



# MSD UK 2024 GRANTS PROGRAMME

MSD UK is proud to launch its 2024 Grants Programme, for Healthcare and Patient Organisations to **address health inequalities with a focus on innovation**. The MSD UK 2024 Grants Programme will be open to healthcare organisations and patient organisations across two open application windows:

- **Application window 1 - March to end of April 2024**
- **Application window 2 - July to end of August 2024**

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## BACKGROUND

MSD recognise that we have an important part to play in tackling health disparities to drive improvements in healthcare access and outcomes for patients across the UK. MSD is committed to improving the outcomes and experience of patients and populations. We do this by engaging effectively with national and local health systems and developing solutions to overcome issues impacting patients and populations, such as health inequalities. In recent years, both the NHS and government have made numerous commitments to tackling health inequalities<sup>i,ii</sup>. More recently, the government have focused on innovation as a mechanism to drive improved healthcare and fulfil the life sciences vision in the UK<sup>iii</sup>.

MSD therefore believes that its ability to support non-product related, non-promotional activities represent an important contribution to addressing health inequalities in the UK and to patient outcomes and experience with a focus on innovation. Part of that contribution is the funding of appropriate third-party activities, based on grant requests – activities in which MSD exercises no direct control but in which it has provided funding.

## GOALS OF THE 2024 GRANTS PROGRAMME

Our aspiration is to support activities which seek to address **health inequalities** with a focus on **innovation**. Projects should align to **both goals** of the programme.

### GOAL 1: Addresses health inequalities

*Clearly defines and seeks to address a disparity in health outcomes, access to healthcare, and/or wellbeing among individuals or groups in the UK.*

#### E.g.

- **Addressing social/cultural barriers:** for example, projects designed to improve health literacy, or projects which promote tailored health education within specific communities.
- **Screening/earlier diagnosis inequalities:** for example, projects which aim to drive uptake of screening programmes within certain minority groups where uptake is lower, or projects which improve awareness of symptoms amongst underserved communities.
- **Outcome inequalities:** for example, projects which seek to reduce variation in treatment/vaccination decisions and outcomes between people from different demographics who have similar patient/disease characteristics.

## GOAL 2: Drives innovation

*Combines creativity and leadership to drive improvements in patient care and/or sustainable patient pathways.*

E.g.

- **Innovative service improvement:** for example, projects which support the recovery of the national immunisation programme through ongoing improvements to the way services are delivered (e.g., national immunisation programme awareness, public information, infrastructure, and data optimisation).
- **Innovative digital solutions:** for example, projects which improve access to health services through the roll out of a digital solution/app.
- **Innovative pathways:** for example, projects which pilot different or more efficient pathways to overcome existing challenges.
- **Innovative patient or public engagement:** for example, projects which engage in a new or tailored approach to drive improvements in patient care.

## 2024 PROGRAMME CRITERIA & SCOPE

The 2024 grants programme is focused on **emphasising community health and wellbeing** and to ensure **healthcare professional, patient, and public empowerment**.

It encourages healthcare, research, or education-related activities, to meet the needs of the public and patients which also includes, but is not limited to; disease awareness, advocacy, patient education and peer support. For projects to be considered they must align with the goals of the programme, plus one or more of the below themes:

### THEME 1: Enables empowerment

*Equips people and communities with knowledge, skills, and confidence to actively participate in healthcare decisions, promoting improved health outcomes. This includes empowerment of healthcare professionals, patients and the public.*

E.g.

- **Empowerment through information:** for example, projects which work with the public to develop accurate and reliable information which protects against vaccine preventable deaths.
- **Empowerment through advocacy:** for examples, local or national campaigns which are designed to improve awareness, care or outcomes.
- **Empowerment through education:** for example, projects which deliver healthcare professional or patient education in an innovative way.

**THEME 2:** Focuses on community health and wellbeing

*Involves tailored engagement with people and communities, adapted to their needs and circumstances, to improve the health and wellbeing of the community or people the project serves.*

**E.g.**

- Ensuring quality of service delivery and outcomes are not subject to inequity on the basis of factors such as geographic location, community background or ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality, etc.
- Working towards parity of esteem for people living with conditions from all those they interact with – free from discrimination.

## 2024 PROGRAMME AREAS OF INTEREST

If projects align with the grants programme goals and themes they will be considered. Projects which align to MSD's areas of interest, in oncology, pulmonary hypertension and public health domains, are those where MSD has the most expertise.

