

Biology of fungal adaptation

This award will support studies that explore the mechanisms and triggers for fungal adaptation, particularly in environments that are associated with disease and/or impacted by climate change. Awardees will generate important breakthroughs in the field, strengthen research networks and empower future leaders in this field.

Scheme at a glance

Lead applicant career stage:

Established researcher, Mid-career researcher

Administering organisation location:

UK, Republic of Ireland, Low- or middle-income countries (apart from mainland China)

Frequency:

One-off

Funding amount:

Up to £3 million. You should ask for the resources you need for your research programme - see the 'Research costs we'll cover' section on this page. You will need to justify this in your application.

Funding duration:

Up to 5 years

Coapplicants:

Accepted

Register for our webinar

Join us for a funding webinar about this call on 27 November at 14:00 GMT. Wellcome staff will go over eligibility and what we are looking for, and they will answer questions from participants. You can ask your questions and upvote other questions ahead of the webinar.

[Register now](#)

Next deadline

Full application deadline: 28 January

Who can apply

Your experience

You can apply for this call if you:

- Are an individual researcher or in a team. Team size will depend on the proposed research but should include 2-8 individuals, including the Lead Applicant. Team applications are encouraged but you are only allowed to be part of one application.
- Have expertise in fungal research and/or in research relating to understanding the molecular mechanisms that fuel environmental adaptation. This call aims to transform our understanding through discovery-driven research, and we encourage collaborations that include partners from relevant disciplines, even if they don't all have a background in fungal research.

We encourage lead applicants to put together diverse teams. You will be expected to actively promote a diverse, inclusive and supportive research environment within your team and across your organisation.

The team

If you are applying as a team, the team must:

- Include the necessary expertise, technical skills and organisational support to deliver the proposed research. Teams are strongly encouraged to include early/mid-career researchers as coapplicants and to consider their development as future leaders in fungal research.
- Ensure the contribution of each coapplicant (and collaborator, if applicable) to the project is evident and justified.
- Demonstrate how they will ensure ethical and equitable partnerships. This should include how you will approach partnerships between researchers in low- or middle-income countries and high-income countries, if relevant. We encourage applications from researchers based in regions most affected by fungal disease, and from low- or middle-income countries.
- Actively foster a diverse, inclusive and supportive research environment within the team and across represented organisations.

Lead applicant

Whether you are applying as the sole applicant or the lead applicant for a team, you must:

- Be driving your own research and ready to lead an independent, innovative, and creative programme of research.
 - Have made significant contributions to your area of research and have experience of working collaboratively. Outputs could include: original publications, open data sets, software, commercial or interventional products or tools, clinical practice developments, educational products, policy publications and conference publications that you have generated.
 - Have experience of, or demonstrate commitment to effectively leading a team and directing, or closely guiding, the work of others.
 - Have a permanent, open-ended or long-term rolling contract (or the guarantee of one) at the point of application. The contract should not be conditional on receiving this award.
 - Have experience of people and research management, as appropriate for your career stage.
 - Be able to contribute at least 20% of your research time to this project.
 - Be based at an eligible organisation that can sign up to our grant conditions.
 - Have a salary paid by your administering organisation for the duration of the award. **If you are based in a low- or middle-income country, you can ask for a contribution to your salary if you hold a permanent, open-ended or long-term rolling contract that states that you have to get your salary from external grant funding. If you have less than three years remaining on your contract at the point of application, you must have secured your next position at an eligible organisation and provide a letter of support from them.**
 - Be based in the UK, Republic of Ireland or a low- or middle- income country (excluding mainland China).
-

Coapplicants

Each coapplicant must:

- Make a significant and essential contribution to the proposed research, for example leading a strand of the research or managing the programme. We expect all applicants to be involved in designing the research and preparing the application. The added value of the team approach must be clear.
- Be able to contribute at least 20% of their research time to this project.
- Be based at an eligible organisation that can sign up to our grant conditions.

Coapplicants can request their salary if they have a permanent, open ended or long-term rolling contract and have to get their salary from external grant funding, or they are employed by a charity, social enterprise or commercial organisation. The amount they request must be proportionate to the time they will spend on the grant.

Coapplicants without a permanent, open ended or long-term rolling contract can request salary depending on the amount of their time they will spend on the grant.

- Less than 80% of coapplicant's time on the grant: they can request salary proportionate to the time they will spend on the grant. Their organisation must guarantee space and salary support if they cannot get it from other sources for the period of time they are working on the grant. Their post cannot be dependent on the application being successful.
- 80% of coapplicant's time on the grant: they can request their full salary. Their organisation does not have to guarantee salary support if salary cannot be obtained from other sources for the period of time they are working on the grant. The post can be dependent on the application being successful.
- If the coapplicants are employed on the award as postgraduate research assistants and they are to spend 100% of their time on the award, their post does not need to be underwritten by the administering organisation and can be dependent on the application being successful.

Alternatively, coapplicants may get their salary through employment on another grant or from their employer.

Coapplicants can be at any career stage and based anywhere in the world apart from mainland China. For coapplicants who are early or mid-career researchers, the team should give clear consideration to their development as future leaders in fungal research. One person can only be either a lead applicant or coapplicant on one submission.

