

NORTH WEST CANCER RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATION GUIDANCE NOTES

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to assist potential applicants for Project Grants to be supported by North West Cancer Research (“NWCR” or the “Charity”).

2. Who we are

We are the only independent cancer research charity funding quality research for local people in North West England and North Wales to stop cancer in an era of increased suffering. We aim to stop cancer locally and further afield.

3. Our vision

Achieving the best local research for a cancer free future.

4. Research

North West Cancer Research supports Project Grants across three main cancer research areas: Basic, Translational and Preventative. We currently provide funding where there is a clear, direct link to benefitting people within our regional footprint i.e. North West Coast and North Wales.

Support for Lectureships, Chair positions and PhD Studentships may also be considered. Please contact research@nwcr.org in the first instance to discuss your proposal.

5. Award

The Charity provides funding for 1 – 3 year projects. On average, the funding for 3 year projects lies between £180,000 and £280,000.

6. Application Process

Key dates for submission of applications are 1st April and 8th October, unless otherwise specified on the website. Applications must be submitted by 5pm. Applications that do not meet this deadline will be held over until the following round.

The Scientific Advisory Group will meet approximately 3 months after the submission date to review the applications. The applicants will be notified of the final decision within one month of the Scientific Advisory Group meeting.

7. Review

The Charity’s review processes have been constructed in line with the guidance set out by the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) Principles of Peer Review (<http://www.amrc.org.uk/publications/principles-peer-review>).

On receipt of full applications, these are sent to all members of the Scientific Advisory Group who recommend appropriate reviewers according to the specific cancer types and research activity or technology being proposed. In addition to this

expertise, the Charity will contact suggested reviewers and may also request advice from other experts in their database.

The applications are then sent to the relevant external reviewers who are asked to provide their opinion using a standard form. Referees also provide a score (1-6) which will be taken into consideration by the Scientific Advisory Group. Scoring is as follows:

- 6 Research which will contribute significantly to the understanding or management of cancer. World-leading. Highly likely to have a significant impact on the field.
- 5 Research which is very likely to contribute significantly to the understanding or management of cancer. Internationally excellent. Will answer important questions in the field.
- 4 Research which is likely to contribute significantly to the understanding or management of cancer, Internationally competitive. Will advance the field.
- 3 Research of merit which may contribute to the understanding or management of cancer. May not be entirely novel but will generate worthwhile data.
- 2 Research that adds to understanding, but which may be of lesser quality, urgency or significance.
- 1 Research that is flawed in its approach, repetitious or otherwise unlikely to make a significant contribution to cancer research.

At the Scientific Advisory Group meeting, the members consider the external reviews, together with their own assessment of the quality of science and grade and rank the applications accordingly. The application will be scored anonymously from one to six (as above) and the mean average will be calculated.

Whether or not an application is funded will depend upon the resources available at the time. A minimum average score of 5 is required for funding.

8. Resubmissions

Resubmissions of applications are not permitted within 12 months unless invited to do so by the Scientific Advisory Group. If an application is resubmitted, please include a covering letter outlining the changes to the original application, and how you have addressed comments made by reviewers and/or the Scientific Advisory Group.

9. Data protection

Applicants must understand and agree to North West Cancer Research holding information about this Research Grant. The information we hold will be used to support our impact measurement work at North West Cancer Research. We will not share your details with any third parties for their marketing purposes'.

GUIDANCE ON COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

The sections below provide guidance on completing the application form sections.

1. Project Title

The project title should give potential reviewers a clear idea of the proposed research. Any confidential or commercially sensitive information should not be included in the title.

2. Proposed Start Date and Duration

An award should begin as soon as possible and no later than six months after the date of the award letter.

3. Applicant(s)

Only one application, per applicant named as the primary applicant will be considered at each submission round. One additional application per applicant named as the co-applicant can also be considered. Applications will be returned if these guidelines are not adhered to.

All applicants named on the grant MUST sign the application form. If signatures are not included, the application form will not be accepted.

Co-investigators should be experienced researchers who have a significant role in the design or management of the project. The roles of each co-investigator must be justified within the application.

