

Research Fellowships 2017 Information for Applicants



The Research Fellowship Programme provides ‘first-step funding’ for health professionals looking to begin their academic career.

The key aim of the programme is to allow **medics** and **non-medics** to undertake 12 months of out-of-programme research to develop their research skills and produce the necessary data to springboard onto successful funding bids for further study.

Applicants are asked to identify an important research question that will make an impact on patient care within the Trust, surrounding communities and the wider NHS.

Since 2009, together with our funding partner, the NIHR Imperial Biomedical Research Centre, the Charity has made a total of 46 Fellowships totalling £2.1 million.

We have funded research into new and novel diagnostic techniques and treatments, self-management and aftercare, research into service delivery, team dynamics and decision making, shift handover procedures through to projects on the implementation of clinical guidelines.

Information in this guide covers the following topics:

Key Dates

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Key Dates

01 November 2016 – Applications Open

17:00 31 January 2017 – Applications Close

Early March 2017 – Research Fellowship Committee Meeting

End of March/early April 2017 – Applicant Outcome Notification

Preparing your Research Fellowship Application

Criteria & Eligibility

Ensure you have read and understood the eligibility requirements before starting your application. If you have any queries regarding your eligibility please contact the Grants Team (contact details at the end of this document). In order to be eligible to apply you must meet the following criteria:

(i) Applicants must hold an NHS employment contract noting they must currently deliver services, and plan to undertake their proposed research project, for the benefit of patients at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust* and/or surrounding communities.**

** Charing Cross, Hammersmith, Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea, St Mary's and/or Western Eye Hospital*

*** Please note you are not eligible to apply if you are employed by Imperial College London only, applications can only be accepted from NHS employees working within/for Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust.*

(ii) Applicants must not be registered, have secured funding for or hold a PhD or MD.

(iii) Applicants must be able to demonstrate a commitment to utilising the Fellowship position to undertake further study.

(iv) Applicants must be a UK resident.

(v) If a medic currently on rotation, an application can be considered with a view to granting a conditional award subject to rotation placement/Trust contract status being confirmed.

Sample Application Form

When considering putting together your proposal download the sample application form from the [Research Fellowship pages of the charity website](#)

The sample application form is for reference only - all applications must be submitted via our online grants management system: Flexigrant, we do not accept hard copy applications <https://imperial.flexigrant.com/>

The sample application form will provide an overview of the questions and how you will be required to structure your request.

Page	Section	Estimated Time
1	Personal Details	20 minutes
2	Project Summary and Research Proposal	240 minutes
3	Fit with Charity's Strategic Objectives	20 minutes
4	Project Outcomes and Career Plans	45 minutes
5	Project Costs	45 minutes
6	Project Cost Narrative and Further Funding	20 minutes
7	Application Support and Declarations	15 minutes

Required Divisional Approval

Your application must be approved and **signed by you**, your **Line Manager**, your **Research Supervisor** and by your **Divisional Head of Research/ Research Manager*** before being submitted to the Charity. You will need to download and sign the 'Signatures of Approval' document from the online form, ask your Line Manager, Research Supervisor and your Head of Research/ Research Manager to sign it, then scan, save as a PDF file and then upload it on the final page of the online application form.

Please be aware that it can take time to secure the required signatures. Keep this in mind when preparing your proposal as we cannot accept late applications. **The onus is on you as the applicant to secure these signatures in advance of the application deadline.** An application without these signatures will not be considered for funding.

* Divisional Research Managers:

Medicine and Integrated Care saddaf.shaheen@imperial.nhs.uk

Surgery Cancer and Cardiovascular helen.graham@imperial.nhs.uk

Women's, Children's and Clinical Support debra.matich@imperial.nhs.uk

Planning your Research Proposal

Personal details: alongside your contact information you will be asked to provide a statement of your qualifications and career to date. You will have 500 words to provide a summary of your CV detailing your education/training and relevant appointments. The Committee wish to use your personal statement to understand your background and provide the context for your approach to your proposed study.

Clear and concise abstract: first impressions count and we advise that you treat your abstract as your 'first impression.' Ensure you include a **comprehensive but concise overview of your planned work** so the Committee understand immediately what you plan to achieve.

What to include in your full proposal: please take note of the key information that must be included in your proposal, it is important each of these topics is addressed.

