

# Grant Application Guidelines

## Background

Cancer Research Wales was established in 1966 as the South Wales Cancer Research Council. The name was changed to Cancer Research Wales (CRW) in 1990 in order to support requests for funding of research projects across Wales.

The charity supports laboratory and clinical cancer research in partnership with the clinical and laboratory services at Welsh Universities, NHS Hospitals and other academic cancer research institutions across Wales. CRW has provided and continues to provide considerable support for clinicians and scientists and allied health professionals wishing to undertake research.

CRW has always been keen to support early-stage researchers, both basic scientists and clinicians, who wish to pursue a career in cancer research, by making grants available to enable them to study a higher degree such as a PhD.

The charity has also aspired to provide partnership grants with the NHS and academic institutions in Wales to help them achieve major research and development objectives.

## Objectives

1. CRW aims to reduce the impact and burden of cancer on the people of Wales through the support, promotion and development of world class cancer research. For full details of the type of research that will be supported please read the [Cancer Research Wales Research Strategy 2024-2029](#).
2. To establish and maintain close links with other scientific and medical departments within universities and other research organisations involved in cancer research or closely related subjects, the outcome of which will potentially lead to advancing knowledge of cancer and possibly lead to new diagnostic techniques and treatment strategies for cancer.
3. To fund high quality research using a stringent, objective and transparent peer review process for all received proposals. Each proposal is thus peer reviewed by at least 3 independent specialist scientific experts based outside Wales (both within

and outside the UK). The reviewers are also recommended to identify any ethical issues or risks to human participants that need further attention.

Applicants are not allowed to lobby CRW staff or reviewers involved in the peer review process. Such lobbying may lead to funding for research proposals being denied. Additional information in support of an application after the original submission date is not normally accepted. Following the peer review, anonymous copies of the reviewers' assessments are provided to the applicants, together with feedback on the scientific committee's final decision based on competitive scoring derived from reviewers' assessments.

4. To continue to ensure that monies raised by CRW are primarily used in research or the furtherance of support for early-stage researchers to undertake cancer research training within Wales.

5. To support appropriate cancer research proposals suitable for CRW funding concerning cancer prevention, early diagnosis and improved treatments.

6. To note relevant research strategies of government, NHS institutions and research funding bodies operating within Wales. However, as an independent charity we cannot be bound by such strategies in determining which research proposals should be funded. Successful applications for funding of research proposals are therefore determined by fit with the current Cancer Research Wales research strategy, advice received from the independent specialist scientific peer review process, and the amount of research funds available to the charity at the time of application.

## **Research Grants and the Application Process**

Cancer Research Wales provides grants for cancer research which must be carried out in Wales. Applications from early-stage scientists wishing to pursue a career in cancer research and leading to a higher degree are particularly encouraged.

Principal investigators must hold a tenured position within a Welsh University or hold a consultancy level post within a Welsh NHS institution. Less senior appointees may be included as co-investigators or collaborators. All applications will be subject to a rigorous external peer review by recognised experts in the particular area of research. The Charity cannot guarantee that all applications will be funded even if a high rating is obtained.

Evidence of collaboration with other research groups/institutions is considered favourable.

Successful applicants will be required to provide both an annual scientific and lay progress report and an expenditure report of the project. The principal investigator, along with the designated researcher, are expected to meet once yearly with the Cancer Research Wales Scientific Team to discuss progress and research results. They may also be required to give a short presentation to the Charity Trustees and/or Scientific Committee on their progress.

The charity also requires a fully signed contract agreement on Intellectual Property Rights.

In keeping with the ethos of the charity, successful applicants will be expected to engage with and participate in fundraising events that are organised throughout the year.

### **Resubmission of Grants**

Resubmission of grants that have proven unsuccessful in previous rounds will only be allowed where the applicant has demonstrated significant alterations to the original submission. Investigators should contact the Cancer Research Wales Scientific Team prior to a resubmission.

### **No-Cost Extensions**

No-Cost Extensions will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Examples of exceptional reasons include, but are not limited to:

1. Major equipment failures
2. Major laboratory/building issues
3. Unforeseen problems with specimen/sample/data collection
4. Unforeseen problems around acquiring ethical approval or permits
5. Unavailability of facilities intrinsic to the project

6. A programmatic need to continue the research with the objectives and benefits clearly defined.

The charity may request a written application that can be sent for peer review. We would not expect to see no-cost extension requests for reasons including, but not limited to:

1. Using unspent funds on supplementary work, or on work not specified in the original grant as awarded.
2. Allowing additional papers to be completed and submitted to conferences/journals
3. Bridging employment of key staff – keeping them employed until new grants start which will continue their employment.
4. Allowing linked projects to finish together.
5. Using an underspend that appears excessive to the charity. At all times the Charity retains the right to say no to any no-cost extension request.

