

OXFORDSHIRE HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH COMMITTEE (OHSRC)

Small Research Grants

Advice to Grant Applicants applying for Charitable Research Funds

1. INTRODUCTION

The Committee's funding comes from Oxford Hospitals Charity and an annual grant from the Nuffield Oxford Hospitals Fund (NOHF) Charity. The OHSRC meets twice a year, with the grant made in each round dependent on fund availability. The funding provided by OHSRC supports individual research projects. The OHSRC encourages research in relevant clinical and laboratory fields, and the Oxfordshire NHS Trusts and Oxford University provide, whenever possible, the basic environment and facilities for this to be done.

2. OHSRC AIMS

- a) To support research in the areas of:
 - (i) clinical studies
 - (ii) community / primary care studies
 - (iii) relevant laboratory studies
- b) To provide opportunities for research by Health Service workers arising out of, and closely related to, their day to day practice.
- c) To wholly fund small projects or pilot studies that can be carried out within three years.
- d) We see it as our primary role to provide opportunities for researchers who are in the early years of their research careers. Therefore, this normally means that established researchers are very unlikely to receive an award.

3. FUNDING Research Grants

The maximum grant for one project is £10,000, and the Committee will not consider grants above this amount.

4. LENGTH OF GRANT

The project must be started within 12 months of the grant being awarded. If the grant is not used within three years of commencing the project then the Committee requires an explanation and the funding is likely to be withdrawn.

5. ELIGIBILITY

The scheme is open to suitably qualified workers in all branches of the health professions (e.g. medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and other professions supplementary to medicine in science and technology) who hold a contract of employment, including an honorary contract, with an Oxfordshire NHS Trust, or who are in contract to provide primary care services in Oxfordshire.

Funding from Oxford Hospitals Charity is from legacies and donations to support research. The charity exists to further charitable purposes relating to the National Health Service, in particular those relating to services provided by the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust.

Reapplication for the same project is not allowed unless the applicant is invited to do so following amendments.

Applications from existing grant holders for a separate project are permitted, but the grant holder must ensure that they are up to date with the submission of their regular progress

reports. If the Committee has not received regular progress reports from the grant holder, then the grant holder may not apply for further funding until this has been resolved.

Multiple applications from principal investigators will not be accepted, but PIs who make an application for funding may appear as named members of research teams on other applications.

6. APPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH GRANTS

The application for a project grant should be made on an application form obtained from Catherine King, Secretary to the Oxfordshire Health Services Research Committee. Contact details: telephone 01865 612 680, email: Catherine.King@ndm.ox.ac.uk

Section 10b of the standard form should include an additional, more detailed paper (3-5 pages) as described in section 10 of the application form.

The Committee expects clinical and laboratory research, including comparisons of therapies and procedures or case-control studies, to be carried out in properly controlled studies with appropriate randomisation procedures and assessments designed to avoid bias. Power calculations on which the sample size is based should also be given. Advice and guidance on issues relating to research can be obtained from: Research Design Service South Central, www.rds-sc.nihr.ac.uk

The OHSRC chair is also happy to discuss the suitability of any applications. This is currently Professor Chris Pugh. Contact details: telephone (01865) 613961, email: Chris.Pugh@ndm.ox.ac.uk

If applicants are being supervised for the duration of their projects, the name, address and a one page CV of the supervisor must be included within the application.

7. ETHICS

Guidance from the Department of Health states that ethics approval is to be sought after the awarding of a grant. If relevant ethics approval has already been applied for, related to other funding sources, then this must be stated in the OHSRC grant application. All clinical research must be approved by the local Ethical Committee prior to the release of any monies.

8. CONTENT OF GRANT

Grants should relate to specific and defined research projects.

Allowable expenditure

Grants may include any or all of the expenditure items listed below:

- a) Sessional, part time or ad hoc funding will be considered for appropriate support staff, but complete and regular salaries will not be funded. If part of a salary is contained in the application, the application must include the costs of employer's insurance, pension and any pay awards likely to occur during the period of employment. The application must not be from the person who would receive any salary.
- b) Any travelling and incidental expenses, proper to the study, in accordance with Trust conditions of service. Travelling will be paid at public transport rate.
- c) Research consumables. A full costing of materials to be used must be provided. A sum should also be included to cover the cost of any stationery, telephone calls, photocopying, library costs, etc.

- d) Costs of purchasing or renting equipment and apparatus. As the OHSRC obtains its funds from charitable organisations and donations, it is likely that equipment purchased is eligible to be VAT zero-rated provided a suitable statement is made at the time of purchase.
- e) Costs of purchasing computer equipment may be allowed provided it is relevant and necessary to the research project. Please note: the equipment will remain the property of the Trust.
- f) Conference fees and associated travel may be allowed provided it is necessary to the research project (attendance at one conference to disseminate the research results may be allowed and should be discussed and agreed with the OHSRC Chair).

Expenditure the OHSRC does not fund:

- a) Complete and regular salaries (see above)
- b) Bursary costs
- c) University/College fees
- d) Course/bench fees
- e) Payments by means of vouchers
- f) Ordinary/general printing costs (these would be expected to be covered by applicant's department).

Publication costs (e.g. journal fees) should not be included in applications. The Committee reserves a small amount of funding centrally and, if work funded through this scheme does achieve an appropriately acknowledged publication, we would make a contribution to publishing costs.

Other expenditure not included in the original grant application budget will not normally be funded. If there is a change in the nature of expenditure required, approval for this change should be sought from the OHSRC Chairman. The budget cannot normally be used retrospectively i.e. to cover expenditure incurred prior to commencing the research project.

9. EQUIPMENT

Before equipment is requested for a project the applicant should verify that this is not only essential for the project but also that existing facilities cannot provide the services required.

The purchase of equipment should be reported to the Trust's Equipment Bank. If the Bank does not accept the machinery, then 10% of the cost of the equipment should be added per annum to meet the cost of maintenance. Any equipment purchased becomes the property of the Trust for whom the main applicant works.

10. EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF

All contracts to any research workers partly funded by the OHSRC should be issued by the appropriate Trust Personnel Officer. These will be fixed term contracts. Contracts will include the Waiver Clause, which extricates the Trust from its obligations in connection with unfair dismissal and reducing payments after the termination of the contract.

It is important to note that the NHS Trust will be the employer in law of any research worker receiving an OHSRC grant, unless there is a specific arrangement to the contrary. This means that the research workers are employed under Trust Terms and Conditions of Service. Applicants for grants must therefore bear in mind all additional costs which have to be

calculated in estimating grants to meet staff costs.

The NHS Trusts, like other employers, may be held vicariously liable for the negligence (other than criminal negligence) of their employees in the course of their employment. Applicants for grants should note that there is no requirement for staff, including research staff, to take out special forms of insurance cover and the Health Authority, as a crown body, is required to meet its own risks. It is essential that all researchers undertaking work in Oxfordshire hospitals have been appropriately cleared for the work they will be undertaking.

11. NHS LABORATORY, X-RAY OR CLINICAL INVESTIGATIONS

If the protocol will require investigations additional to normal clinical needs, it is important that these are discussed with that department prior to submitting the application. The department may request costs for investigations, which should be included in the application, along with a written quotation.

12. APPLICATIONS

Your completed application should be saved as one complete document with all supporting material included within it, and called: yoursurname.doc

Applications should be submitted in Word or .pdf format to Catherine.King@ndm.ox.ac.uk **by 15 April or 15 October.**