

Quest for Cures initiative – Letter of Intent Guidance notes

Funding for collaborative discovery teams with transformational research ideas

Purpose and Scope

As part of our Research Strategy, '[A Cure Can't Wait](#)', we have established the Quest for Cures - Collaborative Discovery Teams initiative.

This scheme has been established to acknowledge the growing importance of international and interdisciplinary team approaches to accelerate the understanding and translation of discoveries and so bring benefits to patients faster. We are seeking innovative approaches to address the critical questions that could present a paradigm shift for brain tumour research or use unexplored paths to allow for new discoveries to be made.

These awards are designed to foster a collaborative research process, strengthen the ties between basic and clinical research and promote transformational brain tumour research advances with the potential for rapid clinical translation. These programme grants are intended for pre-clinical studies. It is not the remit of this award to fund clinical trials.

Multidisciplinary teams working in synergy should be formed from the most talented and promising researchers across international institutions to address the issues and utilise technological advances across fields. Teams should be formed of researchers across at least two/three institutions. A researcher may serve as Principal Investigator on only one proposal in this grant round.

Funding

Funding of up to £1.5million per programme over five years is available.

This funding should be allocated to cover direct costs for staff, including salaries, consumables, equipment and publication costs. Requests for capital / infrastructure will not be considered since it is expected that this will be available at the Lead Institution as well as all partner organisations.

Grants will be awarded to the Principal Investigator's institution (called the Lead Institution). Funding can be allocated to co-investigator institutions with agreements put in place between all partner institutions. It is the Lead Institution's responsibility to put in place an arrangement to reimburse costs incurred by other institutions during the grant.

The award will be made in Pounds Sterling and will be cash limited at the point of award. It will be the responsibility of the Lead Institution to make conversions into other currencies. The Charity is not responsible for any fluctuations in exchange rate over the course of the programme. We advise that the Lead Institution establishes a corporate exchange rate agreement if conversion to other currencies is required.

Eligibility

- All grant applications must focus on the research priorities highlighted in our Research Strategy '[A Cure Can't Wait](#)'.
- This award is open to international researchers, but applications including a UK collaborator will be looked on favourably.
- The Principal Applicant must have a contract with the institution covering the duration of the grant. If the Principal Applicant does not hold an academic or research position, the application must include a co-applicant at the Lead Institution that does.

- The team should be comprised of both established and promising researchers from multidisciplinary backgrounds.
- The collaborative team should have the relevant expertise of laboratory and clinical researchers to demonstrate how discoveries will be translated and taken forward to patient benefit.
- All applications must have input from those affected by brain tumours as early as possible, preferably during scoping of the project.

Assessment criteria

- **Innovative and transformative research**
We are looking for novel approaches with a strong scientific rationale and the clear capacity to revolutionise treatments and/or clinical decision making. As such, we are seeking applications that are looking to develop new approaches or the translation of technologies for the use in the diagnosis or treatment of brain tumours. We encourage applications that adopt a high-risk, high reward approach to addressing the key questions preventing progress in brain tumour research.
- **Collaborative and multidisciplinary emphasis**
The application should show clear benefits in bringing together a collaborative team and demonstrate a synergy that potentiates the achievement of scientific goals that could not be realised by the individual components of the team. New avenues of research which involve experts currently working outside the brain tumour research field are encouraged.
- **Potential for patient benefit**
A potential pathway for the research programme to lead to patient benefit must be articulated as well as the anticipated impact of this. Applications with a clear path to clinical application will be strongly favoured.
- **Milestone and goal-driven approach**
The research programme must have detailed milestones which will be used for monitoring its progress and dictate continuation of support by The Charity.
- **Value for money and communication plans**
Clear plans and mechanisms for sharing resources and information across the team, including existing resources and platforms must also be demonstrated.

Evaluation of proposals

The Brain Tumour Charity is a member of the [Association of Medical Research Charities](#) (AMRC) and adheres to its principles of peer review. All applications will be considered by our [Biomedical Scientific Advisory Board](#) (SAB).

Reporting requirements

The Charity will require annual reports to assess the progress being made. We also use the online outcomes system Researchfish, and so will additionally expect updates to be submitted here.

Application instructions

The application form should be read in conjunction with these guidance notes and with The Brain Tumour Charity's [Terms and Conditions](#) downloadable from our website. By applying for a grant, you confirm your acceptance of these terms and conditions.

It is also recommended that you read our Research Strategy '[A Cure Can't Wait](#)' prior to writing your grant application to ensure that the research proposal complies with at least one of the key areas identified.

Please note that failure to correctly complete the form and abide by the word limits specified will result in your text being automatically cut off by the online grants portal when you have reached the word limit.

