

Application Guidelines for MCID Project Funding

Please note, an addition has been made to these guidelines in [section 3](#) (9th July 2021).

First funding call for project funding (period 2022-2024):
Call opens 30th June 2021

The deadline for submission of project funding applications is Tuesday 14th September, 17.00 (CEST)

Applications are invited for the first project funding call of the Multidisciplinary Center for Infectious Diseases (MCID). The call includes a dedicated funding scheme to support the next generation of academic talent. An emphasis is placed on scientific excellence, as well as research planned that is of a multi- or interdisciplinary nature. Please read the MCID Funding Call Text for more information on the MCID and this first call for project funding.

1. Outline of envisaged MCID Project Funding Activities

2.1 Additional calls for project funding

It is possible that additional calls for project funding may be launched. Such additional calls will be advertised on the MCID website (www.mcid.unibe.ch).

2.2 Length of funded projects

Minimum of 24 months; maximum of 36 months.

2. Outline of MCID Project Funding for the first call (funding period 2022-2024)

For the first period of project funding, the MCID offers funding according to the follow three project funding modalities:

- Multi-applicant Project Funding
- Single-applicant Project Funding
- Career Development Grants (CDG)

3. General applicant eligibility requirements

- All applicants must be employees of the University of Bern, Bern University Hospital (Inselspital) or associated institutes (including IVI and UPD) or will enter employment at the aforementioned institutions at the latest by 1st March 2022.
- All applicants must have guaranteed employment at the University of Bern, Bern University Hospital (Inselspital) or associated institutes for the duration of the project funding period.
- **Individuals can be applicants on a maximum of two project funding applications (CDG applicants can only submit one application).**

4. Permitted expenditures (all project funding modalities)

The following table summarizes the expenditures that are permitted for projects pertaining to the three funding modalities in the funding period 01.2022-12.2024.

Expenditures	Multi-applicant Funding	Single-applicant Funding	Career Development Grant
Salary support for research personnel or co-PI on time-limited contract (e.g. PhD student, post-doc) working on this project	✓	✓	✗
Salary support for technical staff and data managers	✓	✓	✓
Consultation/sub-contracting fees (e.g. biostatistical)	✓	✓	✓
Laboratory supplies and expenses	✓	✓	✓
Laboratory animal purchase and maintenance	✓	✓	✓
User fees for Core Activity services and other non-MCID Core Services	✓	✓	✓
Software purchases required for the applied project	✓	✓	✓
International travel and conference/meeting expenses	✓	✓	✓
Computers/computing infrastructure	✓	✓	✓
Access to data	✓	✓	✓
Data storage	✓	✓	✓
Publication costs, including reprints	✓	✓	✓
PI salary support	✗	✗	✗
Salary support for funding recipient / grantee	✗	✗	✗
Secretarial/administrative personnel	✗	✗	✗
Capital costs/equipment, including maintenance/service contracts	✗	✗	✗
Office furniture and supplies	✗	✗	✗
Construction, renovation, or maintenance of buildings/laboratories	✗	✗	✗
Rental of laboratory or office space	✗	✗	✗
Purchasing or binding of periodicals and books	✗	✗	✗
Dues and membership fees in scientific societies	✗	✗	✗

5. Project funding application submission

For all three project funding modalities, the application should be submitted as a single pdf file containing the following documents, in this order:

5.1 Completed Application form

- Please complete the application form relevant to the funding modality you are applying for.
- Specific remarks relevant to your application are to be included exclusively in the allocated space on the application form.

5.2 CV

- Please include a CV for each applicant.
- Each CV should have a maximum length of 3 pages (excluding publications, minimum font size 10), containing the following information:
 - Personal information including OrcID, ResearcherID or Google Scholar ID)
 - Clearly stated year of completion of PhD, or for clinicians and veterinarians, year of state examination if no PhD.
 - Employment history including current position(s)
 - Institutional responsibilities
 - Approved third-party funding
 - Supervision of junior researchers at graduate and postgraduate level (summary information, the names of the junior researchers should be indicated)
 - Prizes, awards, fellowships
 - Career breaks (provide justification)
- For multi-applicant project funding applications, the CV of each applicant must be immediately followed by the list of publications (see below) for that same applicant.

5.3 List of publications

- For each applicant, please include a list of publications most relevant to this application.
- Each list of publications should have a maximum length of 2 pages (minimum font size 10). This list should only include publications from the last 5 years and should not include manuscripts in preparation or submitted but not yet accepted. Please distinguish peer-reviewed original research papers from reviews/commentaries/editorials.

5.4 Project description

- For specific details regarding the project description, please see the individual description for each project funding modality (see sections 6.6.2, 7.5.1 and 8.4.1).

