**NORTH WEST CANCER RESEARCH STRUCTURE AND CAPACITY APPLICATION GUIDANCE**

1. **Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to assist applicants who are applying for Structure and Capacity grant to North West Cancer Research (“NWCR” or the “Charity”).

1. **Who We Are**

We are the only independent cancer research charity funding quality research to benefit local people in the North West of England and North Wales. We aim to tackle the most significant cancers in our region, stopping cancer sooner.

1. **Our Vision**

Achieving the best research for a cancer free future.

1. **Research**

North West Cancer Research funds cancer research work at academic institutions and with our NHS partners and third sector collaborators that benefit the population of the North West of England and North Wales. Much of our funding goes to projects, but we additionally support Lectureships, Fellowships and PhD studentships. Please contact research@nwcr.org for more information.

We have separate calls for research from the fields of cancer discovery, translational research and applied research. These calls have different eligibility criteria and direction is provided in guidance specific to each call enabling researchers to make considered applications.

1. **Award**

In making an application for a structure and capacity grant, researchers should consider the relevance of the work detailed in the application to the people of the North West of England and North Wales. Applications should aim to build capacity for cancer research within the regional footprint of North West Cancer Research.

This funding round accepts proposals up to £500,000 and up to five years in duration. Applications are encouraged in the following categories:

* PhDs as part of a research programme
* Lectureships
* Fellowships
* Posts and Structures

Applications for a capacity and structure grant are open to researchers in the region of Lancashire, Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and North Wales.

**Applications should be submitted following a consultation with the Research Funding and Impact Officer or CEO.**

1. **Review Process**

The deadline for this funding round is 5pm on Monday 15th May 2023 and applications must be submitted electronically via the charity website in one PDF document. Applications that are not submitted as a single PDF document will not be included in the round if this falls outside of the call closure.

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 an application, the Charity will conduct a ‘charity triage’ to ensure applications meet with the application guidance. At this stage, the Charity considers the principal investigator and co-applicants previously funded work and the added value they have provided to the Charity. Where there have been previous difficulties with projects not completing on a timely basis, or a lack of engagement from the researchers, the Advisory Group will be informed of this. The triage includes assessment in line with the guidelines, completion of all section and adherence to specified word count for each section.

Nominated reviewers and external experts will be approached to provide external review and score of the proposal. This will be shared with the Advisory Group when voting.

Nominated and Independent reviewers are asked to provide a written report on the proposals and provide a score (1-6) which will be taken into consideration by the Scientific Advisory Group. Scoring is as follows:

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| --- | --- |
| 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. |
|  |  |

Where the applicants wish to exclude independent reviewers this must be sent to the charity directly (research@nwcr.org). Researchers will be required to provide a full and detailed justification for excluding independent reviewers. The Scientific Advisory Group will be informed of the decision to exclude reviewers.

All applications will undergo rigorous external peer review. The details of the peer review process, along with information about the Advisory Panel, will depend on both the number and the nature of the applications received and further details will be provided to the applicants upon submission of their application.

At the Advisory Group meeting, the members consider the nominated and independent reviews, together with their own assessment of the quality of science and grade and rank the applications accordingly. The applications are scored anonymously and the mean average then calculated.

Applications will also be discussed with the Charity’s Research Strategy Group (RSG).

The Board of Trustees will meet in September 2023 to consider the recommendations made by the Advisory Panel and to give final approval for funding. The applicants will be notified of the final decision by 30th September 2023.

1. **Data protection**

Applicants must understand and agree to North West Cancer Research holding information about their 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 although we reserve the right to provide details of funded projects to other charities, sector umbrella bodies and other institutions where this is required in order to fulfil the requirements of memberships held by North West Cancer Research.

**GUIDANCE ON COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM**

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

1. **Institution/Centre/NHS Site**

Please provide the name of the organisation who is applying and will be the holder of the grant.

1. **Title/Research Area**

Please provide the title or research area of the application.

1. **Proposed Start Date & Duration**

Please give details on the start date and duration of the grant. Note that funding is limited to £500,000 over a maximum of five years.

1. **Applicants**

The lead applicant should be the researcher who will be the grant holder and responsible for the overall grant management. The lead applicant should be a senior group leader or established experienced clinician. Only one application per researcher will be accepted.

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

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

All applicants must provide a curriculum vita that includes a list of publications.

1. **Collaborators**

Please provide details of any collaborators who will be involved.