Collaborators

You can include collaborators in your application. Collaborators support the delivery of the project but don't lead on a specific component of the research. For example, collaborators could support by:

- sharing facilities
- providing access to resources
- providing expertise on working in different countries
- sharing subject-specific knowledge and guidance

Collaborators are not paid for their input, but you can request costs for their expenses. In your application, you will need to confirm that you have contacted your proposed collaborators, and they are willing to participate. Collaborators do not need to confirm their participation themselves.

[Read about the different applicant roles at Wellcome.](#)

If you've spent time away from research

Career breaks, parental leave, sick leave

You can apply for this award if you have spent time away from research (for example for a career break, parental leave or long-term sick leave). We will take this into consideration during the review of your application.

Retirement

If you have retired, you must have a guarantee of space from your administering organisation and you must contact us before applying.

Working part-time

Lead and coapplicants can be employed part-time. There is no formal minimum, but part-time applicants should still be able to contribute at least 20% of their research time to the project and their part-time work should be compatible with delivering the project successfully.

Who can't apply

You should not apply for this call if:

- You intend to carry out activities that involve the transfer of grant funds into mainland China. Please refer to our guidance on [why we can't fund activities in mainland China](#).
- You cannot demonstrate that you can dedicate enough time and resources to the proposed research throughout the award.
- You are already an applicant on another application to this funding call. You can either be a lead applicant on one application or a coapplicant on one. Not both.
- You have applied for, or hold, the maximum number of Wellcome awards for your career stage. [Find out how many Wellcome awards you can apply for, or hold, at one time depending on your career stage](#).
- Your proposed research does not fit the aims of this award. [Check what kinds of research project aren't right for this call](#).

Is your organisation right for this call?

An administering organisation is an eligible organisation that formally submits the application to Wellcome and is responsible for administering funding if the proposal is awarded. This is the organisation where the lead applicant is based.

Where your administering organisation is based

Your administering organisation can be based in the UK, Republic of Ireland or a low- or middle- income country (excluding mainland China). For applicants based in organisations/countries subjected to international sanctions we recommend they check our guidance on [eligibility information for grant applicants](#).

Your administering organisation can be a:

- higher education institution
- research institute
- non-academic healthcare organisation
- not-for-profit or non-governmental research organisation

Commercial organisations are not eligible to apply as administering organisations for this call. However, coapplicants and collaborators can be based at commercial organisations.

What your administering organisation must do

Your administering organisation must:

- Guarantee that the space and resources you need have been agreed and will be made available to you from the start date through to the end date of your award.
- If based in the UK, meet the responsibilities required by the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. If based outside the UK, at a minimum the organisation must follow the principles of the Concordat.
- Give you, and any staff employed on the grant, ten days a year (pro rata if part-time) to undertake training and continuing professional development (CPD) in line with the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. This should include the responsible conduct of research, research leadership, people management, diversity and inclusion, and the promotion of a healthy research culture.
- Provide a system of onboarding, embedding and planning for you when you join the organisation and/or start the award.
- Provide you with the status and benefits of other academic staff of similar seniority.

Your research environment

What is a research environment?

Wellcome believes that a diversity of people and expertise leads to richer understanding and more impactful discoveries. Excellent research happens in environments where people from all backgrounds are treated with respect, supported and enabled to thrive. We hope to develop future leaders in fungal research and would like to see clear consideration made to the career development of applicants.

Our definition of a research environment is not restricted to the quality of the infrastructure, but also considers the culture and behaviours that create excellent research practice. This includes research that is inclusive in design and practice, ethical and engaged with relevant community stakeholders as well as open and transparent.

[Read more about research environment and culture.](#)

Is your research right for this call?

What your research proposal must consider

This one-off funding call aims to provide funding for research into the biology of fungal adaptation. It will support an ambitious programme of research in an underserved, undervalued but increasingly important field. Our awardees will shift our understanding of how fungi adapt to various environments.

This call focuses specifically on studies that explore the molecular mechanisms of, and triggers for, fungal adaptation.

Proposals must:

- Demonstrate a link to human health and/or climate change. For example, studies involving plant pathogenic fungi could be considered relevant if you can demonstrate that the pathways investigated are applicable in wider contexts and contribute to the understanding of fungal adaptation beyond this specific setting. It is essential that this association is well-established and clearly demonstrated.
- Consider adaptation from the perspective of the fungal organism.

Applications will be prioritised if:

- They consider non-model fungal species.
- They consider how fungi are adjusting to environmental change or have disease relevance. This includes (but is not limited to) adaptation leading to the production of antimicrobials or resistance to antifungals, as well as adaptation that is triggered or encouraged by climate change and results in expansion into novel niches or increased pathogenicity.

What your research proposal can include

- A focus on the molecular mechanisms of adaptation of:
 - non-model and understudied fungal species, or
 - fungal organisms affected by climate change, or
 - disease-relevant fungal organisms
- Fungal adaptation catalysed by climate change and niche expansion, for example:
 - mechanisms that lead to heat resistance and environmental adaptation
 - understanding historical trends and looking at potential future adaptation
 - response to extreme weather events
 - geographic range shifts
- Mechanisms and processes of fungal adaptation that lead to zoonotic shifts and human pathogenesis.
- Fungal adaptation in the context of tolerance and/or resistance towards antifungals (intrinsic and/or acquired). This could include metabolic pathways that can contribute to drug resistance mechanisms or inform drug development. Direct drug development itself will be out of scope and considered too translational.
- Understanding pressures and mechanisms that lead to fungal adaptation to the host immune response and regulation of the host immune system by fungi.

