RESEARCH GRANTS:

guidelines for applicants

The
Dunhill
Medical
Trust

These guidelines apply only to applications for Research Project and Research Programme grants.

Separate guidelines are available for:

- **Research-related grants** buildings and equipment to be used primarily for research).

- **Research Training Fellowships** are designed to develop research capacity in the fields of ageing, rehabilitation and palliative care. From time to time the scheme will announce calls for proposals.

- **A Joint Research Fellowship Programme** is operated through partnership arrangements with Royal Colleges and other professional bodies to whom initial enquiries should be directed.

Please do visit the Trust's website before making an application to ensure that your proposal falls within our criteria for funding. If you still find you need specific advice regarding your application, please contact the Trust's office.

A   Types of research grants

Typically, applications for research grants are considered under two broad headings:

- programme grants
- project grants (including pilot studies and proof of concept studies)

Exceptionally the Trust may endow academic posts working within DMT's areas of priority interest.

B   Eligible Organisations

- All higher education institutions (HEIs) within the UK;

- NHS Trusts and hospitals; Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs); GP practices which have formal academic links with an HEI;

- Appropriate independent not-for-profit research organisations (IROs) within the UK which are established to conduct research for the public good and which place results in the public domain.

C   Eligible Applicants

C1   Principal Investigators (PIs)

The Principal Investigator (Lead Applicant) should be the person responsible for the research. He/she may not be the person whose salary is being applied for as the main funding.

The PI will be expected to demonstrate that he/she is based in a strong research environment with a suitable skill mix in the research team (with other members of

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the team being named as Co-Investigators). Single applicant proposals will not be considered.

Principal Investigators (Lead Applicants) should be experienced researchers, i.e.:

- Academics (normally at senior lecturer level or above or equivalent); or

- Clinicians (normally at consultant level or equivalent); or

- Allied health professionals (normally at post-doctoral level or with equivalent research experience), or

- other appropriately qualified professionals with a strong involvement in the health of older people (normally at senior scientist level, or equivalent) who are employees of an eligible organisation (as defined above) holding:

  - a permanent post, or

  - a fixed term post which extends beyond the duration of the grant.

C2 Co-Investigators (CoIs)

Co-Investigators (Co-Applicants) should meet:

- The same criteria as for PIs (as above), except for those in fixed term posts. For this category of CoIs, the requirement should be that their post should extend at least for the duration of the grant.

- Research Assistants may be named as CoIs if:

  - they have made a significant contribution to the proposal, and

  - they will be employed for a significant proportion of their time on the project (normally at least 50%).

- CoIs are expected to make a substantial and defined contribution to the research.

C3 Research Assistants (RAs) and other staff

Research Assistants and other staff directly employed on a project:

- Will normally be employees of the organisation hosting the project (i.e. the organisation employing the PI and/or CoIs).

- May be employed by other eligible organisations, where their involvement is necessary to fulfil a well defined purpose, such as provision of specialist analytical services.

- Exceptionally, these staff may work for other organisations, or as independent specialists, where their involvement is necessary to fulfil a well defined purpose (such as specialist consultancy advice).

D Eligible costs

DMT's guidelines reflect the established convention that research grants paid by charities generally cover the costs directly incurred in undertaking a project (termed Directly Incurred Costs by the Research Councils), which in most cases are a major proportion of the total cost of the work to be done. However, DMT will not meet 'overhead' costs, including the cost of the time of PIs and CoIs and most of those other costs which Research Councils term Directly Allocated Costs, Estates Costs and Indirect Costs (i.e. Full Economic Costs or fECs). In particular, universities receive funding through the Charities element of the Quality-Related Funding Grant of the relevant Higher Education Funding Council (which in part reflects the level of research grant support received from charities) as a contribution towards these costs. Proposals for funding should detail carefully all of the relevant directly incurred costs, with reference to the following guidance.

D1 Staff costs:

- DMT **will meet** directly incurred salary costs, such as salaries of research assistants, whose time can be supported by a full audit trail. The level of salary requested should be fully justified in the case for support. Salary

costs should include any increments to which an individual is entitled. Any anticipated future pay awards should not exceed 1.5% p.a. and should be fully justified.

note: *Applicants must have regard to the NHS AcoRD guidelines when applying for the costs of research (see* **D3** *below)*

■ DMT will *not meet* any portion of the directly allocated salary costs of PIs and CoIs, *except for* those staff who are clearly providing institution-wide services and are organised in an appropriate manner (for example, the provision of statistical advice from a statistical services department by staff who are dependent on generating income to cover their salaries). However, staff providing such services should be declared as research staff rather than as PIs or CoIs. They should *not* be included under 'other costs'.

