



# The MPS Foundation

A guide for applicants



# Contents



- 3 About The MPS Foundation
- 4 What we fund
- 6 Who can apply?
- 7 How the application process works
- 8 Evaluation process and criteria
- 9 What we ask in return
- 11 Frequently asked questions

# A safer tomorrow starts with research today



**MPS is the world's leading member-owned, not-for-profit protection organisation for doctors, dentists, and healthcare professionals, with over 350,000 members and more than 130 years of global healthcare experience and expertise.**

The purpose of The MPS Foundation is to protect and support healthcare professionals by funding and sharing research, education, and innovation that improves patient safety as well as protecting professional wellbeing, and reduces risk.

To achieve this, we support and fund research across the world that will make a difference and can be applied in the workplace.

To help MPS members and professional colleagues meet the challenges of improving patient care, patient safety, patient outcomes, and their professional wellbeing, The MPS Foundation was established in 2022 and is now in its fifth year of operation.

This groundbreaking research funding initiative aims to make the world safer for patients and healthcare professionals.

## **The MPS Foundation's strategic goals**

We will support research that makes a meaningful contribution to our world by:

- reducing risk for patients, MPS members, and the wider profession
- protecting and improving wellbeing for medical and dental professionals
- increasing the body of knowledge around patient care, safety and outcomes, and healthcare professional wellbeing
- informing, developing, and increasing expertise in risk reduction and management.

**“By equipping practitioners with tools to manage stress and build resilience, we hope to reduce burnout and enhance workforce sustainability. These improvements ripple outward.”**

**Prof Melanie Aley 2025, MPS Foundation Grant Recipient**



# What we fund

To maximise the global impact of The MPS Foundation and improve patient care, patient safety, patient outcomes, and healthcare professional wellbeing, we focus our funding on the following four areas:

## 1 The impact of human factors

We are interested in researching the impact people and teams have on patient care, safety, outcomes, and risk, including:

- perceptions of professionalism and its impact on patient safety
- generational differences in response to risk and its impact on patient safety, culture, and attitudes to risk
- a focus on general practice and primary care.

### Communication:

- communication between patients and healthcare professionals
- causes of communication breakdown
- patient involvement in decision making
- how to manage patients' expectations
- improving patient voice in delivering healthcare
- the impact of the media (both positive and negative) and the public perception of health care professionals.

### Teams:

- building successful teams
- dysfunctional teams and their impact on patient safety and risk
- impact of remote working/multi-site teams on clinical practice, patient safety, and clinician risk.

### Consent:

- the use of third parties in obtaining consent
- obtaining consent in remote working
- the impact of leadership and leadership styles on patient safety and risk
- the impact of culture
- the impact of incentivisation on healthcare professionals and patient care, outcomes, and risk
- the impact of new roles, responsibilities, and functions within healthcare and the implications for quality assurance and risk management
- the impact of clinician mobility, effective risk management, and quality assurance of healthcare
- professionals who transfer from one healthcare system to another
- private hospital governance
- building system resilience.

## 2 The wellbeing of healthcare professionals and teams

The personal and professional wellbeing and development of healthcare professionals and teams remains our priority. For this reason, we're interested in research that recognises and addresses the following:

- proactive approaches to wellbeing
- burnout, resilience, and self-awareness
- the need for healthcare professionals to consider their own mental and physical health and performance in delivering the very best for their patients.
- the role of healthcare organisations in protecting and improving the wellbeing of their staff and teams.

## 3 Digital integration and technology

Digital and technological developments continue to help healthcare professionals and teams to maximise opportunities and minimise risks. We are particularly interested in research into:

- the use, benefits and risks of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in healthcare
- the impact of technology and AI on patient safety and clinician risk
- the impact of technology and AI on the behaviour of healthcare professionals and/or patients
- the impact of telemedicine and social media, and the risks they present to healthcare professionals and patients
- the impact of telemedicine and social media on healthcare professional wellbeing.

