

https://www.escmid.org/profession_career/awards_grants/research_grants/

Research grants 2016

These grants help young and excellent investigators to pursue groundbreaking research in the fields of clinical microbiology and infectious diseases.

The application period for 2016 is currently open and closes on **7 October 2015, 12.00h CET**. Please note that the application criteria and the related information have changed. Most importantly: For the Research Grant programme of **even years** (starting now in 2016), only projects dealing with **Bacterial Infections & Diseases** (incl. antibacterial susceptibility & resistance, diagnostics, pathogenesis, antibacterial stewardship, vaccines) are accepted. For the Research Grant programme of **uneven years** (starting in 2017), only projects dealing with **Fungal/Viral/Parasitic Infections & Diseases** (incl. antifungal/antiviral/antiparasitic susceptibility & resistance, diagnostics, pathogenesis, antifungal/antiviral/antiparasitic stewardship, vaccines) are accepted.

Make sure that you read the information below very carefully to target your application optimally.

Funding

The maximum amount granted per project is EUR 20'000. This includes any potential overhead costs charged by your institution. ESCMID funding may be used to support the entire project or part of the project.

New this year: ESCMID has reserved up to EUR 50'000 each for two excellently rated projects, where the reviewers see a great potential and are of the opinion that they merit additional funds to take the topic further.

Project criteria

- The research project may be based on laboratory investigations, clinical studies, experimental animal studies, or a combination of these.
- Research must be carried out in Europe.
- For the Research Grant programme 2016, only projects dealing with **Bacterial Infections & Diseases** (incl. antibacterial susceptibility & resistance, diagnostics, pathogenesis, antibacterial stewardship, vaccines) are accepted.
- Research projects usually run for 12 months (and may continue for a maximum of 24 months) and must start during the corresponding Research Grant year.
- If your project does not meet the criteria stated above, it will be rejected directly without peer-review.
- Applications will be peer-reviewed and the best projects will be selected based on the application and research proposal (see application procedure).

Eligibility criteria of applicants

- Applicant must be the principal investigator for the proposed research.
- Applicant must have a valid Full or Young Scientist ESCMID membership.
- Applicant must be born on or after 1 January 1976.

- Applicants must have a medical degree (MD, MBBS, PharmD or equivalent) or a PhD or be enrolled in a PhD programme.
- Applicants who have received an ESCMID research grant before can only apply for a subsequent grant in the year after official completion of the first project.
- Members of the ESCMID Executive Committee cannot apply for a Research Grant nor submit a supporting letter for such a grant.
- If the eligibility criteria are not met, your application will be rejected directly without peer-review.

What you need to apply

All documentation is to be submitted electronically and no hard copies are required. When submitting, please have the following documentation ready. Also make sure you have uploaded the correct documents. After the deadline, you cannot make changes to any part of your application.

- **Proposal PDF-Document** (labelled as “YourSurname”.pdf; max 4MB) with:
 - 1) Abstract of your research project (max 750 words; with 3-5 keywords that best characterize your project);
You will also enter the abstract/keywords separately into the online form (in addition to these being part of the PDF document). This will be used to facilitate reviewer selection.
 - 2) Introduction/background (max 500 words);
 - 3) Objectives (max 300 words);
 - 4) Purpose (max 700 words) including the importance and potential impact of the project;
 - 5) Research plan (max 2’000 words) including design, material & methods, data analysis, co-investigators and their contribution to the project;
 - 6) Budget (max 1’500 words; use tables wherever possible) including personnel, equipment, consumables;
 - 7) Description of your present research (max 750 words);
 - 8) CV (max 1’500 words) the CV should make clear that competences required for the project are present. If there are any perceived deficiencies then reference should be made to the letters of support which should indicate that there is adequate mentoring for the project to proceed. You should discuss this with the authors of these letters;
 - 9) Applicant’s publication list: should contain max 10 publications over the last 5 years relevant to the project or illustrating relevant competences.
- **2 supporting letters** (labelled as “YourSurname”_support1.pdf and “YourSurname”_support2.pdf; max 4MB each).
- **Potential reviewers:** You will also need to suggest at least two suitable potential reviewers for your application. They should not be directly involved in the project proposal or be employed at the same department/institution as the applicant. Preferably they should not be from the country, where the applicant is based. You can also state, with appropriate reasons, the names of any person(s) whom you do NOT wish to be selected as a reviewer.
- A **colour photograph** file (labelled as “YourSurname_Firstname”.tiff, .eps or .jpg; max 4MB) at least 4 x 6 cm with 300 dpi resolution for publication.