Research that is not right for this call

Your research proposal will be considered out of scope if:

- You have not clearly defined and provided appropriate evidence for how your project is linked to human health or climate change.
- The connection to fungal adaptation is indirect, for example proposals primarily focused on food safety or driven by agricultural needs.
- The project is purely translational. This call is not intended to support directly translational clinical research, immediate biotechnological applications, surveillance, drug development, diagnostics, clinical trials or direct interventions.
- It focuses primarily on culture collections. This is a one-off funding call that is not intended for long-term infrastructural support. When relevant, proposals may include some resources for sample collection and characterisation; however, this will only be considered in scope if this is directly required to answer the research question. Follow-on support to maintain collections will not be provided as part of this call.
- The primary purpose of the application is the development of tools and/or technologies (including digital tools). If required, an element of tool development may be accepted. However, this will need to be in service of answering the research question.
- It focuses on adaptation of the host. For example, epidemiological studies focused on human healthcare or studies looking at the host's immune response to fungal infection would both be out of scope.

- It is solely based on model organisms (such as brewer's yeast, fission yeast and species used in biotechnological applications). The purpose of this award is to expand our understanding of the physiology of non-model fungi relevant to climate change and disease. The inclusion of model species may be justified only as part of a wider project. In this case, you must clearly justify the reasons, for example safety or the availability of tools. The knowledge gained must also be clearly leverageable, transferable onto relevant species and in service of the wider research question.

Research costs we'll cover

You can ask Wellcome to pay for:

staff

Lead applicant

You must contribute at least 20% of your research time to this award.

If you are based in the UK or Republic of Ireland at a higher education institute (HEI), research institute or non-academic healthcare organisation, you cannot ask for your salary.

If you are based at a charity, non-governmental organisation (NGO) or social enterprise, you can ask for a contribution to your salary, equal to the time you will spend on the award.

If you are based in a low- or middle-income country, you can ask for a contribution to your salary if you hold a permanent, open-ended or long-term rolling contract and have to get your salary from external grant funding.

The amount we pay will be proportionate to the time you contribute to the award, for example if you contribute 30% of your time to the award we will fund 30% of your salary.

If you are requesting contribution to your salary, your administering organisation must:

- confirm that you have to get your salary from external grant funding to participate in the research
- guarantee to provide salary support, including any salary costs not covered by Wellcome, if you cannot get it from other sources for the period of time you are working on the grant.

Coapplicants

If any coapplicant employed on your grant holds a permanent, open-ended or long-term rolling contract and has to get their salary from external grant funding, you can ask us for a contribution to their salary in your application.

The amount we pay will be proportionate to the time they contribute to the award, for example if they contribute 30% of their time to the award we will fund 30% of their salary.

The coapplicant's organisation must:

- confirm that the coapplicant has to get their salary from external grant funding to participate in the research
- guarantee to provide salary support, including any salary costs not covered by Wellcome, for the period of time that the person will be working on the grant.

Coapplicants without a permanent, open ended or long-term rolling contract can request salary depending on the amount of their time they will spend on the grant.

- Less than 80% of coapplicant's time on the grant: they can request salary proportionate to the time they will spend on the grant. Their organisation must guarantee space and salary support if they cannot get it from other sources for the period of time they are working on the grant. Their post cannot be dependent on the application being successful.
- 80% of coapplicant's time on the grant: they can request their full salary. Their organisation does not have to guarantee salary support if salary cannot be obtained from other sources for the period of time they are working on the grant. The post can be dependent on the application being successful.
- If the coapplicants are employed on the award as postgraduate research assistants and they are to spend 100% of their time on the award, their post does not need to be underwritten by the administering organisation and can be dependent on the application being successful.

Coapplicants can also ask for salary where they are employed by a charity, social enterprise or commercial organisation. The amount they request must be proportionate to the time they will spend on the grant.

Alternatively, coapplicants may get their salary through employment on another grant.

Staff working on your programme

We will cover the salary costs of all staff, full or part-time, who will work on your grant.

Staff members may include:

- research assistants or technicians employed on your grant
- specialist service staff and technical experts, for example environmental sustainability, data analysis, fieldwork and clinical studies
- project manager, if you have multiple applicants on your programme
- support if you or a member of staff employed on your grant is disabled or has a long-term health condition – see 'Disability-related adjustment support'.

Teaching buyout

If you're a humanities and social sciences researcher, you can ask for funds for teaching replacement to cover the cost of a temporary replacement lecturer. You must retain at least a 10% commitment to teaching.

Costs:

- can cover up to 33% FTE of your contracted time
- are usually for a person at a more junior level than the postholder
- can be spread across the full period of the grant.

If you already get buyout costs from another grant (funded by Wellcome or elsewhere), you can ask us for this cost, but only for the period of time on your Discovery Award when you won't receive buyout costs from another grant.

You must provide a letter from your employing organisation, confirming that your contract includes a teaching commitment. You should include this in your grant application.

PhD/Research Masters fees

We do not provide studentships on this award. But if applicants employ a research assistant or a technician on the grant, they can ask for the costs to cover their PhD/Research Masters fees. Each applicant can ask for fees for up to two research assistants or technicians in total on the grant, to a maximum of eight per team. Early-career applicants (up to and including holders of early-career fellowships) may not supervise a PhD student alone but can be a co-supervisor with

a mid-career or established colleague. Fees must be requested at application stage. Funds cannot be moved from other budgets to pay fees for additional people.