- All project descriptions should be prepared with a minimum font size of 11 (all margins set to default Microsoft Word setting 2.54 cm) and with page numbers.
- Budgets, including proposed costs and corresponding explanations, should be itemized based on terms presented in the table of permitted expenditures in section 4.

5.5 Details relating to application forms

The following details relate to all three project funding modalities.

- Please do not modify application forms other than to fill in information where required (for the multi-applicant project funding application form, tables can be added for additional applicants if necessary).
- When requested to provide the name of an MCID cluster to which applicant expertise and proposed project most closely match, please select one of the following (more details provided in the funding call text document and online at www.mcid.unibe.ch):
 - Immunity
 - Patient-Focused Research
 - Epidemiology
 - Microbiology
 - Neglected Diseases
 - Ethics and Policy
 - Economics
- When requested to provide the name of the research theme(s) to which your proposed project mostly closely matches, please select one (or more) of the following (name in bold only, more details provided in the funding call text document):
 - **Investigation** of infectious threats and underlying factors for susceptibility using an integrated One Health vision.
 - **Development** of surveillance and preparedness strategies and tools for current, emerging, and future infectious disease risks
 - **Solutions** to address the impact of infectious diseases on animal life, human life and livelihoods, considering biomedical, social, ethical, and economical aspects.

6. Multi-applicant Project Funding

6.1 Requirements for Multi-applicant funding

Multi-applicant projects are intended to reflect the aims of the MCID in promoting multi- and interdisciplinarity. To ensure that applicants within a multi-applicant project have distinct profiles in terms of expertise and research profile, applicants:

- must represent different scientific disciplines (be members of different faculties) and/or

- have research interests that are distinct from each other by spanning more than one of the MCID academic discipline clusters
- from the same research group cannot appear as co-applicants on the same multi-applicant project submission.

6.2 Applicant eligibility requirements

- Non-CDG applicants must be principal investigators employed by the University of Bern, the Bern University Hospital (Inselspital), or affiliated institutes.
- In this context, a principal investigator is defined as a researcher who either has their own independent research group or who is financially responsible for a research project made possible through the receipt of third-party funding.
- Applicants must have guaranteed employment at the University of Bern, the Bern University Hospital (Inselspital), or affiliated institutes, for the duration of the project.

6.3 Regulations regarding multiple applications

- A researcher can be an applicant on a maximum of two multi-applicant project submissions but can only be a lead applicant on one.
- A researcher applying for a Career Development Grant (CDG) can make their application as part of a multi-applicant project submission but cannot act as lead applicant for the application.
- A researcher can be an applicant on a multi-applicant project submission and can submit a single-applicant project proposal.
- In this case, they cannot be the lead applicant of the multi-applicant project submission.
- If a researcher is an applicant on two project funding submissions, the planned research activities in the two projects must be distinct.

6.4 Funding

- Budget: the maximum total budget for multi-applicant projects is 240'000 CHF x n (where n is the number of applicants).
- This maximum budget is 960'000 CHF. The total budget does not need to be evenly divided amongst applicants.
- Five or more applicants can apply together for a multi-applicant project but the maximum allowable budget will remain 960'000 CHF.

6.5 Project duration

- Multi-applicant projects are intended to have a planned duration of 36 months, with the minimum project length being 24 months.
- Exceptions to the 36 month intended project funding period can be made for:
 - Applicants whose expected employment at the University of Bern, the Bern University Hospital (Inselspital),

- or affiliated institute is expected to last fewer than 36 months from 1st January 2022.
- Projects that require a higher annual budget, restricting the length for which the project can run.
- Within the permitted project duration of 24-36 months, it is not required that all individual components within a multi-applicant project have the same duration.

6.6 Application process

Due to the complexity of a multi-applicant submission, applicants are encouraged to submit a project synopsis to the MCID Management Office for an administrative check.

6.6.1 Synopsis submission

- Submission of a project synopsis is optional
- The deadline for synopsis submission is Wednesday, 21st July 2021
- The following components are required to form part of a synopsis submission.
 1. Completed Application Form
 2. Short project synopsis, 3 pages maximum excluding references, structured in the following way:
 - Proposed research aims and approaches
 - Multi/interdisciplinary character of the research project and the added value of the collaboration
 - Proposal's breakthrough character
- The following feedback will be provided on the synopsis:
 - Whether or not all applicants meet eligibility requirements
 - Whether or not the submission is of a multi- or interdisciplinary nature
- Submission and feedback for a project synopsis is only possible for the multi-applicant funding modality
- No assessment will be made of synopses in terms of scientific merit or proposed budgets
- A positive outcome of a synopsis check does not guarantee funding upon review of the corresponding full proposal

6.6.2 Application guidelines: full proposal

A full-proposal application must be submitted in accordance with the general project funding application guidelines (section 5 of this document) and include:

- Completed Multi-Applicant Application Form
- **If one or more CDG applications are embedded**, include a completed CDG Application form for each

- Project Description, 10 pages maximum, excluding references, structured in the following way:
 - a. Summary (200 words maximum)
 - b. Background
 - c. Current status of own research (separate statement for each applicant)
 - d. Hypotheses and aims
 - e. Project plan including methods
 - f. Individual contribution of each applicant to the project
 - g. Multi/interdisciplinary character of the research project and the added value of the collaboration
 - h. **If applicable**, role for Core Activities in the proposed research plan
 - i. Proposal's breakthrough character
 - j. Significance of the proposed research with respect to the MCID mission statement
 - k. A timeline with yearly milestones in funding period 01.2022-12.2024.
 - l. Budget (overall budget and individual applicants' budgets)
 - m. References
- CV for each applicant, limited to 3 pages (see section 5.2)
- List of publications for each applicant (last 5 years, see section 5.2)

7. Single-applicant Project Funding

7.1 Requirement for Single-applicant funding

The MCID supports mono-disciplinary scientific excellence. Single-applicant project submissions intended as precursors for application to highly competitive funding schemes (e.g. SNSF Sinergia, Innosuisse Discovery) will be prioritized.

7.2 Applicant eligibility requirements

- Applicants must be principal investigators employed by the University of Bern, the Bern University Hospital (Inselspital), or affiliated institutes.
- In this context, a principal investigator is defined as a researcher who either has their own independent research group or who is financially responsible for a research project made possible through the receipt of third-party funding.
- Applicants must have guaranteed employment at the University of Bern, the Bern University Hospital (Inselspital), or affiliated institutes, for the duration of the project.

7.3 Funding

- Budget: the maximum total budget for a single-applicant project is 200'000 CHF.

7.4 Project duration

- Single-applicant projects are intended to have a planned duration of 36 months, with the minimum project length being 24 months.
- Exceptions to the 36 month intended project funding period can be made for:
 - Applicants whose expected employment at the University of Bern, the Bern University Hospital (Inselspital), or affiliated institute is expected to last fewer than 36 months from 1st January 2022.
 - Projects that require a higher annual budget that restricts the length for which the project can run.

7.5 Application process

7.5.1 Application guidelines

- Applications must be submitted in accordance with the general project funding application guidelines (section 5) and include:
 - Completed Application Form
 - Project Description 5 pages maximum, excluding references structured in the following way:
 - a. Summary (200 words maximum)
 - b. Background
 - c. Current status of own research
 - d. Hypothesis and aims
 - e. Project plan including methods
 - f. If applicable, role for Core Activities in the proposed research plan
 - g. Significance of the proposed research with respect to the MCID mission statement
 - h. A timeline with yearly milestones in funding period 01.2022-12.2024.
 - i. Budget (itemized)
 - j. Relevant references
 - Applicant's CV, 3 pages maximum
 - Applicant's list of publications (last 5 years)

8. Career Development Grant

8.1 Requirement for CDG applications

The MCID is committed to the support and promotion of non-tenured researchers who hold great promise as future academic leaders. The goal of the CDG scheme is to provide dedicated resources to support this talent pool on the path to independence.

The CDG is intended as a precursor for application to competitive career and/or project funding schemes.

8.2 Applicant eligibility requirements

- At the time of submission, applicants must either already be affiliated to the University of Bern and/or the Bern-(Inselspital) or will become affiliated, at the latest 2 months prior to the planned discharge of funds.
- At the time of application, applicants must fulfill the following eligibility requirements:

Researchers:

- Have a doctorate (PhD) or an equivalent qualification.
- have acquired at least three years of research experience after their doctorate or equivalent qualification.
- defended their doctorate or obtained the equivalent qualification to a doctorate no later than eight years ago.
- present a guarantee of employment at the University of Bern-Inselspital Group or affiliated institutes, for the duration of the grant.

Clinical scientists:

- have a medical or veterinary exam (state examination or equivalent)
- completed their medical exam no later than nine years ago.
- have acquired at least three years of clinical work and were involved in research activities for at least two years after their medical or veterinary exam.
- present guarantee of employment at the University of Bern-Inselspital Group or affiliated institutes, for the duration of the grant.

8.3 Funding volume:

- Budget: the maximum total budget for a Career Development Grant is 240'000 CHF.

8.4 Project duration:

- Career Development Grants are intended to have a planned duration of between 24 and 36 months.

8.5 Application process

- Applications must be submitted in accordance with the general project funding application guidelines (section 5).
- For standalone applications, please submit a Completed Application Form, Project Description, applicant's CV, and applicant's list of publications according to guidelines for the preparation of single-applicant submissions (section 7.5.1).
- For CDG applications embedded within a multi-applicant submission, please provide the completed CDG application form as part of a multi-applicant submission (section 6.6.2).