Important guidance for writing your application

- Write succinctly, i.e. you do not need to use the maximum number of words;
- The use of bullet points is encouraged to facilitate the work of the referees (who have many grants to review);
- If you do not write fluently in English then it is advisable for the text to be reviewed (before submission) by someone who does;
- If the proposed project combines different funding sources, it is **ESSENTIAL** to declare which part(s) will be funded by the ESCMID grant and for which part(s) of the project funding is sought or already guaranteed through other sources. If this is not apparent then the grant application will not be successful.
- To be transparent about the review procedure, please find here the instructions and rating options given to reviewers, when they are reviewing your application (see page 5-6 of this document).
- If you have further questions to the procedure, to the criteria or similar, please read the FAQ document (page 7-9 of this document).

Reporting to ESCMID of the outputs from the grant-funded project

A financial report and a scientific report shall be submitted within two months after project completion.

In the financial report a detailed breakdown of the funds used needs to be given. This breakdown is to be signed by the grantee's department.

The scientific report (max 1'000 words) should include:

- A short introduction summarizing current knowledge for the non-specialist
- The study hypothesis
- What specifically was funded by the grant to make it clear what exactly are the ESCMID-related outputs
- The main findings: these can also include how the data might have helped another grant or project within the department(s)
- Conclusions from the investigation

If the funding period is longer than one year, you are additionally requested to submit a brief interim report after half of the project duration.

If a published scientific article is submitted along with the report, the report may be abridged and may refer to the relevant parts of the article. When the article combines other work from the department or work from other organizations, the report must state, which part(s) specifically is/are based on the grant funding.

Publication of grant-funded projects

The recipient shall acknowledge ESCMID as a provider of financial support for the project in all scientific communication of the project outcome in the form of “This study/project has been funded by a Research Grant [year of grant] by the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID) to [initials of grantee]”. ESCMID makes no further claims on the intellectual property gained in the project. The society’s journal *Clinical Microbiology and Infection (CMI)* is expected the journal of choice for initial submission of the manuscript(s), but alternative journals could be considered depending on the scope of the project.

ESCMID strongly encourages grantees to send proof of all published scientific articles based on the outputs of grant-funded projects to the ESCMID office – even if the project has officially been closed and all reports have been sent. We will publish this information continuously on the Grantees’ website and annually in the ESCMID Yearbook.

Payment of grant

After approval, 50% of the funds are transferred to the institution upon start of the project or in the month of ESCMID, if the project has already begun. The remaining 50% of the approved funds are paid out after receipt of the final report or equivalent (see “Reporting” above).

Application procedure

Applications are **accepted** until **7 October 2015, 12.00h CET**.

The ESCMID Executive Committee will select the project(s) and determine appropriate grant support. Applicants will be notified of the decision by **beginning of February 2016**. Please refrain from inquiring on the status of your application before this date.

Last update: June 2015

Research Grant Reviewer Info

This is the information that reviewers will see on their review forms. When you make sure that you have targeted all points in your proposal in a precise and brief way, it will help the reviewer during the review and will most likely lead to a better score than a proposal not addressing the questions to be assessed by the reviewer.

Reviewer statement: While reviewing, I am aware that this granting scheme is for younger scientists (up to 40 years of age) to receive possibly one of the first grants (of up to EUR 20'000) in their career. [Reviewer will have a box to tick]

Section One: Principal clarity (answer required)

Does the applicant clearly identify how ESCMID funds will be used to deliver the stated objectives? If the proposed project combines different funding sources, does the applicant clearly declare which part(s) will be funded by the ESCMID grant and for which part(s) of the project funding is sought or already guaranteed through other sources?

Yes, please proceed with Section Two.

No, please do not examine this application further.

Section Two: Scientific value of the grant application

Please consider

Strength of the research proposal – is a significant question/knowledge gap being addressed?

