**NORTH WEST CANCER RESEARCH/TENOVUS CANCER CARE PhD STUDENTSHIP GRANT APPLICATION GUIDANCE** **NOTES**

**General Information**

**1.** **Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to assist potential applicants wishing to apply to the joint North West Cancer Research / Tenovus Cancer Care (referred to as Tenovus) PhD studentship funding round.

**2. Who we are**

North West Cancer Research and Tenovus have collaborated for this call to fund a psycho-social PhD that will focus on the cancers and/or cancer care that is significant or challenging for their combined regional population.

North West Cancer Research is an independent charity dedicated to putting our region’s cancer needs first, funding pioneering research to tackle the cause, improve the care and find the cure for cancer. We focus on the types of cancer that affect people living across North West England and North Wales the most.

Tenovus bring practical advice, emotional support and treatment to where it matters most; the heart of the community. Tenovus help people with cancer and their loved one’s cope and through vital research, offer hope. Tenovus Cancer Care is committed to its role in contributing to and enabling the best quality research for the people of Wales, but also the UK and beyond.

**3. Our vision**

The vision of North West Cancer Research is to achieve the best research for a cancer free future.

The vision of Tenovus is a future where fewer people get cancer, and those that do have equal access to the best treatment and support.

We are working together to provide this funding to meet our joint priorities.

**4. Research**

North West Cancer Research funds cancer research work at academic institutions and with our NHS partners and third sector collaborators that benefit the population of 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.

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

Tenovus fund world-class cancer research which covers a variety of projects including prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, support, survivorship and end of life care. Our research in the lab investigates how cancers form and develops new drugs for some of the hardest to treat cancers. Our projects in the community look at how to improve the lives of people throughout their cancer journey. We also work in partnership with Welsh NHS Health Boards and other funding bodies. Funding streams include lab based PhDs, community based PhDs, iGrants, Research Strategy Grants, KESS studentships.

The spirit and ambition of this joint PhD is very much in line with the strategy of both charitable organisations and also seeks to start a career for a next generation cancer researcher.

**5. Award**

The NWCR/Tenovus Cancer Care PhD studentship award provides funding for a single three-year project. The total budget should not be greater than £75,000.

In making their applications, researchers should consider the relevance of the application to the people of the combined regional population of the two charitable organisations i.e. the north west of England and Wales. This can mean that the particular cancer type is common in the region, it may be that it is statistically more significant than elsewhere in the UK, outcomes are different from other parts of the UK or that there are challenges providing treatment or services related to cancer care in this region.

Applications for this funding round are open to researchers across the United Kingdom. Applications that aim to build capacity within the regional boundaries of the charities are encouraged. As charities we strongly encourage applicants outside of the regional boundaries of the charities to collaborate with researchers in the North West of England and Wales.

Applications to this award should aim to impact cancer policy and practice through the targeted area of psycho-social oncology.

Research should address the interactions between the physical, psychological, social and behavioural aspects of the cancer experience for the patient and caregivers.

In addition to the broad areas of psycho-social oncology, projects that are related to the early diagnosis of cancer or multi-morbidities are particularly welcomed.

**6. Application Process**

NWCR will manage the application process on behalf of both the charities. Both charities however will be represented in the review and funding decision. 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 in a single PDF document. Applications that do not meet this deadline will be rejected.

The joint Advisory Group will meet approximately 3 months after the submission date to review the applications. The Board of Trustees of NWCR, along with representation from Tenovus, will meet to consider the recommendations of this Advisory Group and give approval for funding. The applicants will be notified of the final decision within one month of the Advisory Group meeting.

**7. Review**

The NWCR Charity review processes have been constructed 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>).

On receipt of application NWCR will conduct a ‘charity check’ to ensure applications meet with the application guidance. At this stage the principal investigator and co-applicants previously funded projects, when applicable, and their added value. NWCR and Tenvous will review this part of the process jointly. Where there have been previous difficulties, for either Charity, with projects not completing to time or the added value of the research team, in terms of engagement, were deemed unsatisfactory, the joint advisory group will be given this information when they review the project. This may influence the panel’s decision and voting.

Applications which pass the charity check are sent to all members of the Advisory Group who recommend appropriate independent reviewers according to the specific cancer type and research activity or technology being proposed. In addition to this expertise, the NWCR will contact nominated reviewers (named in the application by the principal investigator). NWCR may also request advice from other experts in their databases and will seek recommendations from Tenovus.

Where the researchers wish to exclude certain independent reviewer(s) these must be identified to the NWCR Head of Research directly [Tania@nwcr.org](file:///%5C%5Cenyo%5Credirections%24%5Ctaniaseale%5CDesktop%5CCall%20doc%20-%20work%20up%5CTania%40nwcr.org%20). The researcher will be required to provide a full and detailed justification for excluding such independent reviewers. The Advisory 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 (1-6) which will be taken into consideration by the Advisory Group. Scoring is as follows:

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

Reviewers are informed of the threshold for funding.