1. Your name and department
2. Research question
3. Measurable aims and objectives
4. Background information - a brief review of the area, the evidence base, pilot data and any relevant publications
5. Design of project/plan of investigation
6. Methods of analysis proposed (quantitative or qualitative)
7. References.

Word count: Your full research proposal, including references, must be completed within the allocated **1200 words**. We want you to demonstrate that you can be succinct, specific and focussed on what needs to be conveyed.

Background information: it is important when putting together the background information for your detailed proposal that existing studies, evidence-base, pilot data, publications and established tools etc. within your area of study are acknowledged. The Committee is looking to see your comments and acknowledgment of existing tools/data and importantly your reasons for utilising them (or not utilising them) in your proposed piece of work.

Practical application of the research: this point is often the difference between a good application and a great application and has previously been a deciding factor in whether an application is funded or not. The Committee is looking for important and interesting research topics that will have a demonstrable impact on satisfying the charity's strategic objectives be this immediate or long-term, quantifying the project endpoints and practical application is key.

Costings: ensure you factor in suitable time in your application preparations to provide accurate and realistic costings, ensuring each cost can be related back to the purpose of your proposed project. A maximum of **£50,000** is available through the Fellowship and can be used to cover the **salary of the individual Fellow** and reasonable **research expenses** only.

Research Supervisor: it is important that your chosen supervisor(s) has a relevant academic and professional background to support you in the delivery of your project. The Committee needs to see a direct and logical link between your supervisor(s) and your chosen research topic. The supervisor(s) should be a member of Trust staff, however where a research topic is particularly specialist we can accept the addition of an external supervisor to your proposal (i.e. a Trust supervisor is chosen as well as a second non-Trust supervisor if required).

Fit with the Charity's strategic objectives: you will be asked in the application form to demonstrate how your project satisfies any or all of the Charity's objectives. When evaluating the impact of a proposal the Committee will consider the project's relevance to our strategic priorities.

The Charity's current strategic objectives are:

- To improve patient care, safety and experience,
- To enhance the Trust/AHSC as a leader in clinical research, education and service development,
- To improve the health status of the local community (patients and staff) and address health inequalities.

The Committee is looking to support projects that can show how they will have a direct impact on the above whilst also expecting projects to create learning and knowledge that can be disseminated more widely around the NHS.

Top Tip! Remember our Research Committee has a broad and varied range of expertise so it is important your proposal is clearly presented and can be easily understood by those outside of your area of research. Make sure you avoid using too much field-specific jargon and all acronyms and abbreviations are defined on first use.

Academic Career Plans

All Fellowship applications are **assessed on the quality of the project and the quality of the applicant.**

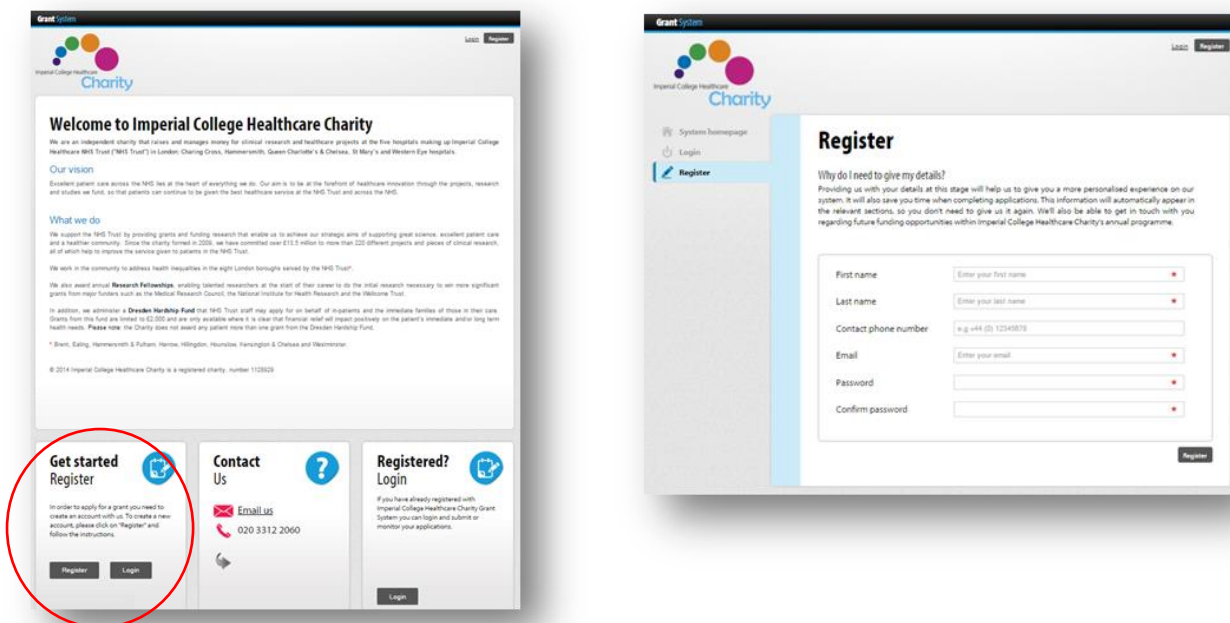
The purpose of the pre-doctoral fellowship programme is to provide an opportunity for individuals to develop their research skills to create a strong foundation from which to build an academic career. It is intended that successful Fellowship applicants will be able to utilise the skills and data produced in their 12 month research project to springboard onto successful funding bids for further study. When addressing questions in the application form regarding your career goals it is really **important to demonstrate how the Fellowship position will support your progression on an academic career path.** The Committee wish to see a clear and considered response to taking on future study – this should be reflected both in response to your personal career pathway and the future development of your area of research.

