

Future Leaders– Letter of Intent Guidance notes



Research | Awareness | Support

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

Purpose and Scope

In order to support The Charity's goals of doubling survival and halving the harm, 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. This scheme is open to applications focusing on either biomedical or quality of life issues.

Funding

The scheme runs in three parts (Postdoctoral Fellowship, Junior Fellowship and Senior Fellowship), with only those entering the scheme as postdoctoral researchers eligible for the latter grants. 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. It is envisaged that the Senior Fellowship will be based in the UK and, as such, only applicants open to move to the UK should apply.

The initial stage, currently open, 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 a Junior Fellowship, available for four years of funding totaling 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 all fellowships, either in person or via video conferencing. 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.

We are now opening the first stage of this scheme for Postdoctoral Fellows. Only applicants who have been awarded a Postdoctoral Fellowship on the scheme will be eligible to apply for a Junior Fellowship. Following that, only applicants who have been awarded a Junior Fellowship will be eligible to apply for a Senior Fellowship.

This funding should be allocated to cover direct costs for the salary of the Postdoctoral Fellow, consumables, minor equipment and publication costs. As a member of the [Association of Medical Research Charities](#) (AMRC), and in line with their guidelines, **The Brain Tumour Charity will only reimburse direct research costs.** The Charity will not fund indirect costs nor will it pay on a percentage basis. (Please note that that for UK-based institutions, The Charity will not pay the apprenticeship levy on salary costs as recently introduced by the UK government.)

Requests for capital/infrastructure will not be considered since it is expected that this will be available at the Host Institution. Grants will be awarded to the Fellow's institution (called the Host Institution).

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 Host Institution to make conversions into other currencies. The Charity is not responsible for any fluctuations in exchange rate over the course of the grant.

Eligibility

- 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 Mentor must hold an employment contract beyond the period of the grant.
- 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.
- All applications shall have input from those affected by brain tumours as early as possible, preferably during scoping of the project. You may choose to access our [Research Involvement Network \(RIN\)](#) for Public Patient Involvement.

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. At all applications stages, Fellows must evidence now their willingness to relocate to the UK to take up a Senior Fellowship.
- **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. There should be identifiable programmes for personal development at the Host Institution that the Fellow can be enrolled upon.
- **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. Leveraging matching funding from other organisations will be favoured.

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 [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.

Letters of Intent will be requested until 5 p.m. (London, UK time) on 28 July 2017. This MUST be submitted by the Mentor.

Successful applications will then be requested to submit a full proposal by 5 p.m. (London, UK time) on 20 October 2017. This MUST be submitted by the aspiring Fellow.

Applications must be submitted online through our online portal: <https://proposalcentral.altum.com>.

Applicants and 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 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.

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

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.

The Letter of Intent **MUST** be submitted by the Mentor. Successful applications will then be requested to submit a full proposal. The full proposal **MUST** be submitted by the aspiring Fellow. This means that for the Letter of Intent, the Professional Profile **MUST** be filled in by the Mentor and for the full proposal this **MUST** be filled in by the aspiring Fellow.

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 project (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.**

The screenshot shows the 'Contents of Professional Profile' page on proposalCENTRAL. The 'Account Information' section is highlighted with a red box. A red arrow points to the 'Prefix' field, which contains 'Dr'. The form includes fields for Name, Email, First Name, Middle Name, Maiden Name, Last Name, Suffix, Primary E-Mail Address, and User Login/ID. The footer shows the Altum logo and copyright information.

