MRC Global Mental Health Research

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MRC mission

- Encourage and **support high-quality research** with the aim of improving human health
- Produce **skilled researchers**; advance and disseminate knowledge and technology to improve the quality of life and economic competitiveness in the UK
- Promote **dialogue with the public** about medical research
The MRC’s UK and global priorities for a healthier society, increased innovation and productivity

- Priority Challenges
  - Infections and AMR
  - Prevention and population health
- Discovery science
  - Lifelong mental health and dementia
  - Regenerative medicine and advanced therapies
- Talent and leadership
  - Cell and tissue systems
  - Experimental Medicine
  - Mechanism to population
  - Therapeutic Target Validation
- Partnerships for impact
  - Data science and computation
  - Stratified Medicine
  - Academic/industry relationships
  - Novel technologies for health
- Transforming Health Research and Innovation
- Discovery for Medicine
MRC & Mental Health Research
Mental Health Research at MRC

• MRC Neurosciences and Mental Health Board remit is to fund excellent, novel research across the spectrum of neurosciences and mental health

• MRC strategy for lifelong mental health launched April 2017

• MRC spent £25.2m on mental health research in 2015-16
  • with a portfolio of approx. 300 grants and fellowships.
  • In addition to underpinning neuroscience and cognitive research, cohorts (£12.2m annually across 22 cohorts), imaging facilities, brain banks, etc.
MRC Strategy for lifelong mental health

- Take a **lifelong perspective** with a **focus on children and young people**
- **Stratification** for mental health research
- Harness data using **informatics** as a tool
- Developing **new interventions**, target discovery and validation
- Major new investment in **global mental health**
- **Prevention** of mental illness
- **Building capacity** for mental health research
MRC strategy and delivery

Strategy Board

- Molecular and Cellular Medicine Board
- Population and Systems Medicine Board
- Infections and Immunity Board
- Neurosciences and Mental Health Board

Population Health Sciences Group

Translational Research Group

Global Health Group

Training and Careers Group

Developmental Pathway Funding Scheme

Fellowship Panels
UK Cross-council mental health research agenda

Network Plus call launch

• innovative, cross-disciplinary approach to accelerate progress and build cross-disciplinary research capacity in mental health research
• Up to £1.25m, up to 48 months

UK Research Councils

• Medical Research
• Economic & Social Research
• Engineering & Physical Sciences
• Biotechnology & Biological Sciences
• Arts & Humanities
• Natural environment
• Science & Technology Facilities

Research Areas

- Understanding mental health and mental health problems
- Connection between physical and mental health
- Public health, prevention and wellbeing
- Living with mental health problems

Effective Intervention(s)

Technology and data

Lifestyle and behaviour

Inequalities

Empowerment, ethics, confidentiality and trust

Research Aspirations

- Novel and transformative research
- Build capacity in the field
- Cross disciplinary from the outset
- Patient and public Involvement
- Impact
MRC & Global Health
Research Changes Lives: Going global

• MRC funds approx. £80m per year global health research
  • basic and applied research in global health, including health systems research and interventions
  • Through Boards, Panels, Units, Centres, GCRF and Newton Fund

• Strategic priorities in global health research:
  • Tackling infectious diseases in resource-poor settings
  • Child, maternal and reproductive health, including nutrition
  • Non-communicable diseases
    • Mental health research
  • Pathways to impact, implementation into health systems
  • Improve health outcomes for vulnerable populations
  • Informatics and technology for health
MRC Strategy for lifelong mental health

• **New investment in global mental health (up to £20m)**
  • Directly address and influence the growing global burden of mental illness
  • Build on UK research strengths and LMIC partnerships
  • Deliver fundamental insights into aetiology and epidemiology of mental health in LMICs
  • Inform future interventional approaches
Working in partnership

- **MRC-DFID concordat**
  Agreement to support biomedical and public health research to tackle the priority health problems of poor people in developing countries; £90m 2013-2018

- **Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF)**
  GCRF is a 5-year £1.5 billion funding stream to ensure that UK research plays a key role in addressing global challenges faced by LMICs. The remit of GCRF spans across multiple disciplines including social, biological, the environment and health.

- **MRC/Wellcome/NIHR/DFID Joint Global Health Trials**
  Late-stage interventions that address the major causes of mortality or morbidity in LMICs, with potential for future implementation and impact for policy

- **Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases (GACD)**
  Coordinated funding of joint programmes into lifestyle-related or chronic non-communicable diseases.

- **Newton Fund**
Global Mental Health Research funding opportunities
Opportunities in global mental health

Upcoming opportunities
• Newton Fund MRC/SAMRC global mental health research
• MRC-GCRF global mental health research
• ESRC-GCRF global mental health research
• **Ongoing:** Research Grants to MRC Boards and Panels accept ODA-eligible applications

Previous/recent funding calls
• GACD mental health implementation research
• MRC-GCRF Confidence in global mental health
• MRC-GCRF Foundation awards
• RCUK-GCRF GROW strategic programmes
• Brisith Academy/DFID Early Childhood Development funding call
• NIHR GCRF
• MRC/WT/NIHR/DFID Joint Global Health Trials
Thank you

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https://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/science-areas/neurosciences-mental-health/
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