Limitations of the research proposal

Level of innovation

Feasibility of methodology

Identification of likely impact

Scoring (required):

0= Does not meet the stated objectives or the objectives are not logical;

1= Very poor; addressed in a cursory and unsatisfactory manner;

2= Poor; there are serious inherent weaknesses;

3= Fair; broadly addresses the stated objectives but with significant weaknesses;

4= Good; addresses the objectives but minor improvements are possible;

5= Excellent; successfully addresses all the objectives.

Reviewer comment (min. 120 words, answer required)

Section Three: Practicability of the grant application

Please consider

Justification of essential resources (including animal numbers if necessary)

Appropriateness of timeframe of the project

Investigator time and involvement

Value for money

Objectives are clearly achievable within the stated budget and timelines

Scoring (required):

0= No attempt to do so;

1= Rather poor; with serious inherent weaknesses either in timeliness or feasibility within the stated resources;

2= Rather good; feasible but minor improvements are possible;

3= Excellent; in that it addresses all the objectives in a timely and resource-feasible manner.

Reviewer comment (optional)

Section Four: Quality of CV/background of grant applicant

Please consider

Suitability of research environment and group

Level of host support

Track record of individuals

Is it apparent from the CV/references/support letters that the applicant has the necessary competences to progress this topic? Areas where the applicant has little experience should be mentioned by the applicant and the letters of support should make clear that there is adequate mentoring for the project to proceed.

Scoring (required):

0= No attempt to do so;

1= CV and references and support letters do not reassure the referee;

2= Minor issues only;

3= There are no concerns.

Reviewer comment (optional)

Section Five: Declaration of conflicts of interests of reviewers (required)

Do you have any possible conflict of interest to declare in relation to this project?

Yes, please detail:

No

Last update: June 2015

Research Grants – Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

Thematic rotation for submissions

Q: What does this rotation mean for my submission?

A: For the Research Grant programme of **even years** (starting now in 2016), only projects dealing with **Bacterial Infections & Diseases** (incl. antibacterial susceptibility & resistance, diagnostics, pathogenesis, antibacterial stewardship, vaccines) are accepted.

For the Research Grant programme of **uneven years** (starting in 2017), only projects dealing with **Fungal/Viral/Parasitic Infections & Diseases** (incl. antifungal/antiviral/antiparasitic susceptibility & resistance, diagnostics, pathogenesis, antifungal/antiviral/antiparasitic stewardship, vaccines) are accepted.

Q: What if my project spans both separated areas, e.g. a diagnostic assay for bacteria and fungi? And what if the project's main focus is in one area, but it also touches the other area?

A: In the first case, you may apply for the Research Grant programme in even and uneven years. In the second case, please apply for the programme, where your main focus is covered. When in doubt, please contact the grant secretariat (henri.saenz@escmid.org).

General

Q: In the “Project criteria” it is stated that “Research must be carried out in Europe“. Are there any country restrictions? How is Europe defined?

A: ESCMID has an inclusive definition of Europe. Please check the definition of European geographical regions for details:

https://www.escmid.org/profession_career/parity_commission/guidance/.

Q: Who is eligible to write supporting letters for my project? May they be from my home institute?

A: These persons should know you professionally and be able to make a judgment of your work, such as your advisor while you were in training or other collaboration partners but should not be your current direct supervisor and/or from your home institute.

Project timelines

Q: Is there a maximum/minimum duration of project?

A: There is no minimum, the usual length should be around 12 months, and the maximum is 24 months. Upon unforeseen delays, an extension can be applied for.

Q: When is a reasonable time to start the project?

A: The project must start in the year the grant is awarded. Usually researchers do not start the project before hearing about the decision, but this is up to the researchers.

Eligibility

Q: Concerning eligibility criteria: is it possible for anyone (e.g. someone with a MSc) to apply or do you need to have a PhD/MD title?

A: A PhD/MD title is not required. The principal investigator must be working in the fields of Clinical Microbiology or Infectious Diseases or a combination of the two, and be at least enrolled in a MD or PhD programme. The project must be supervised by the head of department/group.

Q: Do I have to be affiliated with an institution to apply?

A: Yes, researchers need to have the backing of an institution for their project to apply.

Q: How close does my project need to be to the fields of CM and ID?

A: The project proposal should be related to CM and/or ID. Translational research proposals will be given priority, but the project does not have to focus on clinical application.

