



VALIDATE Lab Placement Grant - Application Guidance

Summary

VALIDATE is an international research network aiming to accelerate vaccine development for three groups of complex, neglected pathogens - mycobacteria (causing TB, leprosy and other diseases), the leishmanias (leishmaniasis), and *Burkholderia pseudomallei* (melioidosis) - by creating an engaged and interactive community of researchers forming new cross-pathogen, cross-continent, cross-species and cross-discipline collaborations, generating new ideas, taking advantage of synergies and quickly disseminating lessons learned across the Network. We also aim to facilitate continuing professional development (CPD) and career progression among our members, particularly Early Career Researchers, and (recognising inequity in career advancement) researchers based in low-and-middle income countries (LMICs), and those identifying as female or non-binary.

The VALIDATE Network Lab Placement grant offers Associate Network members from LMICs the opportunity to participate in a laboratory exchange visit, as outlined in the list of available projects by the host institutes (see VALIDATE website). Each participant can apply for funding of up to £10,000 to join one Laboratory Placement, through a competitive application process. Placements will take place from May onwards in 2025 (placement dates are dependent on host lab and successful applicant availability).

Please read the host laboratory placement information document, very carefully, to ensure that you have the qualifications, skills and expertise required for the placement.

All successful applicants will be expected to submit a report following the completion of their Lab Placement, for inclusion in Network outcomes and publicity.

Please note: it is appropriate (and encouraged) for applicants to maximise their Lab Placement, perhaps by setting up further meetings with VALIDATE members in the host country, or giving a presentation as a VALIDATE member in the host institute about your own research, to build your network and collaborations. If you plan to do this, please detail this in your application.

Lab Placements are awarded via competitive application, and shortlisted applicants will be interviewed by the host to which they have applied. To apply, complete the application form (available on our website), and submit it with the required supporting documents to the VALIDATE team, at VALIDATE@ndm.ox.ac.uk before the call deadline. Please see the further details below about this award, what costs are eligible and how to apply. Do contact the team with any further queries.

Details

Funding eligibility

Applicants:

- Must be VALIDATE Associate members
- Must be based for their current work role in a low or middle-income country (LMIC).
- Must have the qualifications, skills and expertise listed in the host laboratory's project specifications

Applications must be supported by the applicant's Research Group Leader and/or Line Manager.

Members can only apply to one Laboratory Placement in this round. Further applications by members will be disallowed and deemed ineligible for review.

LMIC/HIC:

A list of eligible countries can be found [here](#): any country on this page counts as LMIC for VALIDATE purposes, no matter which column it is listed in, with the exception of the following countries:

- Belarus – we cannot fund members based in Belarus.
- China – we cannot fund members based in China.
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea – we cannot fund members based in North Korea.
- India – the Indian government does not want to receive UK ODA funds, so Indian members are therefore counted as HIC and so not eligible for this grant.
- Iran – we cannot fund members based in Iran.

If you are based for work in any country not on the list, or in India, then you are HIC and are not eligible for this call.

Please note that we cannot fund any individuals/entities subject to [UK](#) or [US](#) sanctions.

Timeframes: lab placements will take place in 2025. Please see the laboratory host project details for the length of each placement.

Value of funding: up to £10,000 of actual costs.

Please explain the costs your budget consists of, how you calculated your budget costs, and how these costs relate to your project, in the resource justification section of the application form.

Activities supported: travel and subsistence costs for Lab Placement visit. Travel, accommodation, visa, and subsistence costs are allowed:

- We can cover standard travel fares only (i.e. no Premium Economy/Business/First class). You must use the most economical (direct) route and carrier.
- Accommodation costs must be reasonably priced and appropriate to the meeting location: we consider reasonable to be up to £100 per night, although up to £150 is allowed for expensive international cities such as London and New York.
- Wherever possible you should use public transport to travel. **Taxis are not generally allowed on our research grants** (funder rules) so will likely be removed from your travel claim unless there is a significant reason for your using them (appropriate reasons are: no public transport available on that route; arriving late at night and public transport not being available and/or not being safe).

Please note that the Universities of Oxford and Stellenbosch are subject to head funders terms and conditions and relevant national legislation, including Export Control, Sanctions Regulations, National Security and Investments Act, and the Academic Technology Approval Scheme. In a very small number of cases it may be that legislation prevents us from making an award. If you are concerned that this may apply to your application, please seek advice from your research office and/or check whether sanctions apply to you/your organisation prior to submitting an application.

Application process

The application form and associated documents must be submitted by email to the VALIDATE team (VALIDATE@ndm.ox.ac.uk) before the call deadline. You will receive acknowledgement of your application within 48 working hours.

The VALIDATE [Scientific Advisory Board](#) (SAB) have oversight of VALIDATE grant reviews to ensure transparency, fairness and consistency.

CV Guidance:

Lab Placement Grant applicants are required to submit a CV (max 2 pages) and publication list (max 1 page) in support of their application. The below list indicates the information we require to be detailed in your CV. Please note that any additional information supplied is optional.

- Full name
- Email address
- Education history (Bachelors degree and above)
 - Dates of education
 - Course name
 - Institution name
- Employment history (10 years)
 - Dates of employment
 - Institution name
 - Job title
 - Brief summary of your role
- Grants obtained (dates, funder, project title, amount, your role on the project)
- Skills, experience and expertise

We do not require the CVs of Research Group Leader/Line Managers.

Letters of Support:

- Applications must include a letter of support from their Research Group Leader (and/or Line Manager where relevant) to confirm they are happy for the ECR to take the time needed for the placement, if successful
- All letters of support included in your application must be genuine and from the signatory – any fraudulent documents will result in disqualification of the application and likely member disbarment from VALIDATE

Plagiarism

VALIDATE takes plagiarism very seriously; applications containing plagiarised work will be deemed ineligible, and the applicant committing this fraud could have their VALIDATE membership rescinded and receive a lifetime ban from VALIDATE membership and activities.

Notification of Review Results

Applications will be reviewed by the respective host. Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed promptly and the VALIDATE team may pass on specific feedback if available.

Reporting

On completion of their travel, recipients of awards are required to submit a report about their Lab Placement.

Publicity and Data Protection

Lab Placement applicants are required to have read the [VALIDATE privacy policy](#).

Copies of applications will be made available to the host laboratory leader, and the VALIDATE NMB and SAB for review of the proposal, post-award administration and grant oversight. Successful Lab Placement awardees will be listed on the VALIDATE website and in other publicity, with a non-confidential abstract outlining the proposed project. VALIDATE may choose to publish details of awards, awardees, projects, and testimonials.

All awards are passed down from [VALIDATE's funders](#) so, to meet our reporting obligations, awardee details may be passed on to these funders as appropriate. These funders in turn have obligations for public accountability and the dissemination of information, so non-confidential details of awards may also be made available on these funders' websites and other publicly available databases, and in reports, documents and mailing lists. The VALIDATE funders will use this information for research related activities, including but not limited to, statistical analysis in relation to the evaluation of their funding, study of trends and policy and strategy studies.

Conflict of Interest

Examples of a conflict of interest include:

- Employed by the same department in the same institution as the applicant(s)
- Close active collaboration impacting on the application being reviewed
- Holding a current position on the governing body of the applicant organisation
- Personal/family relationship with the applicant(s)