



The Kennedy Trust for Rheumatology Research

Grant Awarding Policy

Version Control

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The Kennedy Trust for Rheumatology Research

Grant Awarding Policy

Objects of the Kennedy Trust for Rheumatology Research

Under the terms of its Articles of Association, the Trust applies funds at its discretion:

- a) to provide financial and other support for research and development of basic science underpinning clinical research and its translation into improving ill health caused by rheumatic and related musculoskeletal and related inflammatory diseases; and
- b) to provide financial and other support for research and development of clinical and scientific knowledge of rheumatology and related musculoskeletal diseases.

Priorities for support

The Trust will continue to support the Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology in line with its rolling 10-year agreement with the University of Oxford. Applications from other research institutions or funders of scientific research will be considered in respect of:

- i. the furtherance of knowledge concerning rheumatic and related musculoskeletal diseases as well as other related chronic inflammatory disorders through innovative peer-reviewed academic research;
- ii. achieving a meaningful impact in the development of cures and preventative treatment for these conditions;
- iii. underpinning central services and facilities to enable researchers to carry out world leading research;
- iv. supporting talented individuals wishing to develop a career in research in fields related to the Trust's priority areas;
- v. pilot studies and proof-of-concept studies in the designated areas of higher risk research, which could establish whether major funding is justified;
- vi. bringing together different disciplines to work on specific issues in the relevant fields.

These priorities will be kept under review and may be changed in accordance with the Trust's view of the most effective application of available funds.

Principles

The Trust expects the highest standards of integrity to be adhered to by the researchers it funds. Host institutions must have in place their own published standard of good research practice and formal written procedures for the handling of allegations of research misconduct.

Host institutions must also ensure that, before the activity funded by the grant commences and during the full grant period, all the necessary legal and regulatory requirements in order to conduct the research are met, and all the necessary licences and approvals have been obtained.

As a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC), the Trust supports the principle of using animals in research when it is necessary. Host institutions must ensure that

research involving the use of animals complies at all times with the relevant laws and regulations in the host country and that all necessary licences are in place before any work requiring approval takes place. Host institutions should also follow the guidance set out in 'Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research' at <https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/responsibility-use-animals-bioscience-research>.

Funding streams

1. The Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology

The Trust supports the Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology (KIR) in accordance with a rolling 10-year agreement with the University of Oxford which is reviewed and renewed every 5 years. In line with the agreement, the Trust agrees an 8-year research strategy and indicative funding envelope with the Institute's Director. Funding is provided in the form of core support, studentships, fellowships, research grants and a discretionary fund for the Institute's Director.

All proposals received from the Institute are expected to fall within the agreed 8-year strategy. Such proposals are reviewed by the Research Committee before approval by the Board of Trustees. Any proposals or new initiatives falling outside of the agreed strategy are subject to external peer review prior to assessment by the Research Committee.

An independent, four-person Trust Scientific Review Board (TSRB) is appointed every four years to assess the performance of the KIR and to validate the Trust's funding. In addition, the KIR is also assessed biennially by its own Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), which includes a Kennedy Trust representative who provides an independent report to the Board of Trustees.

2. Independent initiatives

In addition to the continued funding of the KIR, the Trust also provides funding for other strategic response-mode funding carried out at institutions across the UK. These initiatives are primarily established by identifying areas of strategic need and issuing targeted calls for proposals evaluated by independent peer review. The Trust periodically undertakes a comprehensive strategic review of its funding priorities. Full details of the application process for each initiative are set out in the letter of invitation.

All research applications funded through this route undergo rigorous peer review, through an independent Review Panel and, where appropriate, additional external peer review expertise. In all cases, applications are assessed according to the scheme's criteria and the expert panel provides its recommendations for funding to the Board of Trustees through the Research Committee.

The Trust will also consider informal approaches from research institutions and other funders of scientific research for new funding initiatives in line with the Trust's strategic direction. Personal applications are not accepted.

Terms and conditions for grant awards

Successful applicants and institutions are required to adhere to the Trust's standard Conditions and Terms of Grant Awards and any additional conditions stated in the Grant Award Letter.

A Grant Activation Certificate must be signed within 30 days of the grant start date to activate the award and confirm acceptance of these terms.

Payment of grant awards

The Trust will normally make payments quarterly in arrears on the basis of expenditure information received.

Monitoring and audit

The Trust places great weight in the overview of performance and impact of its funded research and has a policy to monitor the progress of all grants awarded. This is in the spirit of enabling and supporting the optimal performance of its funded research, also allowing the Trust to share the value and impact of its funded research as widely as possible.

All grant holders are expected to maintain good lines of communication with the Trust and highlight changes to their grant, challenges and concerns at an early juncture. Equally, news about progress and information of new findings are expected to be shared proactively with the Trust. All grant holders are required to submit a standard annual Researchfish report detailing any outcomes that have been generated from the supported grant. Grant holders outside of the KIR are additionally required to complete a standard annual Progress Report.

Applications for a no-cost extension to a grant must be submitted in writing at least 3 months prior to the grant end date.

Following the conclusion of a grant, all grant holders are expected to submit a standard Final Expenditure Report within 3 months of the grant end date. Grant holders outside of the KIR are additionally required to complete a standard End of Grant Report.

Acknowledgement and publication

The Trust expects that findings from the research it funds will be published in an appropriate form, usually as papers in peer-reviewed journals. The Trust's contributions must be acknowledged in all publications as well as in abstracts and talks at conferences and meetings

Grant holders are expected to follow the Trust's policy on open access

Where the research supported has the potential to produce intellectual property that may be of medical or commercial value, the host institution must follow the Intellectual Property and Commercial Activities principles set out in the Trust's Conditions and Terms of Grant Awards.

Preparation of this Policy

This policy was prepared in line with external guidance and rules on grant awarding, including by the Charity Commission (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/grant-funding-an-organisation-that-isnt-a-charity>).