

Research Project Grant Guidance Notes for completion of Application form [**SAMPLE 2010**]

Medical Research Scotland is committed to supporting research of the highest quality, the outcome of which will make a contribution to improving the health of the nation. Its support is not restricted to any one disease or condition, so applications are welcome from early career researchers in any of the clinical, biomedical, physical or engineering sciences related to medicine, including from those in the nursing, midwifery and allied health professions. (Applicants from the physical sciences should have a co-applicant with expertise in the biomedical sciences.) Proposals, from applicants at the start of a research career, should be innovative and suitable for pump priming to enable them to proceed subsequently to mainstream funding. Only in exceptional circumstances will applications be considered from researchers older than 35 years. Such exceptions might include a necessary career break or prolonged study for research degrees. Applications should not exceed £150,000 over three years.

The application form for a Research Project Grant should be completed in conjunction with these Guidance Notes. These Guidance Notes must be read in conjunction with the *Standard Conditions Applying to the Award of Medical Research Scotland Research Funding*, available for download from the main website (www.medicalresearchscotland.org.uk) or following login to the secure site (www.medicalresearchscotland.net). If you have any queries about completing the application form, please contact the Trust Secretaries, Turcan Connell, Tel: 0131-659 8800; Fax: 0131-228 8118; email: enquiries@medicalresearchscotland.org.uk

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **All sections of the application form must be completed. If a particular section is not applicable to your application, please state, or select the "Not Applicable" option from the drop-down list, in the relevant section.**
- Applications from Principal Applicants who have had previous support as a Principal Applicant from Medical Research Scotland/SHERT will not normally be considered for further funding.
- Many of the fields on the application form have been character-delimited, so there is a maximum to the amount of information you can provide in each. You will have to be concise.
- The application form is an MS Word form, only suitable for completion using MS Word on a PC (the use of open office emulation software will result in its corruption) and completion should not be attempted on a MAC. It should be downloaded and saved to your hard drive/local network server for **completion offline** (it cannot be saved or submitted if completion is attempted online). The system cannot read Word 2007 or later documents, so once complete, it should be saved as Word 2003/XP, closed and then uploaded to the secure website. The Appendix forms are also MS Word documents and they should be downloaded, saved, completed offline and saved as above, closed and then uploaded.
- Once the application form is complete, it should be submitted online (www.medicalresearchscotland.net). Immediately thereafter, a printed copy, which incorporates all original signatures, the appendices, and a covering letter should be sent by first-class mail to: The Trust Administrator, Medical Research Scotland, Turcan Connell, Princes Exchange, 1 Earl Grey Street, Edinburgh EH3 9EE.
- In addition, applicants from universities using the TRAC costing methodology should **also** complete and submit the separate Appendix C – a form which seeks information on fEC and is being collected by all AMRC member charities. w

NOTES TO ASSIST IN COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM (numbered according to the sections on the form)

1. Applicant

Provide full details of the applicant, to whom correspondence will be addressed. This should be the same person whose details were provided on first registering to submit an Application. [PLEASE NOTE: A short CV of the applicant should be supplied in Appendix 3 of the application form and all fields on it should be completed.]

2. Project

- 2.1 Keywords – Please supply up to 5 keywords describing the proposed project.
- 2.2 Project title – Restrict the title to a maximum of 25 words.
- 2.3 Total amount requested in pounds sterling.

3. Justification – Please indicate, in no more than 30 words, why you consider your application complies with the aims of Medical Research Scotland Research funding.

4. Dates – The start date should be the date on which the host institution first incurs staff or other costs. It is appreciated that the start and completion dates may need to be amended. The completion date should be entered based on the proposed start date and duration of the grant.

5. Summary of Financial Support Requested – This section should summarise the support requested in Appendix 1. All costs should be at current prices; however, salary increases should be anticipated and included in the support requested. Applications for funding should not exceed £150,000 over three years.

6. Other Support – For any project requiring NHS resources, e.g. Consultant's time, patient beds, nurse time, use of computers etc., you **MUST** detail these here. Such clinical applications must be accompanied by authorisation from the R&D Director of the appropriate NHS institution authorising the use of NHS facilities and giving details of the costs provided by the NHS (see also Section 12, Declarations and authorisations).