Please note: We do not fund bespoke software or app development. Neither will we fund the development of AI diagnostic tools.

## 4 Evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and learning innovations

Effective teaching and learning innovations are critical to mitigating and preventing risk for the patient and healthcare professional. We are therefore particularly interested in research into:

- generational differences in learning needs and learning engagement
- how to make CPD impactful and effective
- creating a learning organisation in a regulated environment
- how the transfer of knowledge and skills to the workplace to increase patient safety, reduce risk, and enhance wellbeing can be done effectively
- how to effectively share learning from near misses in a safe way that ensures timeliness and maintains psychological safety and wellbeing
- how to create learning opportunities that enable new entrants to manage errors in a reflective way.



### What our funding doesn't cover

Unfortunately, our grants cannot be used for the following:

- × purchase or maintenance of capital equipment, including clinical equipment
- × purchase or maintenance of computer hardware unless there are exceptional circumstances
- × research aimed at setting standards for clinical practice\*
- × research that is a service evaluation\*
- × research associated with clinical trials\*
- × market research
- × undergraduate or postgraduate education involving taught programmes (we would consider funding the research element of a PhD)
- × undergraduate and postgraduate university fee, including PhD
- × overseas education or training
- × the development of bespoke software or an app as the sole outcome
- × The development of AI diagnostic solutions
- × the market testing of AI tools, software or apps
- × projects outside of MPS's geographical areas of interest\*
- × sponsorship of events, conferences etc, unless there are exceptional circumstances
- × communication and promotional materials unless there are exceptional circumstances
- × indirect costs of the research or any other indirect/overhead costs – management costs as part of a grant will be paid to an agreed level
- × work undertaken prior to the start date of the grant
- × The MPS Foundation directly employing grant recipients or participants
- × the cost of employing a permanent member of staff to cover an applicant's duties
- × travel costs not associated directly with the delivery of the project

**Above all, we welcome proposals that are innovative, original, evidence-based, and focused on applied research.**

**We favour projects whose outcomes can be applied to the private sector as well as the public sector, GP practice, outpatient practice, and dental care environments. We give priority to proposals that involve and impact more than one country or region.**

\*See the FAQs section for more information.

# Who can apply?



We welcome applications from professionals with a wide range of research experience, from graduates to seasoned academics, in every corner of the research world including but not exclusively:

- MPS members and clients
- universities
- medical schools
- dental schools
- third sector and private research institutions and organisations
- hospitals or hospital groups (public or private)
- local hospital networks
- primary health networks
- dental practices
- dental groups
- non-MPS members and organisations
- general medical practitioners

## How much can you apply for?

The MPS Foundation will consider two kinds of proposals:

- proposals with a total budget of up to £60,000, or equivalent in local currency, which last between 3 and 24 months
- proposals with a total budget of more than £60,000 and up to £200,000, or equivalent in local currency, which last between 12 and 36 months.

**Grant applicants will receive a maximum of £100,000 in any one year.**

The total number, location, focus, and value of the projects we fund will ultimately be based on the quantity and quality of applications we receive. The MPS Foundation Board will make the final decision.

## Can projects be co-funded?

We are happy to consider funding projects that have already received or had commitments for funding from other sources. In these cases, we will clearly define the outcomes we are funding.

For example, in a digital project, which included funding from another source, our funding would focus on the patient safety and risk element of the research.

Please disclose any previous or existing funding, or funding you intend to apply for outside of The MPS Foundation, in your application.

# How the application process works

The application process includes three stages:

## Stage one: Registration

To register your interest for funding, complete your details on The MPS Foundation's online grant portal. You will have to register in order to access the Expression of Interest.

## Stage two: Expressions of Interest

To apply for funding, you will need to submit an Expression of Interest. To access this, you will need to confirm that your application will be eligible for funding. The Expression of Interest should include:

- organisational details
- project lead details
- a proposed project title
- submissions should cover:
  - why the project is important
  - who the target population for the project will be
  - why the project is original and innovative
  - how you intend to conduct the project
  - the anticipated results and impact of the research
- an outline of how your project meets The MPS Foundation's goals and priorities
- an indication of budget and timescales.

