VALIDATE Directors' Fund Application Guidance

Summary

VALIDATE's remit

The VALIDATE Network aims to accelerate the development of efficacious vaccines for three groups of complex intracellular pathogens that cause diseases significant to low and middle-income countries (LMICs): *Mycobacteria, Leishmania spp,* and *Burkholderia pseudomallei.* VALIDATE also aims to support and facilitate Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and career progression amongst its members, build capacity in our research field, and engage the public around vaccine research and careers in STEMM.

The Directors' Fund

To support these aims, we are holding a Directors' Fund call. This call offers small grants (up to £5,000) for innovative activities that will lead to interesting outcomes and benefits relevant to VALIDATE's remit and in the VALIDATE field, for example to your research, your career or professional development, capacity building, engaging with the general public, or other relevant outcomes.

The activity you propose could be:
- Running an outreach event about vaccines for school kids or the general public
- Creating public engagement materials (e.g. leaflet, brochure, website, computer game)
- Hosting a meeting with new collaborators in the VALIDATE network, to work together towards a grant application
- Running a training workshop at your institute
- Hosting/giving a public talk
- Working with a museum to create an exhibit
- Hosting a key speaker at your institute or for an event or course you are coordinating
- Working with an advocacy specialist to create an advocacy plan/programme/documents to impact policy
- Key consumables for add-on assays that would enhance analyses you are already doing and lead to additional knowledge from samples you have collected
- Any other innovative activity within remit

The proposed activity must fall within the VALIDATE remit, focusing on at least one of VALIDATE's priority pathogens (any aspect of research that will accelerate development of efficacious vaccines for these pathogens is eligible, including biological, physical and social sciences, and humanities).

Lead applicants must be a member of VALIDATE. We particularly welcome applications from researchers based in LMICs. Submitted applications will be reviewed by the VALIDATE Management Team.

All awardees will be expected to provide a short report following the completion of their activity, for inclusion in VALIDATE outcomes and publicity.

Please see the further details below about this award and how to apply. Please submit your application form and associated documents using the Directors' Fund Submission Portal found on the VALIDATE website before the call deadline. Do contact the VALIDATE Team at VALIDATE@ndm.ox.ac.uk with any queries about this call, the application form or the application process.

Grant Call Details

Funding Eligibility & How to Complete the Application Form

Section 1: Applicant and Collaborator Details
Complete your details (copy and paste the collaborators box and complete the details for each application collaborator as well, if relevant). Applications should only include collaborators if they provide benefit to the proposed activity.

Lead applicants must be a VALIDATE member (of any membership level). Members based at academic institutes, governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations and in industry are all eligible.

Due to VALIDATE's funding, under UK and USA government rules we cannot fund any members based in Belarus, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran or Russia, or any individuals/entities subject to UK or US sanctions.

LMIC/HIC
- If you are based for work in a country listed in any column on this page, then you are LMIC, with the exception of:
    - Belarus – we cannot fund members based in Belarus
    - China – we cannot fund members based in China
    - Democratic People's Republic of Korea – we cannot fund members based in North Korea
    - India – the Indian government does not want to receive UK ODA funds, so for this call members based in India count as HIC
    - Iran – we cannot fund members based in Iran
    - Russia – we cannot fund members based in Russia
- If you are based for work in any country not on the list, or you are based in India, then you are HIC.

You can find your membership level on your VALIDATE website profile page, or in your original welcome email from the VALIDATE team confirming your membership. You may apply for this grant call while your VALIDATE membership has been submitted but is still pending review (tick the 'membership pending' box).

Section 2: Career
Briefly outline your career to date, particularly your research experience for VALIDATE's focus pathogens.

Section 3: Funded Activity
Describe in detail the activity you would like VALIDATE to fund (including when it will take place), so that the reviewers can assess your idea, its relevance to VALIDATE's remit, its novelty and innovation, and value for money.

Activities supported
Innovative ideas within VALIDATE's remit of vaccine research for *Mycobacteria,* Leishmaniases, and melioidosis, that advance the research field, contribute to career development or capacity building, engage the public/combat vaccine hesitancy, impact policy etc. If you are unsure whether your idea would be within remit, please contact the VALIDATE team to ask ahead of submitting an application.

