 

**GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS: PORT Small Grants**

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

**Background**

**Pseudo Obstruction Research Trust (PORT) and Bowel Research UK are delighted to announce that PORT grants are now open.**

The Pseudo Obstruction Research Trust (PORT) was formed in 2006, with the aim of funding research into the rare and debilitating diseases Chronic Intestinal Pseudo Obstruction (CIPO),, severe dysmotility, gastroparesis and other rare gastrointestinal neuromuscular disorders, as well as the frequent complication of these conditions, intestinal failure. Bowel Research UK is dedicated to finding effective treatments to bowel disease, to save lives and to help people suffering with bowel conditions to enjoy a better quality of life. Bowel Research UK and the Pseudo Obstruction Research Trust are passionate about supporting research in this field and since 2017 we have joined forces to co-ordinate an annual grant call.

**Pseudo Obstruction Research Trust are providing funding up to £100,000 for this new research call.**

PORT and Bowel Research UK have opened this new grant call to provide financial support for the collection of proof-of-concept data that will enable a high-quality competitive application to be made subsequently to a research council or other large funder.

Bowel Research UK will provide the support services for grant awarding and management purposes regarding this call.  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](https://www.bowelresearchuk.org/our-research/our-research-grants-committee/)

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.

**PORT Small Grants Funding**

Two small project grants will be awarded in this round. We particularly welcome applications from researchers at an early stage of their career as we aim to support and develop future research talent.

Funding is provided for time-limited research projects that in general will aim to provide proof-of-principle preliminary data such that the applicants can use the findings to apply subsequently for more substantive 3-5 year funding from a national public funder e.g. CRUK, MRC, NIHR, Wellcome. The maximum amount awarded is £50,000.

Funded by the general public, PORT is keen to fund research into  CIPO, raise public and professional awareness of the condition and improve understanding of and treatment options for CIPO. Although this grant scheme is for preliminary data collection, any successful application will be based upon presentation of a clear hypothesis; pilot data already gathered to support this hypothesis should be clearly provided in evidence.

Similarly, any requirement for statistical modelling or the use of statistics within a project MUST be clearly demonstrated.

**Eligibility**

* The project **must** focus on a specific research question (or questions). Funding directed toward general infrastructure development is not provided.
* The study **should** be a discrete piece of work. We are unlikely to fund research that is a component part of a larger body of funded work unless the applicant can provide a compelling rationale as to why the work:
  + Stands alone on its own merits with resulting publications and opportunities for dissemination etc.
  + Explores a clearly defined new avenue of research that can be complementary to, but not a small part of, the main body of work.
* We encourage applicants to consider how to provide items of kit or other consumables that may be able to sponsored, donated or otherwise contributed by a commercial partner rather than relying on our funding to provide these.
* The project **must** focus on a question that delivers patient benefit. This need not be within the timescale of the PORT funding, however clear indication should be given of how subsequent funding, if successful, would lead to patient benefit within a reasonable timescale. On this basis, applications should have a definite human disease focus.
* If successful, the applicant **must** be willing to maintain a long term relationship with us so that any progress made or significant milestones achieved following the final reporting of the research can be appropriately acknowledged. We will expect a final report on the work to be delivered 12 months after the end of grant report.
* The charity welcomes applications which avoid the use of experimental animals. As a member of the AMRC, it supports the AMRC statement on the use of animals in medical research, a link to which can be found on the website [PhD & Small Grants application processes - Bowel Research UK :Bowel Research UK](https://www.bowelresearchuk.org/our-research/phd-small-grants-application-processes/)

**Costing of research**

In common with other charity funders, PORT will consider funding only the direct costs associated with the project. It will not fund overhead allocation or other indirect costs, including senior or supervisory posts which are already covered by HEFCE funding.

**Other**

Any successful applicant must appropriately acknowledge PORT funding in any papers, posters or other academic materials relating to the research, using our logo where appropriate. We **must** have the opportunity to approve this before going to print on any materials. We must also have the opportunity to participate in any PR, public engagement or involvement work relating to the research.

**Application process**

* The award scheme is a one stage process for applicants.
* Completed applications should be submitted using BRUK’s 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 of the decision on taking their application forward.
* Peer review of shortlisted applications will be sought.
* Shortlisted applications with associated peer reviews will be considered again by the grants committee and funding decisions will be made.
* Email and offer letters will go out following the grants committee meeting and subsequent board approval, to inform all applicants of decisions.
* The grants committee’s decision is final.

**Project assessment criteria**

Shortlisted 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)
* Scientific potential (applicant’s and centre’s track record in the field)
* Research plans (design, feasibility and meeting award eligibility criteria)
* Justification of resources requested

**Key Dates:**

Call: Monday 11th July 2022

Submission deadline for application: 5pm BST Friday 2nd September 2022

Initial selection: December 2022

Notification of awards: April 2023

**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 both the PORT and 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.