4. Scientific Summary of Proposed Research

Please do not include confidential or commercially sensitive information in this summary as it is circulated to potential reviewers.

5. Lay Summary of Proposed Research

This summary must be suitable for the general public. Do not use technical language.

6. Communications Plan

Outline your plan to communicate details of your research. This should include potential impacts for academic and non-academic users.

7. Impact Summary

The applicant should identify the potential impact of their work and outline the steps they can sensibly make to achieve these. The applicant should demonstrate who might benefit from this research and how.

8. Previous Submission

If the application is a resubmission to the Charity, please include a covering letter advising this and highlight details of changes from the original application. Where possible, please address the concerns raised by both the Scientific Advisory Group and external reviewers following the original application.

9. Human Subjects

North West Cancer Research expects the research they fund to be conducted to the highest levels of integrity, clarity and good management. Research grants are made between the charity and the research institution, and the charity expects that the researcher and their employers will work within the appropriate legal and ethical boundaries.

10. Use of Animals

Northwest Cancer Research recommends that researchers follow the guidelines for the welfare and use of animals in research as outlined [here](#). The Charity also promotes the reporting of research using animals according to the ARRIVE (Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments) guidelines, as outlined [here](#).

11. Proposed Investigation

The following information should be included:

Background

Preliminary Results (if appropriate)

Hypothesis and Specific Aims

Experimental Plan

Identified risks and contingencies in place

References – these can be listed and attached as a separate Appendix

Tables, images and graphs can be included. These will not be included in the 2,000 word count.

If the project involves patient information, human volunteers or tissue samples, or animals, Appendix A should be completed and submitted with the main application form.

12. Independent Referees

Nominated reviewers must be experts in the research field and/or be able to provide an expert view on the value and benefits of the research proposal.

Applicants should not provide reviewers from their own organisation or where any possible conflict of interest may arise. This conflict includes people with whom you have held grants within the last five years. It also includes anyone with whom you have published in the same period. Personal relationships are also considered a conflict of interest.

If the applicant does not want a particular reviewer contacted, this can be included in the application, provided a sufficient reason is given e.g. “main scientific competitor” or “commercial sensitivity”.

13. Summary of Costs

Costs should be included under a number of categories:

Salaries: Funding will be available for research staff employed specifically to work on the project. This can include PhD student, Post-Doctoral Assistant or Graduate Research Assistant. Student stipend is £19,000.

- Equipment:** Funds can be requested for small pieces of specialist equipment that is essential for the project.
- Consumables:** Funds can be requested for routine research consumables.
- Animal costs:** Total costs for the combined purchase, maintenance and experimental procedures should be included. The breakdown must be provided in Appendix A.

Research carried out in the NHS: Grantholders carrying out research in the NHS must ensure that all costs are attributed according to the [AcoRD \(Attributing the costs of health & social care Research & Development\) Guidelines \(link is external\)](#), or equivalent. It is expected that researchers use the study support service when applications are written.

14. Justification for Support Requested

This information should clearly describe how the resources requested are appropriate for the research proposed.

15. Signatures

Please ensure that ALL named applicants sign the form.

The approval of the Head of Department and Administrative representative confirms that the Institution agrees with the budget request and use of facilities.

16. Letters of Support

A relevant letter of support should confirm commitment to the proposed project by articulating the benefits of the collaboration, its relevance and potential impact.

17 CVs

When attaching multiple CVs to an application, please include separate CVs and list of publications for all named applicants.

18 PhD Supervision

Please provide details of the number of students supervised in the last 5 years, including current students. The start and completion dates (where possible) should be listed.

Please provide details of the environment in which the student will be working. This should include the number of group members e.g. PhD Students, Post-Doctoral Researchers and details of equipment available. Details of the daily support should also be included.

Please note, if applications do include requests for PhD students, the relevant Research Office will be asked to provide the institutional procedures for the support of postgraduate students.

19 Published Papers

The publication list should relate to work resulting from funded grants received from North West Cancer Research where this has been received. This includes work funded by the charity prior to the merge i.e. Clatterbridge Cancer Research or North West Cancer Research Fund.