

Future Leaders

Funding the future scientific leaders of research into the causes and treatment of brain tumours

About us

The Brain Tumour Charity is a patient-led organisation in the UK driven by a vision of a world where brain tumours are defeated. We fund pioneering research to increase survival, raise awareness of the symptoms and effects of brain tumours and provide support for everyone affected to improve quality of life.

We are focused on increasing survival and improving quality of life for everyone affected by a brain tumour. We know that brain tumours have a disproportionately high impact on children and young adults compared with other cancers, resulting in high premature mortality and thus brain tumours are the biggest cancer killer of the under 40s. We are also committed to taking every step necessary to improve the quality of life of everyone affected by brain tumours. We will identify ways of modifying patient management and pathways to optimise quality of life.

Our *strategic goals* are designed to make a step change in the overall experience of our community and are necessarily and unashamedly ambitious:

- Double survival within 10 years
- Halve the harm that brain tumours have on quality of life within 5 years

As part of this plan we have launched *A Cure Can't Wait*: our Research Strategy.

Purpose and scope

There is a need to develop the workforce and support the future leaders of scientific research in the brain tumour field, whilst delivering The Charity's Research Strategy, *A Cure Can't Wait*.

This funding scheme has been established to identify excellent early stage non-clinical researchers and support them through their career to enable them to establish themselves and develop their research in the brain tumour field.

Funding

The scheme runs in three parts, with only those entering the scheme as postdoctoral researchers eligible for the latter grants.

The initial stage is to support a named **postdoctoral fellow** over a period of three years. The funding limit is £180,000 over this period and the application must address one of the areas identified in *A Cure Can't Wait*.

At the end of this period, successful applicants will be invited to submit a further application for **junior fellowship** available for four years of funding totalling up to £480,000 to support themselves and a research associate in a host laboratory. The programme of work should continue to develop the themes they have been working on as a postdoctoral fellow. It is expected, however, that the researcher will begin to develop their own group and independent research.

Finally, upon successful application, a **senior fellowship** will be awarded for five years and up to £1,000,000 to support the applicant and a small group. Again, the research should be carried out in a host laboratory that will enable the further development of the applicant to become a fully independent group leader. This senior post must be at a UK university or institute.

All rounds will be competitively assessed with interview panels being convened for the junior and senior fellowships. Applicants will be encouraged to find different host institutions, and thus different mentors, throughout the process to ensure a diverse exposure to techniques and concepts.

Successful applicants will be expected to engage with The Charity to build a network of researchers and promote this scheme and the aims of The Charity.

Application process

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).

Initial applications should be made by a Principal Applicant with a named postdoctoral researcher. Evidence must be provided that the named researcher is of the highest calibre and has the potential to be a future leader of the field.

Applications must be submitted online through our portal:

<https://proposalcentral.altum.com>. Please take the time to get familiar with the site and start filling in your profile.

Deadlines to be announced.

Eligibility criteria

- All grant applications must focus on the research priorities highlighted in our Research Strategy *A Cure Can't Wait*.
- This scheme is initially open to international researchers. However, Senior Fellowships must be taken up at a UK university or institute.
- The named postdoctoral researcher must, at the date of the call deadline, be in possession of a doctoral degree. Clinicians moving into full time laboratory based research are welcome to apply, providing they also fulfil the above criteria.
- The named postdoctoral researcher's previous research need not necessarily be in the brain tumour field, but they must be able to demonstrate how they will apply their prior learning to the study of brain tumours.
- Only applicants who have been awarded a Postdoctoral Fellowship on the scheme are eligible to apply for a Junior Fellowship. Following that, only applicants who have been awarded a Junior Fellowship are eligible to apply for a Senior Fellowship.
- Applicants should seek different mentors, at different host institutions, throughout the process to ensure a diverse exposure to techniques and concepts.
- The host institution should provide additional transferable skills training to the fellow, such as planning and writing of publications, project management, supervision of junior lab members and presentations in conferences and to the general public.
- As they go through the scheme, fellows are expected to show greater maturity and independence from their mentors.

Assessment Criteria

- **Potential of the fellow**
The fellow must be appropriately trained and be able to demonstrate a strong track record in scientific research. They should be well suited to carry out the planned studies and applications must contribute to the development of the fellow, allowing them to reach a position of professional maturity/independence.
- **Expertise of mentors**
Mentors must be well positioned to provide the fellow with appropriate training, supervision and mentoring to help them establish themselves as independent researchers.
- **Methodology**
Projects must have a sound approach and methodology in order to address the questions raised while exposing the fellow to different techniques.
- **Potential for patient benefit**
A potential pathway for the research project 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.
- **Value for money**
Projects must demonstrate that the funds requested are essential for the work and how these represent value for money.

Key Dates

Deadlines to be announced.

For this first year of the scheme, only postdoctoral fellowships will be available.

This scheme will open to new postdoctoral fellowship applications every 2 years.

Further information

- Guidance notes will be made available soon on our website
- All applications shall have input from those affected by brain tumours as early as possible. To facilitate this you may choose to engage The Charity's Research Involvement Network (RIN), a virtual network of people who either have a brain tumour themselves or care for someone who does. Information on contacting the RIN can be found at thebraintumourcharity.org/PPI
- If you have any queries or would like to discuss your application, please do get in touch with us:

E-mail: research@thebraintumourcharity.org

Phone: +44 (0) 1252 418 190