



# Information Session

# Agenda

- **Introduction** – Dr Dan O'Connor, Wellcome
- **Overview of scheme criteria** – Dr Jack Harrington, Wellcome
- **A grant-holder's perspective** – Professor Jim Mills, University of Strathclyde
- **Preparing your application: key themes** – Dr Jack Harrington, Wellcome
- **Questions**

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# **Overview of scheme criteria**

## **Dr Jack Harrington**

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# International Exchange Programmes

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# International Exchange Programmes in Humanities, Social Science and Bioethics

There must be at least two applicants based in different countries (the lead must be in the UK)

Level of funding: Up to £1.5 million

Duration of funding: 3 to 5 years

The exchange programme you propose must:

- **help programme participants** to transform their careers by experiencing academic life abroad
- **enable the programme leaders** to shape the direction of their future work through global partnerships

# International Exchange Programmes in Humanities, Social Science and Bioethics

What we are looking for from a group:

- experience in running a research programme or network, or of delivering complex projects
- effective working relationships with each other through previous collaborations or shared research interests
- experience in supervising researchers

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# Research Development Awards

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# Research Development Awards in Humanities, Social Science and Bioethics

Applicants can be based anywhere in the world

Level of funding: Up to £1 million

Duration of funding: 3 to 5 years

The research development programme you propose must:

- **lead to a significant and sustainable research agenda** that takes risks and pushes academic boundaries
- **develop the careers of the people in your research group**
- **build a diverse and collaborative research community**



# Research Development Awards in Humanities, Social Science and Bioethics

Your research group can be:

- part of an emerging or established research group working in health-related humanities, social sciences or bioethics
- in one discipline, interdisciplinary, or focused on a theme or issue



# Assessment process



# Assessment process

## Two stages:

### Preliminary Application (March 2020)

- Feedback provided to all applicants
- Limited number invited to full application
- Site visits for invitees – an opportunity to meet researchers and provide further feedback

### Full Application (Winter 2020)

- Funding recommendation made by a committee (early 2021)

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**A grant-holder's perspective –  
Professor Jim Mills, University of  
Strathclyde**

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## **Dream-Teams and the Devil: The MHCUK Collaboration.**

**Professor James Mills,**

**Centre for the Social History of Health and Healthcare (CSHHH) Glasgow,**

**University of Strathclyde**

**[www.strath.ac.uk/cshhh](http://www.strath.ac.uk/cshhh)**

**[jim.mills@strath.ac.uk](mailto:jim.mills@strath.ac.uk)**

## Medical Humanities China-UK (MHCUK)

### Dream Team?

2011 ADHS Professor Yong-an Zhang, Shanghai University (SHU)

2012 Drugs and Empires event at SHU (WT098987MA)

2014-2016 AHRC International Networking Grant (3 conferences on IHOs)

2015-2018 Chinese Government 'High-end Foreign Expert of the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs' Award.

Papers at Fudan and at SASS, Gao Xi and Zhao Jing.

CSHHH/Strathclyde buy-in with MSc student exchange

2017+ Exchange activities between SHU and CSHHH lead to MHCUK consortium.

## Dream Team?

- Track record of building cooperation demonstrate capacity for managing increasingly complex projects.
- Confidence and trust between partners.
- Project managers and administrators work together.
- Ideas driven: What happens when two very different academic cultures come together, with a common goal of developing the Medical Humanities?

## The Devil

-Who will contribute, manage and report on resources?

MHCUK: CSHHH and CHSTM manage local and WT funding,  
Chinese institutions manage theirs.

- Will visa regulations, HR rules, tax laws etc shape activities?

MHCUK: Visa X, tax, and employment law.

- How will all institutions contribute to making the programme functional?

MHCUK: two year term for Chinese Masters students.



## Conclusions

How has MHCUK progressed to this point?

- Confidence and competencies built through experience of co-working.
- Ideas driven.
- People driven.

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# Preparing your application: key themes

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# Preparing your application: key themes

- Building a research agenda
- Institutional Support
- Shared leadership
- Career development opportunities for all staff
- Budget and duration

# Building a research agenda

- Shape the direction of future work in your field
- Compelling and expansive vision
- Creative approach
- Less emphasis on post-grant sustainability

# Institutional Support

- Importance of demonstrating real commitment from senior leadership
- Clear fit within overall University vision
- Guaranteed support of applicants' time
- Commitment to career development opportunities for all staff
- Confirmation of being able to sign up to grant conditions
- International Exchange Programme: high-income countries must contribute towards the overall costs

# Shared leadership

“Sharing leadership through democratic structures promotes dialogue and challenge: it enables creativity and is always much more fun than the norm of a single director, who, let's face it, could never do everything anyway.”

**Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley**

Director, Centre for Biomedicine, Self and Society

University of Edinburgh

# Shared leadership

- Equity in management structure
- Shared responsibility among the applicants
- Leadership opportunities for all staff
- Inclusive approach

# Career development opportunities for all staff

“Building new careers and offering diverse opportunities to engage in research development is one of the greatest privileges of working in academia. With imagination and creativity, we can realise the skills and energies of our early career researchers and support them in developing into new roles.”

**Professor Jane Macnaughton**

Director, Centre for Medical Humanities

Durham University



# Career development opportunities for all staff

- Sufficient time-commitment, salary level and expenses to attract and support staff
- Career-building opportunities
- Commitment to the careers of all staff (e.g. research, project management)
- Breadth of expertise needed to deliver your vision

# Budget and duration

- Work at the scale you need
- Ask for everything you need to do this well  
e.g. awarding and running your own small research grants
- Give yourself enough time

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# Questions

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**Thank you**

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**Please send any enquires to  
HSS@wellcome.ac.uk**

## Frequently Asked Questions: Research Development Awards and International Exchange Programmes

### **Eligibility:**

- How do the Research Development Awards and International Exchange Programmes differ from the Investigator and Collaborative Awards?

*The Research Development Awards and the International Exchange Programmes relate to an earlier stage in the research cycle, when you are trying to work out in broad terms what future research in your field might look like and how you would prepare for it. The Investigator and Collaborative Awards look at answering a set of fixed research questions to move your field forward.*

- What are the boundaries between the two schemes?

*It is entirely possible for the Research Development Awards to include links with international partners and have internationalisation as an aim. With the International Exchange Programmes, these would be the primary aims of the project and international exchanges would be the principal activity. If you are unsure which scheme is most suitable for your idea, contact [HSS@wellcome.ac.uk](mailto:HSS@wellcome.ac.uk).*

- Can you explain the difference between “a significant and sustainable research agenda that takes risks and pushes academic boundaries” and post-grant sustainability?

*The emphasis of any application to these schemes should be on trying out creative approaches to transforming careers and building future research agendas. There is an expectation that the scope and resources requested are sufficient to sustain your work over the life of the project in order to achieve your project aims. You may wish to build in post-grant sustainability, but we do not require you to do so and it does not form part of the core criteria for these schemes.*

- Is public engagement eligible in these programmes and how does this funding relate or interact with other Wellcome public engagement schemes?

*The focus of these schemes is on transforming careers and building future research agendas rather than disseminating research findings. These schemes are not eligible for Research Enrichment funding such as for public engagement. Part of your approach might include thinking about innovative ways of co-creating research agendas with non-academic groups, but we do not have any expectation that you should.*

- Will international applicants be regarded any differently to domestic applicants?

*Applicants for the Research development Awards can be based anywhere in the world and all eligible applications (domestic or international) will be assessed according to the same scheme criteria. Applications for the International Exchange Programmes must have at least one programme leader (the lead applicant) based at a UK organisation and at least one other programme leader (coapplicant) based anywhere in the world outside the UK.*

- Is there a tension between the need to have a fully-prepared programme plan in order to apply competitively and Wellcome's willingness to receive applications that are still in the process of feeling out what the next steps might be?

*These schemes are for developing a new research agenda, not delivering one that's been pre-determined. To be competitive, you will need a vision of what you want to attempt that convinces us you are trying something new. Established research groups might be able to show that they have the foundations on which to try very ambitious approaches but the challenge for them will be to show they really are building new agendas. Emerging research groups will need to demonstrate that they can work together and have a shared vision, but they are also in a strong position to show they are trying to do something new.*

- Do you have any suggestions on how to manage the additional administrative work that these schemes might require? Are you flexible on how to define positions on the grants and on how different career trajectories might look?

*The scheme guidance invites you to think creatively about the full range of direct costs you will need to achieve the aims of your project. We encourage you to give academic and non-academic staff attractive employment opportunities. For example, with other schemes such as the Investigator Award, applicants have combined replacement teaching and research roles into a single post. This enables the postholder to combine teaching and research and potentially have a longer employment term. In the new schemes, we expect there to be a wide-range of roles included and that some of these will be new kinds of roles. This flows from our criteria that emphasise including staff with the full range of skills and experience to deliver your agenda and ensuring that all staff are given meaningful, career-building employment. We also expect an inclusive leadership structure. We anticipate that competitive applications are likely to respond thoughtfully and creatively to this expectation.*

- Some international schemes have quotas or expectations about the proportion of funds distributed to international partners. Does this apply here?