Research assistants/technicians should be defined as staff members and incur a lower fee than the student rate. Where organisations do not have a staff rate they may request fees at the home student rate. If no other rate is available, they may request the international student rate.

How to cost salaries for research staff

Staff salaries should be appropriate to skills, responsibilities and expertise. You should ask your host organisation to use their salary scales to calculate these costs, which should include:

- basic salary
- employer's contributions, including any statutory obligations (for example, National Insurance contributions if you're based in the UK) and pension scheme costs
- Apprentice Levy charges for UK-based salaries
- any incremental progression up the salary scale
- locally recognised allowances such as London allowance.

You should allow for salary pay awards during Year 1. If the pay award is not yet known, applicants should use the International Monetary Fund inflation rate, selecting the 'inflation, average consumer price' option as an indicator.

From Year 2 onwards, you should use your organisation's current pay rates. We'll provide a separate inflation allowance for salary inflation costs.

Read about the [responsibilities of grantholders and host organisations for people working on a Wellcome grant.](#)

Visa and work permit costs

If you have named people on your grant whose salaries will be funded by Wellcome, you can ask for visa or work permit costs to help them take up their posts at the host organisation. You can also ask for:

- visa costs for the person's partner and dependent children
- essential associated costs, such as travel to attend appointments at a visa application centre or embassy, and essential English language tests
- Immigration Health Surcharge costs for the person, their partner and dependent children if they will be in the UK for six months or more.

Disability-related adjustment support

If you or a member of staff working on your grant is disabled or has a long-term health condition, you can ask for adjustment support to help you carry out your project.

Costs can include, but are not limited to:

- additional costs for staff to help with day-to-day activities related to your project
- assistive technology to help use computers, research equipment or materials – for example, text to audio software
- care costs for assistance animals if you need to travel.

We will not pay for capital or building costs, such as access ramps.

You can ask for these costs if your government and/or employer:

- does not cover any of the costs
- only covers some of the costs (if they do, we will only meet the shortfall).

The costs we provide must not replace the support you may get from the government or your organisation, who are responsible for providing these costs.

If you don't know what these costs are now, you can ask for them after we've awarded your grant.

materials and consumables

We will pay for the materials and consumables you need to carry out your project, including:

- laboratory chemicals and materials (for example reagents, isotopes, peptides, enzymes, antibodies, gases, proteins, cell/tissue/bacterial culture, plasticware and glassware)
 - project-specific personal protective equipment (PPE) that is above the standard expected for the setting
 - printing associated with fieldwork and empirical research
 - associated charges for shipping, delivery and freight.
-

access charges

You can ask for the cost of access to shared equipment, facilities or services if they're essential to your project.

These may include materials and consumables, plus a proportion of:

- maintenance and service contracts
- staff time costs for dedicated technical staff employed to operate the equipment or facility.

We don't cover the costs of:

- estates and utilities
- depreciation or insurance
- other staff, for example, contributions towards departmental technical, administrative and management staff time.

We do cover these costs if related to animal housing facilities.

If the facilities or equipment were paid for by a Wellcome grant, you can only ask for access charges if:

- the grant has ended
 - any support for running costs and maintenance contracts has ended.
-

equipment

Equipment purchase

You can ask for basic items of equipment that are essential to your research project.

Costs may include purchase, delivery, installation, maintenance and training, where necessary.

We will cover VAT and import duties if:

- the usual UK exemptions on equipment used for medical research don't apply
- you're applying from a non-UK organisation, and you can show these costs can't be recovered.

You can also ask for specialised equipment if:

- it is essential to the success of the proposed research project
- it is not available at your host organisation or through collaboration, and
- you'll be the main user and have priority access to the equipment.

If a complete piece of specialised equipment costs £100,000 or more, we expect a contribution of at least 25% of the total costs, including maintenance, from the host organisation or another source. In some cases, we may expect a larger contribution. We'll discuss this with you after we've assessed your application. Contributions can include benefits in kind, such as refurbishment or the underwriting of a key support post.

Multi-component items must not be broken down into component parts to avoid this contribution.

Equipment maintenance

We will cover maintenance costs for equipment if:

- you are requesting it in your application
- it is existing equipment that is:
 - funded by us or another source
 - essential to the proposed research project
 - cost effective and environmentally sustainable to keep maintaining it.

We won't cover maintenance costs for equipment if there is a mechanism in place to recoup these costs through access charges.

Computer equipment

We will cover the cost of one personal computer or laptop per person up to £1,500.

We won't pay for:

- more expensive items, unless you can justify them
- installation or training costs.

animals

You can ask for funds to buy animals if they are essential to your project. We will also fund the charge-out rates for animal house facilities if your organisation uses full economic costing methodology. These costs include:

- running costs (including animal maintenance, any experimental procedures, licences and relevant staff training)
- appropriate estates costs
- cage and equipment depreciation costs, but not building depreciation costs.

We may not pay the full charge-out rate for an animal house facility if we've provided significant funding towards the infrastructure and/or core support of the facility.

If your organisation does not use full economic costing methodology to establish charge-out rates for animal house facilities, you can ask for funds to cover:

- the cost of buying animals
- running costs (including animal maintenance, any experimental procedures, licences and relevant staff training)
- staff costs, for example, contributions towards the salaries of animal house technicians.

We will not provide estates or depreciation costs.

contract research organisations

We will provide funds if you need to outsource project work to:

- contract research organisations
 - other fee-for-service providers.
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clinical research costs

If you need to carry out clinical research using NHS patients or facilities, we will cover some of the research costs.

