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RESEARCH FOR HEALTH IN  
HUMANITARIAN CRISES (R2HC)  
ANNUAL CALL GUIDELINES

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# R2HC ANNUAL CALL 2020

These Guidelines outline the scope, eligibility criteria and process to help you apply for Elrha's Research for Health in Humanitarian Crises (R2HC) Annual Call 2020 for research proposals. This is R2HC's eighth Annual Call.

## 1) SCOPE OF THE FUNDING CALL

We are seeking proposals to undertake **research** that will strengthen the **public health** evidence base in **humanitarian settings**, and contribute to more effective interventions in humanitarian response. We define what we mean for each of these below.

### How we define research

Research should include a methodical study that will prove a hypothesis or answer a specific question. The research must be systematic and follow a series of steps and a rigid standard protocol. Results should be high quality and publishable in peer-reviewed academic journals.

We prioritise:

- Comparative (multi-country or multi-setting) studies
- Studies with generalisable research findings
- Studies that include cost-effectiveness analyses.

We encourage:

- Mixed method studies
- Primary and/or secondary data approaches
- Robust innovative methodologies that advance research in humanitarian settings
- Formative research to conduct preliminary studies needed before a larger research study can be designed.

We exclude:

- Laboratory-based or clinical trials
- Development of diagnostics
- Systematic reviews.

