

NORTH WEST CANCER RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATION GUIDANCE NOTES CAREER DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

**1.** **Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to assist potential applicants for the Career Development Fellowship supported by North West Cancer Research (“NWCR” or the “Charity”) in the process of applying.

**2. Who we are**

We are the only independent cancer research charity funding quality research for local people in North West England and North Wales. We aim to tackle the toughest cancers in our region. Stopping cancer sooner.

**3. Our vision**

Achieving the best research for a cancer free future.

**4. Research**

North West Cancer Research funds cancer research work at academic institutions and with our NHS partners and third sector collaborators in the North West of England and North Wales. Much of our funding goes to projects, but we additionally support Lectureships, Chair positions, Fellowships and PhD studentships. Please contact [research@nwcr.org](mailto:research@nwcr.org) for more information.

We have themed calls for research from the fields of cancer discovery, underpinning (translational), applied and cancer inequalities. These calls have different eligibility criteria and direction is provided in guidance notes specific to each call, enabling researchers to make considered applications.

**5. Award**

The Career Development Research Fellowship award provides funding for 3-5 years to a maximum value not greater than £500,000.

In making their applications, researchers should consider the relevance of the application to the people of the North-West of England and North Wales.

Applications for the Fellowship are open to researchers nationally and internationally (subject to eligibility to work in the UK) but will be based at institutions within our regional networks of the North West of England and North Wales. Applicants should be aware of the expertise within this regional network and have discussed mentorship with an appropriate member of academic staff prior to making an application. Letters of support should be submitted with the application form from the proposed mentor and Head of Department at the institute the applicant has designated.

**6. Application Process**

Applications should be submitted before the grant close time and date as published on the NWCR website. Applications must be submitted electronically via the charity website as a single PDF document. Applications that do not meet this deadline will not be accepted.

**7. Review**

The Charity’s review processes have been developed 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>).

The timelines for review and appointment of the Fellow will be:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Details** | **Date** | **Responsibility** |
| Advertise Fellowship | * Advert goes live on website * Advert placed in leading journals i.e. Nature * Circulate to Institutions- communication and dissemination teams * Circulate to known and current investigators * Social Media – Twitter/LinkedIn – team Fundraising/Comms/research | May 2019 | NWCR Research Manager |
| Close call and charity triage | Application administrative check e.g. Completeness   * CVs * Nominated referees * Letters of support * Tenure track commitment form host institution | 15th July 2019 (1700hrs) | NWCR Research Manager |
| Preliminary review of applications | * Subcommittee of the Research Strategy Group (RSG), Charity representatives * Review of applications-   + Do they fit the fellowship call criteria? Specifically, level of expertise of the applicant -based on research track record, project experience and supervision of junior staff; topic area/proposal; engagement experience and added value criteria.   + Appointment of independent reviewers by Sub committee | 18th July 2019 | NWCR Manager and RSG sub committee |
| Call for nominated referees | Nominated referees offered by the candidate are approached to review the fellowship proposal and comment of quality, relevance, competence of applicant and mentor’s expertise to complete the fellowship  This is provided through a pro-forma steering the reviewer and is offered in writing to the RSG at the review of the proposal | 18th July 2019 onwards | NWCR Research Manager |
| Call for independent reviewers (experts in the filed | Independent experts, appointed by the RSG subcommittee, are approached to review the fellowship proposal and comment on the quality, relevance, competence of applicant and mentor’s expertise to complete the fellowship  This is provided through a pro-forma steering the reviewer and is offered in writing to the RSG at the review of the proposal | 18th July 2019 onwards | NWCR Research Manager |
| RSG meeting | The RSG and NWCR Charity representative meet to review the proposals and reviewers’ comments.  An independent and anonymous score is made of each proposal reviewed.  The top three-five proposals approved are invited to present to a subcommittee of the RSG. | Week 19th August 2019 | NWCR Manager and RSG committee |
| Interviews | Candidates present their proposal to the committee and a short interview follows.  A scoring pro-forma is completed by each member of the interview panel. The top scoring candidate is recommended for approval as the NWCR Fellow. | Week commencing 2nd September 2019 | NWCR Manager and RSG sub committee |
| RSG meeting | RSG meet to ratify interview panel’s recommendations | 9th September 2019 | RSG committee |
| Board of Trustees | The Board of Trustees meet to review and consider the recommendations of the RSG. Approval of the candidate as the Fellow is formalised. | 27th September 2019 | Board of Trustees, NWCR CEO, NWCR Research Manager |

On receipt of application the Charity conducts a ‘charity check’ to ensure applications meet with the application guidance and strategic fit. At this stage the Charity considers the applicants display of their ‘added value’ through previous projects and engagement.

Applications, which pass the charity check, are sent to all members of the Charity’s Research Strategy Group, who recommend appropriate independent reviewers according to the specific cancer type, research activity or technology being proposed. In addition to this expertise, the Charity will contact all nominated referees (name by the applicant). The Charity may also request advice from other experts in their database.

Where the applicants wish to exclude independent reviewers this must be sent to the charity Research Manager directly [Tania@nwcr.org](file:///\\enyo\redirections$\taniaseale\Desktop\Call%20doc%20-%20work%20up\Tania@nwcr.org%20). Researcher will be required to provide a full and detailed justification for excluding independent reviewers. The Research Strategy Group will be informed of the decision to exclude reviewers.

