

Call for Kennedy Trust *Research Ignition Awards 2023*

Application guidance notes



Context and introduction

The Kennedy Trust is a focussed charitable trust whose mission is to provide sustainable, long-term funding of medical research into rheumatic and related musculoskeletal, immunological and inflammatory diseases. With the goal of stimulating new and ambitious avenues of research, we are seeking incisive and cutting-edge project applications for awards of up to £100k over 1-2 years. The awards will be highly flexible and designed to support a wide range of research costs to seed funding of larger programmes of ambitious clinical, translational or basic research. They will be available to investigators at all stages of independent research careers, although the Trust would like to particularly encourage applications from mid-career investigators.

What the Kennedy Trust is looking for

- **A focus on relevant higher-risk questions:** the funding is intended to prime research in areas that have a clear relation to disease pathways of rheumatological, musculoskeletal and related inflammatory disorders where the scientific evidence is still being accumulated and needs a major boost, and/or where questions are not being routinely investigated by other researchers.
- **The potential to break new ground:** A strong case that the larger question holds importance and, if answered, would significantly move the field on. It is understood that the pump priming award would be aimed at developing further evidence towards larger programmatic funding, rather than addressing the question in full in its own right.
- **Providing impetus to the field:** where other researchers are likely to follow towards the bigger question.
- **Enabling collaboration and interdisciplinary science:** Breaking barriers and encouraging novel research across major disciplines is encouraged e.g. AI, physical sciences and the application of novel technologies.
- **Areas of science:** the research does not have to be focussed explicitly on rheumatological or related musculoskeletal conditions, providing that there is credible evidence that the work has the potential to impact directly or indirectly on the understanding of these conditions.

What applicants can expect

- **Rapid application and review process:** Applications will need to provide sufficient detail of the planned research and be exceptionally well-written, including accessibility to lay audiences. However, the application process will be designed to set out new science without onerous levels of detail and repetition. The Trust will use full peer review including our Research Committee, but we commit to ensuring that the applications will be rapidly evaluated and approved for funding within 5 months of the submission deadline.
- **Scale and flexibility:** £100k over 12-24 months to be used on any area of research costs, including posts, but excluding PhD studentships. Research that harnesses new technology or new techniques, including access to equipment and/or training in new technologies, particularly across laboratories and institutions is encouraged. Applications presenting realistic and well-argued budgets for the scientific question will be prioritised.
- **Broad eligibility:** The Trust will allow any UK based researcher to hold a Research Ignition Award, providing they hold a position at a recognised UK research institution for the full period of the award at the time of award commencement. All stages of independent basic and clinical research careers will be eligible to apply, but priority will be given to mid-career researchers who are not yet tenured. Joint applications between senior group leaders and more junior researchers will be allowed, providing that the funder is convinced that the collaboration is genuine and there is clear benefit for each party. Collaborations with international investigators are also encouraged.
- **Opportunity to network and share:** These awards are designed for collaborative activity across disciplines. Opportunity to travel and work across laboratories, including internationally, will be encouraged. The nature and scale of the costs associated with the collaborative activities supporting the application should be articulated clearly in the application form.

How to apply

The deadline for the receipt of applications is 26th June 2023.

This is a single-stage application process and funding decisions will be reviewed by an expert panel with final awards being approved at our autumn Board meeting in October 2023.

Please read the application and guidance document before starting an application and ensure that the most appropriate language is being used in each section of the form and that the correct sections are completed.

Submit applications to submissions@kennedytrust.org. Further enquiries can be made by contacting the Kennedy Trust's Grants Manager Zoe Montanaro at z.montanaro@kennedytrust.org.

Applicants are asked to give notification of their intention to apply for the awards by submitting [this short form](#) by 31st May 2023. Applications will still be accepted if a notice of intent has not been provided.

Application form guidance notes

A. Project description (maximum 3 pages A4)

1. Background to the proposal

Please set out the context to the proposal together with a short summary of your relevant research over the last five years and any work which has led to this proposal, including a description of your most notable scientific contributions. The background should clearly set out the bigger question to be addressed and why it is important for the field. It should be compelling but written in clear and concise language and readily understandable to a range of scientific audiences. The plan of how the research will eventually seed larger scale funding should be set out in the background and evidenced in the aims and plan of investigation.

2. Aims and objectives

Set out the research questions you plan to address and explain why these are important. Also set out your short and long-term objectives and describe how these will advance the field.

3. Plan of investigation

Provide an appropriately detailed plan of investigation, including a description of the approach to be taken and any milestones. Graphs and figures may be embedded in the text where they clearly support the context of the application.

4. Justification for resources requested

Provide details of the roles and responsibilities of any support staff being applied for and justification for non-staff costs. Where animal costs are being applied for please explain why these are necessary. Explain why any equipment is needed and why it cannot be provided by the host institution.

5. Scientific references

Please provide only the most relevant scientific references, using citations in full, including title of paper and all authors.

B. Budget details

Provide a full breakdown of costs being applied for. Given the short duration of the awards, we expect applicants to build in appropriate adjustments for inflation within the overall £100k budget. All equipment and animal costs should be separately identified. The Trust does not pay indirect costs.

D. Details of proposed collaborators

Provide details of collaborations you expect with either academia or industry, including names and a brief outline of how that collaboration will work and its benefits towards the aims of the project.

E. Applicant's CV

Please provide a succinct CV as a separate PDF with the application. Please ensure that this includes a list of publications from the last three years plus up to five key prior publications (with citations in full). Also list any grants held in the last five years (including name of awarding body, title of project, start and end dates, and value of award).