2019 call for project grant applications: Preliminary application stage

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 5pm on Wednesday 3rd April 2019

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 our three priority areas:

- **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.

Applications must 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.

**Exclusions**

We will not accept applications outside of the three themes described above. 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.

**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.
Please note that 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 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 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.

We will accept only one application from any one PI.

### Application process and timetable

| Stage 1: submission of preliminary application, using the form provided. |
| Deadline 5pm on Wednesday 3rd April 2019 |

| Preliminary applications |
| elapsedTime=Pre-Application |

| Preliminary applications reviewed and short-listed by the Brain Research UK Scientific Advisory Panel |

| Full proposals |
| elapsedTime=Stage 2 |

| Stage 2: Short-listed applicants invited to submit detailed proposal |
| Deadline 9am Monday 24th June 2019 |

| External peer review |

| Detailed proposals externally reviewed |
| Opportunity for applicants to provide a rebuttal |

| Final decisions |

| Proposals return to Scientific Advisory Panel for further discussion |
| Funding decisions announced September 2019 |
Guidelines for completion of preliminary project grant application

Applications must be submitted using the 2019 preliminary application form available to download from www.brainresearchuk.org.uk

1. **Project title.** Please provide a title for the project.

2. **Priority area.** We will only accept applications within the three priority areas outlined above. Please indicate which of the three priority areas you are applying under.

3. **Project duration.** Our project grants provide funding for defined projects lasting up to three years.

4. **Expected start date.** Grants will be awarded in September 2019; projects are expected to commence within 12 months of award.

5. **Estimated cost.** Please give an estimate 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.

6. **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.

7. **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.

   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.

8. **Project overview.** Please set out 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 setting out your hypothesis (or hypotheses) and then use the space to give an overview of your proposed research and its feasibility. 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.

   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.

**Submitting your application**

Your application should be emailed to research@brainresearchuk.org.uk by 5pm on Wednesday 3rd April 2019.

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.

**Queries**

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