

2020 call for project grant applications: Preliminary application stage



SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 9am on Tuesday 25th February 2020

We are inviting preliminary grant applications for translational research projects under our three priority themes: acquired brain and spinal cord injury, neuro-oncology, and headache and facial pain.

We would like to receive applications for the funding of **mechanism-based research** that addresses areas of **large unmet need** and demonstrates a **clear pathway to clinical impact** in one of these three priority areas.

We are keen to encourage applications from early career researchers – defined as those with up to 10 years post-doctoral work (with periods of extended leave taken into account).

Priority themes

- **Acquired brain and spinal cord injury.** We want to fund research to advance understanding of how to deliver interventions that promote recovery **at the level of impairment** in people with acquired brain or spinal cord damage.
This may be through behavioural interventions, enhancement of plasticity mechanisms, or both. We won't consider projects focused on neuro-protection.
- **Neuro-oncology.** We want to fund research addressing the fundamental causes, mechanisms, diagnosis or treatment of primary tumours of the brain or spinal cord, and associated neurological complications.
- **Headache and facial pain.** We want to fund research addressing the fundamental causes, mechanisms, diagnosis or treatment of headache and facial pain.

We will not accept applications outside of these three themes. Projects that are not well aligned with these themes – or are 'shoe-horned' to fit – will not be short-listed.

In particular, please note the requirement that projects are mechanism-based.

Early career researchers

We are keen to encourage applications from early career researchers – defined as those with up to 10 years of post-doctoral work. Family, medical or other leave will be taken into account.

Early career applicants should have their own salary already in place, and should have a co-applicant with tenure. There is space on the application form to provide a brief statement on mentorship arrangements.

What costs can be funded?

Our project grants are intended to provide funds for the employment of suitably qualified research staff and the purchase of essential equipment and consumables for projects lasting up to three years. PhD students may also be funded.

As well as typical research projects, we will consider requests for research infrastructure support where they demonstrate rapid patient benefit and are highly collaborative. Requests for the support of pilot studies are welcomed.

The maximum grant size is £300,000. We do not ask for detailed costings at this stage, but you need to provide an estimated cost. You will be asked to provide a detailed breakdown of costs at the next stage, if short-listed.

Exclusions:

- We will not usually fund the salary of the PI, who should already have their salary in place for the duration of the project.
- **We will only fund directly incurred research costs.** We will not contribute towards the cost of tenured posts nor can we contribute towards institutional overhead costs such as rent, general utilities, general administrative or secretarial costs. As a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities, Brain Research UK meets the qualifying criteria for HEFCE's Charity Research Support Funds, through which you may be able to recoup some of the full economic costs of the research.

Brain Research UK is also an NIHR non-commercial partner, meaning that appropriate research studies funded through this project grant call are eligible for NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) support and therefore entitled to access NHS support via the NIHR Clinical Research Network.

Who may apply?

- Proposals must be submitted by a UK academic institution (university, hospital or research institute).
- We will accept only one application from any one PI.
- **Those already in receipt of Brain Research UK project grant funding may not apply** – except where existing funding finishes within 12 months of date of submission of this preliminary application – i.e. by 25th February 2021.
- Those who wish to reapply for a project that has been previously submitted may do so, but must make clear how the project has been updated since the previous submission.
- We will consider funding international collaborations where they are led by a UK team. In the event that a grant is awarded to such a collaboration, the UK institution must take overall responsibility for management of the project and must undertake to administer the funding.

Guidelines for completion of preliminary project grant application

Applications must be submitted using the accompanying 2020 preliminary application form, available to download from www.brainresearchuk.org.uk

1. **Project title.** Please provide a title for the project.
2. **Priority area.** Please indicate which of the three priority areas you are applying under. We will only accept applications within the three priority areas outlined.
3. **Project duration.** Our project grants provide funding for defined projects lasting up to three years.
4. **Estimated cost.** Please give an estimated cost for the proposed research. This may be a 'ball-park' figure. A detailed breakdown of costs will be required at the next stage, if short-listed. Our maximum award is £300,000.
5. **Lead applicant.** Please name *only one Lead applicant*. The Lead applicant must be employed by the Host Institute, which must be in the UK, and should be the person who will have lead responsibility for managing the project. The Lead applicant will be our named point of contact for all correspondence in relation to this application and, in the event that funding is awarded, this person will be responsible for managing the project and the grant.

Where Lead applicant is an early career researcher, we need you to be able to demonstrate that you have effective mentorship in place. Please include a brief statement on your mentorship arrangements. Please deduct any periods of extended leave from your post doc years (including family leave, medical leave or other extended leave).

- 6. Co-applicants.** In addition to the Lead applicant you may identify *up to three co-applicants* who will have a central role in the proposed project.

Where the Lead applicant is an early career researcher, there should be a Co-applicant with tenure at the Host institute.

Individuals that will have a limited role in the proposed project – but are not centrally involved – should not be named as Co-applicants, but rather as Collaborators and identified in the body of your proposal. This may include, for example, individuals that are contributing samples, data, or specific expertise in relation to discrete parts of the project.

- 7. Project overview.** Please begin your proposal on a new page, making sure that it is contained within a single page. Do not change the font (Arial 11pt) or the margins.

There is no specific format, other than that you should begin by clearly stating your hypothesis (or hypotheses) and then use the space to give an overview of your proposed research and its feasibility. You should set out a clear rationale for the proposed work, provide solid preliminary data where possible, set out a clear pathway to clinical translation, and demonstrate appropriate power. You are advised to address need and potential impact, and to explain why you and your team are well-placed to carry out this research.

Where this project has been previously submitted, please briefly explain how it has been updated since the last submission.

