DGF Remit

The Development Gap Fund (DGF) is an MRC Fund administered by MRCT which supports small- scale studies, building upon research undertaken in MRC Units and Institutes, to provide proof of concept for translational projects. Projects from MRC University Units may be considered on a case by case basis.

Any intellectual property that emerges from DGF-funded work is owned by MRC.

The DGF is intended to accelerate the transition from discovery research arising from core MRC funding in Units and Institutes to translational development, and may precede and support applications for follow-on translational funding schemes such as the MRC DPFS.

The earliest stages of research projects with translational goals will be considered, such as those aiming to improve prevention, diagnosis or treatment of significant unmet health needs or that focus on developing research tools, which will be used in moving a project along a translational pathway and thereby facilitate the development of new interventions.

The fund is not intended to provide supplementary support for an MRC Unit or Institute programme, to provide alternative funding for substantive research projects, nor to support MRC/MRCT collaborative drug/diagnostic development projects.

Applications are invited for funding up to £100,000 and are presented by an MRCT Business Manager on behalf of the MRC applicant to a panel consisting of MRCT and MRC staff, with input from external experts where required. Panel meetings will generally be held four times a year. The Fund for 2017-18 will be £350,000.

Successful projects will have clearly defined milestones, outcomes and future plans.

The following non-exhaustive list provides examples of activities eligible for support:

- Exemplification of patent filings or assembly of a data package to support a new patent filling for a commercially viable discovery
- Developing and testing novel devices
- Developing and testing diagnostics (including questionnaires for clinical use, biomarker validation and prototyping assays)
- Validation of methods of manufacturing potential therapeutic products for commercial production
- Validation of a novel target to establish the viability of an approach or intervention in a specific therapeutic area
- Work on aspects of drug discovery e.g. identification of early stage therapeutic small molecules, assay development and research tool generation
- Generation of disease-relevant animal models where required to move the proposed project along a translational pathway
- Creation of antibodies e.g. for research tools and validation studies where required to move the proposed project along a translational pathway
- Pre-clinical testing (generating *in vitro or vivo* proof of concept data) of novel therapeutic entities