Q: Do you accept applications also from private / for-profit hospitals or only from public or not-for-profit research institutes?

A: Yes, applications are also accepted from private /for-profit hospitals.

Q: What do I have to do, if I move to another institution?

A: This depends on the time point when you move (between application and start of project = Case 1; while project is already running = Case 2) and whether you want to take the project with you to the new institution (Case a) or whether you agree with your old institution that the project remains there (Case b). In any case, all parties involved (grantee, old and new institution) must agree to the planned solution. If this is not the case, the grant will be completely taken back by ESCMID.

Case 1a: Grantee and new institution write an official letter to ESCMID asking for approval of the transfer of the grant to the new institution. A statement of agreement by the old institution shall be enclosed to this letter. Upon ESCMID approval, ESCMID will issue a new Grant Acceptance Agreement to be signed by the grantee and the new institution.

Case 2a: Grantee and new institution write an official letter to ESCMID asking for approval of the transfer of the grant to the new institution. In this letter, the grantee has to give a progress report, a statement on the budget already used and a plan for remaining funds transfer and usage at the new institution. A statement of agreement by the old institution shall be enclosed to this letter. Upon ESCMID approval, the grantee will have to organise the transfer of funds between the institutions.

Case 1b: Grantee and old institution write an official letter to ESCMID asking for approval of the remaining of the grant in the old institution. The grantee shall declare his/her role in the project (not involved any more, supervising, collaborating) and the old institution shall name a (co-)investigator running the project (enclose CV of this person). ESCMID will evaluate whether or not to give approval and whether the original grantee will keep his/her grantee status or whether this will be transferred to the named (co-)investigator. If necessary, ESCMID will issue a new Grant Acceptance Agreement to be signed by the relevant parties.

Case 2b: Grantee and old institution write an official letter to ESCMID asking for approval of the remaining of the grant in the old institution. The grantee has to give a progress report, a statement on the budget already used and declare his/her role in the project (not involved any more, supervising, collaborating) and the old institution shall name a (co-)investigator running the project (enclose CV of this person). ESCMID will evaluate whether or not to give approval and whether the original grantee will keep his/her grantee status or whether this will be transferred to the named (co-)investigator. If necessary, ESCMID will issue a new Grant Acceptance Agreement to be signed by the relevant parties.

Application process

Q: Concerning files to upload, is there a maximum number of files that I can submit online?

A: Yes, the maximum number of documents you can upload is 4 (main information, 2 support letters, and picture). The document “‘yoursurname’.pdf” must include all required information in one file. On the webpage <http://www.mergepdf.net/> you can combine pdfs free-of-charge.

Q: Who is eligible to be proposed as reviewer for my project? May they be from my home institute?

A: They may not be directly involved in the project proposal or be employed at the same department/institution as you. Preferably they should not be from the country where you are based.

Budget

Q: May I use at least part of the grant for personnel costs (temporary worker), consumables, services like sequencing?

A: Yes, these types of costs are eligible. Please detail in the budget; in the final report the actual breakdown should be given.

Q: Could I include travel or assistance to course/conference costs?

A: This depends on how relevant the travel is to the project. If the travel can be considered absolutely necessary to the project, then yes. For coverage of course/conference costs, ESCMID provides a number of attendance grants for this purpose upon separate application.

Q: Is it allowed and/or obligatory to include the overhead for our home institution in the project budget?

A: You are allowed but not required to include overhead costs, to a maximum percentage of 10%.

Administration and payment of grants

Q: How is the grant paid to the recipient?

A: After approval, 50% of the funds are transferred to the institution 1 month to 2 weeks before start of the project or one month after notification if project has already begun. The remaining 50% of the approved funds are paid out after receipt of the final report or equivalent (see call).

Q: What do I do if the grant needs to be paid in full upon the start of the project?

A: If more than 50% of the funds are needed at the beginning of the project, the recipient may submit a request for receipt of all funds before end of project which must include a detailed explanation of the reason for this request.

Q: Does the grant have to be paid into my institutional account?

A: Yes, we do not allow any bank transfers to individual accounts.

Q: May we include VAT in the calculations?

If overhead costs or taxes/VAT are included, this amount must be included in the total grant amount and is not given in addition to the grant money.

Last update: June 2015