Letters of intent will be requested until **5 p.m. (London, UK time) on 28 July 2017**. Successful applicants will then be requested to submit a full proposal by 5 p.m. on 20 October 2017.

Applications must be submitted online through our online portal: <https://proposalcentral.altum.com>. Principal Investigators and Lead Institutions must set up an account on proposalCENTRAL. For help on

how to use the system, please visit: <https://proposalcentral.altum.com/Help.asp>

Examples of tutorials available:

- [How to Register your Institution with proposalCENTRAL](#)
- [How to Register as a proposalCENTRAL user](#)
- [How to Create an Application using proposalCENTRAL](#)
- [How to Customize your Browser](#)

For technical Customer Support please email pcsupport@altum.com or call +1 703 964 5840 (Direct Dial International) or 800 875 2562 (Toll-free U.S. and Canada). Normal Business Hours: 8:30am - 5:00pm Eastern Standard Time, i.e. 1.30pm – 10.00pm London time.

If you have a query regarding the grant round or would like to discuss your project, please contact us directly on: research@thebraintumourcharity.org or call +44 (0) 1252 418190.

Please note the following:

- All dates must be entered with the US format mm/dd/yyyy
- Despite the dollar \$ sign, ALL budget costs must be entered in Pounds Sterling

We understand these are issues and are working with proposalCENTRAL to resolve them. In the meantime, we ask that you bear with us and follow the above instructions.

If you have questions, issues or suggestions please do contact us at any stage so we can help you:

research@thebraintumourcharity.org or call +44 (0) 1252 418190.

Professional Profile

Please fill in your details regarding: contact information and personal data for applications (**mandatory data: email and phone number**), other support and publications. You may choose to link this to your ORCID identifier.

In 'Other Support' please include other grants you have received as this will be pulled through to the main application. In addition, please outline all related applications currently under consideration and describe how they relate to this programme (there is an option for Pending status).

Please ignore the Dollar \$ sign. Add the monetary value of your award as it was given to you and in the description add the currency in which this award was made.

In 'Publications' please note you can either manually populate the fields, or you can use the article's PMID, PMCID which will automatically populate them. In order for this to work, you must fill in the ID and then press 'Submit'.

Please note that your Title (e.g. Dr/Professor) is designated by the term '**PREFIX**' on proposalCENTRAL. Make sure you fill this in in your **Professional Profile-> 9) Account Information**.

We understand it will be a little time-consuming to fill in this level of detail, but please remember you will only have to do this once and that the system will hold this information for all future applications you wish to submit.

Call for applications

In order to find our calls for applications visit this quick access link:

<https://proposalcentral.altum.com/opportunities.asp?GMID=155>

Alternatively, once you have set yourself up on the system, you can click on 'Grant Opportunities' and then select The Brain Tumour Charity from the list of funders.

Once you have found the call you want to apply for, please click 'Apply Now'.

At any point of the application you may wish to save. You can do this by pressing the button 'Save' or simply by clicking 'Next'. Mandatory sections are denoted by a red star, which must be completed before final submission, however you can save your application throughout the process without these sections being completed.

Please note that **spaces count towards character limits**. In addition, please note that **the system does not allow symbol characters to be added**.

1) Title Page

Please enter a brief title for your programme grant.

2) Download Templates & Instructions

Here you can find our Guidance notes, the Call for Applications and Terms and Conditions.

3) Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal

If you wish to grant access of this application to other people, please do so here simply by typing in their email. We suggest that you allow your co-applicants access to your application so they may edit it as well (e.g. choose the permission 'Edit').

You may also wish to give your institution access to the application, as your senior administrative authority will be asked to sign the application on behalf of the Lead Institution (e.g. choose permission 'View').

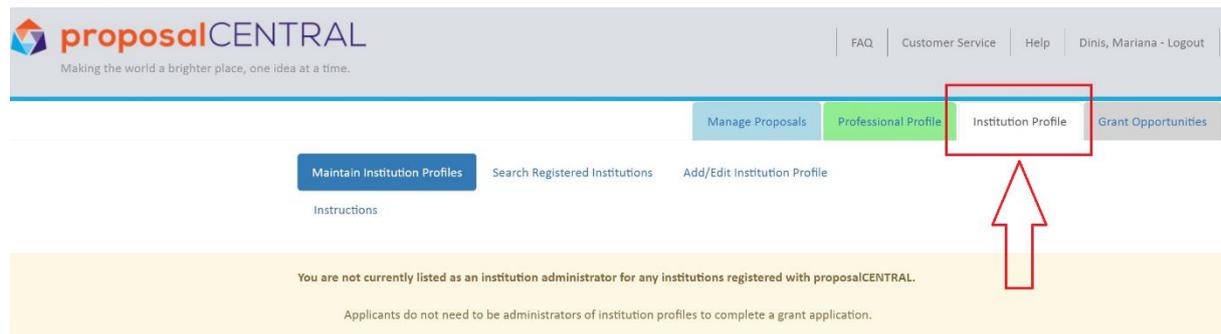
4) Applicant

Please provide contact details for the Principal Investigator who should be based at the Lead Institution. This should pull from your Profile, if you have already filled it in. If you haven't, please do take the time to fill it in at this stage.

