

MSD Animal Health Research Bursary For Veterinary Surgeons



1. Eligibility criteria

The bursary scheme is open to all veterinary surgeons registered (MRCVS) and working in Great Britain. If you were awarded a bursary in 2023, you cannot apply again in 2024.

2. Anonymity of applicant from MSD Animal Health

To ensure a fair and transparent process in the awarding of a bursary, procedures have been put in place to keep the applicant details anonymous from MSD Animal Health. To support this aim please ensure you adhere to the following steps:

a. Enquiries prior to project submission

For enquiries on the application process or regarding a proposed project then please send an email to msdahbursary@msd.com

b. Submission of project applications

Applications should be emailed to msdahbursary@msd.com and write “Application for MSD Animal Health Research Bursary for Veterinary Surgeons” in the subject field of your email.

Please **do not** send any applications directly to MSD Animal Health, as they **will be excluded** from the selection process.

Applications will be acknowledged within 7 days of receipt. If you do not receive this acknowledgement, you are advised to send a further email to check your application has been received.

3. Project submission deadline

The closing date for research bursary application submissions is Friday 1st of November 2024. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

MSD Animal Health Research Bursary For Veterinary Surgeons



4. Research Bursary selection process

For the 2024 MSD Animal Health Research Bursary for veterinary surgeons applications will be considered in the following disease/subject areas:

- **Ruminant Research Bursary:**

- Studies to investigate benefits incurred on farms resulting from prevention strategies including vaccination for endemic infectious disease in youngstock, sheep or cattle.
- Studies to investigate farmer or vet attitudes/behaviours towards prevention strategies including vaccination programmes for endemic infectious disease in youngstock, sheep or cattle.
- Studies to investigate attitudes towards, usage and impact of monitoring in beef and dairy cattle herds.
- Cattle:
 - Young stock health and management, particularly with respect to the effects of BRD & scour and their prevention
 - Adult endemic infectious disease (e.g. IBR, Leptospirosis, BVD, Salmonellosis): effects on productivity & prevention
- Sheep:
 - Abortion: effects on farm productivity & prevention
 - Effects of clostridial and pasteurella infection on farm & prevention
 - Effects of infectious lameness & prevention

Ruminant Bursary applications will be assessed by academic staff from the University of Bristol School of Veterinary Science.

- **Companion Animal Research Bursary:**

- Canine/feline/equine infectious disease
- Canine/feline vector borne disease
- Canine/feline endocrinology
- Companion animal preventative health care.

Companion Animal Bursary applications will be assessed by academic staff from the University of Nottingham Centre for Evidence Based Veterinary Medicine.

There cannot be more than three applications from the same organisation in any given year.

MSD Animal Health Research Bursary For Veterinary Surgeons

The assessment criteria will include:

- Quality of project design (see Appendix – Project Design Guidelines)
- Capability of delivering a successful project outcome
- Originality of project
- Relevance of results to veterinary surgeons in clinical practice.

NB. A project does not need to study the use of a veterinary medicine, but where it does so, the use of such medicines must be within the licensed indication to be considered for a bursary.

MSD Animal Health is not bound to award any bursaries if there are no projects deemed suitable for funding.

Where veterinary medicinal products or devices are used, only veterinary medicinal products or devices manufactured by MSD Animal Health UK Limited or affiliates of MSD Animal Health UK Limited are permitted for the purposes of this project/research.

5. Notification of bursary

Applicants will receive notification as to whether they have been successful or not in being awarded a bursary.

6. Support for selected projects

If required, support will be available from the relevant University for any projects awarded a research bursary.

7. Research Bursary Project deliverables

On project completion, the research bursary recipient must provide a written final study report submitted to MSD Animal Health, detailing the research bursary project results and conclusions within 3 months of project completion.

8. Presentation/Publication of Research Bursary Project

Research bursary recipients will be encouraged to present or publish their findings, as a poster or abstract, at a relevant UK veterinary congress.