1. **Overall Aim**

Please provide a summary of the focus of the organisation and how this funding will add to it. Include details of any potential clinical application or benefit, impact for patients and the building of capacity to support research and/or educate researchers in the region. Please align your aims and objectives to our regional population and the Charity’s strategic mission, vision and strategic objectives. Please also give details on how the structural funding would raise the profile of North West Cancer Research and cancer research in the region.

Applicants should provide an overview of the strategic view and objectives of the institute/centre or site for cancer and detail how the funding from NWCR complement these and the Charity’s own strategic objectives. Careful consideration should be made to detail how the funding would result in any clinical benefit to people within the North West or North Wales, result in a product, build capacity or educate the cancer community within the region. Word limit 500.

1. **Centre Background, Achievements and Previous Work**

Please include details of grants received, people recruited/developed and other major achievements of the centre/organisation to date. Please include evidence of impact and contribution to cancer research or improvements in the care or experience of patients in the region. Word limit 500.

1. **Lay Summary**

Please ensure that the summary includes a rationale for the grant demonstrating the benefit of the funding to the population of people in the North West of England and North Wales. This summary must be suitable for the general public and should not use technical language. Poorly written lay summaries will be penalised. Word limit 300.

1. **Justification for Funding**

Please justify the need for this research within the research centre and the regional footprint.

1. **Scientific Research Plan**

Please provide detail of the scientific research plan including title, supporting evidence, project objectives, detailed plan of investigation, project risks and contingencies, public/patient involvement and references.

1. **Relevance to Region**

Within this section, you should provide a clear case as to why this work is of relevance to the local population of the North West of England and North Wales. This should include details of how the funding will add value to ongoing research in the region.

1. **Planned Education Programme**

Where relevant, describe the strategy for the proposed programme of education (PhD/MRes etc.). Please detail the experience of the supervisors or mentors who will oversee the education programme. Please detail how these align with the overall aims of the funding request and the Charity’s research strategy. Word limit 500.

1. **Outreach Activities**

Please provide a plan of the proposed public outreach activities to be undertaken by the institution/centre/site and include specific examples of collaborations with other partners. Provide evidence of how NWCR’s funding will be acknowledged during these activities. Word limit 300.

1. **Added Value of the Centre Including Leveraged Funding**

Include details of the PIs and their scientific contribution to the Institution/Centre and how it fits with the overall research aims in the proposal. A clear plan should be provided for sustainability of the centre following the funding award and the leverage anticipated for other grant funding following the investment from NWCR. Word limit 500.

1. **Research Management Arrangements**

Please provide a summary of the arrangements for the management of the research delivery, budget and constituent parts. This should include details of the management structure and steerage groups for finance and delivery. Word limit 400.

1. **Impact Summary**

Please consider what your project will do to: generate new and novel ideas; translate research into new ideas and services; create evidence that could influence policy and stakeholders; develop the human capacity to do research; stimulate further research via new funding partnerships; for research in the long-term. Please outline how the people of NW England and North Wales will benefit from this research. Word limit 300.

1. **Public Patient Involvement**

NIHR defines public involvement in research as research being carried out ‘with’ or ‘by’ members of the public rather than ‘to’, ‘about’ or ‘for’ them. Public involvement is important, expected and possible in all types of health and social care research. This not only includes scientific research in laboratories, but also research into health and social care. Research provides evidence about what works best. Please state how your research will consider patients and the public throughout. Word limit 300.

1. **Human and/or Animals**

*If yes, please see Appendix A.*

1. **Nominated External Reviewers**

Please include suggestions for three appropriate independent referees to provide a review of your proposal. It may be useful to notify your nominated reviewers to ensure they have the time to complete the review.

1. **Summary of Costs**

Please provide a detailed cost breakdown of the grant proposal including funds required for staff, equipment and consumables. A template for this has been provided but can be flexible. Detailed descriptions and justifications for support should be given in Section 21.

1. **Justification for Support Requested**

This includes salaries, equipment and consumables. If you make reference to alternative sources of funding from other funders or research groups throughout the application, please provide further detail here.

1. **CVs**

Please attach brief (2 page) CVs of all the investigators including relevant publications and grant income.

1. **Published Papers**

If you have been previously funded by North West Cancer Research as a Principal Investigator, please attach a list of published papers that have resulted in whole or in part from North West Cancer Research support. Please ensure that North West Cancer Research is acknowledged on all publications that have been supported by the Charity.

1. **Signatures**

Please include signatures of head of department, all applicants and administrative staff.

1. **Letters of Support**

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