To be eligible, the Principal Investigator must hold an academic or research position at the Lead Institution and hold an employment contract beyond the period of the grant.

5) Institution

Please provide details of your affiliated institution. This should pull from your profile, if you have already filled it in. If your institution is not yet registered, please do so on the 'Institution Profile' tab, followed by 'Add institution'.



6) Co-Applicants & Collaborators

Enter all the applicants' email addresses. A new window will then pop-up for you to fill in details regarding names, affiliated institutions, role on the programme and expertise details. After you have filled in the details, please click 'Save' and then 'Close window'.

Please note co-applicants and collaborators' institutions need to be added on the system if not already on the list. If this is not done, you will not be able to validate your application.

Please indicate how many hours each week each applicant spends on research and also specifically on this research grant. **Ignore the Phone and Effort shown on the table as we are not collecting this.**

7) Summary

Lay summary (Max 3500 characters)

Please provide a lay summary and title of the research proposed in plain English, this should be comprehensible by lay readers with no scientific background and should describe the full scope of the project. Note that this summary will be used by the Lay Scientific Advisory Board members as part of the assessment process. Describe the research project using plain, non-technical language; please include a glossary for any unavoidable scientific terminology.

Use the sub-headings given below to structure your summary:

1. Aims of the research programme
 - What is already known about the problem that the project will address
 - What you hope to find out
2. Why this research is needed
 - How the results of the research could benefit those affected by a brain tumour – be as specific as possible
 - How the research offers value for money
3. How this research will be carried out
 - Describe the methods and techniques you plan to use in this proposal
 - Describe any involvement of those affected by a brain tumour (including the Research Involvement Network*)
4. Dissemination and implementation plans
 - Dissemination plans for the outcomes of your project – be as specific as possible

- How the findings from the project could be put into practice or developed after completion of the project
- Outline any plans to involve the Research Involvement Network in the dissemination of results*

*To learn more about Public Patient Involvement (PPI) and the help our Research Involvement Network (RIN) can offer, please see: www.thebraintumourcharity.org/ppi. You may also find it helpful to refer to the AMRC's [Guidance for researchers – writing lay summaries](#) downloadable from our website. If your application is successful, the lay summary will be used by The Charity to publicise our research portfolio, so please do not include any confidential or commercially sensitive information in the summary.

Scientific Summary (Max 2100 characters)

Please provide a summary of the research proposed for a scientifically qualified assessor. **This will be used in the first instance for peer reviewing purposes.**

Keywords

Please select keywords which best describe your research, including tumour type. These will be used in the first instance to find peer reviewers for your application. If you want to add a keyword that is not on the list, please use the 'Other' box above.

Please select ALL the categories shown that are relevant to this application. You MUST choose at least one of each of the following categories: High and/or Low grade AND Adult and/or Paediatric tumour.

8) Letter of Intent

Please upload here your Letter of Intent. This Letter must be no larger than three pages plus cover letter, minimum font size Arial 10 with single spacing and must mention:

- What this programme will seek to address.
- How this programme could represent a paradigm shift for brain tumour research or use.
- Unexplored paths to allow for new discoveries to be made.
- How this programme is multi-disciplinary and multi-national.
- How this programme utilises technological advances across fields.
- What co-applicants or collaborators will bring to this programme.
- How this programme fits with our Research Strategy '[A Cure Can't Wait](#)'.

9) Validate

Once you're happy with your application, please click on Validate to see if any of the mandatory fields are yet to be filled in. A yellow box will show up detailing any missing information.

10) Submit

Once your application has been validated and there are no more errors, please click 'Submit'. Please note this must be done before **5 p.m. (London, UK time) on 28 July 2017**. After you submit, you will not be able to make any changes to your application.

When you submit, an automated email will be sent to the Principal Investigator to confirm submission. If this email is not received within ten minutes; please contact proposalCENTRAL [Customer Service](#) team for assistance.

Further information

If you have further questions about making an application, please contact the Research Team.

Email: research@thebraintumourcharity.org

Call: +44 (0) 1252 418190