One additional page may be used for the provision of references, along with tables and figures containing key supporting data. Please keep legends to a minimum, do not use them as an overflow for additional text.

Terms and conditions of application

1. Terms and conditions of application

- 1.1. The Host Institute and Lead applicant submit, and Brain Research UK accepts, the Application on the terms set out in this section 1. These terms apply to all Applications for funding submitted to Brain Research UK, whether or not they are ultimately successful.
- 1.2. Data protection. The Host Institute and Lead applicant agree that all information shared with Brain Research UK in connection with the Application (and, if the Application is successful, with the Grant):
 - 1.2.1. may be used by the Charity for the purposes of administering and evaluating the Application, administering funding if successful, and managing and monitoring the Grant;
 - 1.2.2. may be disclosed to members of the Charity's Scientific Advisory Panel, external peer reviewers, and other research funding bodies connected with the Application or the Grant.
- 1.3. Right to contact. The Charity may contact the Lead applicant and Co-applicants via telephone or email in connection with the Application.

Contact details will also be used to notify the Lead applicant and Co-applicants of future funding opportunities. You can opt out of these at any time by emailing research@brainresearchuk.org.uk

2. Terms and conditions of funding

If the Application is successful, any grant made will be on the accompanying Terms and

conditions of funding, or such other terms as the Charity will notify to the Lead applicant and Host Institute.

3. Research or workplace misconduct

The Host Institute and Lead Applicant confirm that, to the best of their knowledge and except as has been notified to the Charity in writing:

- 3.1. There are no research misconduct allegations currently under investigation involving the Lead applicant or any other person named on the Application, nor has any allegation of research misconduct been upheld in the previous five years.
- 3.2. There have been no upheld findings of bullying or harassment against the Lead applicant nor any other employee of the Host Institute who is named on the Application.

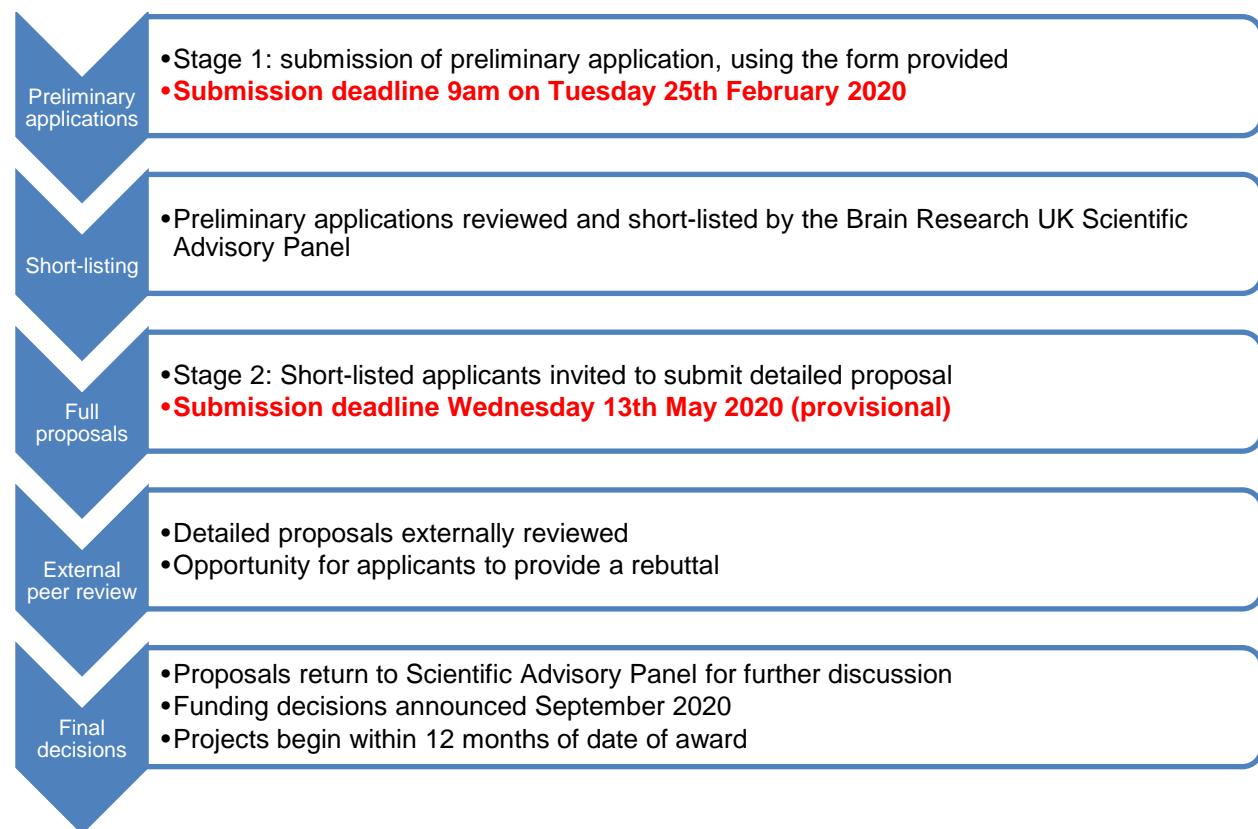
Submitting your application

Your application should be emailed to research@brainresearchuk.org.uk by **9am on Tuesday 25th February 2020**.

Your application should be accompanied by a copy of the Lead applicant's short (two-page) CV. No other documents should be included at this time.

By submitting your application, you are agreeing to the Terms and conditions of application, above.

Application process and timetable



Queries

Please call Katie Martin on 0117 909 4809 or email Katie.martin@brainresearchuk.org.uk