



GUIDELINES FOR SHIRE-VEC RESPONSIVE FUND

1. What is the Shire-Vec response fund?

Shire-Vec is an NIHR funded Global Health Research Group involving members of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM), African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP), Malawi Liverpool Wellcome Trust Centre (MLW) and Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHeS). Shire-Vec is offering grants to fund operational research assessing the impact of novel approaches to reduce the risk of vector-host contact in the lower Shire Valley, Malawi. We are interested in novel multi-sectoral vector control approaches such as environmental management, including house improvement, or novel tools which tackle residual disease transmission. Testing of conventional insecticidal vector control interventions including ITNs, next generation ITNs and IRS is considered out-of-scope for this funding.

Examples of potential projects include:

- Do house modifications lead to reductions in house entry of mosquitoes and are these acceptable to communities?
- Implementation pilot of a farmer field school
- Spatial repellents to prevent outdoor biting in farming communities: acceptability and entomological impact
- Impact of changes to irrigation on entomological parameters and crop yield
- Evaluation of the effectiveness and acceptability of a novel molluscicide for control of schistosomiasis

These are just examples – and we encourage you to be creative and think out-of-the-box.

The research must meet the following requirements:

- Be conducted in Malawi and focus on control tools for malaria, schistosomiasis, or *Aedes*-transmitted diseases
- Show evidence of genuine collaboration between researchers from different disciplines
- Must be highly creative and novel with clear potential for further funding
- Be deliverable within a 12-month period

2. How much funding is available?

A total of £120,000 is available. Shire-Vec will award research grants valued at a maximum of £40,000 with a 12-month duration. The full research grant amount will be dispersed on contract signature and awardees will be required to submit quarterly reports on expenditure, including transaction listings to support how funding has been spent with receipts¹.

3. Who is eligible to apply for the funding?

Any member of staff from a Shire-Vec collaborating organisation – AFIDEP, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Malawi-Liverpool Wellcome, Kamuzu University of Health Sciences – is welcome to apply. The research team must comprise of at least one member of the existing Shire-Vec

¹ Note – all funds awarded will be subject to auditing and any expenditure that is not supported by receipt/invoice will be rejected.

research team (see appendix 1). Members of staff external to the Shire-Vec collaborating organisations are not eligible to apply.

Early career researchers are eligible and encouraged to apply. Students (e.g. BSc, MSc, PhD) are not eligible to receive funds as principal investigators, although they can be involved as co-investigators.

Applications should involve collaboration with investigators from Malawi i.e., north-south or south-south collaborations are welcomed. North-north collaborations are discouraged.

Research must involve at least two parties from different disciplines e.g., entomology, social science, product development, epidemiology, health or agricultural economics, mathematical modelling, spatial modelling.

Any questions for clarification about eligibility should be directed to susie.crossman@lstmed.ac.uk.

4. What activities will the funding support?

Funds will support collaborative research projects assessing the impact of novel approaches to reduce the risk of vector-host contact in the lower Shire Valley. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all relevant ethical and other approvals (as required) are received before data collection commences.

5. What funds can international investigators apply for?

Investigators can apply for:

- Costs for Malawi-based investigator and any staff employed in Malawi including post-doctoral researchers, research assistants and fieldworkers
- Ethical review fee
- International and local travel and subsistence for field work and dissemination
- Equipment (up to a maximum of £10,000) and materials/consumables
- Fees for study participants or community engagement activities
- A contribution towards overheads for any African research organisation

The following costs are not eligible:

- Salary costs for tenured investigators
- Student registration fees
- Costs to attend international conferences totalling more than £3,000
- Equipment valued at more than £10,000

Please note that all funding must be spent in Malawi and UK-spend is ineligible.

6. What is the application process?

We are adopting a single stage application process. Applicants should complete the application form and send this along with all requested documents by **Friday 14th July 2023**.

Call launch: Tuesday 6th June 2023

Webinar: Thursday 22nd June 2023, 12h UK time, 13h Malawi time

Closing date: Friday 14th July 2023, 17h UK time.