7. Patient treatment – Medical Research Scotland funds do not allow for the costs of patient treatment, so please provide information about where the necessary funding will come from if this is a component of your research project

8. Co-applicants, Collaborators & Mentor – Please provide details as requested for your co-applicants and collaborators. If you have more than the spaces provided, please email enquiries@medicalresearchscotland.org.uk and we will provide you with a suitable form. It is not essential for you to supply date of birth and age details for your co-applicants. It is, however, **essential** that you provide an indication of the level of their contribution (hours per week and/or other input) to your project. Medical Research Scotland defines a **Co-applicant** as one whose active and regular scientific and/or technical input is essential to the successful completion of the project: and a **Collaborator** as one whose expertise in a specific area of research is necessary for the success of the project. **Co-applicants** should **each** sign the hard copy of the completed form prior to its submission. Signed letter(s) of consent from the **Collaborator(s)** should also be included in Appendix B and with the hard copy of the application. Furthermore, electronic cop(ies) of the letter(s) should be included on the disk you are asked to supply. You **must** have a **Mentor** for your project. If your Mentor for the project is not one of your co-applicants, please supply all the details requested; otherwise, please indicate which of your co-applicants has this role.

9. Approvals – Ethical approval, Animals, Collaborators. Clear photocopies of all documents marked with an asterisk in the table on the form should, if relevant, be included in Appendix B and also sent, together with a hard copy of the application form containing the original, authentic signatures of the authorised agents in each case, by post to the Trust Administrator immediately following online submission of the application form.

(a) Ethical Approval: Ethical approval is required as detailed below for all research involving or related to either patients or staff. This approval also relates to safety precautions.

***Research Ethics Committee:** Where the proposed research involves NHS patients, foetal material or IVF involving NHS patients, the recently dead, access to patients' records or the use of NHS premises or facilities, **the written approval of the appropriate Research Ethics Committee (REC) must be submitted with each application. Patient or staff information sheets to be used in the research project should be included with the application.**

PLEASE NOTE: Although an application may be **considered** by Medical Research Scotland before ethical approval has been granted, any award will only be **recommended** for funding, subject to receipt of the letter of ethical approval.

(b) Animals: Wherever possible, procedures should be used which do not involve live animals. When it is essential to do experiments involving animals, the requirements of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 must be scrupulously observed. There must be proper care, limitation of pain and use of minimum number of animals to give valid results. **Grantholders using animals must hold the necessary licences (Project and Personal) from the Home Office.**

(c, d, e) Genetic modification: Research proposals which involve genetic modification of organisms must have written authority from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The use of gene therapy in patients must have written approval from the Gene Therapy Advisory Committee (GTAC). The trial of new medicines must have authority from the Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency

(MHRA). If applicable to the proposed research a copy of the letter from the appropriate authority must be included with the application.

(f) Stem cells: Research proposals which involve the use of stem cells must have written authority from the UK Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority

(g) Collaborators: If there are collaborators included in this application, a letter of consent from each collaborator must be provided in Appendix B and attached to the hard copy of the application (and an electronic copy included on the disk you supply).

(h) Use of Human Tissue in Research: In all studies where human tissue (irrespective of origin) is used the Codes of Practice of the Human Tissue Authority (<http://www.hta.gov.uk/guidance.cfm>) must be followed.

10. Commercial exploitation – Researchers should keep under continuous review the question as to whether the work has potential commercial application, taking appropriate action in accordance with the Trust procedures for the protection and exploitation of research findings (see Standard Conditions 12 & 14).

11. Project summary – A concise summary (150 words maximum) of the proposed work, experimental details, aims of the project, research design & method and expected outcomes should be included. Background information should be brief. This summary will be copied by the applicant to the report form when submitting Progress and Final reports.

12. Declarations and authorisations – Please make sure you read the Declarations carefully and note that Declarations are also required from: The Head of Department/Division or equivalent; The Institution; The Intellectual Property Manager of the Institution; The R&D Director where NHS facilities are required.

Confidentiality: A code of practice on confidentiality of personal health information was issued on 7 June 1990 by SODoH under cover of NHS Circular No. 1990(GEN) 22. The guidance in this code must be followed.

Data Protection: Where personal data on individuals who can be identified are held and processed on computer, these data may be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998: applicants are recommended to consult the guidelines on the Act.

