

Centre for Public Health

Seed Grants 2025

Request for proposals

Prevention and Management of
Infectious Diseases

Published: 25th August 2025

Deadline: 30th October 2025



Christian Medical College Vellore

Overview

The Centre for Public Health (CPH) at Christian Medical College Vellore is inviting proposals from its adjunct faculty for Seed Grants 2025. The long-term vision of CPH is to establish sustainable, multidisciplinary research workstreams that address pressing public health challenges in India. Through this series of request for proposals (RFP), CPH aims to build a pipeline of actionable research that will inform programs, policies, and system-level improvements in public health.

These competitive grants are designed to catalyse innovative and high-impact public health research and interventions in priority areas by generating preliminary or proof-of-concept evidence and laying a strong foundation for future extramural grant applications.

Background

Infectious diseases continue to pose a significant threat to global health, particularly in low- and middle-income countries such as India. Despite medical and public health advancements, they remain a leading cause of morbidity and mortality, especially among children, the elderly, and immunocompromised populations. The dynamic nature of infectious pathogens, including the emergence of drug-resistant strains, zoonotic spillovers, and novel viruses, requires constant vigilance and innovation in prevention, detection, and response strategies. In India, endemic diseases like tuberculosis (TB), dengue, typhoid, and respiratory and diarrheal infections coexist with rising concerns about antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and recurring outbreaks of emerging pathogens. Factors such as rapid urbanization, environmental changes, population mobility, and inequitable access to healthcare further exacerbate these challenges.

Addressing infectious diseases requires a holistic and integrated public health approach, strengthening surveillance systems, enhancing vaccine coverage, improving diagnostic and treatment pathways, and investing in community-driven solutions. Aligned with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 3.3¹, which aims to end epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other communicable diseases by 2030, this effort must prioritize locally relevant, evidence-based, and scalable interventions, particularly in underserved settings. This call invites proposals to develop and implement sustainable, context-sensitive initiatives for the prevention and control of infectious diseases, with a focus on the following sub-themes:

- *Public Health Strategies to Combat Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)*
- *Integrated Multi-pathogen Surveillance*
- *Innovative Approaches to Improve TB Detection and Outcomes in Underserved Populations*
- *Advancing Vaccine Use Beyond the Universal Immunization Program*

¹ [THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development](#)

Eligibility

Applications are open exclusively to intramural adjunct faculty of the CPH. Each proposal must be submitted by a Principal Investigator (PI). The team may include Co-Investigators from within or outside the institution, including non-adjunct faculty. An adjunct faculty member may be listed as a Co-Investigator on multiple proposals but can apply for only one project as PI in each funding round. Proposals should present well-defined research questions, clear work packages, realistic timelines, and a plan to generate preliminary data.

Funding and Grant Period

This call for proposals is envisioned as a kick-starter round, and awardees are expected to work toward external funding within three years of receiving a seed grant. Up to three projects will be supported under this call, each with a maximum funding limit of ₹30 lakhs, for a duration of up to 36 months.

Proposal Requirements

Applicants must submit a concept note (max 1500) words or 4 pages in DOCX format. The concept note must include:

- Title of the study
- Brief introduction
- Justification for the study addressing the criteria outlined in the checklist (Annexure II)
- Research objectives (ideally not more than 3)
- Methodology aligned to objectives with preliminary data if any, timelines and expected outcomes/ deliverables (including manuscript and grant submission plans)
- Budget with brief justification (Annexure I)
- Proposed Team
- Proposed pathways for future funding and scale-up plans, if successful

A consolidated bio sketch (maximum of 2 pages) of PI and Co-investigators as an appendix, providing evidence of relevant and/or complementary expertise in the form of previous publications, conference presentations, etc.

The proposal should clearly align with the selected theme and demonstrate scientific merit, feasibility, and potential for real-world public health impact. Proposals must be submitted through [CPH RFP Submission Form](#).

Budget guidelines: The cumulative capital expenditure must not exceed ₹5,00,000. Any deviation from these limits will require prior written approval. The budget should be realistic, justified, and aligned with the project objectives.

Evaluation Criteria

To support applicants in preparing strong and competitive proposals, two tools are provided:

- *Researcher's Self-Evaluation Checklist* (Annexure- II) – A tool to help applicants self-assess their proposal before submission. Kindly attach it along with the application.
 - *Research Proposal Scoring Rubric* (Annexure- III)– This rubric outlines how proposals will be evaluated by the review committee.
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to use these tools to refine their submissions.

Each submission will be assessed on a 5-point scale:

5 = Excellent, 4 = Good, 3 = Satisfactory, 2 = Needs Improvement, and 1 = Poor.

Please note that the criteria '**Public Health Importance**', '**Quality of research proposal objectives**' and '**Scalability**' will carry additional weight in the overall evaluation.

Review and Selection Process

All submitted proposals will undergo a rigorous, three-stage review process to ensure scientific quality, alignment with CPH priorities, and potential for impact and scale-up. Scientifically sound proposals that demonstrate feasibility for external funding will be supported.

The review process will include:

- **Screening Round:** In the first round, proposals will be screened by senior faculty members from within the institution who are not part of the CPH Adjunct Faculty.
- **Blinded Peer Review:** The screened proposals will be independently reviewed by two reviewers external to the project team using the above-mentioned rubric. The average score will be used to rank the proposals for selection.
- **Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) Appraisal:** Shortlisted applicants will present their proposals to the SAG. Refer to Annexure-IV for the presentation template to be used by shortlisted proposals. The SAG will recommend proposals based on scientific quality, innovation, stakeholder engagement, potential for real-world impact, and alignment with CMC CPH priorities.

Monitoring Progress and Final Report

An interim evaluation of each funded project will be conducted at the end of one year to assess progress and alignment with the proposed objectives. Additionally, a comprehensive external review will take place at the end of three years to evaluate the impact, sustainability, and potential of each project for external grants.

Contact for Queries

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Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

Annexures

- I. [Budget Template](#)
- II. [Researcher Self-Evaluation Checklist](#)
- III. [Research Proposal Scoring Rubric](#)
- IV. [SAG Presentation Template](#)