



## **Motor Neurone Disease Translational Accelerator (MNDAcc)**

### **Full application**

Full applications must be submitted using the following link by **5pm on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024**.

<https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/oxford/mnd-translational-accelerator-full-application>

Please email figures and tables separately to [MNDAcc@psych.ox.ac.uk](mailto:MNDAcc@psych.ox.ac.uk).

#### **Full applications must be structured as follows:**

- 1. Project title**
- 2. Start date**
- 3. End date**

Projects are expected to begin within 3 months and may have a duration of no more than 24 months. The end date must be no later than **31<sup>st</sup> July 2026**. It is anticipated that most projects will run for 6-18 months (with an additional 3-month, unfunded set-up time permitted).

#### **4. Lead Investigator details:**

- a. Name**
- b. Position**
- c. Institution**
- d. Email**

#### **5. Co-investigators:**

- a. Name**
- b. Position**
- c. Institution/Company**
- d. Email**
- e. Contribution to the project**

**6. Plain language proposal (max. 1000 words)****a. Abstract for a lay audience (150-word limit)**

Please complete this section in plain English – avoiding scientific terms wherever possible. Please cover the following points.

- What is the aim of the project?
- How will it benefit people affected by MND?
- What is the reason for the study?
- Where could your research findings lead next?

**b. Description of proposal**

Your application will be reviewed by a person affected by MND. Please write a short outline, in lay terms, that covers the items below.

- The aim of the project
- What it involves
- Why it's necessary and how it relates to other research
- What difference your proposed research will make (or aim to make)
- How the results will be shared (this should include sharing with the public, and sharing with people affected by MND)

**7. Scientific abstract (max. 250 words)****8. Scientific aims and translational impact (max. 1000 words)**

Provide an outline of aims and the translational impact of the proposed project.

- How you propose to address the identified gap in knowledge
- The objectives of the proposed research in order of priority
- How will the research potentially translate into results that directly benefit people living with MND?

**9. Lived experience engagement (max. 500 words)**

'Lived experience engagement' refers to engagement with people living with MND.

Please cover the following points.

- a. Lived experience engagement leading up to the proposal
- b. Plan to maintain lived experience engagement throughout the study

**10. Background and preliminary data (max. 1000 words)**

You will need to demonstrate that there is a theoretical underpinning for the proposed project and identify the current evidence gap that the project will aim to address.

**11. Translational pathway (max. 500 words)**

Research funded by MNDAcc must have the potential to be of value to the prevention and treatment of MND.

For studies that are clinical in nature, this section should outline the path by which the research will benefit and/or be of use to patients. For proposals that include *in vitro* data, how findings will be linked to *in vivo* data should be articulated.

**12. Research plan:****a. Collaboration contributions and management (max. 1000 words)**

Please provide details about any collaborating third-party organisations who will have a role in the proposed research, such as a charity partner or supplier of the project intervention.

**b. Experimental plan (max. 1000 words)**

Please provide sufficient detail that experimental protocols can be assessed for suitability and likelihood of success. Where applicable, please cover the following:

- Source, cohort, or recruitment plan
- Characteristics of participants and rationale for their selection
- Selection and exclusion criteria
- Experiments you will undertake to probe the stated hypothesis
- Materials, including specialist equipment or infrastructure required to deliver the project objectives
- Methods of data collection and justification of methodology
- Outcomes to be assessed and how these relate to experimental objectives

**c. Project plan detailing key decision points (max. 1000 words)**

Please provide a description of the project plan, including any key references required to justify the points made. Where applicable, please cover the following:

- How the project objectives are achieved
- Project milestone and timelines
- Success criteria and how these will be used for each milestone
- Key decision points

**d. Analysis plan (max. 500 words)**

Please provide an overview of the planned statistical analyses, providing sufficient details for the replication of sample size calculations; and consideration of potential biases and strategies to minimise their effects.

**e. Data management (max. 500 words)**

The data management plan should demonstrate how you will meet your responsibilities for research data quality, sharing and security. Please cover the following points in this section.

- The type(s) of data proposed to be generated
- When you intend to share the data
- Plans for curating and storing data
- Plans for third-party data discovery and access

**f. Sample management (max. 500 words)**

Where applicable, please outline your sample management plan. This must comply with all relevant regulatory, policy and ethical requirements.

