**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**

Our vision is a cancer free future. North West Cancer Research is dedicated to putting our region’s cancer needs first, funding pioneering research and education to tackle the cause, improve the care and find the cure for cancer.

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](mailto: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 the capacity for cancer research within the regional footprint and have a lasting impact beyond the time of the initial funding. Applications could be in the area of discovery science, translational research, applied work, patient experience, inequalities, or other areas relevant to the region’s cancer needs.

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

* Lectureships
* Fellowships
* Other Posts and Structures
* Centres and/or Partnerships

**Applications must be discussed with the CEO or NWCR Research Team prior to submission (research@nwcr.org).**

1. **Review Process**

The deadline for this funding round is 5pm on Monday 14th October 2024 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](mailto:research@nwcr.org)). Researchers will be required to provide a full and detailed justification for excluding independent reviewers. The Advisory Panel assessing the application 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 Panel 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 early 2025 to consider the recommendations made by the Advisory Panel and to give final approval for funding.

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 Body**

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. We would normally expect work to start on a grant within 6-months but extensions to this can ben provided where reasonably requested.

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. **Aim of the funded group**

Please provide a summary of the focus of the organisation or group which is receiving the funding and how this grant would 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 1,000.

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

Please include details of grants received, people recruited/developed and other major achievements of the centre/organisation/group 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. The aim of this grant is to increase the capacity or effectiveness of research in the region so your justification should be in line with this. Word limit 500.

1. **Ensuring future provision**Please provide information on how the posts and structures put in place will continue beyond the initial funding period. Word limit 500.
2. **Supporting evidence**Please provide any other information or evidence not covered elsewhere. This may include the work area for the posts. Word limit 1000.
3. **Project risks and contingencies**Please consider the risks involved in your application and the implementation of this. What could prevent your proposed work from starting, operating as expected and completing on time. What could prevent future provision. Please detail these risks and the contingencies or mitigations you will use. Word limit 1000.
4. **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. 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. **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. Please ensure you notify your nominated reviewers prior to submitting the application to ensure they have the time to complete the review. The Charity may also approach applicants to ask them to contact their reviewers directly to request references.

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 22.

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.