University College London (UCL) and All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi

Joint Call for Collaborative Research Projects and Exchange Activities

1. Introduction

With the objective of enhancing interdisciplinary and collaborative research interest between UCL and AIIMS, New Delhi, a joint research seed fund has been established to invite joint project proposals from faculty members from both institutions. This scheme essentially provides joint research seed funds for research projects to galvanize research groups from both sides to work on proof of concept ideas, generate initial data and apply for big grants to international funding agencies. It is expected that these interdisciplinary research groups will:

(i) grow in size or merge with other allied research groups and in the process enhance the level of expertise and scope of research in a specific interdisciplinary theme.
(ii) attract support from external funding agencies
(iii) catalyze the synergic ‘cross-research activity’ between the two institutes, leading eventually to joint research publications and patents.

The joint research seed fund is a one-off grant, and the success of these project will be determined by a number of parameters, including (i) how the project has contributed to joint research activity between the two institutions, and (ii) how this work will lead to a submission for further funding.

2. Eligibility for participants within the scope of this call

i) There will be two principal investigators (PIs) – one from each institution. The PI can include co-PIs from the same or other departments provided that there is no financial implications to the concerned department/faculty.

ii) The project work should not be part of the thesis/dissertation work of a resident or PhD student.

iii) Applications are open to UCL staff members with the following roles:
   - Professor/Professorial Teaching Fellow or equivalent.
   - Reader or equivalent.
   - Senior Lecturer/Principal Researcher/Principal Research Associate/Senior Teaching Fellow or equivalent.
   - Lecturer/Senior Research Associate/Teaching Fellow or equivalent.
   - Post Doc/Researcher/Post Doc Fellow/Research Associate or equivalent – eligible provided the contract covers the spend and activity period.
   - Applicants are not required to have a doctorate to apply, but do need to hold a role at one of the levels described above.
   - PhD students are not eligible to apply, but are encouraged to take part in the project.

iv) For AIIMS the call is open to all the faculty members and scientists.
3. **Area of Collaboration**

The call for proposals is open to all areas of in the healthcare and medical domains.

4. **Collaboration Activities**

Collaboration activities may be based on joint projects set up by faculty/staff members of both institutions, including:

- Joint research projects.
- Any other form of partnerships, to be promoted and implemented jointly when both UCL and AIIMS, New Delhi find it mutually beneficial.

5. **Number of Projects, Value and Duration**

Up to four successful proposals will receive up to £10,000 i.e. each successful proposal will receive up to £5,000 per year for UCL faculty and up to Rs. 5 lakh per year for AIIMS, New Delhi faculty for one year.

Funding will be jointly provided by UCL and AIIMS, New Delhi, with 50% going to the academic at each respective institution.

**One principal investigator should submit only one joint-proposal using the form below.**

Projects will be selected by the end of January 2020, and must begin by the start of March 2020.

The budget provided by UCL and AIIMS-New Delhi may be spent as per norms and regulations followed in each institute.

In the current call for proposals, UCL as well as AIIMS colleagues need to consume their funds by 31st July 2019.

In subsequent years, we hope that the project will start much earlier and finish by July of the following year.

6. **Timeline**

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Call for proposals</strong></td>
<td>Monday, 16th December 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deadline for submission of</strong></td>
<td>Friday 17th January 2020 by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proposal**</td>
<td>4pm UK time, 21.30 hrs Indian Standard Time</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Communication of Results to</strong></td>
<td>Week commencing 24th February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>applicants**</td>
<td>2020</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Start date of Awards</strong></td>
<td>Week commencing 9th March 2020</td>
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7. **Identifying Academics at AIIMS, New Delhi and UCL**

i) In order to identify academics at either institution, please refer to the institutional websites in the first instance. These are [http://www.ucl.ac.uk](http://www.ucl.ac.uk) and [http://www.aiims.edu](http://www.aiims.edu).

If further help is required, then UCL applicants should contact Professor Vineet Ahuja at researchsectionaiims@gmail.com whilst AIIMS, New Delhi, applicants should touch base with Dr Amit Khandelwal at amit.khandelwal@ucl.ac.uk to seek assistance. We will help where practicable and possible.
8. Ethics and Governance
i) The research proposal will require ethics clearance from respective Ethics Committee of both the institutions. The ethics clearance letter may be submitted while submitting the initial project proposal or subsequently after the project proposal is approved for funding. Funds will be allocated for approved projects only after ethics clearance is obtained.

ii) Collaborative Research Agreement, Intellectual Property Right issues and Joint Supervision issues will be addressed as per the guidelines of the two institutes and described in the UCL-AIIMS, New Delhi MOU, a copy of which is attached below.

9. Submission of Proposals
i) Proposals are to be prepared and submitted jointly.

ii) Compilation of the proposal will be handled by AIIMS, New Delhi. It is therefore crucial that UCL academics, in particular the lead Principal Investigator, liaise closely with their AIIMS, New Delhi, counterparts who will be responsible for filling the application form, a copy of which is presented below.

iii) The AIIMS, New Delhi, counterpart must ensure that the UK counterpart is in full agreement on all aspects of the proposal.

iv) The full joint project proposal should be submitted by the PI of AIIMS, New Delhi to both the offices of Dean (Research) at AIIMS, New Delhi and Dr Amit Khandelwal, UCL’s Global Engagement Office by 17th January 2019, 4pm UK time, 21.30 hrs Indian Standard Time for adjudication.

10. Adjudication
i) Proposals received by AIIMS, New Delhi and UCL’s Global Engagement Office will be evaluated by a separate review at each institution.

ii) Selection Criteria: Both internal review committees will assess each proposal according to the following criteria:
   - Scientific Merit, Project design and rationale (how clearly presented, and justified is the design and basis for the collaboration)
   - Project impact (how clearly linked are the outcomes to the planned activities and performance indicators, such as joint papers, external funding applications, joint research with industry and proposal for policy recommendations; does the project have a focus on the UN Sustainable Development Goals? If so which ones and why?)
   - Impact of collaboration (is there a distinct advantage provided by this collaboration that is not possible by the two institutions working individually?)
   - Capacity for future collaboration (what is the extent to which future collaborations are possible as a result of the proposed exchange activities.)

iii) A joint committee will convene to select up to four final proposals.

11. Communication of Results
Final results will be announced by means of a communication to the successful faculty members.

12. Reporting after Project Completion
All awardees must, as a condition of receiving an award under this call, complete a narrative report of achievements (of between 1 and 2 pages), and how they intend to take the research forward beyond the funding period.
They will also have to submit an auditable Statement of Expenditure Certificate to respective institutions.

13. Contacts

For any clarification points or questions on the joint call, please do not hesitate to contact the colleagues listed below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>UCL</th>
<th>AIIMS, NEW DELHI</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Professor Monica Lakhanpaul</strong></td>
<td><strong>Professor Chitra Sarkar</strong></td>
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<td>Dean (Research)</td>
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