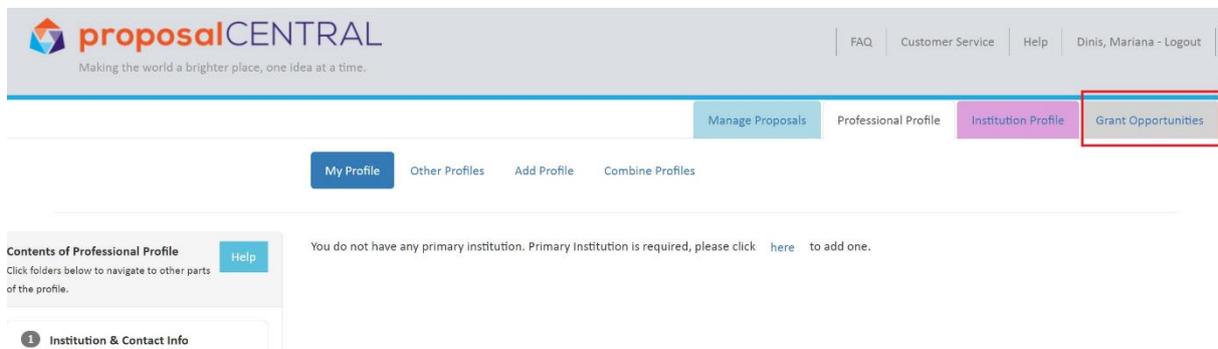
We understand it will be a little time-consuming to fill in this level of detail, but please remember you will only have to do this once and that the system will hold this information for all future applications you wish to submit.

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.

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 the Fellow access to the Letter of Intent 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 Host Institution (e.g. choose permission 'View').

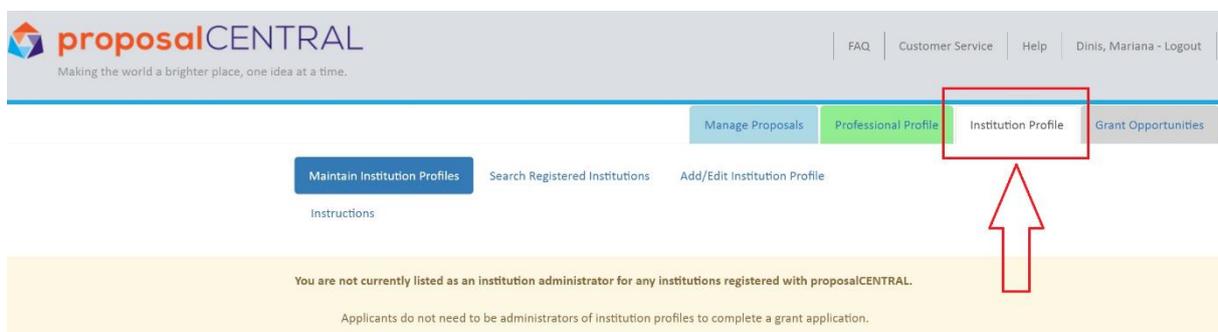
4) Applicant

The Letter of Intent MUST be submitted by the Mentor. Please provide contact details for the Mentor who should be based at the Host 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 Mentor must hold an academic or research position at the Host Institution and hold an employment contract beyond the period of the grant.

Successful applications will then be requested to submit a full proposal. The full proposal MUST be submitted by the aspiring Fellow.

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

Fellowships, due to their nature, are not expected to have co-applicants. Collaborators are allowed if it is justified that they bring value to the project (e.g., allowing Fellow to learn a different technique at a collaborator's lab for a short period of time).

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: 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.

We encourage you to use the RIN as early as possible as it is expected that you obtain patient involvement in the shaping of your project.

If your application is successful, the lay summary and sentence 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, minimum font size Arial 10 with single spacing and must mention:

- Details of the work relation between the Mentor and the Fellow.
- Reasons for the Mentor to support the Fellow, details of what this person and their lab will bring to this fellowship and what they will provide to the Fellow.
- Details of commitment of Fellow to continue on this scheme, applying for Junior Fellowship and, if successful, for Senior Fellowship and, importantly, take this fellowship up in the UK.
- Details of Fellow's scientific contribution to date and Fellow's commitment to research into brain tumours.
- Details of how this fellowship will be the first step towards independence of the Fellow.
- Briefly describe how the project fits with our Research Strategy [A Cure Can't Wait](#).
- Short summary of the research project the Fellow would undertake.

It is also MANDATORY that you submit a CV for both the Mentor and the Fellow on this section.

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 Mentor 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