Annex A of the [guidelines for attributing the costs of health and social care research and development \(AcoRD\)](#) sets out the costs we cover, and which costs should be funded through the Department of Health and Social Care in England, or its equivalent in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. If you're based in the Republic of Ireland, we would expect you to adhere to the spirit of these principles.

Read [more information on our clinical trials policy](#).

If your proposal involves clinical research using NHS resources, [check if you need to upload a SoECAT form](#) with your full application.

fieldwork expenses

We cover fieldwork costs if they're essential and you can justify them. Costs can include:

- survey and data collection, including communication and data collection services and any associated costs such as essential field materials, travel costs and language translation services
- the purchase, hire and running costs of vehicles dedicated to your project
- expenses for subjects and volunteers, including the recruitment of participants, their participatory fees and travel costs
- statistical analysis.

You can ask for other fieldwork costs that aren't listed here, but you'll need to justify them.

travel and subsistence

You can ask for these costs if you are applying from a higher education institution, a research institute, a non-academic healthcare organisation, a not-for-profit or non-governmental research organisation or a small company.

Travel costs

Conference attendance

You can ask for a contribution towards the costs of attending scientific and academic meetings and conferences, including registration fees. The limits are:

- Lead applicant – £2,000 a year
- Coapplicants on your grant – £2,000 each a year
- Research and technical staff on your grant – £1,000 each a year.

We provide costs to cover caring responsibilities for any staff employed on your grant attend a conference. This includes childcare and any other caring responsibility they have. We will pay these if:

- Wellcome is providing the salary
- the conference is directly related to the research
- the caring costs are over and above what they would normally pay for care
- the conference organiser and their employing organisation are unable to cover the costs.

You can ask for up to £1,000 per person for each conference.

Collaborative travel

You can ask for travel and subsistence costs for collaborative visits for you and any staff employed on your grant. You'll need to justify each visit and its duration.

Other travel

We will pay for other essential visits, for example to facilities, libraries, archives, sample collection and for fieldwork. You can include subsistence costs. You'll need to justify each visit and its duration.

Carbon offset costs

This applies to all types of travel costs Wellcome provides.

You can ask for:

- the cost of a low carbon mode of transport, even if it is more expensive (for example travelling by train instead of flying)
- project-related resources or activities that provide an alternative to travel, such as video conferencing, communication and file-sharing software
- costs to offset the carbon emissions generated by the essential travel. If carbon offsetting for travel is not part of your organisational sustainability strategy, you can ask us for a similar level of support for other sustainability initiatives. Your organisation must get our approval before submitting an application.

We won't pay for the core infrastructure that your host organisation should provide, unless you're eligible to ask for these costs under our [overheads policy](#). Examples of these costs include:

- organisation-wide video conferencing packages
- high-speed broadband
- HD screens.

See our [environmental sustainability policy](#) for what you and your organisation can do.

Subsistence costs

If you're away for **up to one month** you can ask for subsistence costs. These include accommodation, meals and incidentals (for example, refreshments or newspapers).

If your administering organisation has a subsistence policy, use their rates.

If your administering organisation doesn't have a subsistence policy, please use the HMRC rates.

If you're away for **more than one month and up to 12 months**, we will pay reasonable rental costs only, including aparthotels. You should discuss appropriate rates with your administering and host organisations, or Wellcome, as appropriate. We expect you to choose the most economical options, booked in advance where possible.

If you're from a low- or middle- income country and will be working in a high-income country for **more than one month and up to 12 months**, you can also ask for up to £10 a day to cover extra costs, such as transport and incidentals.

If you're away for **more than 12 months**, we will pay the costs of your housing. You should discuss your needs with your administering and host organisations.

The allowance we provide will be based on family and business need. We will set the maximum allowance we pay for each location. This will be based on current market data or, where data is unavailable, in consultation with your administering organisation, using equivalent market rates. Please contact us if you need help calculating the costs.

We will cover the direct expenses you have to pay to find and rent a home. We will not cover the cost of utilities or any refurbishment.

Overseas research

If you or any research staff employed on your grant will be doing research away from your home laboratory, we'll help with the additional costs of working on the project overseas. Please see the 'Overseas allowances' section for details.

overseas allowances

You can ask for these costs if you are applying from a higher education institution, a research institute, a non-academic healthcare organisation, a not-for-profit or non-governmental research organisation or a small company.

If you or any staff employed on your grant will be spending time in another country, we'll help you with the additional costs of working on the project overseas.

Our overseas allowances are:

- a contribution towards the personal cost of carrying out research overseas, to ensure that you are not disadvantaged
- provided on the assumption that you'll be paying income tax, either in your home country, or the country you will be working in (your personal tax is your responsibility).
- provided on the understanding that you or your partner will not receive equivalent allowances from elsewhere
- determined by the amount of time you will spend away from your home country.

Carbon offset costs

We expect the people we fund to choose travel that has a lower carbon impact, even if it's more expensive (for example travelling by train instead of flying). We will not pay for business class flights.

You can ask for costs to offset the carbon generated by the travel as part of your overseas allowances. If carbon offsetting for travel is not part of your organisational sustainability strategy, you can ask us for a similar level of support

for other sustainability initiatives. Your organisation must get our approval for other sustainability initiatives to be included in applications.