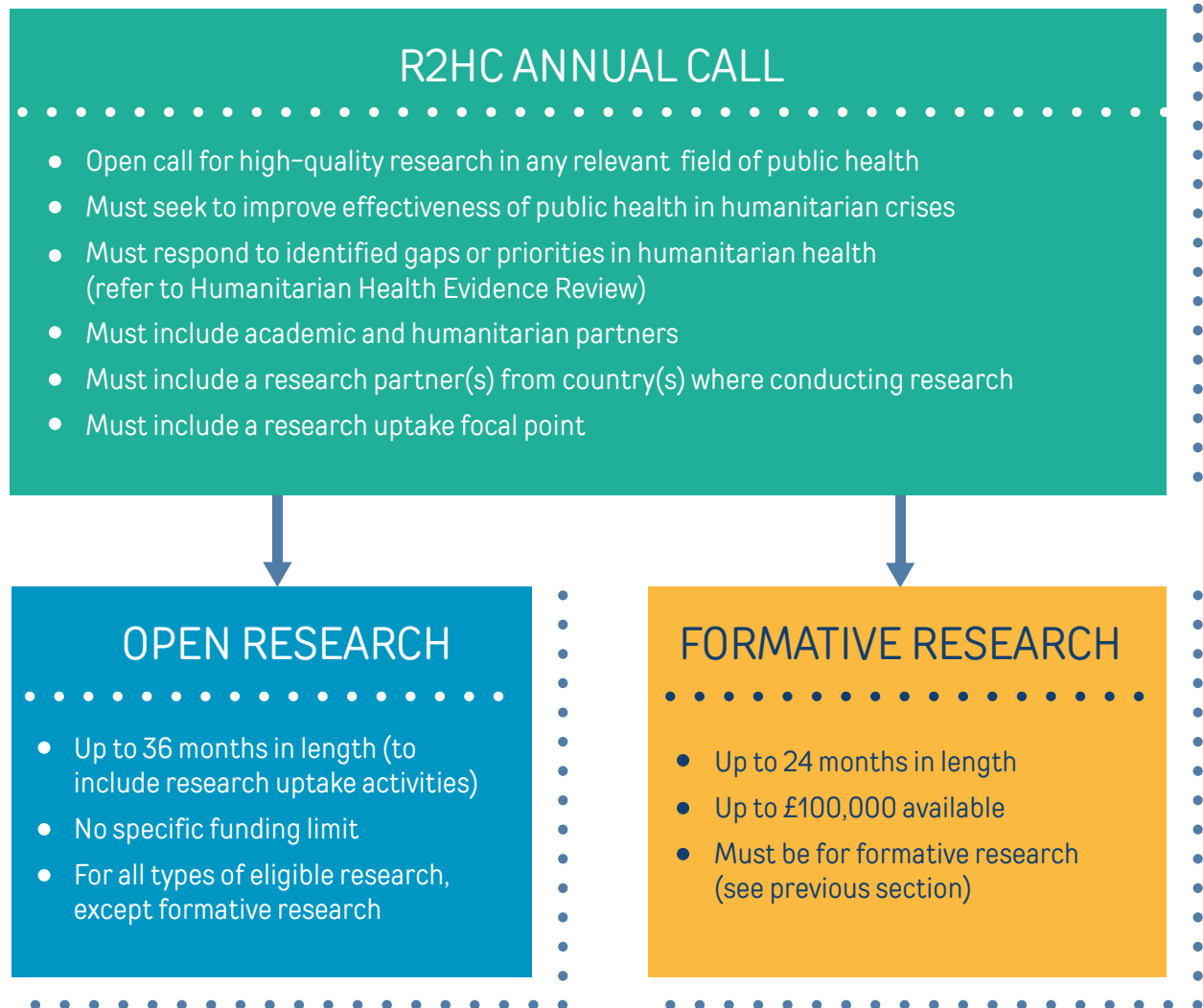
### Formative research

Focus areas of Formative research include:

- The development and testing of research instruments and/or protocols and clarifying intervention elements to study, such as determining the target audience(s) for a larger study
- Understanding the factors which influence audience behaviour
- Identifying the best ways to reach different target audiences
- Assessing whether/how interventions can be implemented or adapted for target audiences in different geographical settings
- Testing other aspects of the larger study with unknown effectiveness
- Or clarifying other components of the larger study which have not been tested.

This year we have introduced a new Formative research stream, alongside our existing Open research. All applications should be made using the same Expression of Interest (EOI) application form, indicating which stream you are applying under. We expect to make all funding decisions in June 2021.

## Open and formative research



## Humanitarian public health: R2HC scope

We define humanitarian public health as interventions that contribute collectively, in combination or singularly to saving lives, building resilience and promoting better health outcomes in humanitarian emergencies. In this sense public health interventions should be considered in their broadest scope, including all relevant practice areas such as communicable and non-communicable diseases, nutrition, water and sanitation, sexual and reproductive health, including gender-based violence, injuries and rehabilitation etc.

We will fund proposals that address:

- Public health priorities specific to the context of a humanitarian crisis that lack a solid evidence base, such as those identified in the [Humanitarian Health Evidence Review](#) and/or in other humanitarian sector research gap analyses or prioritisation exercises
- Health service delivery models, including multi-sector integrated responses
- Strengthening and resilience of health systems in humanitarian settings, particularly health financing and human resource elements
- Adaptation of public health interventions for use in humanitarian contexts
- Specific interventions designed to improve health outcomes, such as cash transfers
- The specific needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups, how they access health services and are integrated into the planning of service provision. For example, people with disabilities, older people, women and girls, and hard-to-reach populations.

Recognising the current relevance, we encourage research on the impact of COVID-19 on health systems and delivery of health services in countries that are already experiencing humanitarian crises.

This funding call does not invite proposals which specifically address COVID-19. R2HC was able to fund [15 studies to support COVID-19 response in humanitarian settings](#) through a separate funding call, which is now closed.

## How we define humanitarian settings

Humanitarian settings can include:

- Conflict-affected locations (e.g. Yemen, Central African Republic, Mali)
- Natural disasters
- Complex emergencies (e.g. eastern DRC, northeast Nigeria)
- Refugee or IDP camps/settlements including in protracted crises
- Refugees and IDPs in urban settings.

We prioritise:

- Acute phases of a humanitarian crisis
- Phase 3 responses /Grade 3 emergencies
- [Very high/high severity of humanitarian crisis](#) (e.g. South Sudan, Afghanistan).

We exclude:

- Countries that are not included in the [Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\) list of official development assistance \(ODA\)](#) (e.g. Greece, including refugee camps)
- General populations in Low or Middle Income Countries (LMIC), including those that have been affected by COVID-19 unless also qualifying as a humanitarian crisis setting as above
- Other vulnerable population groups such as migrants, slum dwellers, or rural communities that are not otherwise affected by a humanitarian crisis.

## 2) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

### Your research team

As a minimum your research team must include:

- ✔ A research institution
- ✔ An operational humanitarian organisation
- ✔ A research institution from the country(s) or region(s) in which you plan to undertake research
- ✔ A research uptake focal point

Team members can come from a range of organisations including academic or other research institutions, operational humanitarian organisations, governmental organisations, individual experts, and local non-governmental or community-based organisations. Proposals must demonstrate that the team includes members with a range of skills including: experience in conducting research in humanitarian settings to ensure academic rigour; humanitarian operational experience to ensure relevance, feasibility, and potential for uptake; and research uptake experience to ensure the findings are used to influence humanitarian policy and practice.