*We do not assess the ratio of funds distributed between partners. This is because we recognise that a range of considerations to do with feasibility and the needs of the partners will determine this split. However, equity in management and an inclusive approach to leadership are essential in these schemes. We would, therefore, expect to see that every opportunity had been taken to enable a division of responsibilities.*

- On the International Exchange Programme scheme page, 'fees for Master's' are listed as an example of eligible costs, do you also expect to see PhDs embedded in the International Exchange Programme?

*We have not encouraged PhDs because of their length and the additional expectations they place on supervisors and universities. We would be concerned that this might distract from the commitment to build an exciting research agenda within the life of the project. However, we would not exclude them if you are able to justify your decision to include them. Providing fellowship opportunities to people already on PhD programmes would be feasible within these schemes.*

#### **Assessment:**

- Is it mandatory or part of the assessment to come to one of the information sessions?

*No. Attendance at these events is in no way linked to the assessment process.*

- Can the same research group apply for both the International Exchange Programmes and the Research Development Awards and if so, will this affect their chances of getting either award?

*Research groups can apply for both of the schemes. The two schemes are assessed separately. As with any application, you should be able to demonstrate that you can commit to what you propose.*

- By who and how will applications be assessed?

*The preliminary applications will be assessed internally by Wellcome staff. All applicants will be given feedback about decisions made at this stage. Site visits will then take place for applications that pass the preliminary stage, led by Wellcome staff. This will produce a site visit report that is shared with the applicants. The full application will then be submitted and the final recommendation for funding will be made by a committee including external experts. The recommendation will be based on a review of the full application and site visit report. Committee members will not be confirmed until after the preliminary application deadline.*

- How will the site visits work, where will they be held and how will they differ between newer applicants and those with established research foundations?

*For the Research Development Awards, the site visit will take place at the organisation where the majority of the work will be conducted. For the International Exchange Programmes, site visits will be based at the partner organisation where the exchanges will be happening (i.e. not the UK-based organisation). The site visits will all follow the same format. They are opportunities for Wellcome staff to meet the research team and get a sense of the kind of research that you do or propose to do. Invited groups will be given clear expectations about what's involved.*

#### **Partnerships:**

- Will there be equal opportunities for applicants who don't already have established links or collaborations with their proposed partners/co-applicants? What type of partnerships are you expecting?

*It is not necessary to have pre-established links between the applicants and coapplicants and we fully expect a range of partnership sizes. However, evidence of shared research interests will be essential. If you have not previously collaborated together, you should demonstrate the potential to do so and show that your planned project is at an appropriate scale for your team and its ambitions. If your group already has a clear research agenda that they want funds to deliver, this is not the scheme for you. As the emphasis for these schemes is on building exciting new ideas, established groups face the challenge of demonstrating that they are not simply doing more of the same.*

- Can lead applicants or partners be from non-traditional research backgrounds?

*We strongly believe that the people best suited to lead innovative new research agendas will draw on a range of backgrounds. It is for you to tell us what experience makes you well placed to deliver your vision.*

#### **Host organisation:**

- Are you expecting to fund only Russell Group universities or is there the opportunity for funding a range of organisations?

*Our funding criteria are designed to focus on the idea, the suitability of the researchers and how they will manage their work, rather than the size or status of the host organisation. The location of your programme only matters to the extent that your organisation can make a case for it being the right place to do the proposed work. This might be based on expertise in the field, links with relevant communities or any number of strengths that are not to do with an organisation's membership of a particular status group.*

- What do you mean when you state the need to show 'significant additional resource commitment' from organisations in High-Income Countries? Do you have particular minimum amounts in mind?

*With both schemes, the most important organisational expectation will be genuine strategic fit with the idea and commitment to giving the team the time and freedom to deliver what they propose. Only with the International Exchange Programme will the High-Income Country organisation need to show a commitment financially. We do not have a target amount or ratio for this. Consideration will be given to the size and type of organisation and what is appropriate for your discipline or topic. It is for you to make the case that your organisation is making a contribution that reflects genuine commitment to your team and their proposed work.*

- Is there a limit to the number of applications one organisation can make?

*No. We have no restriction on the number of applications that can be made per host-organisation. We encourage you to avoid unnecessary duplication with other applications from your organisation. There will be limits to how far this is possible. This is because a well-defined area of interest which reflects the shared interests of the applicants is essential.*

*All applications should be accompanied by a statement of commitment from their host organisations. You should ensure that your host organisation is able to show genuine commitment to your proposal.*

- Do you expect to see capacity-building, for instance with LMIC partners?

*There is not a requirement for this. Competitive proposals must focus on the shared research interests of the applicants, the potential to transform careers and the opportunity to develop future research agendas. Proposals that are primarily framed in terms of capacity-building are unlikely to be successful. Applications that include an element of this or have capacity-building as an outcome can be competitive if they demonstrate that they are meeting the scheme criteria.*