■ DMT will *not meet* any portion of the salary costs of any other academic (lecturer or equivalent), clinical or allied health professional (of equivalent status) or other equivalent employees.

■ Clinical Trial Unit Staff: DMT *may provide* a reasonable contribution towards CTU staff participating in the research, providing appropriate justification is given. This will require completion of a supplementary form at full application stage (*see* **E3.3** below)

D2 Non-staff costs:

■ DMT *will meet* approved directly incurred non-staff costs in full (i.e. costs directly attributable to the project), including:

- travel and subsistence costs
- small pieces of equipment costing up to £10,000
- materials and consumables

■ DMT *may meet* some directly allocated costs with appropriate justification (e.g. the costs of using research facilities such as imaging scanners, infrastructure technician costs etc.)

■ DMT *will not* meet overhead costs, typically those identified by Research Councils as Directly Allocated Costs, Indirect Costs and Estates Costs.

D 2.1 Guidance on specific non-staff cost items:

Programme grant costs: please note that the maximum costs specified below are applicable to project grants. DMT *may* consider providing higher levels of funding for programme grants. However, these costs must be fully justified.

Travel and subsistence costs for PIs, CoIs and staff assigned to the project where these are required by the nature of the work. These will *normally* be met and should be based on the most suitable and economical form of travel.

Conference costs: The costs of attendance at conferences by members of the research team, *may* be met up to a total of £1,000 per grant where this is shown to be of benefit to the research. Requests over this amount will require detailed justification and will only be met in exceptional circumstances.

Requests for project-specific items of equipment costing up to £10k *may* be met but should be fully justified. For requests between £10k and £100k, DMT will expect a detailed case to be provided and at least a 50% contribution towards the total cost of the equipment from the host institution and/or other funders. Suppliers' quotations will also be required.

DMT would *normally* expect the host institution to provide access to major equipment, but where specific circumstances require substantial usage and either the purchase of a major item of equipment specifically for the project, or a contribution to the use of major equipment is requested, a detailed case should be provided, with the University contributing at least 50% of the costs.

The cost of materials and consumables required to carry out the proposed research *will* be met (normally to a maximum of £17,500 per annum) but should

NOTE
applications for equipment over £100k should be made under a separate grant scheme.

See RESEARCH-RELATED GRANTS: Guidelines for applicants.pdf

be justified with special regard to those categories of overhead costs which DMT will not meet. Estimated figures for consumables/materials are not acceptable and must be itemised.

Non-UK costs (for e.g. specialist tests or assays) *may* be met, on condition that full justification is provided. It will however be the responsibility of the host institution to reimburse the non-UK institution for carrying out such tests.

Computers and other IT equipment dedicated to the project *may* be met, on condition that full justification is provided.

Data storage and archiving: DMT will contribute 50% towards these costs, up to a maximum of £500 per grant.

Recruitment costs: DMT will pay a maximum of £500 towards recruitment costs for staff being supported by the grant.

Publication costs: should *not* be included in applications. In line with DMT's open access policy, grant holders may apply for a contribution towards open access publication fees (on a sliding scale dependent on the size of the grant), once a paper has been accepted by a publisher.
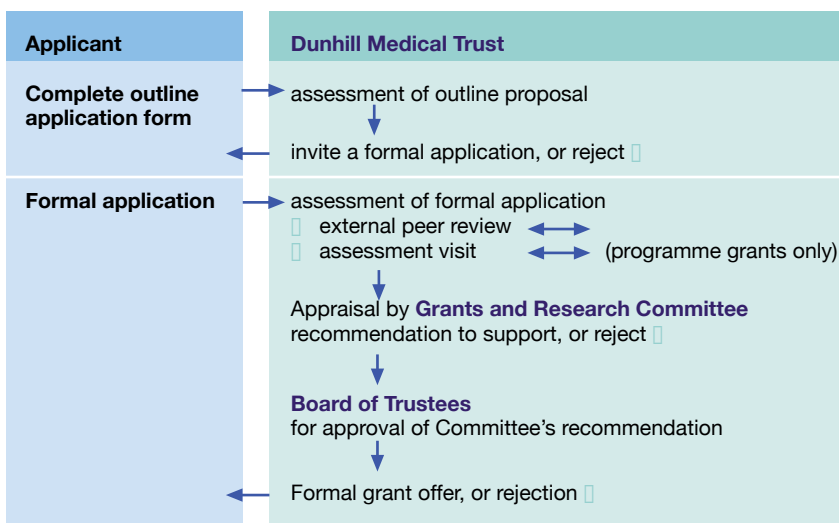
See: OPEN ACCESS POLICY.pdf

