 

**THE EVE APPEAL and NORTH WEST CANCER RESEARCH OVARIAN FELLOWSHIP 2024**

**GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS**

The purpose of this document is to assist potential applicants wishing to apply to the 2024 Ovarian Cancer Fellowship call, which is jointly funded by The Eve Appeal (TEA) and North West Cancer Research (NWCR).

**About The Eve Appeal**

For the last 20 years, The Eve Appeal has focused on funding research on risk prediction, prevention, better diagnosis and early detection of the five gynaecological cancers: womb, ovarian, cervical, vulval and vaginal.

Prediction, prevention, better diagnosis and early detection are underfunded, with the majority of cancer research funding supporting new treatment discovery. Evidence shows that improving diagnosis and prevention will save more lives.

We are the only national charity raising awareness and funding research for the prevention and earlier diagnosis of all five gynaecological cancers.

**About North West Cancer Research**

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.

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, Chair positions, Fellowships and PhD studentships.

**The Ovarian Cancer Fellowship:**

**Our second joint fellowship call is dedicated to advancing ovarian cancer research, focused on early detection, prevention, screening, and understanding inherited risk.**

The fellowship scheme is open to early to mid-career researchers with a **proven track record** in gynaecological cancer research, and **evidence of their academic potential**. These researchers will be looking to lead their own research groups and bring innovation and original thinking to the field. Our aim is to provide a springboard to help make a transformational impact on their area of work.

The fellowship is open to proposals across the spectrum of discovery, translational, and clinical research. We invite applications that explore novel avenues for early detection methods, innovative prevention strategies, in-depth understanding of inherited risk factors, and advances in screening technologies for ovarian cancer.

In return we provide:

* Substantial funding to support cutting-edge research
* Three-year support to bridge the gap to establishing and leading independent research groups
* Mentorship and support from leading experts in the field
* Networking opportunities within a collaborative research community
* The opportunity to build your public profile as a researcher
* The potential for impactful contributions to ovarian cancer research

We look forward to receiving applications from dedicated researchers eager to make a significant impact on ovarian cancer research in the UK.

The proposed financial investment for The Eve Appeal / North West Cancer Research Fellowship on Ovarian Cancer would be **up to £120,000 per year**, **to cover salaries and directly incurred costs of research for 3 years**.

**Eligibility**

We invite outstanding postdoctoral clinicians and researchers who can demonstrate an excellent track record and who have shown potential for research quality and leadership to apply for support.

Fellowships will be considered for basic science, clinical and translational research that focuses on risk prediction, early detection, early diagnosis, screening or understanding inherited risk of ovarian cancer.

The Fellowship is intended to support researchers to gather data and strengthen their bids for longer-term substantive funding and to emerge as independent research leaders.

**Criteria to apply**

* The candidate must be hosted in a UK university or research institute, and the fellowship must be undertaken in the UK. Periods of research experience away from the host institution may be requested but must be fully justified.
* The candidate must not hold a tenured post. Clinically qualified applicants may hold Academic Clinical Lecturer (or equivalent) posts. Non-clinically qualified candidates should be post-doctoral researchers or Research Fellows.
* All candidates must have a PhD. Candidates must have submitted their PhD by the time the fellowship is awarded (September 2024) and been awarded their PhD before taking up the fellowship.
* For academics in a non-clinical role, we are prepared to pay 100% of their salary. For those in a clinical role, a minimum of 50% of their time should be allocated to research, and we are prepared to pay pro-rata for their research time. If the candidate is conducting clinical work, we would expect this to be paid by the NHS entity with whom they are employed. The fellowship can also be awarded to candidates who have their full salary covered by their institution; in which case the funds may be used to cover the costs of salaries for their research team or the direct costs of doing the research.
* Funding may be used to support a new project or one in progress, provided a substantial element of the project is carried out during the course of the fellowship.
* The candidate must demonstrate the support of the host institution, including NHS institutions for clinically qualified applicants.
* The candidate must not be in receipt of another Fellowship that covers all or part of their salary.