NB. MSD Animal Health, University of Bristol School of Veterinary Science and the University of Nottingham Centre for Evidence Based Veterinary Medicine reserve their rights to have their involvement in the study identified in any publications or presentations. The wording of any statement to be provided by MSD Animal Health.

9. Contract

Successful research bursary recipients will be asked to sign a research bursary contract prior to commencing the research project and receiving any funding.

MSD AH Privacy Notice:

The personal information (name, address, email address, phone number) you have provided in your application will be processed for the purpose of contacting you to notify you regarding your application. By providing your details, you consent to the processing by MSD Animal Health UK Ltd, MSDAH, acting as data controller. Consistent with the purposes described above, you acknowledge that the Personal Information you provide to MSD can be transferred to Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, NJ, USA, its subsidiaries and/or to companies globally that provide services on our behalf, if that is required, and in accordance with applicable laws and our instructions. This may include international transfers in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation 2018, Binding Corporate Rules, Privacy Shield and Standard Contractual Clauses. Any party handling information on behalf of MSD is contractually obliged to process your personal information in accordance with the same privacy standards as MSD. Retention period applied will be ten years. You may exercise your rights, among others, of access, rectification, erasure of your personal information and withdrawal of your consent by sending an email to msdukdbo@msd.com. For more information on our privacy practices and policies, please check our privacy commitments: <http://www.msd-animal-health.co.uk/privacy.aspx>

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Appendix – Project Design Guidelines

Study design

Studies are normally categorised into two main types – Descriptive or Analytical. Descriptive studies would include case reports/series, surveys and cost of disease. Analytical studies would include observational or experimental studies. Any of these study types is suitable and can be considered for a bursary, although bear in mind that the strength of evidence can vary between each. Any project involving the use of live animals should use as few animals as necessary to prove a statistically significant result which shows that the results were not just due to chance. Detailed planning of a study is integral to these outcomes and should be undertaken with care.

Experimental studies involve researchers assigning subjects to groups (usually treatments and controls). These types of studies should incorporate attributes of the 'ARRIVE' guidelines (see <http://www.nc3rs.org.uk> and type in "Arrive Guidelines" in the search criteria). Randomised controlled trials performed on livestock with production, health or food safety outcomes should also meet the minimum guidelines of the 'REFLECT' statement (see <http://www.reflect-statement.org>)

Observational studies involve researchers observing animals already having exposures, receiving treatments, etc. for specific outcomes (incidence of disease, production parameters, etc.). The three major types of observational studies are cohort, case-control and cross-sectional studies. These types of studies

At the very minimum, all project details provided should address:

- What is the objective, or hypothesis(es) you are looking to test
- Design of the study and particularly how you will avoid bias in your results (randomisation, blinding, etc.)
- Housing and husbandry details
- How you determined sample size requirements (see more info below)
- Which experimental outcomes are being assessed
- Determination of how you might analyse the data and the statistical methods which you will employ

Sample size

Sample size determination before commencement of a study is imperative. With too large a sample size, subjects, time and money will be used unnecessarily. With too small a sample size, researchers will be unable to determine whether or not any effect of a treatment really exists or if they were simply not able to determine its existence because not enough subjects were included in the study. Either of these scenarios is a waste, so sample size determination must be done in the planning of any study. Mathematical formulae exist to assist with sample size calculations, but several websites, statistics packages, and other computerised programs are now available to make the process of pre-determining a sample size simpler. One that is specifically suggested for veterinary study sample size determination is <http://epitools.ausvet.com.au>. Be careful, however, when using this tool that you are clear on whether you are estimating proportions (percentages), means (averages), prevalences, etc. and select the correct link. If you need advice, consult someone with statistical knowledge.

Further Reading:

Neil Forbes. Undertaking research in practice 1. Why and what? In Practice 2001 23: 613 – 615
Neil Forbes. Undertaking research in practice : 2. How? In Practice 2002 24: 44 - 46
James Anderson and Helen Jukes. Clinical trials in practice: what do you need to know?
In Practice 2007 29: 546-549