



## Grant Scheme Application Guidelines

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INSPIRE is coordinated by the Academy of Medical Sciences and supported by the Wellcome Trust. INSPIRE activities are designed and delivered locally by individual medical schools.



## Introduction

INSPIRE is coordinated by the Academy of Medical Sciences with support from the Wellcome Trust. Currently we are running the 6th round of INSPIRE.

The INSPIRE programme aims to:

- Inspire medical, dental and veterinary undergraduates to consider a research career.
- Stimulate medical, dental and veterinary schools to design and implement local, innovative approaches to building student interest in research.
- Encourage student involvement: the experiences and needs of local students should inform the development of the local INSPIRE programme.
- Promote high quality, collaborative partnerships between members of faculty and students, and between schools and other local/regional/national organisations.
- Strengthen local, regional and national student research networks, sharing experiences and resources.
- Foster a research culture in all clinicians entering the NHS, not just those with an interest in pursuing a career in academic medicine. INSPIRE also aims to foster a research culture in dentists and vets across the country.

The core elements of INSPIRE are:

- A small grant scheme open to all UK medical, dental and veterinary schools<sup>1</sup>.
- A series of sharing conferences hosted by the Academy to enable schools to showcase activities, share learning and develop new ideas.

Applications will be led by an academic nominated by the medical, dental or veterinary schools who will act as the INSPIRE lead, supported by the Head/Dean of the medical or veterinary school and other contributors including student leads. Applicants should read the INSPIRE Grant Terms and Conditions and refer to the [Case Studies](#).

The scheme **opens** for applications on **9 May 2022**

The **deadline** for applications is **4 July 2022**.

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<sup>1</sup> All UK undergraduate veterinary schools, dental schools, and medical schools recognised by the General Medical Council

## 1. Who can apply?

All UK undergraduate veterinary schools, dental schools, and medical schools recognised by the General Medical Council<sup>2</sup> are eligible to apply for an INSPIRE grant. The INSPIRE lead, a member of faculty nominated by the Head/Dean of the medical or veterinary school, should apply on behalf of the school. At least one student should contribute to the application and be named on the grant application.

The INSPIRE lead will have overall responsibility for the project if the application is successful and will be the point of contact for the Academy. The Head/Dean of the medical or veterinary school will support and facilitate the implementation of the INSPIRE proposal, oversee the scheme locally and be in contact with the local INSPIRE lead. Applications from anyone other than the appointed INSPIRE lead will not be considered.

Collaborations between schools within one institution are mandated and we will accept only one application from any university, covering all clinical schools (medical, dental, and veterinary). Together, applicants can form a larger collaboration by co-applying with other schools at other universities.

Collaboration between universities is strongly encouraged. This collaborative approach is particularly important given the emergence of new medical schools, with all students benefiting from the sharing of resources and increased exposure to a wider network of students. Universities without a previous award are also strongly advised to co-apply with an established group/university.

Joint applicants will need to demonstrate how they will ensure that students from all schools benefit equally from the scheme. The Heads/Deans of all medical and veterinary schools involved must be in support of the application.

Funding can be requested for collaborative activities as part of an individual school bid. Please ensure that details of these activities are given by applications from all schools involved and how the costs will be covered between schools if applicable.

We also encourage schools to collaborate with other organisations in the development of the INSPIRE programme, for example, with other departments/disciplines within their organisations, other higher education institutions, industry, research institutes and the NHS. Such organisations may, for example, provide funding, resources, or facilities for students to use. Relevant letters of support should be provided.

## 2. Application process

Applications for the current round of INSPIRE will be processed using the Flexi-Grant grant management system. Once the application window is open, a link will be found on the INSPIRE webpage. Use **[this link](#)** to take you to the Academy's Flexi-Grant webpage. Once there, the INSPIRE lead for each school will be able to login and complete the application on behalf of the school. Any application coming from someone other than the designated INSPIRE lead will not be considered. Please view our **[Flexi-Grant user guide](#)** for more information.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.gmc-uk.org/education/undergraduate/awarding\\_bodies.asp](https://www.gmc-uk.org/education/undergraduate/awarding_bodies.asp)

If two or more schools are making a joint application for funding, one INSPIRE lead must be designated who will then complete the application on behalf of all the schools named in the application.

### **3. Schools with existing grants open**

Schools with existing grants open from a previous round of INSPIRE, whose grants are due to finish after the application deadline, are still able to apply for further funding. Your application must comply with all other conditions, and it must clearly demonstrate how you plan to further develop current activity or develop new activity that ultimately promotes research within your school.

**For schools that have End of Grant Reports outstanding from previous rounds of INSPIRE, all reports must be completed and returned to the Academy for your application to be considered pursuant to clause 4(vi) of the Terms and Conditions.** We use these reports to create a small database detailing the activities implemented by each school in previous rounds and the impacts they have had. All information on previous activities implemented can be found on [the INSPIRE activities webpage](#).

