research Committee by two representatives of the Panel. These representatives will take part in the discussion and voting during the Medical Research Committee meeting. The information you provide in this form will therefore form a significant part of the awards process.

The members of the Lay Research Panel do not have a scientific background so please do not use scientific terminology or jargon. Please also refrain from including references to material that is not available to the general public. Avoid the use of abbreviations where possible. You may find it helpful to ask a non-scientist friend or relative to read this application prior to submission to check readability. Please visit the [news section](#) of our website to see the level of lay English we would expect you to use and refer to the [guidance](#) we have provided with the Lay Panel on writing a lay summary for your application. Your lay application will be screened by the members of the Research Team; you will be asked to rewrite the application if it is too technical.

The information contained in the lay application will be treated as confidential. Further guidance on each section is given below:

Background

What is the background to your application? Does the topic require an introduction? Why is the research question that you are addressing important? Please put this in context of other ongoing research and describe the collaborations that will facilitate this research.

Objectives

Please provide concise bullet points of the objectives of your research. The objectives must align with those stated in the scientific application. You may be asked to amend the application if they do not.

Outcomes

Please give details of the expected outcomes of your research. How will this research project take us towards a treatment or clinical benefit for muscle disease either in the short or longer term?

Experimental Plan

The Lay Panel will not be making a judgement on the strengths and weaknesses of the science, however a general understanding of the research proposal is helpful. Please give a brief overview, of what you plan to do. If applicable, this should include information about the experimental approaches to be employed, the types of samples/measurements to be analysed and how they will be sourced/measured and how human subjects will be recruited etc.

Next Steps

If the project is successful, what are the next steps? Where will you apply for further funding?

Budget

The information in the budget table will be taken from the Finance tab on your application. Please briefly justify the requested costs.

Involving Patients

Are people with nemaline myopathy directly involved in your research (e.g. participants in a clinical study)? If so, please give details and describe how the results of the research will be fed back to participants.

Impact for Participants

What will the study involve for the participants? How many visits, what happens at each visit, are there risks and how are these mitigated?

Engaging Supporters

Much of the funding for Muscular Dystrophy UK's research programme comes from families and supporters of the charity. Please explain how you will engage people whose lives are affected either directly or indirectly by muscle disease during the course of your project.

Supporting Documentation

This section can be used for uploading additional documents that are relevant to your application, e.g. a letter of support from someone who is not a co-applicant or collaborator. Files must be in pdf format.

Application Review

All applications are sent for external peer review prior to being reviewed by our Medical Research Committee. We would like you to suggest three reviewers to review your application. These should be independent experts who you or your co-supervisor(s) have not published with in the past three years and who do not work at the same institute/university as any of the applicants. Please give their full names, the institutes at which they are based and their email addresses.

Further information

If you would like to receive further correspondence from Muscular Dystrophy UK please indicate in this section. GDPR requires that we have approval to keep your details for a specific purpose. For research and other mailings we may keep your details indefinitely for the purposes to which you agree. You can ask for your details to be removed at any time by contacting researchgrants@muscular dystrophyuk.org.

Departmental Support

This section cannot be completed online.

After submitting your application you will receive a pdf version of the application by email. This can be printed and signed, scanned and the scanned copy sent to us (see below). Alternatively, if you have access to electronic signatures, for example via adobe acrobat, you may use them. If you can only send the signed application by post please contact us on the email address below to make arrangements. The application must be signed by the Principal and co-investigators and your Head of Department in which the proposed research and training will be carried out, or an appropriate signatory e.g. Dean, if the applicant is Head of Department. Additional signatures are required from your Research Office/Finance department.

Please send the signed electronic copy of the application to researchgrants@muscular dystrophyuk.org *within three weeks* of the deadline for the call.

What happens after submission?

Milestones for the selection process of your grant application are given below; *please note the dates given are approximate and for guidance only*. Find out more about the assessment process on our [website](#). You will be contacted by email when your applicant response is due, or if there are any other actions you need to take; these will all be done via your online account.

Milestone	Date
The Lay Research Panel reads the lay application. Changes will be requested if it is not written in suitably lay language.	Mid to late August 2022
You will be invited to respond to the peer reviewers' comments	Mid to late October 2022
A joint meeting of members of the Lay Research Panel and Medical Research Committee will meet to review the application.	Early to mid-November 2022
Notification of outcome- you will be notified of the outcome of your application after our Finance Committee/Board of Trustees has met to make the final decision.	December 2022
Formal outcome letter - you will receive a formal letter (by email) with the outcome of your application and feedback from the Medical Research Committee and Lay Research Panel.	January 2023

If you have any questions please contact the Research Team at researchgrants@musculardystrophyuk.org.