

SUSTAIN Round Five - Application guidelines

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1. Introduction

SUSTAIN is a programme designed to develop the skills that are important to enable female researchers to thrive in their independent research careers.

Supported by the Academy of Medical Sciences (AMS), the Medical Research Council, the Royal Society and the Royal Academy of Engineering, we are offering places to 24 women on the fifth cohort of the programme.

Scientists and engineers from all disciplines are eligible to join SUSTAIN, provided they currently hold a qualifying award or fellowship from one of the funding organisations.

AMS is committed to working towards diversity and equality of opportunity and we therefore actively encourage applications from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) candidates and candidates with disabilities.

2. Programme content

SUSTAIN is part of the AMS portfolio of activities aimed at developing talented researchers and it will include the following:

Interactive career development workshops

The programme will launch **virtually** in March 2021. Sessions will be **afternoon only** and will take place on the **11, 12, 15, and 16 March**. The launch will offer an introduction to the other participants and training for the mentoring and co-coaching aspects of the programme.

To note: In previous years we have launched the programme with an in-person residential, which has formed a valuable part of the programme. Due to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have taken the decision to launch the programme virtually for this round. An in-person event in March is likely to be challenging to deliver safely and may have been a cause of stress for applicants. We hope that making this

decision at this stage in the process, we have alleviated some of this uncertainty and worry.

For this year's launch, we are working hard to tailor our launch programme to offer as similar an experience as possible through varied workshops and networking opportunities. Additionally, we hope to be able to offer in-person events and training when it is safe to do so for participants who feel this is valuable.

The March launch will be followed by a series of career development workshops. Each session will be tailored to support attendees through the challenges of combining research, teaching, clinical practice and caring and other responsibilities where relevant. Previous sessions have included topics on:

- Time management
- Negotiation
- Setting up a research team for success
- Developing your leadership style

The content will be developed in the coming months and will be tailored to the needs of the participants. The information you provide in your application form regarding areas that you are interested in covering will also feed into the content of the sessions.

A peer support network

The group will be matched in co-coaching triads to enable ongoing peer support and discussion of issues/challenges. Small group work at each workshop will help to embed and make learning practical.

One-to-one mentoring

Participants will have the opportunity to be mentored by a senior researcher through the [AMS Mentoring Programme](#). Ongoing support will be provided to both mentees and mentors, and participants will receive mentoring training as part of the launch to ensure maximum benefit of the mentoring relationship.

3. Who can apply

The programme is open to female scientists and engineers (including both clinical and non-clinical researchers) who hold an eligible award or fellowship from one of the partner organisations.

To be eligible to apply you must hold one of the following awards:

Medical Research Council	Career Development Award
	Clinician Scientist Fellowship

	New Investigator Research Grant (NIRGs)
The Royal Society	Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowship
	Sir Henry Dale Fellowship
	University Research Fellowship
Academy of Medical Sciences	Academy of Medical Sciences/The Health Foundation Clinician Scientist Fellowship
	Springboard Award
	Starter Grant Award for Clinical Lecturers
Royal Academy of Engineering	Research Fellow
	Engineering for Development Research Fellow

Your award must be active at the time of your application. **All applicants must be available to participate in the career development workshops.** For the media training workshop, groups will be coordinated depending on participants' availability. Please see 'key dates' section on this document.

4. Selection process

All eligible applications will be stratified and randomly selected within the following categories:

- Funding institution
- Clinical and non-clinical/other background
- UK regions

The randomisation will be achieved by allocating a number to each applicant and using a random number sequence generator. We aim to achieve an approximate split between clinical researchers and scientists from other backgrounds as well as a fair distribution around the UK. A total of 24 places are available.

The selection process is overseen by the SUSTAIN reference group chair, Professor Moira Whyte OBE FMedSci, Professor of Adult Respiratory Medicine, University of Edinburgh. The decision of AMS is final.

Notification of decisions regarding SUSTAIN applications will be made in January 2021.

5. Mentoring

SUSTAIN participants will be mentored by a Fellow of one of the academies. Bespoke training and ongoing support will be provided to both mentees and mentors over the course of the pilot.

We promote a developmental model of mentoring to enable mentees to make critical career decisions.

Participants are asked to:

- 1) Attend mentoring induction as part of the launch.
- 2) Commit to meet their mentor regularly over the period of one year (meetings may be virtual).
- 3) Complete short e-surveys at key points during the programme.

6. Key dates

Date	
2 November 2020	Applications open
11 December 2020	Applications close
Early January 2021	Applicants are notified about the outcome of the selection process
11 March 2021 12 March 2021 15 March 2021 16 March 2021	Launch of programme split across four days, they will be afternoon only and will take place virtually. The final part of the launch will be the Inspiring Women Celebration, featuring guest speakers and networking opportunities with senior women in research.
8 July 2021	Career development workshop 1 (full day event)
14 and 20 September 2021	Career development workshop 2 (two half days)
9, 17 and 25 November 2021	Media training workshop (full day event) – cohort split into three groups across different dates
March 2022	Career development workshop 4 and conclusion (full day event with evening celebration)

The full agenda for each event will follow for successful programme participants.