Activities not supported
- Activities that would be covered by a VALIDATE [training grant](#)
- Conference attendance (including attending the VALIDATE Annual Meeting), and associated activities (e.g. poster printing costs)
- Equipment purchase
- Journal publication fees
- PhD fees, thesis publication costs
- Activities focused on non-VALIDATE pathogens
- Anything outside VALIDATE's remit

Section 4: Outcomes
Clearly detail the expected outcomes and benefits of your proposed activity – this might be advances in your research field, career/professional development, capacity building, impact on policy/patients/the public, advocacy outcomes and any other outcomes/benefits you anticipate. Include, where relevant, the number of people impacted (e.g. for workshops/courses, public engagement, policy changes).

Section 5: Budget
Your Directors' Fund grant costs can be up to a maximum budget of £5,000. VALIDATE funding can be used in conjunction with other funding to cover activities that are more expensive than this (i.e. you can use co-funding) – if this is the case please explain where the additional funds required will come from in your application.

In section 5.1 clearly itemise the costs for your activity.

In section 5.2 clearly explain what these costs are, how they relate to your activity, how you calculated your budget costs, and how your activity offers value for money.

Section 6: Ethical Concerns
If your activity involves samples or animals, please select the answer that applies (if not, tick 'not applicable').

Section 7: Required Additional Documents

CV Guidance:
The below list indicates the information we require to be detailed in your CV. Please note that any additional information supplied is optional. Please ensure you stick to page limits (2 pages for CV, 1 page for publications list of your key publications):

- Full name
- Email address
- Education history (Bachelors degree and above)
    - Dates of education
    - Course name
    - Institution name
- Employment history (10 years)
    - Dates of employment
    - Institution name
    - Job title
    - Brief summary of your role

- Grants obtained (dates, funder, project title, amount, your role on the project)

Letters of Support from Research Group Leader
- Investigators do not need to submit this letter of support
- If you are an Associate or Affiliate VALIDATE member, applications must be supported by your Research Group Leader (who must be happy for you to take time away from your research to carry out the activity). If you do not have a Research Group leader at your institute, please instead include a letter of support from your line manager (again, stating support of your application and the time away from your normal work).
- If you are a senior staff Affiliate member (e.g. Professor, Associate Professor, Research Group leader) then you do not need to submit this letter of support.

Letters of Support from Each Collaborator
A letter of support from each collaborator must be included in your application, stating their support of, and their role in, the activity (i.e. what they are bringing to the activity by being a collaborator). Please ensure all letter of support from collaborators include an acknowledgement of having read the VALIDATE Privacy Notice and CV guidance.

All letters of support, and CVs/publication lists from collaborators, included in your application must be genuine and from the signatory – any fraudulent documents will result in disqualification of the application and likely member disbarment from VALIDATE.

Section 8: Signature
Sign and date the document before submission. Please ensure you have read the VALIDATE Privacy Notice before doing so.

General
Complete the application form as directed on the form itself, sticking to the word limit where stated. Ensure you complete all sections. Make sure the necessary additional supporting documents are uploaded into the correct sections of the submission portal. All documents should be in English, and extra documents/appendices will not be accepted.

Submit your application form and associated documents using the Directors' Fund Submission Portal found on the VALIDATE website. You will receive an automated email notification of your submission immediately after submission, followed by acknowledge of your submission from a member of the VALIDATE team within 3 working days (Monday-Friday) of submission.

Applications will be reviewed by the VALIDATE Management Team. Assessment will be made based on the track record of the applicant, their and the activity's fit with VALIDATE strategic priorities, the originality of the proposed activity, and the value-for-money of the activity.

Management Team members will not input into discussions about an application where they have a conflict of interest (see below for details on conflicts of interest). The VALIDATE Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) has oversight of VALIDATE's processes to ensure transparency, fairness and consistency.

You will be notified by email of the review decision.

Publicity and Data Protection
Successful Directors' Fund grant awardees are listed on the VALIDATE website.

Copies of applications may be made available to the VALIDATE Management Team, NMB and SAB who will use information provided for review and post-award administration (all have signed confidentiality agreements). Observers from our funders may sit in on the review process and see applications. VALIDATE and its funders may choose to publish non-confidential details of awards, awardees, and information of funded activities.

Conflict of Interest

Examples of a conflict of interest include:
- Employed by the same department in the same institution as the applicant/host
- Close active collaboration impacting on the application being reviewed
- Holding a current position on the governing body of the applicant organisation
- Personal/family relationship with the applicant