



GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS: PhD Studentships

PLEASE READ IN FULL, APPLICATIONS THAT DO NOT FOLLOW THE STIPULATIONS WITHIN THESE GUIDELINES ARE UNLIKELY TO BE CONSIDERED.

Background

Bowel Research UK (BRUK) is seeking high quality applications for consideration at its funding round in April 2022. Proposals are welcome of up to £120,000 over 3 years full time, and 6 years part-time, to support PhD students in areas relating to diseases of the lower gastrointestinal tract, including, **but not limited to**, bowel cancer, inflammatory bowel disease and irritable bowel syndrome. Awards will be made in December 2022.

We aim to deliver our vision by funding scientific and clinical research to save lives and improve the quality of life of individuals with bowel cancer or other bowel diseases. We support ways that involve the public in the design and delivery of research.

The charity operates out of both the Royal College of Surgeons and the National Bowel Research Centre in London. The charity's grants committee is fully independent and has a breadth of expertise. Details of the individuals on this committee can be found in the Research section of our website: [Our Research Grants Committee - Bowel Research UK :Bowel Research UK](#)

Bowel Research UK was launched in September 2020, following the merger between Bowel & Cancer Research and the Bowel Disease Research Foundation. Bowel & Cancer Research was founded in 1990 by Professor Sir Norman Williams , President of the Royal College of Surgeons (Eng.) from 2011 to 2014. Professor Sir Norman is now the charity's lifetime President.

BRUK PhD Studentships

A minimum of two PhD Studentship awards are made annually. Projects should be designed with the aim of bringing tangible benefits closer for people who are suffering bowel cancer, chronic bowel disease or who are living with a permanent stoma, today and in the future.

Support will be given to:

- Experimental medicine
- Innovation; therapeutic, diagnostic or devices
- Pilot studies

Eligibility

- **The Principal Investigator (PI) must be based at a UK institution.**
- The project must focus on a specific research question (or questions). Funding directed toward general infrastructure development is not provided.
- The project must elucidate a sound hypothesis, the response to which aims to deliver clear patient benefit, and must have a clearly defined human disease focus.
- The main focus of funding should generally fall under the umbrella of experimental medicine (study of human disease in humans or human tissue), innovation (therapeutic, diagnostic or monitoring devices: EU Directive 2007/47/EC) or clinical trials (outcomes research). In general, the charity does not support studies using experimental animals.
- Bowel Research UK will cover the costs of the student stipend and consumables but will normally not cover senior staff or other HEFCE funded posts.
- Bowel Research UK will normally not consider an application from a PI already in receipt of an existing PhD grant until the original project is completed and a satisfactory final report has been submitted.

Application process

- The award scheme is a one stage process for applicants.
- Completed applications should be submitted via our CC Grant Tracker grants management portal *bruk.ccgranttracker.com*
- All applications received will be considered and rated by the grants committee. The rating process will identify a number of projects to go forward for peer review.
- All applicants will be informed by email the decision on taking their application forward.
- Peer review will be sought.
- Shortlisted applications with associated peer reviews will be considered again by the grants committee in the autumn and funding decisions will be made.
- Email and offer letters will go out following the grants committee and subsequent board approval, to inform all applicants of decisions.
- The grants committee's decision is final. While it is happy to provide a brief feedback on unsuccessful applications at this stage, this cannot be viewed as an opportunity to amend or clarify an application on which the decision has already been made and no further correspondence will be entered into.

Project assessment criteria

Projects are reviewed by at least two external reviewers and the members of the Bowel Research UK's grants committee. Assessment is made on the following criteria:

- Importance (clinical need, originality, likelihood of delivering patient benefit)
- Student experience (a first class learning environment for the student)
- Scientific potential (applicant's and centre's track record in the field)
- Research plans (design, feasibility and meeting award eligibility criteria)
- Justification of resources

Key Dates:

Call: 20th April 2022

Submission deadline for application: 5pm BST Friday 1st July 2022

Initial selection: September 2022

Guidance on filling in the application form

All sections must be completed in CC Grant Tracker. In general, the information required is self-explanatory. However, once registered there is detailed guidance on how to use CC Grant Tracker via 'system help' and the Portal Guidance document details how to navigate your way around the portal.

Lay Summary

This section will appear on the Bowel Research UK's website and partner websites and is critical to raising awareness of research. It **MUST** therefore be a LAY summary; the word limit must be adhered to. The following are suggestions:

- ✓ The first sentence is crucial - could you explain your research in 25 words?
- ✓ What is the wow factor?
- ✓ Hypothesis supporting pilot data is KEY. We cannot assess an application without a clear hypothesis and an illustration of the pilot data you have generated to support this.
- ✓ Avoid technical and scientific terms, acronyms and abbreviations. If you do use one explain it;
- ✓ Use short, simple words and plain language; use every day (Anglo-Saxon) words; avoid Latin-based words - ideally avoid Latin altogether.
- ✓ Use short, simple sentences - sentences should be less than 25 words long.
- ✓ Provide context. Give concrete (everyday) examples - paint a picture for the reader.
- ✓ Ensure that the text indicates where the research is taking place.
- ✓ Be very clear about what your proposal will deliver for people with the condition that you are investigating. Finish with a sentence that gives an indication of what the benefit of your research for this group of people will be.
- ✓ Lay summaries must be lay! Please consider carefully how you would explain your research to a member of the public.

Confidentiality

Project applications are considered confidential by the Grants committee and reviewers. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that this confidentiality is not breached.