Nominated and Independent reviewers are asked to provide a written report on the proposals and provide a score (1-4) which will be taken into consideration by the Research Strategy Group. Scoring is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 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. |

The top scoring applicants for the Fellowship will be invited to interview where the personal specifications of the individual will be reviewed and an opportunity to justify their research proposal given. Particular reference to the benefit of the population of the North West of England and North Wales should be considered.

At the 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 and the performance of the applicant at interview.

**8. Data protection**

Applicants must understand and agree to North West Cancer Research holding information about their Fellowship Grant. The information we hold will be used to support our impact measurement work. 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 NWCR.

**GUIDANCE ON COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM**

The sections below provide guidance on completing the application form sections.

* 1. **Plan of work (Study Area)**

The plan of work title should give potential reviewers a clear idea of the proposed research. Any confidential or commercially sensitive information should not be included in the title.

* 1. **Proposed Start Date and Duration**

An award should begin as soon as possible and no later than six months after the date of the award letter.

* 1. **Applicant**

Only one application will be considered per Fellow Applicant and only one application for a Primary Mentor. A primary mentor may be on one further application as an additional mentor.

The applicant and the mentor named on the grant MUST sign the application form. If signatures are not included, the application form will not be accepted.

Primary mentors must be experts within the field of science being studied in the research proposal.

Additional mentors should be experienced researchers who have a significant role in the design or management of the project.

* 1. **Scientific Summary of Proposed Research**

Please do not include confidential or commercially sensitive information in this summary as it is circulated to potential reviewers. Word limit 250.

**5. Lay Summary of Proposed Research**

This summary must be suitable for the general public. Do not use technical language. Word limit 250.

**6. Communications Plan**

Outline your plan to communicate details of your research. This should include potential impacts for academic and non-academic users. Word limit 250.

**7. Impact Summary**

Outline the potential impact of your work and the steps you will make to achieve these. Please consider the wider definition of impact and how as a charity we measure impact. In your summary please consider how your project would: generate new ideas; translate research in to new ideas and services; create evidence that could influence policy and stakeholders; develop the human capacity to do research; stimulating further research via new funding partnerships. Word limit 250.

**8. Human Subjects**

North West Cancer Research expects the research they fund to be conducted to the highest levels of integrity, clarity and good management. Research grants are made between the charity and the research institution, and the charity expects that the researcher and their employers will work within the appropriate legal and ethical boundaries.

**9. Use of Animals**

North West Cancer Research recommends that researchers follow the guidelines for the welfare and use of animals in research as outlined [here](https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/responsibility-use-animals-bioscience-research). The Charity also promotes the reporting of research using animals according to the ARRIVE (Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments) guidelines, as outlined [here](https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-guidelines).

**10. Proposed Investigation**. This section should not exceed 2,000 words. Please provide details of both the proposed fellow and Phd students research plan

The following information should be included:

Background.

Supporting evidence.

Hypothesis and Specific Aims.

Research Plan.

Identified risks and contingencies in place.

References – these can be listed and attached as a separate Appendix.

Tables, images and graphs can be included. These will not be included in the 3,000-word count.

If the project involves patient information, human volunteers or tissue samples, or animals, Appendix A should be completed and submitted with the main application form as part of the submitted PDF document.

**11. Independent Referees**

Nominated reviewers must be experts in the research field and/or be able to provide an expert view on the value and benefits of the research proposal and the development of the Fellow.

The applicant should not provide reviewers with personal relationships.

If the applicant does not want a particular reviewer contacted, this should not be added to the main application form but should be submitted directly to the Research Manager. Researchers must provide justification for this exclusion e.g. “main scientific competitor” or “commercial sensitivity”.

**12. Summary of Costs**

Costs should be included under a number of categories:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Salaries:** | Funding will be available for the Fellow and a PhD student. The student stipend should not exceed £19,000. |
| **Equipment:** | Funds can be requested for small pieces of specialist equipment that are essential for the project. |
| **Consumables:** | Funds can be requested for routine research consumables. |
| **Animal costs:**  **Publications/conference attendances** | Total costs for the combined purchase, maintenance and experimental procedures should be included. The breakdown must be provided in Appendix A.  Costs for open access publications and/or attendance at conferences primarily for the dissemination of findings and results. |

Research carried out in the NHS: Grant holders carrying out research in the NHS must ensure that all costs are attributed according to the [AcoRD (Attributing the costs of heath & social care Research & Development) Guidelines (link is external)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-attributing-the-costs-of-health-and-social-care-research" \t "_blank), or equivalent. It is expected that researchers use the study support service when applications are written.

**13. Justification for Support Requested**

This information should clearly describe how the resources requested are appropriate for the research proposed.

**14. Signatures**

Please ensure that ALL named applicants sign the form, these should include the Applicant, Primary Mentor and Head of Department.

The approval of the Head of Department/School confirms that the Institution agrees with the budget request and use of facilities.

**15. Letters of Support**

A relevant letter of support from the mentor and Head of Department should confirm that the host institution can and will host the Fellow; has the facilities to support the Fellow and their PhD student’s research activities; confirm a plan of mentorship and detail the suitability of the environment and an intention that the Fellow is ut forward for a tenure track position.

**16 CVs**

Please include CVs within the PDF document for the Fellow and Primary or additional mentors with a list of publications.

**17 PhD Supervision**

Please provide details of the supervisory experience of the Applicant and Mentor i.e. the number of students supervised in the last 5 years, including current students. The start and completion dates (where possible) should be listed. Previous experience of supervising Fellows at an early and middle grade level should be detailed.

Please provide details of the applicant’s previous experience of supervising students and/or junior researchers.

Details of the daily support should also be included.

**18 Published Papers**

Please include a publication list related to work.