### Principle investigator/s

Research teams must be led by an experienced Principle Investigator(s). This individual must have:

- ✔ A PhD in a relevant academic field
- ✔ Experience of conducting similar research in equivalent settings
- ✔ Multiple peer-reviewed articles published in academic journals

### Lead applicant

The lead applicant is the organisation which submits the proposal and will manage the research grant if awarded. Any organisation represented by members of the research team can be the lead applicant. We encourage LMIC lead applicants.

The lead applicant cannot be a profit-seeking enterprise or an individual (although these may form part of the research team).

### Your research proposal

We are able to fund a wide range of grant sizes, including grants for large comparative studies that have the potential to generate significant impact. For our Open research there is no ceiling on the amount that can be requested. For our Formative research there is a maximum of £100,000 available. The total funding for this call for proposals will be in the region of £4.5 million.

The number of grants and the total amount of funding approved will depend on the quality of proposals received.

## Partnership principles

We promote research partnerships that are based on four principles: equity, mutual benefit, responsibility and transparency. All partners, including those based in the country/region where you plan to conduct research, must be involved in determining the research objectives, study design and budget. If your application is shortlisted, you will be eligible to apply for Seed Funding to support your study team to meet in person. This will enable your team to collaborate in the design of the research, determine roles/responsibilities and engage with people in the country(s) where you plan to conduct research.

## Seed Funding

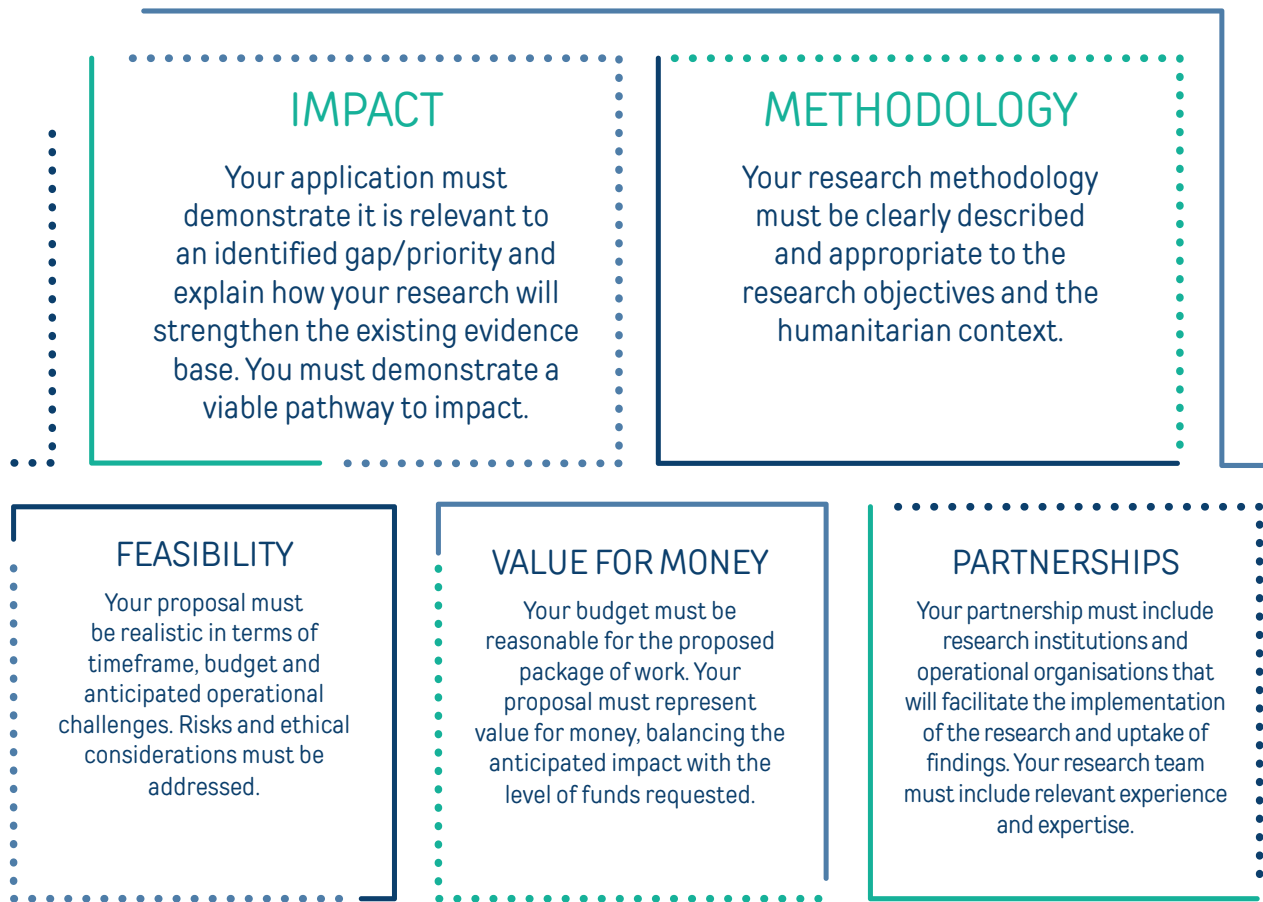
To foster research partnerships between academic and humanitarian organisations, we offer Seed Funding to all applicants successful at the Expression of Interest stage. Seed Funding is a unique offer from R2HC, enabling shortlisted applicants to:

