

## Clare Francis Research Fund – PhD Studentship

### Application call and guidelines

The purpose of Action for M.E.'s PhD Studentship is to support the career development of scientists in the UK who are in the early stages of their research career and have the potential to become leaders in the field of M.E. research.

The Studentship provides match-funding for up to three years totalling £45,000.

**Our 2021 application call was launched on Monday 7 January, and the deadline for applications is noon on Monday 22 February.**

### Focus of call

Action for M.E.'s research strategy is to increase interest and investment in biomedical research into M.E. We do this by providing funding for PhD studentships and Fellowships to support early career researchers to come into the field and securing match-funding from academic institutions or other organisations to increase the level of funds available. Additionally, we collaborate with others to increase research funding and opportunities for more research.

You can read more about our research work at [www.actionforme.org.uk/research](http://www.actionforme.org.uk/research)

### Eligibility

This call is open to UK-based researchers, including those working in partnerships, who can show they will direct the proposed research and be actively engaged in carrying it through. Eligible institutions include UK higher education institutions, Research Council institutes and [eligible Independent Research Organisations](#) as listed by UKRI.

### About M.E.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E.) is a long-term (chronic), fluctuating, neurological condition that causes symptoms affecting many body systems, more commonly the nervous and immune systems. M.E. affects an estimated 250,000 children and adults in the UK, and millions worldwide.

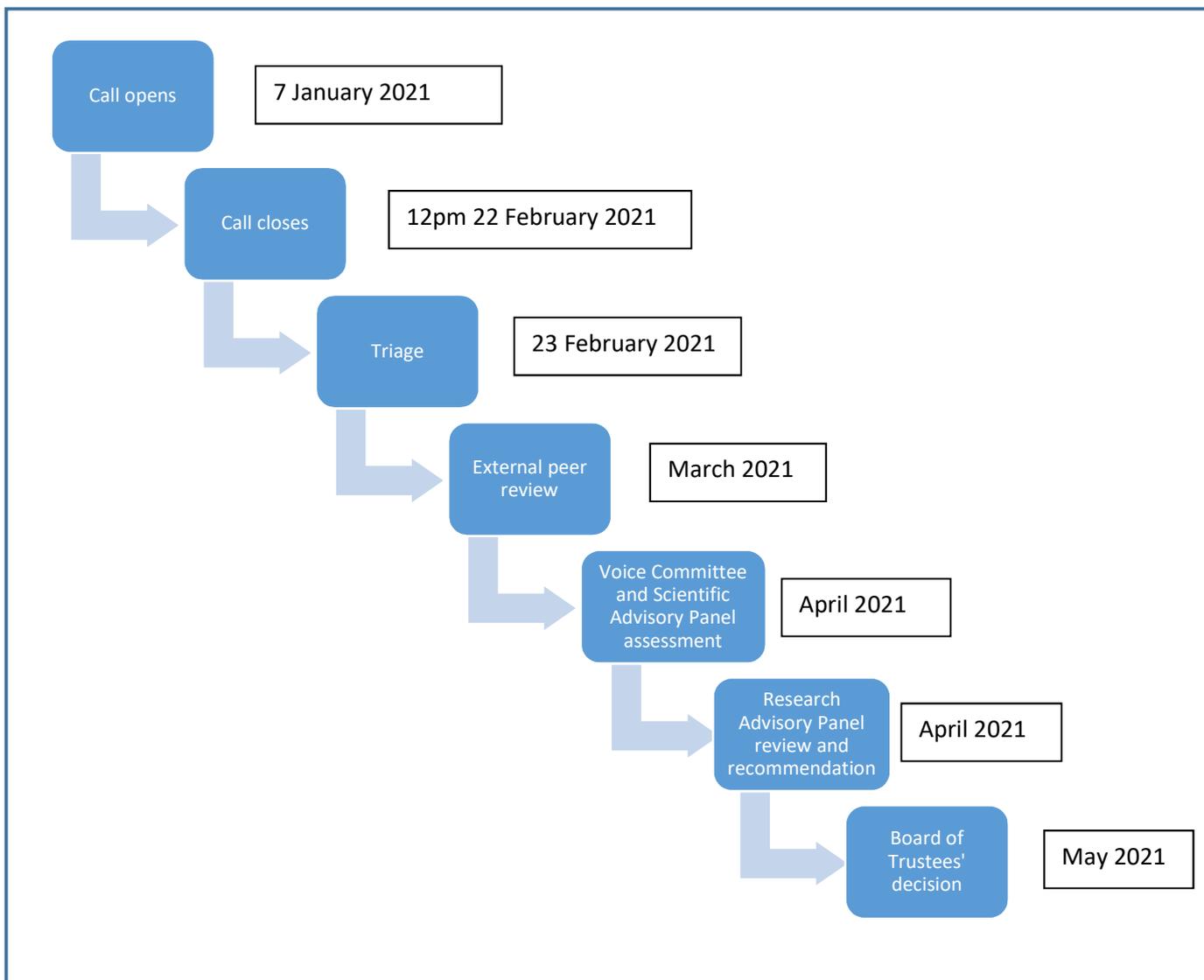
People with M.E. experience disabling severe and persistent exhaustion that doesn't improve with rest and post-exertional malaise. These occur alongside a range of other symptoms which may include cognitive dysfunction, sleep difficulties, pain, hypersensitivity to light, sound and touch.

