

Parkinson's UK is the largest member-led charitable funder of Parkinson's research in Europe. So far, we've invested more than £85million in ground-breaking research.

### Purpose and scope

- Our health and social care research projects aim to generate evidence to help improve the quality of health and social care services provided to people affected by Parkinson's.
- Funding is awarded for projects designed to answer a single question or a small group of related questions.
- The duration of a grant is for a maximum of three years.
- The maximum value for a project grant is £200,000.

### Eligibility

- Grants are tenable at a UK university, NHS trust, statutory social care organisation or other research institution.
- Principal applicants should hold employment or honorary (if a clinical academic) contracts with the host institution that extend beyond the period of the grant.
- Applicants may be new to Parkinson's research.
- Co-applicants and collaborators may be based at institutions outside the UK and / or at pharmaceutical or biotech companies.
- Applicants should read [Research grant terms and conditions](#) before completing the application form.

### Application procedure

- Applicants are initially asked to submit an expression of interest and outline their approach to answering a specific research question. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a full application.
- All applications must be made in English.
- Details of any collaboration should be included and a letter confirming agreement from each collaborator should be submitted in the full application.
- If the project includes work with patients please ensure a letter of written support is supplied from a clinical collaborator.
- Any relevant 'in press' articles should be attached as appendices.

### Costing the application

- Applicants must justify the funds requested.
- Applicants must apply for funding in British pounds sterling.
- Applicants should seek the advice of their institution's Finance or Research Office on costing the application well in advance of the application deadline. Submissions of the application are sent directly to Parkinson's UK.
- In line with the Association of Medical Research Charities guidelines, Parkinson's UK will only reimburse directly incurred research costs for awarded grants as per the application submitted. **Please read our [guidance on research costs](#).**
- **Staff costs:** Basic salary should be stated for each individual. Provision for London weighting, superannuation and National Insurance should be shown separately in the space provided. An appropriate grading and salary must be quoted even where a named assistant cannot be specified; both grading and salary should have the approval of the appropriate administrative officer of the institution where the assistant would be employed. If appropriate, applicants can apply for support costs for PhD students.
- **Research expenses:** Details must be given. Grants do not cover administrative expenses, costs for attending conferences or publishing costs. Please see our guidance on [open access publishing](#).
- **Equipment:** Please specify each piece of equipment requested.
- **Inflation:** Inflation will not be paid in year one; inflation in years two and three is allowable up to 3%.

## Review procedure

- Applications will be judged by external peer reviewers and panel members against the following criteria:
  - importance and relevance of the research
  - potential impact of the research for people affected by Parkinson's
  - the likelihood that research will deliver evidence to help improve the quality of care for people affected by Parkinson's
  - scientific quality of the proposal
  - quality of the researcher and team
  - value for money
  - budget and infrastructure
- Applications will be reviewed by at least three external peer reviewers and up to three lay grant reviewers (people affected by Parkinson's).
- Outline applications at the Expression of Interest stage will be scored by reviewers on a scale from one to ten. A review panel will consider the scoring and recommend a shortlist of applicants to invite to submit a full proposal.
- Full applications by shortlisted applicants will be scored by reviewers and considered by the review panel at a review meeting. The Panel's recommendation for funding will be submitted to the charity's chief executive for approval.

## Unsuccessful applications

- For full applications, unsuccessful applicants can request feedback. This would entail edited comments from the combined reports of external peer and lay grant reviewers and panel members. No further discussion with Parkinson's UK staff or with members of the panel is allowed.

If you have further questions about making an application, please contact the Research team.

**Email:** [researchapplications@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:researchapplications@parkinsons.org.uk)

**Call:** 020 7963 9356

# Writing a research grant application

We only fund the best quality research so that every penny donated towards research will benefit people with Parkinson's. We receive a high volume of applications in each grant round, so it's vital that you make your application stand out from the crowd. Below are some tips and pitfalls to avoid when writing your grant application to give yourself the best chance of success.

## Make a good first impression

- Read the 'Information for applicants' document for the appropriate grant scheme.
- Read the Parkinson's UK research grant terms and conditions – make sure your requests are allowable by Parkinson's UK.
- Give all the information required in the correct format - Arial typescript, size 11pt.
- Ask at least one independent person to proofread your application – reviewers dislike typographical and grammatical errors.
- Ensure figures make sense and are correctly referenced in the text.
- Make sure everything in your research proposal is correctly referenced.
- Even if your ideas are excellent, a badly presented application may make reviewers wonder if this is an indication of how the research will be conducted.

## Write a good plain English summary

- Our lay grant reviewers bring the unique and valuable perspective of people affected by Parkinson's into the funding decisions made by Parkinson's UK. It ensures that their needs and interests are reflected in our research.
- Researchers may not have personal experience of Parkinson's and therefore may not consider some of the issues that are highlighted by people affected by the condition. This is why the input of lay grant reviewers is so important. Applicants are similarly encouraged to seek the views of people affected by Parkinson's as part of their submission process.
- Lay grant reviewers may have considerable personal experience but little specialised scientific knowledge, so it is important that you think carefully about your lay reader when writing your plain English summary.
  - The plain English summary must accurately reflect the research proposal and scientific abstract. Applicants should be realistic about the potential outcomes of their research and the likely timescales involved.
  - Avoid using jargon, abbreviations and technical terms wherever possible – if you have to use them provide a clear explanation.
  - Include a good glossary.
  - Avoid complicated English or uncommon words.
  - Avoid elaborate explanations of 'what is Parkinson's'. They are very likely to know a lot about this and want to know about the particular research project.
  - Use active not passive phrases, for example say 'we will do it' rather than 'it will be done by us'.
  - Keep sentences short - try not to use more than 15 to 20 words per sentence.
  - Break up the text, for example by using bullet point lists.
  - Ask someone without a scientific background to read your draft and advise if anything is unclear.
  - If your study involves participants ensure you have included details of what will be involved for them and how they will be supported.
- You can find more tips on writing a good plain English summary on the [Make it Clear campaign website](#).

## Clearly demonstrate how your research relates to Parkinson's

- Parkinson's UK only supports research into Parkinson's. We want to fund research that has the greatest chance of improving the lives of people with Parkinson's.
- Peer and lay reviewers have a lot of knowledge of Parkinson's and will usually have considered many applications over the years. They expect applicants to demonstrate a good understanding of Parkinson's. Applicants whose expertise and publications record primarily relates to another field should seek to collaborate with relevant experts in Parkinson's and people affected by Parkinson's where necessary.

### Ensure your research proposal is clear and logical

- Make sure your application outlines how the evidence you aim to generate can support improvements in health and social care delivery for people with Parkinson's
- Provide sufficient detail on the study design and how this will ensure robust evidence.
- For quantitative research specify outcome measures and give realistic sample sizes and power calculations.
- Identify and address any potential challenges or pitfalls – what will you do if your first study design doesn't enable testing of your hypotheses or if you have challenges with recruitment or retention of participants?
- Ensure your application includes details of how the results of your research will be made available to others.