

International Cancer Prevention: HPV vaccination small grants programme 2024 – Request for Proposals

Overview

As the world's largest independent funder of cancer research, Cancer Research UK (CRUK) is committed to reducing cancer burden in countries all over the globe. CRUK's Global team leads the organisation's global policy engagement, which includes the International Cancer Prevention (ICP) programme, an initiative committed to reducing cancer burden in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

The aim of the ICP Programme is to drive progress in cancer prevention in LMICs through cost-effective and affordable public health interventions aimed at tobacco use and cervical cancer prevention, through advocacy as well as development and communication of policy-relevant evidence.

Through the ICP Programme, CRUK has been working to support the implementation of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (the FCTC), specifically focusing on the economics of tobacco control, especially taxation, in LMICs since 2016. In 2020, CRUK began working in the cervical cancer space with a focus on supporting the introduction of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine in LMICs to align with the WHO global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem. These WHO global strategies provide the framework and momentum for the ICP Programme over the course of its 2021-2026 strategy. Both HPV vaccination and tobacco control through taxation are recognised by the WHO as "best buys" for improving public health.

ICP objectives are:

- At a national level in LMICs, encouraging the generation and implementation of policy-relevant research which supports preventative policies and programmes for tobacco control and cervical cancer.
- At the global level, advocating for implementation of WHO frameworks, strategies and treaties to prevent and address the growing burden of cancer in LMICs.
- Building CRUK's voice as a leader on global cancer prevention.

HPV vaccination focus

In 2020, the World Health Organization launched a global strategy committed to 'accelerating the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem'. This included a target for every country in the world by 2030 to ensure 90% of girls are fully vaccinated against the cause of most cervical cancers, HPV, by the time they reach 15 years of age. We know that HPV vaccination can cost-effectively reduce the incidence of cervical cancer, having reduced predicted cases in the UK by

nearly 90% since its introduction. Many LMIC governments, however, have been unable to establish nationwide HPV vaccination strategies and subsequently achieve sufficient uptake. In 2022, only 21% of girls globally received an HPV vaccine by age 15. In the same year, less than 28% of low-income countries offered free and routine HPV vaccination within their national immunisation schedules, in contrast to over 89% of high-income countries.

In light of this, CRUK's ICP programme has a specific focus on improving coverage of HPV vaccination as a means of preventing cervical cancer. CRUK aims to support efforts to address global disparities in coverage by supporting policy-relevant research and advocacy, generating evidence that can fill knowledge gaps and can be used by policymakers and advocates to improve acceptance of and access to HPV vaccines in LMICs.

HPV vaccination small grants programme

CRUK are looking to grant funding to support 3 organisations deliver a project working in LMICs to improve HPV vaccination coverage in adolescent girls as a means of preventing cervical cancer.

We are interested in projects with one or more of the following objectives:

- To help introduce, sustain or expand HPV vaccination programmes
- To form or explore the basis of new research on HPV vaccination implementation
- To strengthen an organisation's/organisations' capability to pursue future work related to HPV vaccination programmes
- To advance integration of HPV vaccination programmes with other public health interventions i.e. with SHRH, routine immunisation, adolescent health, or HIV-focused programmes
- To support HPV vaccination programmes reach girls who are not equitably served by public health interventions

As part of this programme, we will fund:

- Policy and implementation research exploring HPV vaccination programme development, implementation and acceptance, including barriers to uptake such as political commitment and vaccine hesitancy
- Capacity strengthening opportunities, specifically to make projects more effective and/or improve the sustainability of an organisation's work on HPV vaccination
- Activities disseminating existing HPV vaccination policy research findings
- HPV vaccination-related advocacy campaigns
- Networking or learning activities that promote state/country/regional collaboration and for which the objectives and impact are well defined

Criteria for application

Organisations can apply for a funding amount of between GBP40 – 50,000. We anticipate that we will have funds to support 3 organisations for a maximum duration of 18 months. Organisations must be located in an LMIC in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, or the Caribbean.

Organisations can be one of the following:

- Research institutions (including universities)
- Civil society organisations
- Think tanks
- Advocacy/campaigning groups
- Coalitions of the above

We also encourage applications from groups who have not previously worked in HPV vaccination.

A maximum of 10% of the budget can be used for an organisations' indirect costs.

Exclusion criteria

- Organisations that are already recipients of CRUK funding between 2023–2024
- HPV vaccine procurement or delivery programmes
- HPV vaccination medical research projects
- Projects based in or on a high-income country or Europe
- Cervical cancer screening or treatment projects
- Travel bursaries

Countries that are deemed as high risk may not be eligible. These countries include, but are not limited to:

- Burkina Faso
- Cameroon
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Haiti
- Iran
- Lebanon
- Mali
- Myanmar
- Russia
- Senegal
- South Sudan
- Syria
- Turkey
- Yemen

Application process

If you are interested in receiving the grant funding, please submit an Expression of Interest by email to global@cancer.org.uk

The submission deadline for an Expression of Interest is **15th November 2023**.

Expressions of interest should describe how your planned work relates to and supports implementation of the WHO's *Global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem*.

Please adhere to the following structure in your Expression of Interest (max. 4 pages):

1. Aims and Objectives
2. Description of Project (incl. activities, outputs and impact)
3. Organisations Involved
4. Project Lead (individual, and if in a coalition, the lead organisation)
5. Funding requested (max. GBP 50,000)
6. Duration of Project (max. 18 months)
7. High-Level Budget Breakdown

If we receive separately submitted Expressions of Interest which could complement each other, we will connect applicants.

Next steps

- Shortlisted organisations will be informed by **29th November 2023** and calls will be arranged with these organisations on the week commencing **4th December 2023** to understand more about their proposed project.
- Shortlisted organisations will be required to complete a short project proposal by **31st December 2023** (Format will be disclosed upon shortlisting).
- The successful organisations will be notified of their selection w/c **15th January 2024**.
- CRUK aims to have all due diligence completed and grant agreements signed by the end of **March 2024**, with first funds being dispersed in **May 2024**.

If you have any queries, please feel free to email CRUK's Global team at global@cancer.org.uk