Action for M.E. has been supporting people with M.E. for more than 30 years. You can read more about our work at [www.actionforme.org.uk](http://www.actionforme.org.uk)

### Application and selection procedure

All applications must be submitted using the [application form](#) and follow the guidelines provided.

The following provides a summary of Action for M.E.'s [research funding assessment process](#):



## Guidelines

These notes are included to provide guidance on completing each section of the Studentship application form.

Question	Guidance
<b>1. PhD Student</b>	Only complete if student has already been identified
<b>2. Principal Investigator</b>	
<b>3. The research</b>	<p>Please provide concise answers to the questions on the application form sticking to the word limit. Any applications that do not stick to the word limit will not pass beyond triage stage.</p> <p>The project must be for biomedical research into M.E. and must ensure patient and public involvement that works to the <a href="#">UK Standards for Public Involvement</a>.</p> <p><b>Scientific abstract</b> This is an opportunity to provide a short summary of the key objectives and focal areas of the project. It is important that this summary contains sufficient information to provide a clear understanding of the overall vision of the project. The scientific abstract will be sent to potential reviewers to help them determine if they have the appropriate expertise to review your application.</p> <p><b>Communication and dissemination plan</b> Please use this section to outline plans for engagement, communication and dissemination of your research and its outcomes within the research community and the wider community, including people with M.E.</p> <p><b>Lay summary</b> Describe the proposed research in simple terms in a way that could be publicised to a general audience. The summary should include details of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>background and need for the research</li><li>the main aims of the project</li><li>an outline of the research methods</li><li>how people with M.E. will benefit from the research</li><li>patient and public involvement.</li></ol> <p>Please be advised that if your project is selected for funding, the lay summary you provide will be used publicly on our website as a description of the project, and may also be used for fundraising purposes. As such, please <b>do not</b> include any confidential information.</p>

	You must also ensure that the lay summary is written in language which can be easily understood by a non-scientist – <b>if it is not, your application will not be accepted.</b>
<b>4. References</b>	Provide full citation
<b>5. Financial breakdown</b>	<p>Please note that as a charity, it is our policy not to fund any indirect costs that are not directly related to the project such as university overheads, estate costs, non-staff costs in academic departments, central services etc.</p> <p>Publicity and dissemination costs include travel and registration costs for conference attendance or other dissemination activities. Please note that funds to cover publication charges should not be requested here.</p> <p>Office or lab equipment costs include costs for computers for experimental or researcher use or other equipment that is fundamental to the project.</p> <p>Other support via awarded or applied for funds should be identified. Match-funding will be required to be secured prior to any contract being confirmed. If funding has not yet been secured, you are required to provide details of your plan and timescales to secure funding. This must be secured within 6 months of our funding offer otherwise it will be retracted.</p>
<b>6. Peer review</b>	Please provide names and contact details for up to five suggested peer reviewers for this application where there are no known conflicts of interest.
<b>7. Signatures</b>	<p>All applicants must sign and date the application form.</p> <p>Please ensure that only SHORT CVs are provided for all applicants.</p>

**If you have any further questions regarding completing the application form, please contact us at [research@actionforme.org.uk](mailto:research@actionforme.org.uk)**