



# **MND ASSOCIATION HEALTHCARE PROJECT GRANTS**

## **Summary Application Guidelines**

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# **MND ASSOCIATION HEALTHCARE PROJECT GRANTS**

## **OBJECTIVES**

The MND Association supports healthcare research on Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis and related conditions, in all relevant disciplines. The objective of the MND Association healthcare research programme is to fund research aimed at increasing treatment options and improving clinical/healthcare practice, to support people living with MND and also their caregivers and families.

Researchers should be able to demonstrate that their proposed study will inform and expand the [NICE Guideline \*Motor Neurone Disease: Assessment and Management\*](#) through identifying knowledge gaps and/or generating a more robust evidence base, strengthening the case for statutory funding of high-quality MND care.

**For 2025 we additionally have three specific areas of research for which we would welcome applications, please see Appendix.**

The Association only supports work carried out in conjunction with universities, hospitals and other established research institutions/organisations.

## **PROCEDURE**

Research proposals are considered in outline initially and a full application may be invited thereafter. Full applications are independently peer reviewed prior to consideration by the Association's Healthcare Research Advisory Panel (HRAP). The Panel's funding recommendations are then considered by the Board of Trustees of the MND Association. For further information on the Association's application review process, please see the MND Association's [Healthcare Research Governance Overview](#) and the [Supplementary Document](#).

### **Purpose of the Association's Project Grants**

The essential purpose of the grant is to support a single project, ie a piece of work designed to answer a single question or a small group of related questions. Such support will usually be of limited duration and applications of up to three years will be considered. Applications for less than two years should ideally include a named researcher with the relevant expertise, familiar with the institute and the methodologies to be used. The continuation of a grant within the funded period will be subject to annual review after the submission of a progress report, which is required at the completion of each year of the project.

***Applications for Project Grants at non-London Institutes should not exceed £100,000 per annum (and £300,000 in total) without the prior agreement of the MND Association.***

***Applications for Project Grants at London Institutes should not exceed £110,000 per annum (and £330,000 in total) without the prior agreement of the MND Association.***

Please budget for the costs of conference attendance in line with our Terms and Conditions, to a maximum of £3,000 for a three year grant, and pro-rata for a shorter grant.

## **Personal direction of the project**

The grant holder/s must be actively engaged in directing the project.

## **COLLABORATORS**

Where the viability of a project depends on collaboration / involvement with investigators not named as co-applicants, the exact role of the collaborator/s should be clearly stated within the summary application. Confirmation from each collaborator indicating their willingness to participate will be required with the full application.

## **OVERSEAS APPLICANTS**

Applications submitted by researchers based at institutions outside of the UK and Ireland **must** meet the following criteria:

- the project must be unique in concept or design (ie no similar research is being performed in the UK/Ireland)
- the project must involve a significant collaborative component with a UK or Irish institute
- the research outcomes must be applicable to the UK healthcare environment

## **Timing of applications**

The deadline date for summary applications for healthcare grants is normally in late April or early May. HRAP meets to consider *invited* full applications in the following October. Successful applicants are notified in November/December following approval of grant support by the Board of Trustees.

## **SUMMARY APPLICATION**

**Applicants need to make an initial approach, by completing an online summary application indicating:**

- the relevance to *classical* MND (i.e. ALS, PMA, PLS) or Kennedy's disease (SBMA). Other motor neuron conditions will only be considered if a direct benefit to MND research can be demonstrated.
- the aim/s of the work
- an outline of the proposed work plan
- how the study fits in with other work in the laboratory/institute/hospital
- approximate cost and time scale
- the potential clinical and/or translational relevance of the research

The online summary application form is located on the MND Association website in the 'for researchers' section and will be open from late March. There is also a link from the Association's home page. The *Healthcare Project Grant Terms and Conditions*, *Research Strategy*, *Research Governance Overview* and the *Guide to Completing the Online Summary Application Form* are also available online. **It is essential to be familiar with the information provided in these important documents when applying for a grant.**

Prior to completing the form, please read the important information below (this page will also appear as the first page of the form).