Shortlisting: Mid-August

Notification of award: Thursday 31st August 2023

Funding disbursement: by Friday 29th September 2023²
Latest project start: Friday 1st December 2023
Latest project report: Friday 30th May 2025

Applicants should expect to hear the outcome of their application by Thursday 31st August 2023. Funding will be dispersed subject to the necessary paperwork being in place and projects will be expected to have started by Friday 1st December 2023 at the latest.

The completed application should be emailed as a single pdf to: susie.crossman@lstmed.ac.uk

All applications will be acknowledged within 3 working days and will be screened for completeness. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

7. What is the review process?

Applications will be reviewed by the Shire-Vec Group Management Board and selected external advisors. Where there is a conflict of interest with any applicants submitting applications, review panel members will excuse themselves and will not review that proposal.

8. What are you looking for in a successful application?

Criteria for assessment will be:

- Highly creative and novel idea
- Scientific excellence
- Expertise and experience of the proposed research team
- Potential for impact of the research
- Potential for building longer-term relationships between different disciplines
- Potential for successful follow-on funding from other sources on completion of the research
- Value for money of the research proposed

9. Where can I find out more information about the Shire-Vec project and this funding call?

The call will be officially launched on Tuesday 6th June 2023 with a webinar on Thursday 22nd June 2023. The webinar will share preliminary findings from the Shire-Vec project and you will have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have about Shire-Vec and this funding call. You can register for the webinar via this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/xHprWU7Qem>

10. Who do I contact if I have any questions?

If you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact susie.crossman@lstmed.ac.uk.

² Subject to the necessary paperwork being in place.

Appendix 1 – Existing Shire-Vec Team Members



Themba Mzilahowa



Rose Oronje



Christopher Kaudzu



Levi Kalitsilo



Chris Jones



Michelle Stanton



Federica Guglielmo



Sylvester Coleman



Susie Crossman



Anne Wilson



Russell Stothard



Olivia Wetherill



Aisha Kambewa



Rex Mbewe



Blessings Chiepa



Blessings Kapumba



Lucy Kaunga



Patience Korea



Yamikani Dickson



James Chiroambo



Lindiwe Mafuleka

● Vector surveillance ● Disease surveillance ● Ethnography ● Project Management ● Modelling ● Response Fund ● Policy change & stakeholders ● Community engagement & involvement

Shire-Vec Response Fund: Application guidelines

Required documents:

1. Completed application form

The application form in Annex 2 should be completed.

2. Case for support

The case for support should be a maximum of 4 pages, with a maximum of one additional page for references. The document should be structured according to the headings described in Annex 3. Guidance on what information should be included under each heading is also given in Annex 3.

Your application must be formatted as follows.

- 11 point font
- At least 0.5" margins all around
- Single line spacing
- Standard character spacing (neither expanded nor condensed)
- Arial or Times New Roman font

Proposals that do not adhere to these restrictions may be blocked from submission and review.

3. CV of principal investigator and co-investigators

CVs for each investigator should be a maximum of 2 pages, including a list of relevant publications that should be a maximum of 1 page per person.

4. Budget & Justification of resources

A budget summary should be provided with a justification of why the resources have been requested. If requesting equipment, a robust justification should be provided. Please note that successful applicants will be required to report quarterly on their project expenditure in the form of transaction listings to support how funding was spent and receipts must be held.

5. Gantt Chart/Work Plan

A detailed work plan in the form of a Gantt chart should be provided of how the programme of research will be completed in the time allotted. The Gantt chart should be a maximum of 1 page. The length of the project is for only 12 months, however, in exceptional circumstances with appropriate justification, this period could be extended.

6. Letters of support

Each application should contain a letter of support from all institutions/project partners.

Annex 2: Shire-Vec operational research fund full proposal application form

Organisation where the grant will be held:	
Organisation	
Division or department	

Project title (up to 150 characters):

Start date and duration	
Proposed start date	
Duration of the grant (months)	

Applicants (add or delete as appropriate)	
Principal Investigator name	
Institution address	
Position	
Telephone	
E-mail	
No of hours worked/week on project	
Co-investigator name	
Institution address	
Position	
Telephone	
E-mail	
No of hours worked/week on project	
Co-investigator name	
Institution address	
Position	
Telephone	
E-mail	
No of hours worked/week on project	
Co-investigator name	
Address	
Position	
Telephone	
E-mail	
No of hours worked/week on project	

