

Parkinson's UK is the largest charitable funder of Parkinson's research in Europe. So far, we've invested more than £80million in ground-breaking research.

Purpose and scope

- The duration of a fellowship is for three years and a maximum of £250,000.
- Funding supports salary costs, a contribution towards research expenses and attendance at appropriate conferences or short courses that will form part of the Fellow's research training.
- Applicants should be appropriately qualified health and social care professionals who wish to undertake research training relevant to Parkinson's.
- Applicants should be aiming to achieve a higher research degree, such as MPhil or PhD.
- Awards must be based in, or linked to, host research units, centres, institutes or departments with an appropriate track record in training and research relevant to Parkinson's.
- Awards are available on a full-time or part-time basis.
- We're keen to receive applications from researchers working across all fields of Parkinson's research.
- Funding for cohort studies is not available through this grant scheme. Please see our [website](#) for information on how we fund these types of studies.

Eligibility

- Grants are tenable at a UK university, NHS trust, statutory social care organisation or other research institution.
- Applicants should have a BSc or MD.
- Supervisors should hold employment or honorary (if a clinical academic) contracts with the host institution that extend beyond the period of the grant.
- Co-supervisors 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.

Application procedure

- Applications are invited annually with a closing date each March; the interviews will be held in June.
- All applications must be made in English.
- Grant applications to Parkinson's UK are made through the charity's [online grant application system](#).
- Applicants are not required to submit a hard copy application.
- In order to avoid formatting problems, text from other documents should be pasted into Notepad (or similar programme) before being copied into the application form.
- Details of any collaboration should be included and a letter confirming agreement from each collaborator should be submitted as appendix.
- 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.
- Applicants will receive confirmation from the online applications system once an application is submitted. Unless the charity requires further information, no correspondence will be entered into until the results are notified. Applicants are requested not to initiate contact with the Research team during the review process.

Costing the application

- Please refer to our '[Costs guidance for research grants](#)' before completing your 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. Online 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 direct research costs for awarded grants as per the application submitted. The charity will not fund directly allocated or indirect costs:
 - Allowable costs
 - **Directly incurred costs** are costs that would *only* be incurred if the project were to go ahead. They include salaries for staff dedicated to the project, consumables, animals, equipment, etc.
 - Non-allowable costs
 - **Directly allocated costs** are costs of resources used by a project that are shared by other activities and based on estimates (eg principal and co-applicant costs, estates costs).
 - **Indirect costs** are non-specific costs charged by host institutions across all projects that are based on estimates (eg HR and finance services, library 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.
- **Research expenses:** Details must be given. Up to £1000 per year may be requested for travel to conferences. Grants do not cover administrative expenses or publishing costs. Please see our guidance on [open access publishing](#).
- **Animals:** The species, number and unit cost of all animals must be shown.
- **Biological materials (such as human tissue or cell lines):** Please specify.
- **Equipment:** Please specify each piece of equipment requested.
- **Inflationary rate:** Inflation will not be paid in year one; inflation in years two and three is allowable up to 3%.

Review procedure

- Applications will be sent out to review by at least three [College of Experts members](#) and up to four lay grant reviewers (people affected by Parkinson's). Reviewers score applications on a scale from zero to ten.
- Applications will be shortlisted based on the combined average scores of the external peer and lay grant reviewers.
- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview. The interview panel will be made up of members of the charity's College of Experts and lay people from the [Research Support Network](#).
- In advance of the interview, candidates will be forwarded anonymised comments from external peer and lay reviewers. Candidates should be prepared to address concerns raised by the reviewers.
- The interview panel's recommendations for funding will be submitted to the charity's Chief Executive for approval.
- Applications will be judged by external peer reviewers and panel members against the following criteria:
 - quality of the researcher and his or her ability to make an impact on Parkinson's research
 - potential impact of the research for people affected by Parkinson's
 - scientific quality of the proposal
 - quality of the researcher and team
 - value for money
 - budget and infrastructure

- A good Plain English Summary is essential for evaluation by lay grant reviewers (please see p4) who will judge applications against the following criteria:
 - the importance of the research for people affected by Parkinson's
 - the potential benefit of the research for people affected by Parkinson's
 - if the proposed research involves human participants, whether they think people would be likely to take part

Unsuccessful applications

- Edited comments from the combined reports of external peer and lay grant reviewers and panel members will be made available to unsuccessful applicants. 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.

Call: 020 7932 1332 or 020 7963 3950 or 020 7963 9376

Email: researchapplications@parkinsons.org.uk

Visit: <http://www.parkinsons.org.uk/researchgrants>

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. Attach figures as an appendix to avoid formatting issues within the research proposal.
- 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 lay abstract and 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 both your lay abstract and plain English summary.
 - 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.
 - Be realistic about any likely benefits which could arise from the research for people with Parkinson's and their carers and give realistic timescales.
 - 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.
- Applications at the 'pure science' stage must clearly demonstrate how their research relates to Parkinson's and how it could provide valuable insights for future research.
- 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.
- Parkinson's UK will consider applications which may provide insights into a number of neurodegenerative conditions, but again you will need to show the particular relevance to Parkinson's.

Ensure your research proposal is clear and logical

- Make sure your hypotheses are clear and firm and are reflected clearly in the methodology.
- Show how the various experiments and stages of proposed research relate to each other.
- Give clear information on what the outcome measures will be.
- Identify and address any potential challenges or pitfalls – what will you do if your first proposed experiment doesn't result in the outcome you expected? Or if you have challenges with recruitment or retention of participants?
- Provide sufficient detail on the experiments and how they will be carried out to show your understanding of what you're doing.
- Give realistic sample sizes and power calculations based on evidence.
- Clearly describe the future clinical benefits and timescales of practical improvements that could result from the research.
- Ensure your application includes details of how the results of your research will be made available to others.