At the Advisory Group 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. The applications are scored anonymously and the mean average then calculated. A minimum average score of 5 is normally required for funding.

In this joint call our Advisory Group and processes will be conducted in collaboration with Tenovus representatives.

**8. Resubmissions**

There will be no opportunity to resubmit to this call but unsuccessful candidates will be provided with feedback from the reviews of external reviewers and the advisory panel.

1. **Data protection**

Applicants must understand and agree to both North West Cancer Research and Tenovus holding information about their Research Grant. The information we hold will be used to support the impact measurement work of both charities. Neither charity will 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 and Tenovus Cancer Care.

**GUIDANCE ON COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM**

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

* 1. **Project Title**

The project 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 but no later than six months after the date of the award letter.

* 1. **Applicant(s)**

 Only one application will be considered at each submission round for a principal investigator. One additional application will be considered for a researcher named as a principal investigator on one further submitted application when the applicant is named as a co-investigator. Applications will be returned if these guidelines are not adhered to.

All applicants named on the grant MUST sign the application form. If signatures are not included, the application form will not be accepted.

Co-investigators should be experienced researchers who have a significant role in the design or management of the project. The roles of each co-investigator must be justified within the application.

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

Please do not include confidential or commercially sensitive information in this summary as it can be circulated outside of our organisation. Word limit 250.

**5. Lay Summary of Proposed Research**

 This summary must be suitable for the general public as the NWCR / Tenovus research advisory group includes patient and public representatives who are not from a scientific or academic background.

Within this section you should provide a clear case as to why this work is of relevance to the local population of the north west of England and North Wales. Do not use technical language. Word limit 500.

**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 take to achieve this. We appreciate some research work has a longer impact timeframe, please therefore consider the wider definition of impact and how as charities we measure it. In your summary please consider how your project would: generate new ideas; translate research into new ideas and services; create evidence that could influence policy and stakeholders; develop the human capacity to do research; stimulate further research via new funding partnerships. Word limit 250.

**8. Previous submission**

If applicable, please provide details of where this application has been previously submitted detailing how you have addressed previous reviewers comments.

**9. Human Subjects**

North West Cancer Research and Tenovus expects the research they fund to be conducted to the highest levels of integrity, probity and good management. The research grant will be managed by NWCR. Research grants are made between the NWCR and the research institution, and the charity expects that researchers and their employers will work within the appropriate legal and ethical boundaries and with the approval of research ethical committees where appropriate.

**9. Use of Animals**

North West Cancer Research and Tenovus recommend 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 Charities also promote 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.

The following information should be included:

Background.

Preliminary Results (if appropriate).

Hypothesis and Specific Aims.

Experimental Plan.

Identified risks and contingencies in place.

Patient/Public Involvement plans

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 2,000 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.

Ethical Review Appendix A can be downloaded at: <https://nwcr.org/funding-researchers/nwcr-tenovus-phd-studentship/>

**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.

Applicants should not provide reviewers from their own organisation or where any possible conflict of interest may arise. This conflict includes people with whom you have held grants within the last five years. It also includes anyone with whom you have published in the same period. Personal relationships are also considered a conflict of interest.

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 NWCR Research Manager. Researchers must provide justification for this exclusion e.g. “main scientific competitor” or “commercial sensitivity”.

**12. Summary of Costs**

Costs (not amounting to >£75,000 in total) should be included under a number of categories:

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| --- | --- |
| **Salaries:** | Any student stipend should not exceed £19,000 per annum.  |
| **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:** | Total costs for the combined purchase, maintenance and experimental procedures should be included. The breakdown must be provided in Appendix A. |
| **PPI/Participant costs** | Costs may be applied for to cover the cost of PPI involvement or costs for the reimbursement of participant participation. |

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%22%20%5Ct%20%22_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.

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

**15. Letters of Support**

A relevant letter of support should confirm commitment to the proposed project by articulating the benefits of the collaboration, its relevance and potential impact.

**16 CVs**

Please include CVs within the PDF document for all named applicants with a list of publications.

**17 PhD Supervision**

Please provide details of the number of students supervised in the last 5 years, including current students of the PI and co-supervisors. The start and completion dates (where possible) should be listed.

Please provide details of the environment in which the student will be working. This should include the number of group members e.g. PhD Students, Post-Doctoral Researchers and details of equipment available. Details of the daily support should also be included.

Please note, the relevant Research Office will be asked to provide the institutional procedures for the support and monitoring of postgraduate students.

**18 Published Papers**

Please include a publication list related to work resulting from funded grants made to any of the named investigators by North West Cancer Research and Tenovus during the last ten years. This includes work funded by the charities or any of its predecessor bodies including:

- North West Cancer Research Fund

* Clatterbridge Cancer Research
* Cancer and Polio Research Fund Ltd