Submitting your Research Fellowship Application Online

All applications must be submitted via our online grants management system: Flexigrant. We do not accept hard copy applications.

Online Registration

In order to gain access to the online application forms you will first need to complete a short registration form with your contact information. Once completed an automatic username and password will be issued to you. Please use the following link to complete your Flexigrant registration form. <https://imperial.flexigrant.com/>



Completing Your Online Form

When starting your online application form you will be able to save your work and come back to it later. If you leave your computer, **the system will automatically save and log you out after a maximum of two hours.** Simply log back in to continue.

At the bottom of the application summary page is a 'Submit Application' button. This button is initially greyed out and only becomes available when all pages of the application are marked as 'complete' – please note: supporting documents must be uploaded where requested in order for a section to be considered 'complete.'

When you click on the 'Submit' button you will be asked to confirm that you wish to submit your application. **Once submitted, you will be able to log in and view your application but NOT amend it.**

The online application system will close at **17:00 Tuesday 31 January 2017** – please ensure you plan sufficient time to complete and submit your form.

Application Assessment and Funding Recommendations

Upon submission all applications will undergo an initial eligibility review by the charity Grants Team. Any applications deemed out-of-scope or ineligible will be 'closed' at this stage and applicants notified.

All eligible applications will go on to be processed for Committee review and scoring.

Scoring Categories:

Applications are scored across four categories:

(i) Quality of the Applicant:

Has the applicant produced a clear and coherent proposal, showing attention to detail in response to all questions?

Has the applicant clearly presented their personal qualifications and experience and the relevance of these to the proposed area of research?

Has the applicant allocated a sufficient number of hours per month to achieve the project aims?

(ii) Quality of the Project:

Has the applicant presented measurable aims and identified significant outcomes?

Is the project achievable in the time given?

Does the project seem sufficiently important with regard to number of potential beneficiaries, the research being conducted and alignment to charity/AHSC strategic objectives etc.?

Are the costings provided well thought through and reasonable?

Has a sound methodology been presented?

(iii) Quality of the Supervisor:

Has the applicant provided a convincing case for the choice of supervisor(s)?

Has the supervisor(s) allocated sufficient hours to oversee the project?

Are qualifications and experience of the named supervisor(s) satisfactory in relation to the project?

(iv) Quality of Long-Term Career Plans:

Has the applicant made a good case for the importance of this Fellowship to their future career?

Has the applicant provided/identified a clear long-term pathway for their career?

Grants Team Contact Details

If you have any questions about the funding available or should you require assistance with your proposal or online application form please do not hesitate to contact the Grants Team on the details below:

Emma Hale, Head of Grants

E: emma.hale@imperial.nhs.uk

T: 020 331 22060

Ella Muir, Grants Officer

E: ella.muir@imperial.nhs.uk

T: 020 331 25481

General Charity Contact

E: charitygrants@imperial.nhs.uk

T: 020 3312 2037