APPENDIX 1 – Details of Financial Support Requested

1. Staff details – Please specify: name (if known) and job title of each member of staff; grade (e.g. RA1B); spine point; effort on project; net salary (full-time rate); combined employer's superannuation and national insurance; gross salary. All staff costs requested should be fully justified in Appendix 2. The case for staff should be made in terms of the standard of expertise and workload required by the research. In the case of projects which require NHS staff, applicants should consult the Health Board concerned prior to submission, on the grade and tenure of post, and type of contract which may be necessary. Applicants are advised to consult their Finance Officer about all proposed salaries. Normally, the salary scales and conditions of service which apply to equivalent workers employed by the Administering Institution will be accepted. Salaries requested should include an element for anticipated salary increases and inflation. The information provided should reflect salary costs for a complete (notional) year based on the starting salaries at the date of the application.

2. Consumables – All consumables, for example, chemicals animals, glassware, etc. should be itemised and their requirement fully justified in Appendix 2.

3. Travel – These costs may be included if they are a necessary part of the project, i.e. travel to collect samples etc. Applications should be based on actual prices and no allowance should be made for inflation. **The Trust does not fund costs of visits to other establishments or to conferences, etc.**

4. Exceptional items – Please specify and note that charges for such items will be accepted only if they are for materials of a kind or quantity that would not normally be available to the applicant at the establishment at which the work is done. These items should only be included where their use is specifically related to the project and they must all be justified fully in Appendix 2. No allowance should be made for inflation. Recurrent costs of computing dedicated to the project may be included, e.g. stationery supplies and software licences. Do *not* include any costs associated with use of central computing facilities. Telephone/fax/specialist postal costs may be included where dedicated or separately metered lines and/or specialist postage requirements are directly related to the project and the individual costs exceed £2,000 p.a. Specialist cartography/photography/reprographic services may be included where total costs are directly related to the project and are likely to exceed £5,000 over the lifetime of the grant. Where costs exceed the amounts stated the full costs should be included.

5. Equipment essential to your project – Please note that only items dedicated to the project and costing £1,000 or more (including VAT) should be included here; items costing less than £1,000 should be included under section 2 (Consumables). Items of equipment should be costed at the time of the

application without making allowance for inflation. Reasons should be given for selecting particular types of equipment, in relation to the needs of the research. Equipment of EC origin should be preferred. Medical equipment and apparatus purchased by universities or other charitable bodies for medical research may be VAT exempt. Applicants should declare whether they are able to purchase the equipment sought free of VAT. Prices quoted should show VAT separately where appropriate. **Note:** *Maintenance and running costs of all equipment funded by the Trust will require to be met by the institution; therefore no claim for these costs will be considered by the Trust.*

Computer equipment and software: Medical Research Scotland may seek advice from external sources on the relevance and cost of computing equipment/facilities requested in proposed applications for funding. Applicants should therefore list the make, model, quantity and price of equipment along with any special features required, e.g. communications, graphics, etc. Where funding is sought for storage media or devices, an estimate should be provided of total data to be stored (in Megabytes). If computer software is to be purchased, the purpose for which it is required should be given along with the name and price. Any computing consumables to be purchased should be itemised in Appendix 1, section 2, with the quantity and price. Should computing advice be sought, the names of the persons/organisations to be consulted should be given.

APPENDIX 2 – Proposed Research Project in Detail

You should address **all** the points mentioned below. Please remember that the forms fields are character delimited, so you will have to be concise throughout.

Project Title – Should be that given on page 1 of the application form (section 2.2)

