

# MRC and BBSRC interfaces: joint statement

The Medical Research Council's mission is to improve human health, and is the lead research council on health research strategy. MRC supports research relevant to human health and disease – from fundamental discovery science in non-clinical, clinical, and population settings, through to development and initial testing of new treatments or preventive measures – and focuses on the areas of fundamental science most important for health. MRC develops routes into industrial and public sector translation of human health research.

The Biotechnology and Biological Research Council (BBSRC) supports a broad spectrum of research relevant to animal and plant health and productivity, microbiology, biotechnology, human health and new platform technologies and approaches applicable across bioscience research. Research facilitated by BBSRC investment underpins and supports innovation in key UK industrial sectors including agriculture, food and drink, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, healthcare, fast-moving consumer goods, and the environment. In areas relevant to human biology, BBSRC focuses only on fundamental discovery science and on science which reflects strategic themes BBSRC is developing or which complement other BBSRC interests (for example, in animal health and disease).

In areas of science where there are common interests, we work together in various ways. Sometimes a single lead research council or managed cross-council programme is best (for example, the UK Regenerative Medicine Platform, Synthetic Biology). In other settings it is better for UK research for both MRC and BBSRC to support an area, working with a single, joint strategic view, or with complementary strategies (for example, infection and vaccines, food and nutrition).

In areas relevant to human health:

MRC will give priority to fundamental science which:

- addresses important health questions, or
- is likely to inform research on health or disease, or
- forms part of a multidisciplinary effort / centre of excellence with close links to health research.

BBSRC will give priority to fundamental science which:

- addresses important underpinning questions in biology or normal human physiology\*, which can advance knowledge and innovation across many sectors, or
- seeks to develop new tools, technologies and approaches that have broad application across bioscience research, for example data rich and systems biology, or
- informs / is informed by research into animal or plant health.

## Managing proposals across the interface

Outside of areas where there is a joint scientific strategy, we encourage research that adds value by linking science across our remits. Research proposals that need to span the distinct remits of BBSRC and MRC will be handled by one lead council, with the other contributing to the review and funding as needed. Please contact us before you submit a proposal to discuss any remit concerns at: [remit@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:remit@bbsrc.ac.uk)

### Footnote

\*BBSRC does not fund research where the primary aim is to understand human disease-specific processes, and/or develop associated interventions.