See our [environmental sustainability policy](#) for information on what you and your organisation need to do.

Partners and dependants travelling with you

If you will be away more than 12 months, we will provide overseas allowances for your partner and any dependants if they are travelling with you.

If you will be away for 12 months or less and can justify why your partner and dependants must travel with you, we may provide overseas allowances for them.

We define your partner as the person:

- you're married to
- you're not married to but with whom you've been in a relationship for at least a year

and

- you live with at the same permanent address and share some form of joint financial commitment with, such as a mortgage.

You can ask for the following allowances. You need to provide estimated costs as accurately as possible.

outward and return travel

We will pay your travel costs at the beginning and end of your overseas work. Costs can be for air, ferry, train or coach fares.

All fares should be:

- in line with our [environmental sustainability policy](#).
- booked in advance where possible.

baggage and freight shipping allowance

If you are away for **up to 12 months**, you can ask for up to 80kg of additional baggage or unaccompanied airline freight for your outward and return journeys.

If you are away for **more than 12 months**, you can ask for the costs of shipping your personal items at the beginning and end of your overseas work.

We will pay the full cost of transporting:

- half a standard shipping container if you're travelling alone
- a whole standard shipping container (20ft) if you're travelling with a partner and/or dependants.

medical and travel insurance

We will pay the cost of your medical insurance and travel insurance.

If you will be working in a low- or middle-income country we will also cover the cost of emergency evacuation cover.

We won't pay for medical insurance if you will be based in the UK or Republic of Ireland.

visas and vaccinations

We will pay the costs of visas, vaccinations and anti-malaria treatment.

housing security

You can ask for this if you'll be based in a low- or middle-income country and it is necessary.

Costs can include guards, panic buttons and alarms. You should ask your employing organisation for advice on the level of security you need.

accommodation and subsistence

If you're away for **up to one month** you can ask for subsistence costs. These include accommodation, meals and incidentals (for example, refreshments or newspapers).

If your administering organisation has a subsistence policy, use their rates.

If your administering organisation doesn't have a subsistence policy, please use the HMRC rates.

If you're away for **more than one month and up to 12 months**, we will pay reasonable rental costs only, including aparthotels. You should discuss appropriate rates with your administering and host organisations, or Wellcome, as appropriate. We expect you to choose the most economical options, booked in advance where possible.

If you're from a low- or middle- income country and will be working in a high-income country for **more than one month and up to 12 months**, you can also ask for up to £10 a day to cover extra costs, such as transport and incidentals.

If you're away for **more than 12 months**, we will pay the costs of your housing. You should discuss your needs with your administering and host organisations.

The allowance we provide will be based on family and business need. We will set the maximum allowance we pay for each location. This will be based on current market data or, where data is unavailable, in consultation with your administering organisation, using equivalent market rates. If you need help calculating the costs please contact us.

We will cover the direct expenses you have to pay to find and rent a home. We will not cover the cost of utilities or any refurbishment.

education

If you're away for **more than 12 months** we will pay:

Local nursery or school fees

You can ask for these costs if you are in a location where there isn't free local education of the same standard as in your home country.

Costs include:

- local nursery school fees up to a maximum of 570 hours a year for 3 to 4 year olds
- local junior or secondary school fees, up to the end of secondary school education.

Local international school fees

You can ask for these costs if local schools do not provide the same standard of education as in your home country. We will only pay the published termly school fees.

We will not cover the costs of:

- extracurricular activities, including field trips
- other extras including, but not limited to, uniforms, sports kit and equipment, transport, meals, books and electronic equipment.

Boarding school fees

We will consider paying the cost of boarding school fees in your home country if:

- a local international school is not available
- both parents, guardians or the sole care giver live outside the home country.

The allowance covers:

- up to a maximum of £30,000 a year for each child for the published termly fees only
- the cost of return airfares at the start and end of each school term, in line with our carbon offset policy for travel.

We will not cover the costs of:

- additional annual leave airfares
- extracurricular activities, including field trips
- other extras including, but not limited to, uniforms, sports kit and equipment, transport, meals, books and electronic equipment.

We will cover the cost of providing special needs education as far as possible. Please contact us to discuss your needs.

We would not usually expect to provide an education allowance if you will be working in a high-income country.

annual leave travel costs

If you will be away for **more than 12 months**, we'll pay for you to travel back to your home country for annual leave. This is in addition to your outward and return travel costs and depends on how long you will be away:

- 12-24 months – 1 annual leave trip
- 25-36 months – 2 annual leave trips
- 37-48 months – 3 annual leave trips
- 49-60 months – 4 annual leave trips

All fares should be:

- in line with our environmental sustainability policy
- booked in advance where possible.

language lessons

If you will be away for **more than 12 months**, you can ask for up to 100 hours of lessons in the local language for you and/or your partner during the first 12 months of your visit.

We will cover 100% of the costs for local language school classes or up to 50% of the costs of individual tuition.

We will not cover the cost of examinations or personal learning materials such as DVDs and books.

public engagement and patient involvement costs

You can ask for costs that are essential to the project. These can include:

- materials, including printing and publishing
- other costs relating to engagement activities that are essential to carry out your research, such as patient involvement (including under-served groups) and community engagement
- dissemination of research results and findings arising from Wellcome funded research and workshops.

For more information, please refer to our guidance on [using an engaged research approach](#).

overheads

You can ask for overheads if your grant will be based at a:

- university outside the UK
- research organisation that does not receive core funding for overheads
- charitable or not-for-profit organisation
- small or medium-sized commercial organisation.