## DATA PROTECTION

All information provided will be entered into our grants management database and used solely for the purpose of the grants application process (please see [Healthcare Research Governance Overview](#) section 3). When a grant has been awarded, contact details will also be added to the Association's contact database for the purpose of providing you with MND Association information only, eg deadline dates for grant rounds, symposium details, and any other relevant information. (There will be the opportunity to opt out of receiving these).

## COMPLETING THE FORM

To enable our records to be as accurate as possible, it is important to provide all relevant information requested as well as completing the mandatory fields, marked with an asterisk. Please read and use the [Guide to Completing the Online Summary Application Form](#) when filling in the form.

The form consists of ten pages, please work your way through these using the **previous** and **next** buttons (at the bottom of each page) to navigate through the form. **Any formatted text, diagrams or tables etc will need to be prepared offline and uploaded on the attachments page** (there is provision for two up-loads with a maximum of 10MB and 4 pages each). It is not possible to insert these documents direct into the form itself. If the applicant is an early career researcher, please submit a brief two page CV by email to [research.grants@mndassociation.org](mailto:research.grants@mndassociation.org). The CV should be either a word or PDF document, DO NOT upload this with your summary application. Further information will be provided as you complete the form by clicking on the '?' sign for help and information on individual questions.

The form consists of the following pages:

1) Applicant Details 2) Institute Details 3) Co-applicant Details 4) Collaboration Details 5) Project Details 6) Summary Details 7) Estimated Costs 8) Attachments (figures, tables, pictures and publications) 9) Declaration 10) Applicant Feedback Survey (optional)

The step prior to submission is to review the application (at the bottom of the feedback page) and make revisions if needed. Once submit is selected it will not be possible to edit the form further.

## AFTER SUBMISSION

An initial automatic acknowledgement, together with a copy of the form, will be sent via email.

If you do not receive this email, please contact us at [research.grants@mndassociation.org](mailto:research.grants@mndassociation.org). A further acknowledgement will be sent to the lead applicant a few days after the closing date for submissions, once MND Association staff have had time to check all applications.

After consultation with the Healthcare Research Advisory Panel, the MND Association will normally respond within six weeks, to advise whether submission of a full application is appropriate or not. The closing date for submission of full (formal) applications will be at least four weeks from the date of the invitation to submit a full application.

(These guidelines may be subject to change, please check before completing the Online Summary Application Form)

## **APPEXDIX: HRAP – specific subjects of interest in 2025**

As stated on our website, in general we ask that applicants for healthcare research projects and studentship grants should be able to demonstrate that their proposed study will inform and expand the NICE Guideline [Motor Neurone Disease: Assessment and Management](#) through identification of knowledge gaps and/or generation of a more robust knowledge base, strengthening the case for statutory funding of high-quality MND care.

**In 2025, we are also highlighting three specific areas where we would particularly welcome applications.**

For these areas, proposals utilising a traditional research methodology, or proposals with a robust real-world evaluation approach are welcome.

### **Subject focus: Pain management in MND**

We are interested in a research project focussed on pain in MND which addresses these three following points:

1. explores prevalence of pain in MND and confirms how to effectively assess pain in people living with MND (plwMND),
2. confirms the effectiveness of pharmacological and non-pharmacological responses to different types of pain in MND,
3. and develops a management pathway to inform best practice when discussing and agreeing an appropriate course of action.

### **Subject focus: Exercise and MND**

We are interested in a project which addresses these three following points:

1. explores the wider benefits of exercise eg psychological well-being, identity, maintenance of mobility, activities of daily living and comfort,
2. helps health and social care professionals to answer, with evidence, the questions often posed by plwMND, (eg can I continue my sport/exercise or will it worsen my MND; will it work to regain my muscles; will it delay progression; will it preserve function?) to support self-management by plwMND,
3. and produces an informed guide for health and social care professionals to help them judiciously advise their patients on appropriate and effective exercise.

### **Subject focus: Cognitive deficits, behavioural symptoms, and prognostic indication**

We are interested in a project which:

1. investigates cognitive and behavioural symptoms as a prognostic indicator with a view to explore these as part of the work to establish a UK validated prognostic tool.

We are interested in a project which

1. investigates how cognitive and/or behavioural assessments are best used in clinical practice,
2. how often should they be repeated,
3. and what is the impact of using them on care for the patient, and their carers?