

UK CARDIO-IMID Partnership Travel Fellowship Taster Session Application Helpsheet

Background

About the UK CARDIO-IMID Partnership

The UK-wide CARDIOvascular-Immune-Mediated Inflammatory Diseases (CARDIO-IMID) Partnership is an MRC and BHF co-funded collaboration currently comprising >30 UK research centres and/or NHS Trusts. The ambition is for this network to be operationalised into an internationally competitive, precision research driven and sustainable interdisciplinary Partnership, to support high-quality biomedical research studies and targeted therapeutic trials of cardiovascular (CV) disease (CVD) in IMIDs. A key objective of the Partnership is to connect and upskill the next generation of cardio-rheumatology researchers through our early career research (ECR) network.

Purpose of Travel Fellowship Taster Session Programme

The Travel Fellowship in its shorter taster-session format supports ECRs to spend time at other centres for short placements to gain exposure in cardio-rheumatology research and skills and/or develop collaborations.

Remit

Your visit must be used to observe research activities in cardio-rheumatology and if feasible, to develop specific skills. The learnings gained must have clear relevance to the field of cardio-rheumatology and should be used as a platform to benefit your home institution, your own research career and/or collaboration between institutions. Due to the short format of this round of placements, only domestic lab visits are possible.

Eligibility

To participate in this programme, you must be a member of the UK CARDIO-IMID ECR network and/or hold a current position within the field of cardiovascular or rheumatological research at a centre participating in the UK CARDIO-IMID Partnership. You may be at the pre-doctoral, doctoral or post-doctoral stage of your career, working towards independence.

What is Funded?

Travel Fellowship Taster Session placements should be 1-2 weeks in duration, depending on the nature of the skillset to be developed. The funding level varies depending on the expected costs, up to a maximum of £750 per person.

You can apply for funding to cover your travel, accommodation and subsistence. The applicant's host and collaborating centres would be expected to support any research expenses, but these could be included if within the £750 budget. Funding will **not** be provided for:

- Salary costs
- Attendance of conferences or lectures
- Visits that have already taken place, or are underway

Assessment Criteria

Applications are reviewed by the Executive Steering Committee on the following areas:

- Suitability of the applicant – track record or potential. Is the applicant committed and competitive with a clear vision?
- Quality of the host lab - does it have the relevant expertise and resources to fulfil the applicant's skill acquisition plans?
- Feasibility of the trip - are the aims and schedule realistic?
- Benefit for the home lab - will the taster session support development in cardio-rheumatology at the institute?

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Training Proposal and Personal Statement

These are the most important sections of your application and should be carefully prepared. You should provide the details of the institute and supervisor(s) that have agreed to host you, in addition to details of your home institution. If you will be supported on your visit by more than one scientist, then please include all the relevant contacts. Your proposed visit dates may be provisional at the time of application, but they should still be precise with regards to calendar year. Successful applicants are asked to confirm their finalised travel dates prior to the visit.

Your training proposal and personal statement should cover the following:

- What is your current stage of training and research focus?
- What experience and exposure to skills/techniques would you like to gain?
- How this will be achieved by placement at host lab/institution?
- How will the experience gained through this placement benefit your career and future research?

Finance Details

You should take time to think about the costs that you will incur from undertaking your proposed project. It is important that this section is accurate, detailed and clear. You should read the paragraph on 'what is funded?' to help you understand what costs you can include. Please input projected costs into the finance details table provided in the application form. You should use the proposed start and end dates from the visit details section to help you estimate the costs accurately. You need to show your sources to justify your projections, for example:

- Train Tickets: Manchester Picadilly to London Euston, 08:35 on 17/05/2025 (Avanti West Coast); [cost]; quantity x1; www.trainline.com
- Accommodation: Night at Travelodge London Central Euston, [dates]; [cost]; quantity x30; www.booking.com.
- In addition to the cost breakdown, we ask that you provide the total amount that you are asking from the UK CARDIO-IMID Partnership to support your visit. The maximum that you can request is £750.

Receipts will need to be provided for all claims once your placement has finished

Submission

Applications for the 2026 cohort are accepted until 01st November 2026. Placements for the 2026 cohort are expected to take place between 01st January 2026 – 20th December 2026. Applications are reviewed by the Executive Steering Committee. Completed applications should be signed-off by your host supervisor and submitted alongside a copy of your most recent CV. You are entitled to ask for feedback on your application, but please remember that the Committee's funding decisions are final.

Post-visit Evaluation

UK CARDIO-IMID Travel Fellows will be expected to provide a short report following the stay. We will also ask you to answer a selection of reflection questions and completion of a short survey for feedback to inform future such support and we will also ask you send a few high-quality photographs. We may use information from Travel Fellowship evaluations on the UK CARDIO-IMID website and in other promotional materials

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Terms and Conditions

- i. Travel Fellowship funds must be returned in full if for any reason a successful applicant is unable to complete the planned trip.
- ii. The UK CARDIO-IMID Partnership is unable to 'top up' applications in the instance that the actual cost of the trip exceeds the funding awarded by the Partnership.
- iii. Under no circumstances is a UK CARDIO-IMID Travel Fellowship transferable to another person.
- iv. UK CARDIO-IMID Travel Fellowship funds can only be used to support the trip specified in the application form. Successful applicants must seek agreement from the Partnership if any details change after the application has been submitted.
- v. The UK CARDIO-IMID Partnership may request a partial return of funds in the event that a Travel Fellow undertakes a shorter trip than the one detailed in the application form.
- vi. The UK CARDIO-IMID Partnership must be informed about any other funding that a Travel Fellow receives for the purposes of the trip. The Partnership may request for Travel Fellowship funds to be returned if alternative funding covers the same costs.
- vii. The UK CARDIO-IMID Partnership may request evidence that Travel Fellowship funds were used solely for the purposes of the visit. All relevant receipts should be retained by the Travel Fellow for two years.
- viii. Travel Fellows must complete the evaluation process within two months of the end date of the visit.
- ix. All applications will be held on record for five years.
- x. The UK CARDIO-IMID Partnership may contact the home and host supervisors about applications.
- xi. The UK CARDIO-IMID Partnership may publish information about Travel Fellowship visits online and in print using the full name of the Travel Fellow.
- xii. The support of the UK CARDIO-IMID Partnership should be acknowledged in any published work that results from a Travel Fellowship.