

PhD Studentship Guidance Notes for completion of Application Form [June 2011]

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 for PhD Studentship Awards may be for projects in any of the biomedical, physical, clinical or engineering sciences, provided that the research addresses a medically-relevant question.

These awards provide funding for a four-year PhD including student stipend, contributions to laboratory expenses and fees as detailed in the Application Form. The application must be made by a recognised Scottish University/Research Institution (the Administering Institution) working in conjunction with a trading company operating in Scotland (the Company) involved in medically-relevant life sciences research. The Administering Institution undertakes to deliver a first-class PhD studentship programme, incorporating both academic and commercial research training tailored to research into any matters relating to the causation, prevention, diagnosis or treatment of illness or to the development of medical or surgical appliances, including hearing aids.

It is unlikely that any supervisor will be awarded more than one Medical Research Scotland PhD Studentship to run concurrently. However, supervisors are permitted to be named on applications for a PhD Studentship which will commence after the planned completion date of a currently held PhD Studentship.

The application form for a PhD Studentship should be completed in conjunction with these Guidance Notes, and also the *PhD Standard Conditions Applying to the Award of Medical Research Scotland Research Funding* (available from www.medicalresearchscotland.org.uk/apply.htm). 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: applications@medicalresearchscotland.org

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **All sections of the application form must be completed. If a particular section is not applicable to your application, please state so, or select the "Not Applicable" option from the drop-down list.**
- 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 and should, preferably, be completed using MS Word on a PC (the use of MAC-compatible software might result in its corruption). It should be downloaded and saved to your hard drive/local network server for completion offline. It should be saved as an MS Word document, (no later than 2003/XP) before being submitted by email (*see below*).
- **Applications larger than 5MB will not be accepted and will be returned.** If you choose to incorporate an image or table in the separate Appendix to your application, please ensure that the size and/or resolution of the inserted graphic has been reduced appropriately to ensure that the combined file size of both parts of the completed application does not exceed the 5MB application size limit.
- Once the application form is complete, it should be emailed to: applications@medicalresearchscotland.org and you will receive an auto-reply acknowledgement of your email. Immediately thereafter, a printed copy of the application form, which incorporates all original signatures, together with any Appendix and clear copies of all approvals/licences etc. 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.
- Applications will only be allocated a Reference Number and formally accepted for consideration if they are smaller than the maximum file size AND after receipt of the properly completed and signed hard copy.

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

1. Administering Institution Details

Provide full details, as requested, of the Scottish University/Recognised Research Institution which is applying for the Studentship and in which the student will be matriculated and which will award a PhD degree, subject to successful completion of that University's assessment and examination requirements.

2. Principal Supervisor from University/Research Institution Details

Provide full details, as requested, of the principal (first) supervisor from the University/Research Institution in which the student will be matriculated and of the Department in which the Studentship research will be carried out.

3. Second Supervisor from University/Research Institution Details

Provide full details, as requested, of the second supervisor.

4. Company Details

Provide full details, as requested, of the trading company in Scotland which has agreed to be involved in the delivery of the PhD Studentship.

5. Supervisor from Company Details

Provide full details, as requested, of the Company employee who will be responsible for supervising the project and student.

6. Financial Support

The application form includes a table detailing the provision that will be made toward the student stipend and information should be completed about fees (with a maximum of £4,000 per annum, or the level of fees at the UK/EU level, whichever is the lesser) and consumables (up to a maximum of £10,000 per annum). The Administering Institution must confirm (check box) that it will ensure that the Company will make the specified contribution to the student stipend and ensure additional laboratory costs will be met.

7. Research Project Details

Sections which are self explanatory have not been expanded upon in these Guidance Notes.

Project Title – this should be no more than 25 words in length and should succinctly inform a reader of the nature of the proposed research.

Key Words - Please supply up to 5 keywords describing the proposed project.