D3 Attributing the costs of health and social care research (AcoRD)

Applications that include NHS resources will need to adhere to the Department of Health *AcoRD guidance*[§]. As an AMRC member charity, Trust would expect any research costs identified as 'Part B' (e.g. recruitment of participants or data collection) that are carried out by existing staff employed by the NHS, NIHR Clinical Research Network (NIHR CRN) or other clinical organisation to be paid by the Department of Health through local networks or the NHS trust (Guidance FAQ 6 and 7).

Any Part B costs included in an application will be automatically struck out and applicants should therefore pay particular attention to attributing costs appropriately (consulting their local CRN prior to submitting an application where necessary).

[§] Department of Health 2012 AcoRD Annex B available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-attributing-the-costs-of-health-and-social-care-research

E   The application process

Applicant	Dunhill Medical Trust
Complete outline application form	assessment of outline proposal ↓ invite a formal application, or reject ☐
Formal application	assessment of formal application ☐ external peer review ←→ ☐ assessment visit ←→ (programme grants only) ↓ Appraisal by **Grants and Research Committee** recommendation to support, or reject ☐ ↓ **Board of Trustees** for approval of Committee's recommendation ↓ Formal grant offer, or rejection ☐

E1   Initial outline application

Research applicants are required to complete a short outline application form (available to download from DMT's website). Outline application forms should include the following information:

- Lead Applicant (PI):
  - name (including degrees/qualifications)
  - present appointment
  - institution
  - address
  - e-mail and phone details
- Co-Applicant(s) (CoIs):
  - name(s)
  - present appointment(s)
  - institution(s)
- Title of proposed research
- Scientific abstract *(150 words maximum)*
- Lay abstract *(150 words maximum)*
- An explanation of what difference the research is expected to achieve within 5-10 years in terms of patient benefit/improving the health & well-being of older people *(150 words maximum)*
- Timescale of proposed research
- whether the research involves the use of animals
- whether the research will take place in a recognised Clinical Trials Unit
- indicative budget§:
  - staff (including grade(s), % WTE)
  - consumables
  - equipment
  - other (specify)
  - total amount being applied for
- Details of the most recent grants held by the Lead Applicant (max 5)
- Details of the most recent/relevant publications authored by the Lead Applicant (max 5)

§   *Whilst we appreciate that at outline application stage, the budget is likely to be an estimate, the amount applied for at formal application stage must not exceed the amount specified in the outline application by more than 10%.*

E2   Assessment of initial outline

Outline applications will be reviewed against DMT's grant-making policy and research funding strategy by DMT staff in consultation with the Chair of the Grants and Research Committee to assess whether they meet the DMT's criteria for support. Where necessary, outlines may be referred either to a sub-group or all members of the Committee for decision as to whether it should go forward to the next stage.

Following this 'triage' process, eligible applicants will be invited to submit a formal application. They will be sent a short formal application form, together with other requirements and essential information including deadlines for return of completed applications and a statement of the terms and conditions that would govern any grant offered.

Outline applications that ***do not meet*** the criteria for support will be rejected at this stage and applicants notified promptly.

E3 Formal Research Application

Whilst DMT staff are happy to provide advice on completing a grant application, it is the responsibility of the Lead Applicant to ensure that the application is correctly submitted.

E3.1 A formal application will require:

■ Completion of a full application form

■ A scientific protocol for the study (*maximum six A4 sides*) setting out:

- the background to the proposal;
- aims and objectives, study design and methodology for the research;
- potential outcomes and outputs;
- a dissemination plan;
- a clear demonstration of an appropriate skill mix within the research team and a description of each applicant's individual role and the specific skills that members of the research team will bring to the project/programme;
- a brief description of the environment within which the research will be conducted;
- a timetable with specific milestones;
- detailed costs and their justification (including salary and on-costs, consumables, equipment etc.).