This stage is designed to allow us to assess how your project fits with the objectives and priorities of The MPS Foundation. All applicants wishing to be considered for funding will need to complete their Expression of Interest online by the deadline. The deadline will only be extended in exceptional circumstances.

The MPS Foundation will assess applications and only those that are shortlisted will be asked to proceed to the next stage. Applications that are outside the financial or time limits will automatically be excluded.

The MPS Foundation reserves the right to ask different projects to work collaboratively where similar areas of research are being undertaken using similar methods – especially where the projects are in different countries. If you would prefer not to work this way, you can reject this request.

## Stage three: Full Application

If your Expression of Interest is shortlisted, we will invite you to proceed to stage three.

As part of the process, we will also ask you to submit a more detailed application, which includes:

- further information about the project design and methodology
- a detailed project plan
- information about the project team, including their CVs
- your ethical considerations
- a budget breakdown
- your consideration of risks associated with your project
- potential conflicts of interest clearly stated with ways to manage them
- dissemination plans
- an outline of how your project could be scaled up for a national or global solution.

You can find out more about application timescales at [thempsfoundation.org](https://thempsfoundation.org)

Please ensure you read our guides on [How to complete your Expression of Interest](#) and [How to make a good application](#).



# Evaluation process and criteria



Expressions of Interest will be evaluated to ensure they match The MPS Foundation's goals and priorities. Projects invited to submit a full application will be evaluated using a weighted evaluation system. This criteria is available at [thempsfoundation.org](https://thempsfoundation.org)

## Stage two criteria includes:

- relevance of the project to our priorities and focus
- project impact
- project originality
- applicant experience and support.

## Stage three criteria includes:

- detailed project design
- project rationale and relevance
- project scalability and sustainability
- project timeframes
- project costs and budget
- how important funding from The MPS Foundation is to the delivery of the project.

Applicants invited to submit a full application will be provided with feedback on their Expression of Interest, including any areas where The MPS Foundation requires further detail or clarification.

In some circumstances an applicant may present an application that has merit, but in the view of the judging panel the project is not yet ready to start. In these circumstances, The MPS Foundation may work with the applicant to enable them to be ready for the next grant application window.

## Application timeline



### Stage one

Registrations are welcome all year round



### Stage two

Expressions of Interest opens  
**1 February 2026**

Expressions of Interest closes  
**1 May 2026** at 17.00 BST



### Stage three

Invitation to apply starts  
**10 June 2026** at 10.00 BST

Applications close  
**13 July 2026** at 17.00 BST



Board decision

**28 September 2026**

Successful applicants notified by  
**5 October 2026**



### Any other questions?

Please contact us by emailing  
[enquiries@thempsfoundation.org](mailto:enquiries@thempsfoundation.org)



# What we ask in return

Making a positive contribution to the world around us is an important part of The MPS Foundation and we welcome the opportunity to work with professionals who share our ethical principles, values, and standards.

## When you submit a proposal, we'll ask you to:

- carry out activities in an ethical and lawful manner in line with our policies regarding health and safety, data protection, modern slavery, safeguarding, bribery, tax evasion, and other financial crimes.

For more information, read the [Grant Recipient Code of Conduct](#).

## We'll also ask you to comply with five key ethical principles

- Research should aim to maximise the benefit for individuals and society and minimise risk and harm.
- The rights and dignity of individuals and groups should be respected at all times.
- Participation should be voluntary and appropriately informed.
- Research should be conducted with integrity and transparency.
- Independence of research should be maintained and where conflicts of interest cannot be avoided, they should be made explicit.

## Meeting milestones

As part of the application process, we will ask you to agree a series of milestones. If your application is successful, we will formally include these in your grant agreement. Any payments will then be linked to the milestones outlined in the agreement, and any regular status meetings you have with The MPS Foundation.