You can also ask for overheads on any part of your grant that is sub-contracted to any of the organisations listed above.

If you're based at a UK university, you can't ask for overheads for sub-contracted activity if your university will include the sub-contracted funding in its annual reporting for the charity support element of UK government block funding, for example the Charity Research Support Fund for universities in England.

Overheads can include:

- estates, for example building and premises
- non-project dedicated administrative and support staff
- administration, for example finance, library and room hire.

The total cost for overheads should not be more than 20% of the direct research costs.

These costs must directly support the activity funded by the grant.

How to apply for these costs

In your grant application you must:

- give a full breakdown of costs (you can't ask for a percentage of the research costs)

- explain why these costs are necessary for your research
 - include a letter from the finance director of your host organisation, or the sub-contracted organisation, confirming that the breakdown is a true representation of the costs incurred.
-

continuing professional development and training

You can ask for these costs if you are applying from a higher education institution, a research institute, a non-academic healthcare organisation, a not-for-profit or non-governmental research organisation or a small company.

Continuing professional development and professional skills training

You can ask for a contribution towards these costs.

Types of training can include:

- research leadership, professional and people management skills
- career development support
- responsible conduct of research
- diversity and inclusion
- promotion of a healthy research culture
- understanding and reducing the environmental impact of research.

We expect your host organisation to provide and fund this training. However, if these types of training are not available, or the quality is inadequate, you can ask for up to £500 a year for you and each member of staff employed on your grant who will be:

- in a post of 12 months duration or more only and
- working on Wellcome funded awards for at least 50% full time equivalent.

You will need to justify these costs in your application.

Research skills training

You can ask for costs to cover training for the technical and research skills you need to deliver your proposed research.

You can ask for whatever research skills training you need for you, and each member of staff employed on your grant, who will be:

- in a post of 12 months duration or more only and
- working on Wellcome funded awards for at least 50% full time equivalent.

You will need to justify these costs in your application.

open access charges

If your organisation receives open access block grant funding, you can ask them to cover your open access article processing charges.

If you're at an organisation that does not receive block grant funding, we'll supplement your grant when your paper has been accepted for publication.

You cannot ask for these charges in your grant application.

inflation allowance

How we calculate your inflation allowance

We will add an inflation allowance to your award. Your inflation allowance is based on your total eligible costs and the duration of the award.

We will use an inflation allowance that reflects the inflation rate of the country where the host organisation is based using data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). You'll receive the following allowance if the costs in your application are in pounds sterling.

AWARD DURATION (IN MONTHS)	INFLATION ALLOWANCE
0-12	0.0%
13-24	1.01%
25-36	2.04%
37-48	3.09%
49-60	4.13%

The costs in your application must be based on current known costs, excluding inflation.

You should allow for salary pay awards during Year 1. These should be based on pay awards already agreed; if you don't know what the pay award is yet then use the IMF rate for the currency your award will be made in.

other costs

Allowed costs

You may ask for the following costs (you will have to justify them in your application):

- specialist publications that are relevant to the research and not available in institutional libraries
- consultancy fees
- expenses for subjects and volunteers – includes recruitment of participants, their participatory fees and travel, as well as interviewee expenses
- reasonable research-associated costs related to the feedback of health-related findings but not any healthcare-associated costs
- costs associated with developing an outputs management plan
- questionnaires, recruitment material, newsletters etc for clinical, epidemiological and qualitative research studies
- public engagement materials where dissemination (including printing and publishing) is a key activity of the project
- recruitment, advertising and interviewee travel costs for staff to be employed on the grant
- purchase, hire and running costs of project-dedicated vehicles
- project-specific personal protective equipment (PPE) that is above the standard expected for the setting

- costs to host/a contribution towards the cost of hosting:
 - a conference
 - a session within a conference
 - a symposium
 - a seminar series
 - advisory board meetings, if appropriate.

The meeting should either be:

- for research purposes, for example data gathering
- to disseminate your research findings, for example to policy makers.

Costs can include:

- travel and accommodation for keynote speakers
- external room hire and catering
- event publicity and conference materials
- childcare and other caring responsibility costs for delegates
- any costs related to accessibility and inclusion.

Disallowed costs

We will not pay for:

- estates costs – such as building and premises costs, basic services and utilities*
- phone, postage, photocopying and stationery, unless you can justify these within a clinical or epidemiological study
- page charges and the cost of colour prints
- research, technical and administrative staff whose time is shared across several projects and isn't supported by an audit record*
- PhD stipends
- cleaning, waste and other disposal costs*
- indirect costs – this includes general administration costs such as personnel, finance, library, room hire and some departmental services
- office furniture, such as chairs, desks and filing cabinets
- clothing such as lab coats and shoes
- non-research related activities such as catering, room and venue hire for staff parties, team-building events and social activities
- indemnity insurance (insurance cover against claims made by subjects or patients associated with a research programme)
- ethics reviews, unless you are in a low- or middle-income country
- radiation protection costs
- contingency funds
- organisation insurance
- clinical examination or course fees
- working capital costs of commercial organisations.

*We will fund these costs in the case of animal-related research.

How to apply

Where to apply

You need to apply for this scheme on the Wellcome Funding Platform. You will need to log in or create an account. You can save your application and return to it at any time. You can get some [tips to help you write your grant application](#), and [register for our funding webinar](#) taking place on 27 November.