■ Completion of CV forms§ for the Lead Applicant (Principal Investigator) and each of the Co-Applicants (Co-Investigators)

§ *These should be a maximum three A4 sides for the Lead Applicant and two A4 sides only for each of the Co-Applicants. Any additional pages will be removed prior to consideration by the Grants & Research Committee.*

The following will also be required:

■ The name of the research sponsor (a University or NHS institution) for the project, as required by the NHS Research Governance Framework (if appropriate). Evidence of the acceptance of the proposed sponsor to undertake this responsibility will be required before a grant can be confirmed.

DMT **will not** under any circumstances act as research sponsor.

E3.2 Research involving the use of animals

In line with DMT's grant making policy, the Trust will only support the use of protected animals in research where no viable alternative exists and applicants are required to comply with guidance published by the National Centre for the Refinement, Replacement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs). Where an applicant intends to use animals in the proposed research, they will be required to complete a supplementary form at full application stage.

E3.3 Research conducted in a Clinical Trial Unit (CTU)

Where an applicant intends to carry out the research in a CTU, he/she will be required to complete a supplementary form at full application stage, setting out all costs applied for (both staff and non-staff), with detailed justification for each cost making up the overall contribution being applied for. Any ineligible costs will be automatically struck out and applicants should ensure that any Part B AcoRD costs are not included.

E3.4   Additional information required post-award

In the event that the application is successful and a grant awarded, prior to the commencement of research, additional information will be required (as appropriate to the research to be carried out):

■ Evidence that ethical approval has been granted for the study to be carried out.

■ Evidence that NHS R&D approval has been granted for all relevant NHS sites.

■ Evidence of relevant Home Office licences and certificates, as required by the *Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act* 1986.

E4   Appraisal stage

■ **Assessment**: formal applications are sent for external review to at least two (usually three) referees selected by the Trust.

You may, if you wish, nominate referees, although DMT is under no obligation to use the referees nominated. Full contact details should be provided on your completed application form. It should be noted that nominees may not be colleagues or recent collaborators, or persons employed within the same institution as any of the applicants.

■ **Criteria**: referees are asked to comment on the application by focusing on the following questions:

- is the research original?

- is the research feasible?

- is there a clear question to be answered?

- is the research programme well-constructed to answer the question?

- is it possible for the research to lead to an improvement in clinical practice, either now or with further research?

- are the costs applied for justifiable?

- is there an appropriate research environment?

- is there an appropriate skill mix within the research team?

- *in the case of research using animals:* is the use of animals appropriate and does the proposal meet the requirements of the 3Rs?

■ **Research integrity**: as a member of the AMRC, DMT supports the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* and expects host institutions to have systems in place to ensure that research is conducted in line with best practice and the highest standards of rigour and integrity. This includes procedures for the reporting and investigation of research fraud and misconduct. Assessment of these procedures will form part of the peer review process to which research applications are subjected.

■ **Visits and clarification**: to assist the decision-making process a DMT representative may wish to visit you and your organization at any stage to seek further information.

E5   The decision

Once referees' reports have been received, the application will be considered at the first available meeting of the Grants and Research Committee (normally in February, May, July and November). Applications deemed worthy of support will be recommended by the Grants and Research Committee to the Board of Trustees with whom the final decision rests. The Board of Trustees meets quarterly in March, June, September and December.

F   Time scales

■   Outline applications are normally assessed within 4-6 weeks of receipt. Those that are rejected will be notified promptly to applicants.

■   There are deadlines for formal applications and DMT requires at least ten clear weeks between receipt of completed formal applications and presentation to a meeting of the Grants and Research Committee to allow for the external review process. Some applications may take longer due to their complexity, delays arising during refereeing, or where the Grants and Research Committee requests further clarification or information.

■   Wherever possible, DMT aims to determine the outcome of a formal application within four to six months of receipt. This may be exceeded for the reasons stated above or where there is an extended gap between Committee and Board meetings.

■   All recommendations made by the Grants & Research Committee (whether to support or to reject) are referred to the next meeting of the Board of Trustees for approval.

■   The outcome of formal applications are normally notified to applicants within two weeks of the relevant meeting of the Board of Trustees.

G   Duration and size of grants

■   **Research project grants** are normally awarded for a maximum of three years and may be between a minimum of £25,000 and a maximum of £300,000.

■   **Proof of concept grants** will be awarded for 18 months in the first instance and will not normally exceed £50,000 per annum (i.e. £75,000 in total).

■   **Programme grants** may be awarded for more than three years (normally for a maximum of five years) and may be between a minimum of £300,000 and a maximum of £1,000,000.