**What is Covered**

* Salary
* Direct research costs (consumables, lab costs, statistical support)
* Travel related to the research project or collaborations
* Publication costs
* Funds to pay for salary costs or to employ research assistants, PhD students or postdoctoral staff
* PPI
* Dissemination

The following costs are excluded:

* The NHS component of salary for clinically-qualified applicants
* Indirect costs and estates costs

**The Selection Process**

**Assessment Criteria**

Applicants will be asked about their career achievements to date, the reason why they are applying, and how the fellowship will assist their future career. A statement of support from their institution(s) and sponsor will be requested.

Our review processes have been constructed in line with guidance and governance considerations set out by the Association of Medical Research Charities Principles of Peer Review.

**Assessment Process**

There are three phases to the assessment.

**Phase 1:** **Preliminary Review**

All applications will be reviewed by The Eve Appeal’s independent Research Advisory Committee, nominated representatives from North West Cancer Research, and up to four external reviewers who are experts in the ovarian cancer research field.

Any reviewer with a conflict of interest will be excused from the process. Reviewers are asked to provide a written report on the proposals and provide a score for each application, which will inform the Fellowship Advisory Group when voting.

**Phase 2: Shortlisting Meeting**

The phase 1 assessments will be considered by the Fellowship Advisory Group. The Fellowship Advisory Group consists of The Eve Appeal Research Advisory Committee and representatives from North West Cancer Research.

The Fellowship Advisory Group will meet to consider the applications and will rank candidates according to the following criteria:

**Part A: The Person:**

* **Track record** of the candidate Does the applicant have appropriate research experience and necessary balance of disciplinary expertise?
* **Future potential** of the candidate
* **Qualifications** of the candidate
* **Suitability** of the applicant for an Eve Appeal Fellowship – will the applicant engage with The Eve Appeal staff, stakeholders, donors and support fundraising activity?
* **Support** of the host institution - will the facilities, resources and ethos of the host institution support the candidate to thrive with the project and succeed in the longer term?

**Part B: The Project:**

* **Relevance** to the Eve Appeal research strategy - is the researcher and the proposed project focused on early detection, screening, prevention and/or understanding inherited risk for ovarian cancer?
* **Importance and originality** of the hypothesis - how innovative and thorough is the approach?
* **Scientific merit** of the proposal
* **Feasibility** of the approach - is the project realistic, given the time constraints and budget and are the funds requested essential and justified by the size, scale and likely outcomes of the research?
* **Engagement** - How strong are the plans for engagement, PPI, dissemination, partnership and collaboration?
* **Potential impact** – does the project have the potential to produce ouputs that are relevant beyond a single project or an immediate context?

**Phase 3:** **Interviews**

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an interview with the Fellowship Awarding Panel. Membership of this panel will include members of the Fellowship Advisory Group, along with Board members from The Eve Appeal and North West Cancer Research.

Interviews will last for 45 minutes, and candidates are required to give a presentation of no longer than 10 minutes at the beginning of their interview, which should cover the scientific background, hypothesis, aims and overall experimental approach to the proposal. The panel will then question the candidate focusing on the key aspects for the fellowship outlined above.

The highest scoring candidate will be recommended to the Boards of both charities for a final decision.

**Benefits and Expectations**

We want to support our talented fellows to become research leaders and provide them with the skills they need to achieve this.

We will support our Fellows through a range of opportunities, including access to a network of established researchers for support and guidance. We will establish a meaningful partnership, with opportunities for personal and scientific development. Our communications team will help with the dissemination of your work to the broader scientific and public audience. We will provide guidance for researchers transitioning to leading their own groups. This support should assist The Eve Appeal Fellow in applying for the next level awards and grants to continue their career.

Successful applicants will be embarking on a long-term relationship with both charities. In return for our support, we will want to ensure Eve/NWCR Fellows contribute to the aims of both charities.

We will expect our Fellows to reasonably aid The Eve Appeal and North West Cancer Research with their charitable objectives. This may involve engaging across a range of activity, including connecting with press and engagement with the media, participation in fundraising events, providing quotes and articles for blogs and the charity websites, speaking at events or meeting donors.