1. Introduction – Please begin by giving a *short* explanation of why you feel that you should be considered for funding and explain any special circumstances which you think contribute to your case (for example, duration of academic qualification and training, career break, illness, change of occupation etc.). Follow this (if applicable) with information about any NHS supplementation for clinical costs. Thereafter, provide a *brief* explanation of the current knowledge of the research field, citing key references.
2. Results of pilot studies – These should provide a firm base for expecting that the research proposal is feasible.
3. Aims of the proposed study
4. Research questions to be asked and hypotheses to be tested
5. Research design, methods and expertise available – The methodology to be used should be described clearly and in sufficient detail to be assessed by peer reviewers. To enable peer reviewers to evaluate the likelihood of success of the project, the existing expertise of the applicant should be given. Statistical analysis and power calculations, to assess the results obtained, should be provided together with the name(s) and affiliations of the biostatistician(s) consulted. A plan of investigation should be included which provides details of how answers will be obtained to the questions posed and should include information on:
 - Subjects to be included in the study. The use of power analyses is essential where relevant; furthermore, a named expert who will supply such advice must be provided.
 - Methods to be used, giving references where these are non-standard. Where new methods are being developed, arrangements for establishing reliability and validity should be described. Examples of non-standard questionnaires, tests, etc. should accompany the application or their content be clearly indicated.
 - Study design, described in sufficient detail to allow assessment of workload and timetable and including experiments, observations to be made, randomisation method where relevant, and the use of controls. If necessary advice should be sought on studies with a strong epidemiological or statistical content.
 - Data processing and analysis, including means of validating records and the type of statistical analysis to be carried out.

You may include up to two images to illustrate your proposed research, but these have to be included, together with any explanatory legends or annotations, in the appropriate fields in the separate document “Appendix A – Figures 1 & 2 and Legends” [See Section 15 below]

6. Statistical Information – Applicants must consult an appropriate biomedical statistician, who should be identified by name and has agreed to be consulted, and carry out power calculations
7. Timetable of work – A brief summary of the planned programme of work should be included here, which highlights significant phases of the project.

8. Existing facilities – Describe the resources available for supervision, equipment, space, staffing, relevant departmental interests, and collaboration.
9. Justification of Requirements – The case for staff should be justified in terms of expertise and workload required by the research and reasons given here for selecting particular types of equipment and etc., in Appendix 1.
10. Research outcomes – This should describe the underlying purpose of the project and its possible implications for health in Scotland. Where appropriate, plans for commercial exploitation arising from the research should be described as well as the potential for implementation in the NHS in Scotland.
11. Dissemination – Please describe the ways in which the research findings will be disseminated.
12. Key references – These should be provided in full, including titles and all authors and presented in alphabetical order of the first author. Ideally, no more than 20 references should be given in the text and listed in full at the end.
13. Additional relevant material – this may include any other items (questionnaires, diagrams of equipment, copies of licences, etc), copies of which should be scanned, saved as MS Word or PDF files and **inserted into** Appendix B (“Additional Relevant Material”). Copies should also be included with the hard copy of the application form. A brief list of any unusual items should be included in this section.
14. Lay summary – This should be of no more than 250 words and should clearly address the purpose, aims and projected results of the proposal, including any potential benefit to health. In composing the summary, applicants should bear in mind that Medical Research Scotland includes a number of Members who do not have a medical or scientific background. (In addition it should be noted that Medical Research Scotland distributes publicity material on work funded and it is to the benefit of the applicants to provide as succinct and informative a summary as possible.)
15. Figures/Illustrations/Images – You may incorporate up to two images to support your application. These should be **pasted into** the relevant section in the separate Word Document (Appendix A). The illustrations themselves **should be in .gif or .jpeg format only** and you should try to ensure that the original image has a resolution of no less than 600 dpi and also that the completed image Appendix file, *including legends*, is not greater than 1MB in size, otherwise it would take a long time to upload to the website. Please note that separate illustration files or files in any other format will not be accepted by the system.

APPENDIX 3 – Applicant’s Curriculum Vitae

Please provide the information requested in the fields available, including details of your five most recent publications. Note that if, for example you are over 35 years of age and thus do not meet Medical Research Scotland’s principal criterion for funding, you should here explain the reasons why you should still be considered eligible for Medical Research Scotland funding (e.g. career break, duration of degree study etc.).

APPENDIX 4 – Previous Medical Research Scotland/SHERT grants

For each Medical Research Scotland/SHERT grant which you or *your co-applicants or collaborators* may have held previously, please provide the information requested. Applicants who have previously held a Medical Research Scotland/SHERT grant as a principal investigator may be ineligible for further funding.

APPENDIX A – this is for the incorporation of images and appropriate legends ONLY.

APPENDIX B – this is for the incorporation of MS Word or PDF copies of additional relevant documents ONLY

APPENDIX C - this is for the provision of information of FEC being collected by all AMRC member charities. Applicants from HEI using the TRAC costing methodology should also complete and submit this online with the other application documents (Application Form, Appendix A and Appendix B).