### **4. Awards available**

**A grant of up to £10,000 per medical, dental, and veterinary school, covering a period of two years, is available. If a joint bid is successful, the amount awarded is dependent on the number of collaborating schools but will be based on a calculation of a maximum of £10,000 per school over two years.** E.g. (up to £40,000 for 4 schools collaborating).

Joint applicants will need to demonstrate how they will ensure that students from all schools benefit equally from the scheme. We also expect to see cost advantages of schools working together on joint activities.

INSPIRE grants can be used to fund a range of proven and innovative activities which engage students with research. **Activities could include, but are not limited to:**

- Workshops, lectures, events, discussions including professional facilitator fees to cover specific training such as writing skills, presentation, leadership, team science, research integrity etc. Developing themes such as analysing and using data, AI, patient involvement in research, working with industry may be considered.
- Opportunities to network and develop mentoring relationships.
- Practical research workshops e.g., teaching research methodology and laboratory techniques.
- Stipends for competitively awarded short-term vacation studentships.
- Travel bursaries to enable students to attend conferences and other activities.
- Creation of teaching materials.
- Exhibitions.
- Films, websites, and multimedia projects.
- Science-art projects.
- All activities implemented in previous rounds of INSPIRE can be found on the [INSPIRE Activities webpage](#).

**We expect that the local activities supported by INSPIRE will provide opportunities to a significant proportion of students and we do not recommend that all funds be invested in one project only.**

***Funds can be used for:***

- Direct activity and production costs including venue costs, equipment and materials.
- Publicity costs.
- Travel costs for speakers.
- Administration costs where they are not already covered by further funding.

Schools may choose to work closely with student research groups in the delivery of activities. However, schools should take care to ensure that students who are not actively involved in a student group also benefit from the scheme.

***Funds cannot be used for:***

- Staff salaries.
- Core overheads of the medical school, dental school or veterinary school.
- Expenses incurred in submitting an application.
- Costs arising prior to the start date of the project.
- Course costs/fees, for example, to fund student(s) undertaking BSc/MRes/PhD courses.
- Course costs/fees which are normally covered by the school’s curriculum budget or costs normally covered elsewhere.
- Activities already funded through other means – INSPIRE grants should be used for new or expanded activities.
- Health promotion, campaigning projects or projects that do not directly aim to engage students with research.

**5. Key Dates**

<b>Date</b>	
9 May 2022	INSPIRE grant scheme opens for applications.
4 July 2022	Deadline for INSPIRE applications (5pm, BST)
November 2022	Grant decisions made and schools notified.
January 2023	Start of activities.

**6. Expectations of INSPIRE activities**

Applicants are encouraged to design an INSPIRE programme which includes:

***Innovative approaches***

INSPIRE grants offer an opportunity to pilot new, innovative activities in addition to proven methods that engage students with research. Creative approaches that communicate the value of research and the rewards of a career in research are encouraged. Activities which target local needs should be considered. In particular, we encourage activities that explore future research areas such as AI, data handling, experimental medicine and embracing all aspects of research culture.

***Student involvement***

The views, experiences and needs of local students must feed into the development and delivery of activities in order for the scheme to be effective. INSPIRE leads are expected to engage with students and, where appropriate, local student groups when developing and publicising INSPIRE activities. A student lead should be appointed who will contribute to the development of the programme and be named on the application.

### ***Networking opportunities***

Activities that allow students to speak to and interact with researchers are encouraged to inspire students to consider a career in research.

### ***A range of initiatives***

We expect a range of initiatives to be adopted through INSPIRE. The following points should be taken into consideration:

- **Communication to all:** applicants should consider providing all students with information and experiences and should not only target students showing a particular interest in, or aptitude for, a research career.
- **The breadth of research:** students should be informed about the broad range of research opportunities available to them.
- **The development of practical research skills:** schemes which encourage students to develop research, analytical and critical skills can be very valuable.
- **Vacation studentships:** schools will need to make a robust case for investing funds into approaches, such as vacation studentships, which are costly and benefit only a few students. Instead of funding research projects directly it may be more effective to support students in finding and identifying suitable supervisors.
- **Promotion of role models:** schemes should encourage students to meet, network with and be inspired by potential role models. Role models may include peers, clinical academic trainees and more senior researchers.

### ***Partnerships and collaboration***

Medical, dental and veterinary schools are encouraged to collaborate with other organisations and departments, including higher education institutions, industry and hospitals in the delivery of their activities in order to increase reach, visibility and impact. Schools are also encouraged to consider drawing on other resources within their university, for example when contemplating how creative approaches/multimedia might be used to engage medical students with research.

### ***Sustainability of INSPIRE activities***

Schools should use the INSPIRE scheme to leverage further funding from elsewhere. We strongly recommend that schools consider the sustainability of their proposed programme beyond the support of an INSPIRE award. When making their decisions, panel members will focus on the matched/external funding secured by each school as this helps to improve the sustainability and longevity of research strands within schools.

