



MicroTex Hub – Partnership Funding Call

Impact Acceleration Partnership Awards with Aravind Eye Care System

Overview

The **MicroTex Hub** invites applications for **Impact Acceleration Partnership Awards** to support collaborative projects with the **Aravind Eye Care System**.

This call aims to accelerate translation and impact by supporting **new and emerging opportunities** that have arisen since the original MicroTex programme proposal, particularly those that strengthen international collaboration and real-world validation pathways.

Scope of the Call

We are seeking proposals for projects of up to **12 months duration** that will:

- Accelerate the **impact pathway** of MicroTex research
- Strengthen collaboration with the Aravind Eye Care System
- Enable testing, validation, and translation of **emerging technologies**

Priority Areas

Projects should align with one or more of the following themes:

- Corneal infection
 - Microdosing approaches
 - Anti-infective / drug development pathways
 - Technologies relevant to ophthalmology and low-resource settings
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Aims of the Awards

The awards are intended to:

1. **Strengthen collaboration** with the Aravind Eye Care System
2. Equip **early and mid-career researchers** with the resources and staffing needed to advance their work
3. **Develop and test models and pathways** for validating emerging technologies
4. Support **interdisciplinary collaboration** across:
 - Engineering
 - Biology
 - Physics
 - Chemistry

Accelerate **translational pathways**, particularly in **microdosing and clinical application contexts**

Eligibility

This call is open to all researchers from the three MicroTex partner institutions:

- The University of Edinburgh
- Heriot-Watt University
- The University of Bath

Additional Criteria

Priority will be given to:

- Applicants **without existing directly funded resources** within MicroTex
 - Teams with **experience working in India**
 - Existing or prior collaboration with the Aravind Eye Care System
 - Early and mid-career researchers as lead applicants
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Funding

- Projects may be funded for a maximum of **12 months** and must conclude no later than 31st December 2027
- Funding is provided in line with **EPSRC rules (80% FEC)**

University of Edinburgh

- Eligible costs:
Most Directly Incurred (DI) costs, including but not limited to:
 - Research staff
 - Project consumables
 - Travel
- Ineligible costs:
 - Any Directly Allocated (DA) or Indirect funding including overheads
 - Equipment
- Applicants may request up to £80,000 FEC in total funding

Heriot-Watt University and The University of Bath

- Eligible costs:
 - A) Most Directly Incurred (DI) costs, including but not limited to:
 - Research staff
 - Project consumables
 - Travel
 - B) A contribution to Directly Allocated (DA) and Indirect costs, within the funding cap specified below.

- Ineligible costs:
 - Equipment
 - Funding cap:
Applicants may request up to £100,000 FEC, corresponding to a funder contribution of up to £80,000.
At least 80% of the requested FEC must be for eligible DI costs.
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Application Process

Stage 1 – Short Application

- Submission of a **brief application form** outlining:
 - Project concept
 - Alignment with call aims
 - Partnership approach

Stage 2 – Interview

- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview
- Panels will include:
 - Members of the MicroTex Funding and Awards Action Group
 - Representatives from Aravind Eye Care System

Stage 3 – Award

- Successful applicants will receive their signed award letter by end of July 2026

Stage 4 – Final report

- At the end of the project, a final report must be submitted which details results and outputs of the funding.
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Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed on:

- Alignment with **funding call objectives**
 - Strength and feasibility of the **collaboration with Aravind Eye Care Systems**
 - Potential for **translation and real-world impact**
 - Interdisciplinary integration
 - Added value beyond existing MicroTex activities
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Timeline

- **Call Launch:** 5th May 2026
 - **Application Deadline:** 29th May 2026
 - **Interviews:** Late June 2026
 - **Project Duration:** Up to 12 months
 - **End Date:** no later than 31st December 2027
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Further Information

For further details or queries, please contact the MicroTex Hub Manager at microtex@ed.ac.uk