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**Call for proposals for PhD studentship/postdoctoral biomedical M.E. research pilot projects**

*23 November 2016*

Action for M.E. invites proposals for high quality research pilot projects that will address the biology of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E.)/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS).

Proposals must be submitted by email to research@actionforme.org.uk by **4pm Monday 6 February 2017**.

**Context**

M.E. (often diagnosed within the NHS as CFS or M.E./CFS) is a chronic, fluctuating, neurological illness that causes symptoms affecting many body systems. It affects an estimated 250,000 people in the UK, and around 17 million people worldwide. People with M.E. experience severe, persistent fatigue associated with post-exertional malaise. However, M.E. is also characterised by a range of additional symptoms including chronic pain, increased sensitivity to light and sound, and problems with sleep, cognition and the nervous, immune and digestive systems.

**Focus of the call**

This call builds on priorities identified by people affected by M.E. through an Action for M.E. survey and is targeted at supporting a PhD studentship for up to three years with 50% funding to be matched by the applicant’s university.

The focus of this initiative is to support high-quality, innovative biomedical research ideas that have the potential to increase the current knowledge base of M.E./CFS and to support new career researchers into the field, building capacity for future research.

**Available funds**

Up to £46,500 over three years to provide 50% match funding.

Proposals submitted against this call must be costed using the Full Economic Costing model. However, as a charity Action for M.E. will expect to meet only the direct costs incurred with overheads being met by the parent institution.

**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](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforrcs/) listed by the Research Council UK.

**How to apply**

You must submit:

* a case for support using the application form below – further guidance on completing your case for support can be found on page 3
* a CV for each named researcher including the PI.

Please ensure you allow sufficient time for your organisation’s submission process between submitting your proposal to them and the call closing date.

Following initial triage, applications will be processed as follows:

* assessed by expert peer-review; applicants will be given the chance to respond to reviewers’ comments and applications will only proceed to the next stage if they meet the peer-review requirements
* considered by our [Scientific Advisory Panel](https://www.actionforme.org.uk/resources/questions-and-answers/what-does-your-scientific-advisory-panel-do/) and [Voice Committee](https://www.actionforme.org.uk/resources/questions-and-answers/what-does-your-voice-committee-do/) with recommendation to the Research Panel.
* recommendation made by Research Panel to the Board of Trustees of Action for M.E., who will make the final decision.

Action for M.E. must receive your application by 4pm Monday 6 February 2017.

**Timetable**

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| **Task** | **Date** |
| Launch call | Wednesday 23 November 2016 |
| Submission deadline | 4pm Monday 6 February 2017 |
| Peer review (external) | February 2017 |
| Scientific Advisory Panel/Voice Committee Review | March 2017 |
| Prioritisation Research Panel meeting | 13 April 2017 |
| Board decision | 27 April 2017 |
| Applicants receive notification of outcome | 30 April 2017 |
| Awards announced | May 2017 |

If you have a query about the call, contact research@actionforme.org.uk

**PhD Studentship Research Application Form**



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| **Section 1 – Principal Investigator (PI) Details** |
| **First/Last name** |  |
| **Job title/role** |  |
| **University** |  |
| **Email**  |  |
| **Telephone number** |  |
| **Section 2 – Co-Applicants** |
| **Details of Co-Applicants (name/job/university/contact details)**  |  |
| **Section 3 – The Research**  |
| **Title of project**  |  |
| **Number of years funding required (1 – 3 max)**  |  |
| **Total support requested (£)** |  |
| **Proposed start date** |  |
| **Research question (200 words max)** |  |
| **Summary of proposed research (including key goals; 200 words max)** |  |
| **Why the research is important for people with M.E. (200 words max)** |  |
| **Details of research project (3 A4 sides max):**1. **Aims**
2. **Work which has led to the project (including pilot data)**
3. **Experimental design and methods**
4. **Timetable and milestones/deliverables (incl. PhD appointment date)**
5. **Justification for financial support**
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| **Explain how this work will potentially pump prime future grant proposals to continue future investigation (200 words max)** |  |
| **Lay summary in simple language for the non-expert (including the research question, why it is important for people with M.E., an overview of the experimental approach, key goals and why it might lead to further funding in the future; 500 words max).**  |  |
| **Section 4 - References (full citation)** |
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| **Section 5 – Financial Breakdown (total costs)** |
| **Student Stipend** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** |
| **University / college fees**  |  |  |  |
| **Conference & training allowance**  |  |  |  |
| **Materials and consumables (please list)** |  |  |  |
| **Total**  |  |  |  |
| **Total (£) match funding required/secured (please indicate which and identify where from)** |  |
| **Section 6 – Peer Reviewer Suggestions** |
| **If you are able to, please suggest up to 5 peer reviewers and email addresses (if known) who have no conflicts of interest with you/PI and the research** (please note this is not mandatory or assessed) |  |
| **Section 7 – Signatures** (please sign and date) |
| **Lead applicant**  |  |
| **PI** |  |
| **Confirm CVs of all applicants/PI attached**  | YES / NO |

**Please return your completed form to research@actionforme.org.uk by 4pm Monday 6 February 2017**