### ***EDI<sup>3</sup>- Equality, diversity and inclusion.***

Schools should use INSPIRE to show evidence of how EDI and tackling research culture will be embedded as key elements within the proposals and activities for students.

## **7. Selection process**

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<sup>3</sup> Equality- creating an equal platform for everyone

Diversity- [protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010](#)

All eligible applications will be subject to assessment and consideration by the INSPIRE selection panel, based on the criteria set out below in this document and the Grant Terms and Conditions.

### ***Selection panel***

The INSPIRE selection panel, chaired by Professor Jonathan Seckl FRSE FMedSci, Vice Principal (Planning, Resources and Research Policy); Professor of Molecular Medicine at the University of Edinburgh, is responsible for making grant awards. The panel comprises a range of stakeholders including Academy Fellows, Heads/Deans of Medical or Veterinary Schools, research Professors, early career academics and an individual currently in undergraduate/postgraduate medical training. The scheme is overseen by the Academy's Council.

A robust assessment process will be undertaken. The decision of the Academy of Medical Sciences is final. The Academy reserves the right not to enter into any correspondence about the assessment process and/or subsequent monitoring procedures.

### **Notification of decisions regarding INSPIRE applications will be made in November 2022**

### ***Assessment criteria***

The INSPIRE selection panel will be asked to comment on and consider, but are not limited to, the following aspects of a grant proposal:

- The potential for the proposal to stimulate interest in, and appetite to pursue, clinical research.
- If the proposed activities are new, and the degree to which they are innovative and address future research areas.
- If the proposal is to build on previous activities, evidence that the activities have been successful so far.
- If the proposal is to expand the area over which activities are delivered, the potential to catalyse activities and the strength of the proposed networks and collaborations.
- The degree of involvement of medical/dental/veterinary students in design and delivery.
- The composition of the applying team, their roles, experience and expertise. How they will work together to develop and deliver activities and engage other relevant individuals and organisations to maximise the potential for the scheme.
- Sustainability of the activities as shown by matched funding.
- A realistic timetable to implement the project, with clear outcomes and outputs.
- A clear and realistic monitoring and evaluation plan.
- A clear budget for the proposed activities, including additional funds available to support the activities.
- If the proposal outlines how students will benefit from collaborations across schools

## **8. Support provided by the Academy of Medical Sciences**

The Academy of Medical Sciences is coordinating the next round of the INSPIRE programme. The Academy will:

- Administer and manage the grant scheme.
- Facilitate the sharing of learning between institutions.
- Where appropriate, support schools to help them develop a local activity plan.
- Promote INSPIRE activities to other schools.

There are also opportunities for more connection with the Academy to support INSPIRE activities, including:

- Invitation requests
- Connections to Regional Champions/Regional Fellows
- Invitation to AMS regional events
- Link to cross-sector scheme hub activities.

### **Office support**

The Academy has a dedicated project team who are always happy to answer questions and provide assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [INSPIRE@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:INSPIRE@acmedsci.ac.uk) or, alternatively, you can use the details provided on page 2.

### **Sharing Conference**

The INSPIRE Sharing conference is held annually. The last sharing conference was hosted virtually by the Academy on 29 April 2022. This was attended by INSPIRE leads and students from a number of UK institutions. The conference provided an opportunity to:

- Update leads on the new round of INSPIRE, including application criteria and timelines.
- Hear from our INSPIRE EDI lead about the new EDI guidelines.
- Hear about the INSPIRE activities across the UK that have been implemented by medical, dental and veterinary schools since the last sharing conference in July 2021.
- Discuss the future developments of INSPIRE
- Facilitate discussions and sharing of ideas that may help the development of local activities and collaborations.
- Ensure the representatives from schools have an opportunity to meet one another and the INSPIRE project team.

## **9. Monitoring and evaluation**

Please see the [Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines document](#) for further information.

## **10. Reporting**

Medical, dental, and veterinary schools will need to provide the Academy with an end of grant report after the two-year period has come to an end. Please see the Grant [Terms and Conditions](#) for further details. We encourage leads to maintain close contact with the Academy to facilitate the sharing of good practice and interim progress updates about the scheme.

We note that organisations providing funding 'in kind' and resources is important to schools and supports the local INSPIRE programme. However, we are now asking for 'in kind' funding to not be included as part of the application form.



- **EDI reporting guidance**

Please see the full [EDI reporting guidance document](#) for more information.

**The Academy of Medical Sciences** is the independent body in the UK representing the diversity of medical science. Our mission is to advance biomedical and health research and its translation into benefits for society. INSPIRE is part of the Academy of Medical Sciences' portfolio of activities aimed at developing talented researchers. Find out more here: [www.acmedsci.ac.uk](http://www.acmedsci.ac.uk)

**The Wellcome Trust** is a global charitable foundation whose vision is that everyone benefits from science's potential to improve health and save lives. Find out more here: [www.wellcome.ac.uk](http://www.wellcome.ac.uk)