[Start your application](#)

Information you need to provide

As well as answering the application questions, you must provide:

- a letter of support from each organisation (of the lead applicant and any coapplicants)
- a letter of support from the director of finance at the administering organisation or any indirectly funded organisation requesting overheads, confirming the breakdown is a true representation of the costs incurred.

If you have less than three years remaining on your contract at the point of application, you must have secured your next position at an eligible organisation and provide a letter of support from them.

How long it takes to apply

You must leave enough time for:

- you and any coapplicants to complete the application
- your organisation to review and submit the application

Getting support with your application

We offer disability-related support for applicants. Read the [disability-related support guidance](#) if you:

- are disabled or have a long-term health condition and you need help applying for funding
- need to defer your application
- need help completing your project, for example costs for assistive technology

If you need help with anything else, [please contact us](#).

Application process

1. Before you apply

Make sure you read everything on this page.

Get some [tips to help you write your grant application](#).

[Register for our funding webinar](#) on 27 November at 14:00 GMT. Ask questions for our team and upvote other questions ahead of the webinar on [Slido using the code #WellcomeFungalAdaptation](#).

You do not need to contact us before you write and submit your application.

View the [sample application form \[PDF 254KB\]](#).

2. Submit your application to your administering organisation for approval

Complete your application form on [Wellcome Funding](#).

Submit your application to the 'approver' your administering organisation for approval. Make sure you leave enough time for the to review and submit your application to Wellcome before the deadline. The approver may ask you to make changes to your application.

If this is your organisation's first time applying for Wellcome funding

If this is your organisation's first time applying for Wellcome funding, they will need to contact us to request an organisation account. Email fundingsupport@wellcome.org with your organisation's:

- name
- address
- country
- team email address for the people who will approve and submit your application (this is usually a research management team).

We will create the organisation account and provide access to the approvers. Review our [guidance for research offices](#).

3. Administering organisation reviews your application and submits it to us

Your application must be submitted by 17:00 (GMT) on the deadline day. Review our [guidance for research offices on using the Wellcome Funding platform](#).

4. Shortlisting

We will check your eligibility for the call and that your application fits the call scope. If your application is not eligible or is not within the funding call scope, we will withdraw your application and contact you to explain why.

A committee will assess eligible and in remit applications against the assessment criteria outlined below, to make shortlisting recommendations to Wellcome.

Committee membership will be comprised of a diverse range of international experts in fungal biology and will take into account Wellcome's diversity and inclusion priorities.

If your application is shortlisted, we will invite the lead applicant accompanied by up to three coapplicants for a virtual interview.

5. Interviews

The committee will interview shortlisted applicants online and make funding recommendations to Wellcome.

Accessibility requirements will be accommodated.

You will be asked to give a presentation at the start of your interview. Details of the requirements for this presentation, and the date when slides need to be submitted to Wellcome, will be shared in advance.

We will provide further information on the structure of the interview, room layout and committee membership before the interview.

The focus of the interview will be on questions and answers. The committee will assess the application against the full set of assessment criteria, rather than one specific aspect of the proposal.

The committee will consider your application and interview responses when making funding recommendations to Wellcome.

6. Funding decision

Final funding decisions will be made by Wellcome's Discovery Research Decision Board.

You will receive an email notification of the funding decision soon after the decision has been made in June 2025.

The reasons for a decision will be provided to unsuccessful interview applicants in writing.

How applications are assessed

Stage 1: Eligibility and remit review

We will check your eligibility for the call and that your proposed research is within the call's scope of funding. If your application is ineligible or is not within the funding scope, we will withdraw your application and contact you to explain why.

Stage 2: Shortlisting

At the shortlisting stage, the Committee will consider how your proposed work aligns with the scope of the funding call, as well as the quality and feasibility of your design.

Stage 3: Interview

If shortlisted, you will be invited to attend a virtual interview. During the interview, you may be asked to:

- justify costs
- discuss your experience or your team's composition
- discuss your research environment considerations

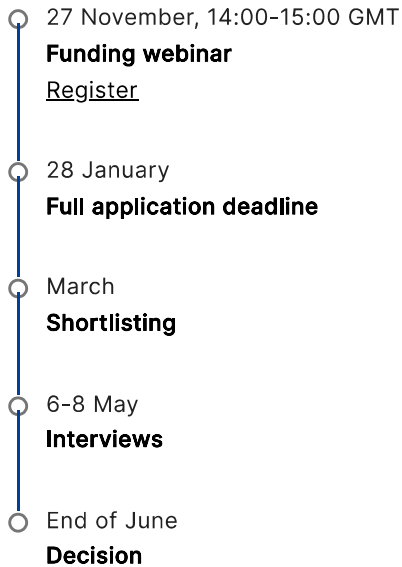
Essential criteria and weightings for interviews

- Proposal (50%)
- Lead/Team (25%)
- Research Environment (25%)

Further information on the assessment criteria will be published in due course.


Application process timeline


You must submit your application by 17:00 (GMT) on the deadline day. We don't accept late applications.




Contact us

If you have a question about eligibility, what we offer or completing the application form, contact our funding information advisers:

 [Send us a message](#)

 [\(0\)20 7611 5757](tel:(0)20 7611 5757)

If you have a question about your proposal or the remit of the funding call, contact us at:

 DiscoveryResearch@wellcome.org

We do not answer questions on the scope or competitiveness of proposals.

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