Please note that our plans to run events in person from June 2021 onwards may be subject to change depending on safety during the COVID-19 pandemic and we will ask the programme participants what they would prefer closer to the time.

7. Accommodation and childcare

For any in-person events, hotel accommodation will be provided for all participants. This will include the night before subsequent workshops, to help participants to avoid rush hour travel.

Childcare support, if not ordinarily in place, will be available up to £50 per child per day. Participants will be able to claim childcare support by completing a form, and providing appropriate receipts to AMS.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

Feedback from participants will help us to assess the impact of SUSTAIN and inform future developments. We expect participants to maintain close contact with AMS and to complete monitoring surveys after each workshop.

The SUSTAIN programme is independently evaluated, and participants may be asked to complete surveys during or after the programme. You may also volunteer to provide further detail on your experience of SUSTAIN through interviews. All data is anonymous and used to develop the SUSTAIN programme and evaluate the impact of the programme.

9. Governance

The programme will be overseen by a Reference Group, chaired by Professor Moira Whyte OBE FMedSci, Professor of Respiratory Medicine at the University of Edinburgh. She has been a mentor in the AMS Mentoring programme since it was set up in 2002. Professor Whyte is the AMS representative for the Athena Swan Forum and chaired the Working Group for the development of the SUSTAIN programme.

The role of the Reference Group is to advise AMS on the development of SUSTAIN and oversee the application process as well as the evaluation of the programme.

Reference Group members:

- Professor Moira Whyte OBE FMedSci, Head of College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, University of Edinburgh (Chair)
- Professor Susan Wray FMedSci, Professor of Cellular and Molecular Physiology, University of Liverpool
- Sir James Smith FRS FMedSci, Director of Science at Wellcome and Visiting Group Leader at the Francis Crick Institute
- Professor Eva Hoffman, Professor in Molecular Genetics, NNF Young Investigator, University of Copenhagen
- Professor Elizabeth Sapey, Professor of Acute and Respiratory Medicine, University of Birmingham
- Dr Zania Stamataki, Senior Lecturer in Liver Immunology, University of Birmingham and SUSTAIN Round 1 participant

10. Guidance notes for the application form

Please complete and submit an online application **by 17.00 (GMT) 11 December 2020**.

The application form is hosted on Flexi-Grant and is accessible via the link on the [SUSTAIN webpage](#).

Each applicant should provide the following:

Section 1 - Your personal information: name, contact details, institution and job title.

Section 2 - Select the applicable researcher category. This information will be used to stratify applications.

Section 3 - Select your current research award. Your award must be active at the time of applying to the programme.

Section 4 - Information about why you are interested in SUSTAIN and any particular areas of career development you would like us to cover. **Your answer does not affect the selection process.** The information from participants will help us to further develop and tailor the programme of activities during the year.

Section 5 – Monitoring and marketing feedback. The AMS accepts its responsibilities to reflect the communities in which it works. We are therefore committed to a policy of Equal Opportunities and applications are welcome regardless of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, ethnic origin, or religious belief. We request this information to monitor AMS activities with respect to the beneficiaries of proposals and awards, and applicants. It is not used in the application review process; it is not provided to SUSTAIN reference group members. (By providing this information, you are agreeing to us holding this information, under current data protection legislation, and will be helping us to monitor our practice).

If you have any questions about the application, please contact the AMS team at SUSTAIN@acmedsci.ac.uk.

11. Data protection

When you make an application to participate in the SUSTAIN Programme, you will provide certain personal information to the Academy of Medical Sciences (the "Academy"). This will be stored by or on behalf of the Academy, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

The Academy will use your personal information in order to process the application for the SUSTAIN Programme and to manage and administer the programme should the application be successful. For further information about the personal information the

Academy holds about you, how the Academy uses it, who it is shared with and what your rights are in relation to your personal information, please see the Programmes privacy notice which can be found here: <https://acmedsci.ac.uk/privacy-policy>

The Academy of Medical Sciences

The Academy of Medical Sciences is the independent body in the UK representing the diversity of medical science. Our vision is to improve health through research and our mission is to promote medical science and its translation into benefits for society. Find out more: www.acmedsci.ac.uk

Medical Research Council

The UK's Medical Research Council mission is to improve human health through world-class medical research. To achieve this, the council supports research across the biomedical spectrum, from fundamental lab-based science to clinical trials, and in all major disease areas. Find out more: www.mrc.ac.uk

The Royal Society

The Royal Society is the national academy of science in the UK whose vision is to recognise, promote, and support excellence in science and to encourage the development and use of science for the benefit of humanity. Find out more: www.royalsociety.org

The Royal Academy of Engineering

As the UK's national academy for engineering and technology, the Royal Academy of Engineering brings together the most talented and successful engineers – our Fellows – to advance and promote excellence in engineering for the benefit of society. www.raeng.org.uk/