*If you will access biosamples from a biobank, then the biobank should review and confirm the feasibility of your sample access request prior to the submission of your full application.*

**g. Risk management (max. 500 words)**

You should demonstrate that you have considered potential risks and provide the risk mitigation strategy, including how likely the risks are to occur and the impact on the success and deliverability of the project.

**h. Future plans (max. 500 words)**

Please outline any current plans for this research beyond the grant period.

**i. References**

Please provide references in Vancouver style.

**13. Detailed budget and justification of resources requested:**

MNDAcc is designed to be flexible. There is no set budget limit for proposals. However, we expect to fund 8 to 12 proposals across a range of values, and it is therefore essential that applicants fully justify their requested budget.

While collaboration with industry or in-kind contributions from industry partners are welcome, funding cannot be provided to industry partners.

Funds may be used to cover:

- Scientific, medical, and technical personnel
- Research consumables and reagents
- Appropriate CRO costs
- Service costs commensurate with the specific use of equipment

Ineligible costs include:

- Conference and other meeting registration and travel
- Publishing costs
- Industry partner costs
- PhD studentships

Modest travel costs may be included but only when travel is necessary for the successful delivery of the research. Funds may not be used for the purchase of equipment unless

the applicant can demonstrate that the proposed equipment is an essential component of the project and is otherwise unavailable (including via a collaborator).

Applications should be costed under MRC's standard 80% FEC methodology (<https://www.ukri.org/councils/epsrc/guidance-for-applicants/costs-you-can-apply-for/principles-of-full-economic-costing-fec/>). Permitted exceptions will be funded at 100% FEC.

Successful applicants will receive MRC award letters under MRC standard grant terms and conditions (<https://www.ukri.org/manage-your-award/meeting-ukri-terms-and-conditions-for-funding/>).

This section should not simply be a list of the resources required. All items requested must be justified. Where applicable, please cover the following points.

- a. Staff**
- b. Technology & Equipment**
- c. Data Management**
- d. Travel & Subsistence**
- e. Other**

## Selection criteria

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- In-scope and responsive to the call remit including relevance to and impact on people affected by MND/FTD
- Vision for the project
- Feasibility of project plan:
  - Project plan & milestones
  - Methodology, experimental and statistical design
  - Risk mitigation and management
  - Research environment and infrastructure
  - Data management and sharing plans
  - Resources requested
- Translational pathway
  - The applicant should outline a translational pathway which should describe plans for ensuring that the project outcomes result in patient impact.

## Scope

In-scope projects include, but are not limited to:

- Projects to develop, validate or apply biomarkers for disease stratification, monitoring progression, clinical trials, etc.
- Projects to demonstrate target engagement.
- Early phase clinical trials and experimental medicine
- Leveraging existing cohorts to validate biomarkers
- Analysis of human samples and data generated from earlier clinical trials
- Evaluation of novel fluidic biomarkers for diagnosis, proximity, or monitoring
- Development of novel patient-derived cellular models of disease (e.g. organoids, iPSCs) with specific aim of supporting translational research
- Nested studies within existing MND research trials and consortia, where additional investment or mechanistic insight could increase impact

Ineligible/out-of-scope activities include:

- Fundamental or discovery neuroscience research
- Animal-based studies
- Sample characterisation or phenotyping projects
- Creating or expanding cohorts

### Application process

Please use the following link to submit your full application. Ensure all fields are complete and adhere to the specified word count.

<https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/oxford/mnd-translational-accelerator-full-application>

Full applications must be submitted using the following form by **5pm on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024**.

Your full application will undergo scientific review by our Scientific Steering Group and external peer reviewers. Awards will be made in **April 2024**.

It may be helpful to prepare text using an application such as Microsoft Word and paste this into the appropriate section of the form. Figures and tables will need to be prepared separately and emailed to [MNDAcc@psych.ox.ac.uk](mailto:MNDAcc@psych.ox.ac.uk).

Any queries should be directed to [MNDAcc@psych.ox.ac.uk](mailto:MNDAcc@psych.ox.ac.uk).

### Important dates

Full applications invited:	18 December 2023
Full application deadline:	2 February 2024
Peer review and rebuttals completed:	22 March 2024
Recipients announced:	April 2024

Website: [www.mndacc.com](http://www.mndacc.com)

Email: [info@mndacc.com](mailto:info@mndacc.com)