We would ensure that any requests were not excessive or disruptive, recognising the workload of a researcher, and hope that this activity would benefit both the charity and the researcher, in helping to build their profile.

In applying the applicant agrees to reasonable assistance in this manner.

**Practical Details**

Please apply using The Eve Appeal Fellowship Application Form on The Eve Appeal website**.** The completed application form, a full CV, publication list along with the two required letters of reference should be provided by the deadline of **Monday 3 June at 5pm.** Applications must be submitted electronically via the charity website in one PDF document. Applications that are not submitted as a single PDF document will be returned to the investigator for modification and will not be included in the round if this falls outside of the call closure.

Non-shortlisted candidates will be informed by mid-July, and interviews will be held in late July 2024. A final decision on the successful candidate will be shared in November 2024, following Board meetings for both charities. Feedback will be provided to unsuccessful candidates.

**Timetable:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Stage**  |
| 21 February 2024 | Fellowship Programme Launch |
| 3 June 2024 | Application closing date   |
| Week of 8 July 2024  | Shortlisting takes place  |
| Late July  | Unsuccessful candidates informed |
| 15-26 July 2024 | Fellowship Interviews  |
| Mid-October 2024  | Successful fellow informed  |
| 1 November 2024  | Announcement of second NWCR/TEA Fellow   |

**Data protection**

Applicants must understand and agree TEA and NWCR holding information about their research grant. We will not share your details with any third parties but 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. We will also keep you informed of future funding rounds.

**Guidance on Completing the Application Form**

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

**Section A: APPLICATION INFORMATION**

Applicants should provide their contact details.

**Please note:**

**Institution/Organisation:** This should be the institution where the Applicant will be based and that will be responsible for administering the grant.

**Academic and Professional Qualifications:** Please list any academic or professional qualifications relevant to this proposal. If you have an MD that has been obtained in another country, please confirm that it was a research-based MD, rather than clinical training.

**Current and Previous Grants or Fellowships:** Please list all current and previous grants and fellowships that have been awarded to you. Your list should read in reverse chronological order.

**Research Commitment:** Please note that you are required to have a research commitment of at least 50% of your time to be eligible to apply.

**Section B: INSTITUTIONAL LETTER OF REFERENCE**

**Supporting Statements**

Please give the names and contact details of your referees in this section. Referee 1 will be providing your Institutional Letter of Reference, which be included in your application documentation as one PDF. This reference will indicate organisational support for your application, and should be someone who can legitimately authorise your use of your contracted hours for the fellowship; for example, the Head of Department, Chief Executive. The second letter of reference should be from you Clinical Director. We will contact your referees for confirmation of their endorsement.

If you have recently moved departments and have been working in your new department for less than six months, you may prefer to seek a statement from your previous Head of Department.

Please ensure your referee letters are included in your PDF application documentation.

**Section C: STATEMENT OF PERSONAL OBJECTIVES**

This section gives the applicant an opportunity to share how they would use their fellowship experience with TEA and NWCR during the three years and beyond. This is the opportunity for you to share your experience in prevention, early detection and screening of cancer, and how this fellowship will advance this work.

Please refer to the assessment criteria, the charity websites, and the aims of both charities when writing this section. This is an important section of the application, and we are keen to see what makes you an ideal candidate for the fellowship. There are lay/community members of our reviewing panel, and it is important that this section is written in language that is understandable by the general public.

**Section D: THE PROJECT**

For Section D, you are asked for a summary of proposed research, along with a lay summary. The lay summary is particularly important for our lay and lived experience reviewers, and must be understandable for the general public, and not written for a scientific or academic perspective. Do not use technical language.

**Human and/or Animal Subjects**

TEA and NWCR expect the research they fund to be conducted to the highest levels of integrity, probity and good management. Research grants are made between NWCR and the research institution, and the charity expects that researchers and their employers will work within the appropriate legal and ethical boundaries and with the approval of research ethical committees where appropriate. If the answer to the question is yes, please complete the supplementary document Appendix A.