### Oncology

MSD is proud to work with patient groups, healthcare professionals, policy makers and the NHS to address some of the UK's most significant cancer challenges. By working effectively, together, we can accelerate patient pathways, alleviate NHS capacity, explore new care delivery models, reduce variation in care and overcome health inequalities – all for the benefit of people with cancer and their families.

### Public Health

MSD is committed to supporting the local and national health system to strengthen the UK's public health response by reducing inequalities in access to services, screening, and treatment. MSD's commitment to public health aligns to vaccines and HIV.

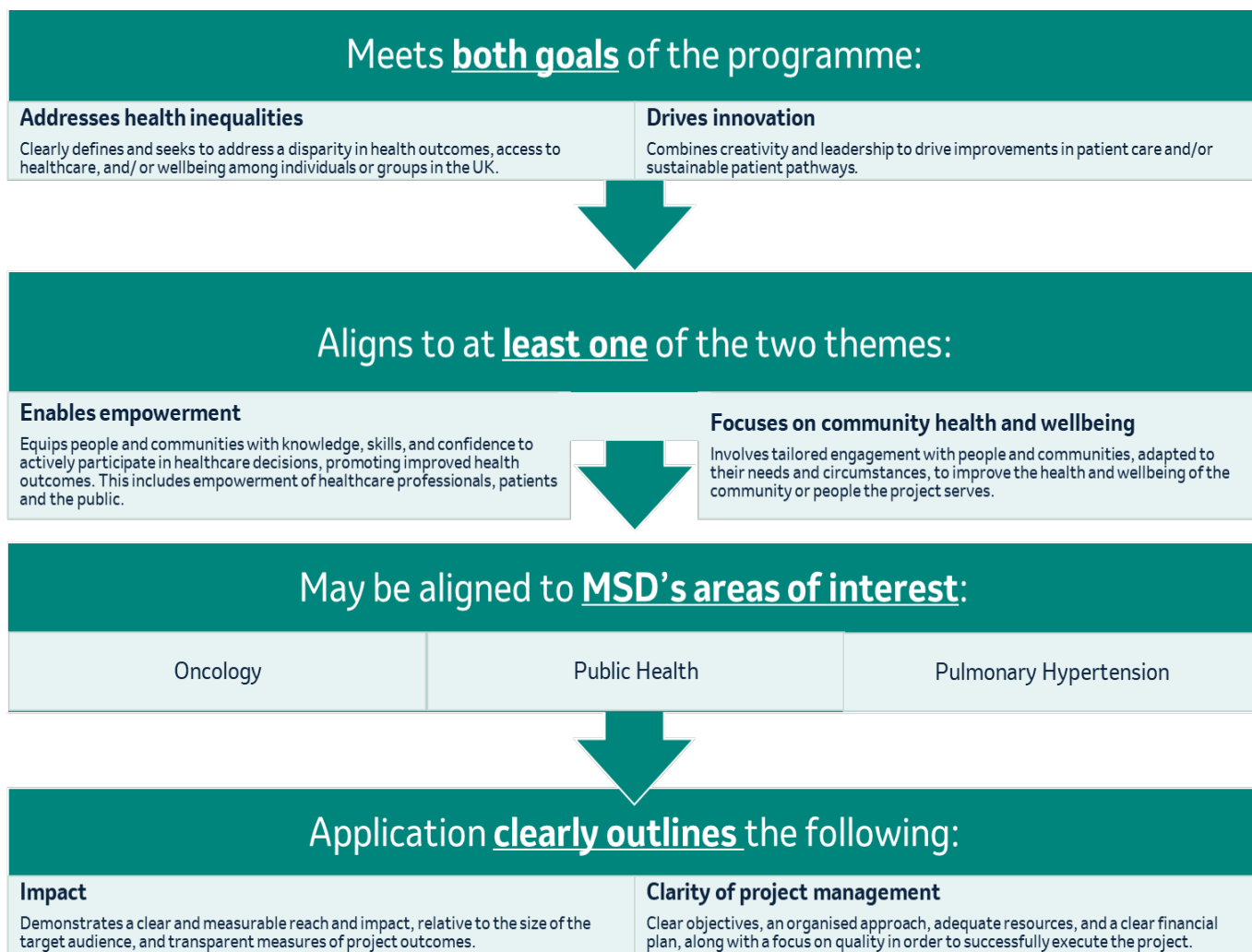
### Pulmonary Hypertension

MSD's heritage in cardiovascular disease is significant. MSD is committed to supporting patients and the healthcare system to achieve speedier diagnoses and improved outcomes for people affected by this disease.

## EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be evaluated based on their alignment to the 2024 Grants Programme goals, plus at least one of the programme themes. The 2024 grants programme is open to applicants across all disease areas; **MSD has particular expertise within the areas of oncology, public health and pulmonary hypertension.** All applications will be assessed based on their **impact and**

clearly defined management plan for the project. See **figure 1** below which details how an application could be structured.



**Figure 1: Overview of the 2024 Grants Programme for Applicants**

## FUNDING AVAILABILITY

- Individual grant proposals from Healthcare Organisations must be for a minimum of £15,000 and can be for a maximum of £25,000.
- Individual grant proposals from Patient Organisations must be for a minimum of £5,000 and can be for a maximum of £15,000.
- Subject to meeting the criteria, we hope to make between 8-12 grants available within each open application window in 2024.

# ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

## Grants recipients

1. Grants can only be paid to an organisation, not to an individual
2. Phase 1 of the 2024 Grants Programme is open to both healthcare and patient organisations, which are defined as follows:
  - a. **Healthcare Organisations** are defined as organisations that are:
    - **either** directly involved with patient care, treatment and management. e.g. NHS Trusts, Primary Care Networks
    - **or** an HCP membership organisation or Learned Society that is indirectly linked to patient care, treatment and management.
  - b. **Patient Organisations** are defined as organisations that are:
    - Not-for-profit organisations (including the umbrella organisations to which they belong), mainly composed of patient advocates, patients and/or caregivers, that represent and/or support the needs of patients and/or caregivers.
    - To be eligible for a grant, Patient Organisations must be able to show that are legally registered with a business address, company or charity number and have an established company organisation chart (i.e. CEO, Finance Director, etc).

## Financial conduct

1. Grants can only be paid to organisations with other additional sources of annual revenue (MSD will not be a 'sole funder')
2. The total value of grants plus any other payments to an individual organisation cannot exceed half of the annual income of the recipient organisation
3. Grants are project based and cannot be provided for core funding (i.e. basic running costs) or capital expenditure (e.g. buildings or vehicles) - please see further details below under 'Project Criteria'

## Project criteria

1. Grants can be provided to fund costs directly to the project, including but not limited to non-clinical research, creative services, material production and distribution, website costs, advertising costs, logistics, venues and non-lavish hospitality where it is secondary to the purpose of the event.
2. Grants cannot be provided to offset routine or normal business expenses of the organisation. For example, costs described as 'overheads' and 'administration', or any staff costs relating to the day-to-day running of the organisation, cannot be supported.
3. However, the cost of time spent specifically managing or delivering the project by salaried and / or contracted staff can be supported, if it is clearly set out in the project budget and is not used to increase an individual's current salary.

4. Grants cannot be provided to support capital expenses (e.g. building repair, office equipment, medical equipment or vehicles).
5. Projects should be started and completed within a 12-month timeframe following approval of the grant.
6. Grants can only support projects that deliver outcomes in the UK.
7. Grants cannot fund direct medical care for a patient(s), or the purchasing or prescribing of specific medicines or medical devices.
8. Where hospitality (travel, room-hire, or overnight accommodation etc) is required as part of the project, arrangements must be clearly stated.
9. Hospitality must be limited to the purpose of the event and secondary to the main purpose of the meeting. As such, MSD is unable to support events which take place in luxury / five-star venues, golf clubs or health spas for example, and we cannot support first class travel. We ask that requests for hospitality and travel costs include acknowledgement of this requirement.

## HOW TO APPLY

At MSD, we understand that every project we are asked to support is different, so we want to give you the chance to give a full description of your proposed activity in your own words.

Within the application form there are also some details which are critical to our understanding of your request and its eligibility for funding. We have asked for these specifically in the application form, as well as your project description.

To apply for the programme, please find the application form on our Grants and Donations webpage: [Here](#)

If you have any questions about the programme, please email: [GrantsCommittee@msd.com](mailto:GrantsCommittee@msd.com).

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<sup>i</sup> NHS England. The NHS Long Term Plan. 2019. Available from:

<https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/publication/nhs-long-term-plan/>

<sup>ii</sup> Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities. Levelling Up the United Kingdom. 2022.

Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

<sup>iii</sup> Department of Science, Innovation and Technology. New £100 million fund to capitalise on AI's game-changing potential in life sciences and healthcare. 2023. Available from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-100-million-fund-to-capitalise-on-ais-game-changing-potential-in-life-sciences-and-healthcare>