Objectives (List the main objectives of the proposed research in order of priority [up to 4000 chars])

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Lay summary

(Describe the proposed research in simple terms in a way that could be publicised to a general audience [up to 4000 chars])

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Technical summary

(Describe the proposed research in a manner suitable for a specialist reader. [up to 2000 characters])

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Impact summary

(Summarise the societal and economic impacts of the research. [up to 4000 chars])

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Summary of resources required for the project:

Summary fund heading	Fund Heading	Cost (£)
Directly incurred	Staff	
	Travel and subsistence	

	Equipment (max. £10,000 for one item)			
	Other costs			
Directly allocated	Investigators			
	Estates			
	Other directly allocated			
Indirect costs				
TOTAL (£)				

Contribution (cash or in-kind) from Industry or other Partner(s) (£)

Name of partner	Service provided			Amount

Other support

(Details of support sought or received from any other source for this or other research in the same field.)

Awarding Organisation	Title of project	Decision Made (Y/N)	Award Made (Y/N)	Start Date	End Date	Amount Sought / Awarded

Justification of resources

(Summarise why the resources requested are needed. [up to 4000 chars])

Annex 3: Guidance for completion of case for support

<p>Background / Importance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the topic of research and explain its academic and wider context • Explain the need for research in this area, and the rationale for the particular line of research planned. • Give sufficient details of other past and current research to show that the aims are scientifically justified, and to show that the work will add distinct value to what is already known, or in progress. • Outline the aim of the research in 1 or 2 sentence in bold and explain why the proposed project is of sufficient timeliness and novelty to warrant consideration for funding.
<p>Scientific potential</p>	<p><i>People and track record</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each of the CVs should be provided separately as attachments. If it is not obvious, the applicant may elaborate on why the group is well qualified to do this research in the case for support. • Explain how each of the investigators named in the proposal will work together and outline other major collaborations important for the research. <p><i>Environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how the research will benefit from facilities provided by the host research organisation. <p><i>Objectives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the overall aims of the project and the individual measurable objectives against which you would wish the outcome of the work to be assessed. This should refer to the objectives set out in the proposal form (Objectives section). <p><i>Research plans</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail the methodology to be used in pursuit of the research and justify this choice • Give details of the general experimental approaches, study designs, and techniques that will be used. • Experimental studies should give information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary and secondary experimental outcomes to be assessed ○ Explain experimental and control groups ○ Define the experimental unit and give the number of 'experimental units' in each experimental group. ○ Give the total number of 'experimental units' to be measured and number of times each 'experimental unit' will be measured ○ Number of independent replications of each experiment. ○ Steps taken to minimise the effects of bias (e.g. blinding, randomisation) or an explanation of why this would not be appropriate ○ Show clearly how effect sizes have been calculated and justify how they are biologically relevant ○ Demonstrate that statistical power calculations are grounded in justifiable and explicit assumptions about both anticipated effect size and variability of the experimental effects. ○ If statistical power calculations cannot reasonably be applied, applicants should provide a principled explanation of the choice of numbers

	<p>Overview of the planned statistical analyses in relation to the sample size</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social science studies should provide information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The data, materials or information to be collected ○ The methods for achieving this should be explained. ○ Where sampling is involved, the sampling frame, population and sample sizes, the sample design and arrangements for any pilot should be specified, and reasons given for the procedures adopted. ○ Approaches employed to ensure validity and reliability of data collection and conclusions generated. ○ Where access to people or archives is needed, indicate clearly the records, population or samples to be consulted. <p><i>Linking across disciplines</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how your research brings together those working in different research disciplines
Ethics and research governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe briefly the ethical issues arising from any involvement of people, human samples, personal data or animals in the research proposal. • Describe the ethical review and research governance arrangements that would apply to the research.
Exploitation and dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this is a pilot work or to provide proof of principle, give a brief description of likely subsequent proposals and potential funders if the work is successful. • Explain opportunities or plans for pursuing commercial exploitation (where appropriate)? • Other than publication in peer reviewed journals, indicate how any results arising from the research will be disseminated to promote or facilitate take up by beneficiaries.
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail the activities which will promote potential economic and societal benefits.