Other submissions – If the proposed project has been submitted, or it is going to be submitted, to another funding body, provide details of the:

- name of the funding body to which each application has/will be submitted
- date(s) of each submission
- date(s) informed of outcome
- outcome (if known)

Lay Summary - This should be of no more than 200 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 trustees who do not have a medical or scientific background. Further, it should be noted that Medical Research Scotland distributes publicity material on work it has supported, so it is to the benefit of the applicants to provide as succinct and informative a summary as possible.

Brief explanation of how the proposed project complies with the **aims of Medical Research Scotland**.

Brief explanation of how the proposed project fits with the **Company's commercial objectives**.

Start Date – This would normally be in September of the year following submission of this application. Please confirm that this will be the case and, if not, provide an anticipated start date with explanation of why there is a change. PLEASE NOTE: any alternative start date should be no more than 4 months later, or the award may be forfeited.

Detailed Project Description – please use the following headings, noting the word limits in the several sections. The written description may be augmented with **one** image or table but only if essential to the application (see 14 – APPENDIX below):

- **Background** - should provide sufficient background information to the project, including what is currently known in the area of the proposed research, to enable a reviewer to understand the research questions which intend to be addressed (300 words).
- **Aims and Objectives** (250 words)
- **Experimental Design and Methods** (650 words)
- **Outline of the Timetable of Work** – bullet points (150 words)

8. Ethics and Regulatory Issues

Clear photocopies of all documents indicated as being applicable should be 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 emailed submission of the application form.

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 may only be **recommended** for funding, subject to receipt of the letter of ethical approval.

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. **Supervisors and Students using animals must hold the necessary licences (Project and Personal) from the Home Office.**

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.

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

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>) must be followed.

Patient Data: Where patient data are to be used, the guidelines of the **Information Services Division Scotland** (<http://www.isdscotland.org/About-ISD/Confidentiality/>) must be followed.

9. Research and Training Provisions – provide information about the location(s) where the research training will be given, the research environment(s) (including special facilities and available expertise of relevance to the proposed project), the time (%) the student is anticipated to spend at each. The skills and research training to be provided and the methods of student supervision and assessment should be outlined.

10. Collaboration Details – provide brief information about any past or present collaboration between the Administering Institution and the Company. The remaining sections in this question should be completed to enable Medical Research Scotland to ensure that its funding of this project is secure and that the project will be of mutual benefit to the student and all others concerned.

11. Intellectual Property & Publications – Medical Research Scotland expects that, before this application is submitted, the Administering Institution and the Company have both considered and reached formal agreement on how the exploitation of any potential intellectual property arising from the project will take place. The template Plan can be downloaded from: www.medicalresearchscotland.org.uk/apply.htm to record the agreement and a copy should be enclosed with the application, or sent to Medical Research Scotland once completed (and prior to any funding being made available). Medical Research Scotland wishes to ensure that the student's right to publish the work of the project timeously is not withheld unreasonably.

12. Previous Medical Research Scotland awards – Medical Research Scotland seeks both to publicise the work carried out by the individuals it supports and also to assess the longer-term impact of its funding. Please provide outline information of the support received from Medical Research Scotland (or earlier when it was known as SHERT, the Scottish Hospital Endowments Research Trust) by any of the three supervisors named in this application.

13. Declarations and authorisations – Please ensure that all signatories to this application have read and understood the Declarations & Authorisations carefully, before signing it. The names of all the individuals should be included in the emailed copy as well as the hard copy.

14. APPENDIX (separate document)

You may submit an image or table, if essential to support the application. This cannot be inserted into the application form, but must be included in the separate Word Document (Supporting Image/Table Appendix). An image should be in .gif or .jpeg format only (**not PDF**); a table can be inserted directly. If you choose to incorporate an image or table in the Appendix, please ensure that the size and/or resolution of the inserted graphic has been reduced appropriately to ensure that the Appendix is no longer than 1 A4 side and that both parts of the completed application are no greater than the 5MB application size limit. Applications larger than 5MB will not be accepted.