TEA and NWCR recommend that researchers follow the guidelines for the welfare and use of animals in research as outlined [here](https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/responsibility-use-animals-bioscience-research). The charities also promote the reporting of research using animals according to the ARRIVE (Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments) guidelines, as outlined [here](https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-guidelines).

**The Project Proposal**

When outlining the project to be undertaken during the fellowship, please provide the context for the research with reference to the issue it will address. Please include detail on the hypothesis and aims, methodology, proposed analysis, potential outputs/impact, public/patient involvement plans and references. The references will not be included in the word count, and should be limited to 20.

We appreciate some research work has a longer impact timeframe, therefore please consider the wider definition of impact and how as a charity we measure it. In your summary, please consider what your project will do to:

* + Generate new and novel ideas
	+ Apply research in new ideas and services
	+ Create evidence that could influence policy and stakeholders
	+ Stimulate further research via new funding partnerships

 It would be worth considering what the next proposed action will be if the fellowship objectives are met.

When describing the rationale for the research planned, it would be useful to know any limitations in the evidence base.

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. Please state how your research will consider patients and the public, including in its development. For more information, please visit: <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/patient-and-public-involvement-and-engagement-resource-pack/31218>

If applicable, please indicate your plans for data management, sharing and storage.

It is important to include as much detail as possible on design and methodology, including justification of sample size, power calculations, sample selection and exclusions criteria where appropriate. Statistical methods should be sufficiently described.

This section should also provide detail of any problems/barriers to be anticipated and how they will be mitigated.

*Applicants are strongly advised to seek the guidance of someone with experience in making a grant application or to contact their local NIHR* ***Research Design Service*** *(RDS).*

**Section E: FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

This section should be as accurate as possible and must be completed with the relevant Research Grants or Finance Officer of the Host Institution. Shortlisted candidates will be asked to provide a full budget with a detailed justification for support and will need to clearly describe how the resources requested are appropriate for the research proposed.

The upper funding limit is £360,000 over three years.

TEA/NWCR will only fund Directly Incurred (DI) costs of research and will not fund Directly Allocated (DA) or Indirect costs. Charges for administration levied by the University or NHS Trust concerned will also not be met. Indirect costs of research in universities can be covered by the Charity Research Support Fund (CRSF).

For research that will be carried out in the NHS, applicants must ensure that all costs are attributed according to the AcoRD guidance for attributing the costs of health and social care research, or equivalent.

Please discuss your application with the relevant NHS Trusts and/or your Local CRN(LCRN) early to help with study design, cost attribution and availability of resources.

**Salary:**

Please include the percentage of your salary costs being requested. Please see the ‘Criteria to apply’ for further detail on clinical vs non-clinical roles. For additional salaries, please replicate the table provided. Funding will be available for staff working directly on the project. This can include PhD students, Post-Doctoral Assistants, Graduate Research Assistants, or others.

**Materials and Consumables:** Please include non-reusable items specific to the research. All items must be research specific, not just general office costs which should be covered by indirect costs.

**Equipment:** Please include any items of equipment that are essential for the research.

**Travel and Subsistence:** Please include any relevant journey and subsistence This may include travel for Project Advisory/Steering Group meetings or for fellows to present/disseminate their work, either as an oral or poster presentation, at relevant scientific meetings within the UK or overseas.

**Dissemination:** Please include a list of costs related to the dissemination activities of the research, including costs for open access publications, attendance at conferences (for the dissemination of findings and results) or publication costs.

**Patient and Public Involvement:** Please include a list of costs relating to activities involving patients and members of the public within the research. This might include out of pocket expenses, payments for time and any relevant training and support costs for their participation in the research.

Further guidance on PPI costs is available on the NIHR website.

**Other:** Please list any other DI research costs that are not identified elsewhere. This might include sub-contractors, specialist technical support or computer licensing.

**Section F: DECLARATIONS AND SIGNATURES**

No application can be accepted without completion of this section by the Applicant, their Head of Department and the Finance Officer responsible for administering the grant.

**Completing your application**

Please amalgamate your application form, CV (two pages maximum), published papers list and two letters of support into one PDF document. Applications with multiple files will be returned to the applicant.