- Strengthen partnerships – funding can be used to convene an in-person meeting between the different research partners.
- Strengthen proposals – Seed Funding can be used to cover the costs of visits to the potential study sites to undertake further consultation or assess any feasibility and security concerns.
- Strengthen research – Seed Funding may be used to collect preliminary data that can help finalise the research methodology and details for the full proposal.

When submitting your Expression of Interest (EOI) you can indicate if you want to apply for Seed Funding. Applicants whose EOIs are successfully shortlisted will then be eligible for a Seed Funding grant. Our team will be in touch with successful applicants with the details of how you can request Seed Funding support.

## Assessment criteria

Applications submitted to us are reviewed by our Funding Committee against five criteria:



## Research impact

It is essential that the research we fund leads to improved outcomes for people affected by humanitarian crises. Your research objectives should be determined with this outcome in mind.

If your proposal is shortlisted, you will need to outline in your full proposal how your research findings will influence changes in humanitarian policy and practice, and how these changes can lead to positive impacts for people affected by crisis. You will need to identify a focal point on your study team for research uptake activities. This individual(s) must have relevant skills, knowledge and experience to be able to work with us to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy to enable your team to influence change in policy and practice within the humanitarian sector.

Please refer to the [R2HC Research Uptake Guidance Note](#) for further information.



### 3) APPLICATION PROCESS

There will be a two-stage selection process: an initial Expression of Interest (EOI) stage, and a subsequent Full Proposal stage for shortlisted applicants. Expressions of Interest should be submitted through our online Common Grant Application system. You will need to provide:

- ✔ Details of your organisation
- ✔ Information on the proposed research team and partners
- ✔ Proposal abstract
- ✔ Indicative budget and timeline
- ✔ Indication if you wish to request Seed Funding

Applicants will need to register on the system before proceeding with applications. A link to the application, where full instructions are provided, is available on our website.

**Deadline: Expressions of Interest must be submitted online by 17:00 (GMT) on 27 October 2020.**

Please see the following page for a timeline and overview of our application process.

## Process and timeline



The same application and review process will be used for our Open research and our Formative research streams.

## 4) SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

If you have any questions about our R2HC Annual Call 2020 you should:

1. Refer to our Frequently Asked Questions document
2. Refer to the explanatory videos on our website
3. If your question has not been answered through these mechanisms, contact us via email at: [R2HC@elrha.org](mailto:R2HC@elrha.org)

### Engaging communities affected by crisis

You should ensure that communities affected by crisis are engaged and consulted with at all stages of the research. Local communities' interest in engaging with the research, the perceived benefits and risks of the research, and how these will be shared or mitigated are all important considerations when research proposals are being designed. We have [our Ethics Framework and Tool](#) for health research in humanitarian crises to use when designing your study.

### Guidance documents

We have produced a number of useful reference documents that we encourage you to refer to when developing your application for our R2HC Annual Call:

- [Application Instructions \(available on the Common Grant Application platform\)](#)
- [Humanitarian Health Evidence Review \(updated 2015\)](#)
- [R2HC Research Ethics Tool](#)
- [R2HC Research Uptake Guidance Note](#)
- [Evidence Review of Gender-Based Violence Research Methodologies](#)
- [Due Diligence and Contracting FAQs](#)
- [Elrha Grant Agreement Template](#)

### Our donors

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