## **Available Research Grants**

Types of research grants funded are in line with other charities and are as follows:

### **PhD Studentship**

PhD studentships provide support for 3 years for a defined piece of cancer research. Grants will provide the stipend (at UKRI rates, accounting for inflation) and tuition fees for the PhD student. They will also include support for consumables, travel costs for presentation of research data, data preservation, data sharing and dissemination costs. All successful grants will not exceed £110,000 and must have satisfied the competitive external peer review process and are subject to yearly review.

### **Clinical PhD Studentship**

Clinical Research Studentships provide support for clinicians undertaking research, supervised by an established researcher, leading to the qualification of PhD. The

support will be for a defined piece of cancer research to be carried out within a host Welsh University or NHS institution. The applicant will normally be the supervisor and must be recognised by the host degree-awarding institute. The objectives of the application should be driven by a clear hypothesis and should represent research work of the standard of a normal PhD. Clinical PhD Studentship grants will provide the salary of the Research Fellow, consumables, travel costs for presentation of research data, data preservation, data sharing and dissemination costs. Successful grants will not exceed £240,000 and will have satisfied the competitive external peer review process.

### **Innovation Grants**

These are intended to support pilot or pump prime research projects for the testing of a proof-of-principle hypothesis within the field of basic, translational or clinical cancer research. Successful grants will not exceed £40,000 and are anticipated to serve as forerunners for larger grant applications. The applications will be subjected to external peer review.

### **Project Grants**

Two levels of project grants will be made available to promote the sustainability of promising research. These grants will support research projects for the duration of 1 to 3 years, in order to help accelerate progress and bridge the translational gap that often exists between the bench and bedside.

**Level 1:** These grants will provide support for promising post-doctoral scientists to accelerate their research careers beyond their PhD studies. Successful grants will not exceed £200,000 and will have satisfied the competitive external peer review process.

**Level 2:** Normally, these grants will only be made available for the continuation of research previously funded by Cancer Research Wales. Successful grants will not exceed £300,000 and will have satisfied the competitive external peer review process and are subject to yearly review.

### **Programme Grants**

The Programme Grant scheme may provide long-term support to a research team for broad, multidisciplinary research where the aim is to answer an interrelated set of

questions. They are awarded to outstanding individuals with an established scientific track record and are generally held for 5 years. They are awarded following strict peer review. Successful grants will not exceed £1M. The award is initially for 3 years and subject to acceptable annual progress reports. The final 2 years funding will be subject to a satisfactory interim progress report as determined by external peer review.

Programme grants are offered periodically with details posted on the CRW website when such grants are made available.

### **Fellowships**

Cancer Research Wales aim to recruit and retain the best cancer researchers in Wales, helping to build a thriving research ecosystem. Through the funding of research Fellowships, we will provide important career development opportunities for the most promising scientists and clinicians, giving them the chance to become independent researchers in their own right.

Fellowships can take place in any cancer-related field and are not limited to any specific cancer type. Successful Fellowships will be supported for up to 5 years, with costs not exceeding £500,00.

N.B. All candidates must have in place an academic mentor, as well as an endorsement from the Head of School, at the Welsh university that will be their host institution.

Applications for Fellowships are welcomed from candidates who are currently based outside of Wales but who are looking to relocate to a Welsh university.

### **Partnership Grants**

Where appropriate Cancer Research Wales will consider partnership grants that provide core funds for 1 to 5 years for managed consortia and partnerships and for supporting more diverse groupings of researchers. Partnership Grants allow resources to be pooled and add value to high-quality scientific programmes that cannot alone be funded by any single organisation or institute.

The partnership will be between CRW and a recognised Welsh academic institution, normally a university or an NHS institution. Each partner will provide 50% of the total grant funding which in total will not normally exceed £110,000 for PhD studentships,

£200,000 for level 1 project grants, £300,000 for level 2 project grants, £240,000 for Clinical PhD Studentships, and £1M for programme grants.

All applications for partnership grants are subjected to rigorous external peer review by 3 recognised experts in the relevant area of research which may be arranged by either partner, with reports shared between the partners. Normally partnership grants will be considered alongside full grant applications and therefore should be submitted within the most appropriate grant scheme. For all potential applications for partnership grants, the investigator should first discuss the nature of the project with the Cancer Research Wales Scientific Team.

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