## Promoting the future

To help raise awareness of your research and achieve The MPS Foundation's global goals, we would like to publish information about your project in MPS's member publications. From time to time, we may also ask you to take part in promotional activity, such as publicity or photography to promote The MPS Foundation and your research.

As part of the funding agreement, we will ask you to acknowledge The MPS Foundation's support in any research dissemination activities and publications you may appear in.

## Intellectual property

You will retain the ownership of any academic intellectual property that you develop as a result of the funding and retain the right to use any of the results for academic and research purposes. You will be able to find full details of the Foundation's Intellectual Property agreement within the terms and conditions of your grant agreement.

## Starting your project

Before you get started with your project, we will ask you to:

- sign a grant agreement and research contract
- accept the terms and conditions of the MPS Foundation's grant award
- agree on project milestones, interim reports, and meetings
- wait for clear confirmation via email and an approved Purchase Order
- ensure ethical approval has been granted.



### How grants are paid

While the payments you receive will differ, depending on the time and length of your project, grants will generally be paid in three instalments:

- an initial instalment (up to 30%) at the start of the project when you receive confirmation from The MPS Foundation
- interim instalments linked to achieving the milestones outlined in the grant agreement
- a final instalment when the project is completed, and the final research report is submitted.

#### **Please note:**

If you require payment in a currency other than UK Sterling, we will pre-agree an exchange rate when your grant is awarded.

As part of the funding application process, we will need to carry out financial and due diligence checks before the grant is awarded.

### Other ways The MPS Foundation can provide support

#### **Sourcing subjects**

With access to the global MPS network and more than 350,000 MPS members, we can often put applicants in touch with organisations and individuals who are willing to take part in research.

On some occasions, we may also be able to identify potential subjects for your research proposal. If this is the case, we'll let you know as soon as possible during the application process.

You are under no obligation to accept our recommendations and choosing other subjects will not affect your application.

#### **Using MPS data**

If you would like to use data held by MPS or The MPS Foundation in your project, please let us know as soon as possible in the application process.

Please note, The MPS Foundation reserves the right to reject applicant requests.

**“I have had a really positive experience with The MPS Foundation and I’m looking forward to continuing to work together now.”**

**Dr Sinéad Lydon, 2023 Grant Recipient**

# Frequently asked questions



## What is a 'clinical trial'?

A clinical trial is research that requires – for the purpose of MPS Foundation funding – strict regulatory and ethical guidelines, and is defined as any research study that prospectively assigns human participants or groups of humans to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effects on health outcomes. Interventions include but are not restricted to drugs, cells, and other biological products.

## What is meant by 'research aimed at setting standards for clinical practice'?

This is research which in part, or in its entirety, is carried out according to internationally agreed methodology for the purpose of defining and setting guidelines for the care and/or delivery of services for most people with a specific condition or need in a particular circumstance or setting.

## What is a 'service evaluation'?

These are projects that are designed to define or measure current practice within a service. For example, projects that involve testing out how research outputs proven in one setting translate into another setting. Service evaluation projects will not generate new knowledge that will be generalisable.


## Where are MPS's geographical areas of interest?

These are jurisdictions within which MPS provides protection for individuals, groups, and large corporate healthcare providers. They are:

Australia  
Bermuda and the Caribbean Islands  
Hong Kong  
Ireland  
Malaysia  
New Zealand  
Singapore  
United Kingdom  
South Africa.

The MPS Foundation will not support projects whose main focus is outside of MPS's geographical areas of interest.

More FAQs can be found under the [Guidance for Applicants on the Grant Portal](#)



**“We hope the results will be used to develop strategies to strengthen retention of physicians in emergency medicine and foster positive workplace environments to support physician wellbeing.”**

Dr Lynn-Marie Lovell,  
2024 MPS Foundation Grant Recipient

**“The MPS Foundation’s mission aligns perfectly with my own aspirations to challenge the status quo and push the boundaries.”**

Dr Farhad Peerally,  
2023 Grant Recipient