

Call for Proposals: Research capacity development in support of the EVD response

Status:	Open
Type of Action:	Coordination & Support Action (CSA)
Open date:	19 March 2015
Close date:	6 August 2015, 17:00 CET
Indicative call budget:	1.4 million Euros
Maximum funding:	250,000 Euros per application
Funding level:	100% of eligible costs
Expected number of grants:	5-7

Background

The outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) in West Africa has catalysed a number of research and development activities that are focused on delivering effective therapeutic, diagnostic and preventive interventions. However, the successful testing and implementation of these interventions requires the availability of functioning health research infrastructures and increased research capacity in the affected countries, as well as willingness of affected populations to engage in research and development activities.

Scope

The purpose of this Call for Proposals is to build and strengthen regional, national, institutional and individual capacities to conduct high quality health research (e.g. clinical trials, operational and/or implementation research) during infectious disease outbreaks resulting in health emergencies. Proposals should complement current and future research initiatives for treatment, prevention and containment of EVD or other emerging infectious diseases of particular relevance to Africa. Applications should address one or more of the following areas:

- Establish training or other capacity building activities for health care and laboratory personnel to detect and respond to infectious disease epidemics, conduct clinical trials and analyse samples in an emergency context to ensure clinical trial site preparedness
- Generate evidence for and implement ethically sound approaches to the introduction and clinical testing of new prevention tools or treatments during outbreaks of EVD or other emerging infectious diseases of particular relevance to Africa
- Identify and implement best practices for building both community and national health authority support and engagement in clinical trials being conducted in emergency situations. This may include activities related to the development of appropriate mechanisms for surveillance, identification, tracking and referral of cases, as well as reintegration of survivors into the community.

The proposals may include support for networking, development and promotion of policies and guidelines, innovative approaches for best use of existing protocols and good clinical and laboratory practices, as well as concrete plans for sharing of research infrastructures, personnel and know-how. Projects involving transnational collaboration and regional networking are encouraged. Applicants are encouraged to establish links with relevant WHO and EDCTP-funded activities, including the EDCTP Regional Networks as well as Regional Training Centres and networks supported by the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (WHO/TDR).

This Call for Proposals is a joint initiative between EDCTP, TDR and the UK Medical Research Council (MRC) to support the EVD response in West Africa. The funders consider that proposals

for activities of between 12 and 24 months duration would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals for activities of a different duration.

A separate Call for Proposals will be launched in early April 2015 by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), which aims to support EVD research in the areas of: EVD biology; EVD treatment; transmission, spread and containment of EVD; and studies of the impacts of EVD on health system utilisation patterns by different populations groups in affected regions, the cost-effectiveness of health system resource development strategies in response to the EVD crisis, and the sustainability of health workforce and other health system resource allocation strategies once the EVD crisis subsides. Researchers who are funded through the respective calls will be required to attend a joint workshop hosted by the funders, to identify opportunities for international synergy and collaboration. Applicants must allocate sufficient funds to attend this workshop in their submitted budgets.

Expected impact

Projects funded under this Call for Proposals should contribute towards increasing health system preparedness and community engagement in research and development activities. By improving community trust and health research capacity, they will facilitate rapid testing and introduction of high quality research interventions in emergency situations caused by infectious disease outbreaks.

Eligibility

Consortia of researchers composed of at least one legal entity can apply. The requested contribution per activity shall not exceed 250,000 Euros.

Submission and evaluation procedure

This is a single-stage application procedure. A full proposal must be submitted via [EDCTPgrants](#) by 6 August 2015 at 17:00 CET (16:00 GMT).

The evaluation results will be available by 1 October 2015.

Evaluation criteria, scoring and thresholds

This call follows a single-stage application procedure. Following an admissibility and eligibility check, full proposals are evaluated by external, independent experts. Proposals are evaluated according to the criteria Excellence, Impact and Implementation. Each criterion is scored between 0 and 5. The threshold for individual criteria is 3 and the overall threshold for the sum of the three individual scores is 10. Applicants have the opportunity to submit a written response to the expert reviewers' comments prior to an expert review committee meeting convened by EDCTP to finalise the funding recommendations.

The following aspects are considered under the evaluation criteria:

Excellence

- Fit with the scope and objectives of EDCTP2 and the call topic description
- Importance, relevance and clarity of the objectives
- Credibility of the proposed approach
- Clarity, pertinence and importance of the strategic vision
- Soundness of the concept
- Quality of the proposed coordination and/or support measures.

Impact

- Contributes towards the expected impacts listed for the call
- Likelihood to result in major advances for the field
- Effectiveness of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results
- Sustainability of capacity beyond the end of the grant, where relevant
- Contribution to networking, where relevant.

Quality and efficiency of the implementation

- Coherence and effectiveness of the proposed work, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources
- Feasibility and appropriateness of the methods and project management to achieve the objectives within the timeframe of the grant
- Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management, and how responsibilities for research data quality and sharing, and security will be met
- Compliance with national and international standards of research, Good Clinical Practice, ethics and safety related issues
- Complementarity of the participants within the consortium and gender balance among consortium members (when relevant)
- Participants have the operational capacity, to carry out the proposed work, based on the competence and experience of the individual participant(s).

Financial provisions

The indicative call budget is 1.4 million Euros.

The total requested contribution (direct + indirect costs) shall not exceed 250,000 Euros per project. Indirect costs may constitute up to 25% of direct costs. There is no cofunding requirement: EDCTP/TDR/MRC may fund 100% of eligible project costs.

The funders consider that proposals for activities of between 12 and 24 months duration would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals for activities of a different duration.

Grant agreement

A grant agreement with EDCTP (general EDCTP2 mono- or multi-beneficiary grant agreement) should be signed within three months of receipt of the conditional award letter¹. In the case of projects involving multiple beneficiaries, all participants in the project must sign a consortium agreement prior to the conclusion of the EDCTP2 grant agreement. Applicants receiving funding from TDR will be required to conclude a grant agreement with TDR.

Application process

- The application must be submitted online via EDCTPgrants
- Only registered users of EDCTPgrants system can apply for grants and therefore you are advised to register on the system as soon as possible
- Please read the **guiding notes** embedded in the online application and the EDCTP2 work plan carefully before submitting an application.

For further information

¹ Grant awarding by EDCTP will depend on the final approval of the EDCTP2 work plan and associated budget for 2015 by the European Commission and the EDCTP Association.

For questions related to this Call for Proposals, please contact:

- Ms Nuraan Fakier at fakier@edctp.org

For questions and issues about EDCTPgrants and the online submission please contact EDCTP via EDCTPgrants@edctp.org or +31 (0) 70 344 08 80.