



INNOVATION PRIZE

APPLICATION GUIDELINES



CANCER
RESEARCH
UK

Together we will beat cancer

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'BEFORE YOU SUBMIT' CHECKLISTS

APPLICATION

- Notify your Host Institution that you are intending to submit an application to the Innovation Prize – if successful, the award will be issued to Host Institution.
- Use the application template provided, which contains all the relevant forms
- Ensure the proposal is no longer than 3 pages
- Check the You-Tube link for the video pitch works
- Use a numbered referencing format within the proposal *i.e.* cancer research¹
- Include a list of your 3-5 key achievement
- Include a list of your team and highlight skills/contribution
- Reserve the dates in your diary
- Send your proposal to the Commercial Partnerships team at commercial@cancer.org.uk

FOR POSTDOC APPLICANTS OR THOSE WHO IDENTIFY AS AT THE 'DEVELOP INDEPENDENCE' STAGE OF THEIR CAREER (CRUK'S COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK)

- Complete and send a list of Skills and Experience,
- Provide a letter of support from your Group Leader / Host Institution

POST AWARD

If your **application** is successful, we need some additional information, including a more detailed breakdown and justification of costs. We also require the **approval from your Host Institution**.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

These guidelines explain what Cancer Research UK's (CRUK) Commercial Partnerships require and what the Innovation Panel are looking for in an application to the **Innovation Prize**. To get your application right first time, you'll need to read the scheme specific Application Guidelines below.

Before you start your application, please also read our [grant conditions](#) for our Terms and Conditions.

1.2. ABOUT CANCER RESEARCH UK AND CRUK'S COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS

CRUK's vision is to **bring forward the day when all cancers are cured**. CRUK's [research strategy](#) clearly articulated its ambition to accelerate the progress of cancer research over the next 20 years, so that by 2034 three in four people diagnosed with cancer will survive for at least ten years.

Cancer Research UK's Commercial Partnerships team, a component of the Research and Innovation division, develops promising ideas into successful cancer therapeutics, vaccines, diagnostics and enabling technologies. The team is dedicated to develop, translate and commercialise exciting new discoveries in cancer research—a key step to deliver patient benefit.

To realise our ambition and encourage researchers who are new to considering the commercial potential of their discoveries, we launched the **Innovation Prize**.

1.3. ABOUT THE INNOVATION PRIZE

The Innovation Prize was established to support an **entrepreneurial culture and the translation of cancer research**. The application process is quick and simple with awards of up to **£50,000** over **1 year** issued within a maximum of 3 months from the application deadline.

2. SCHEME GUIDELINES

2.1. REMIT

The Innovation Prize provide funds for exciting proposal for the commercial development of research and/or technology that could advance the field of oncology. We welcome applications in any of the following area of oncology:

- Development of novel treatments;
- Implementation of digital tactics;
- Delivery of innovative imaging strategies, medical device development or disruptive diagnostic assays.

Applications can have a very broad remit, requesting support across different aspect of the translational and commercialisation route including, but not limited to, support for consultancy, business plan preparation or proof of concept experiments (all oncology related).

2.2. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

All applications are assessed by the Innovation Panel, a diverse group of Commercial Partnerships representatives, innovators, investors and entrepreneurs. Please note the composition of the Panel will be confirmed at the shortlisting stage.

2.2.1. APPLICATION STAGE

The first stage of the process is submission of your application to the Commercial Partnerships team (commercial@cancer.org.uk).

Your proposal will initially be judged on the extent to which it:

- Has translational/commercial potential;
- Are the requested support likely to help achieve the goal of the proposal and/or next milestone;
- Has the potential to advance cancer research and patients benefit;
- Are individuals with the appropriate expertise involved to deliver the project.

We encourage applicants to provide a brief introduction to their project/idea for context but to primarily focus on what the proposal is aiming to achieve, clearly articulating why this would enable you to progress your discovery through translation and commercialisation. You should have a clear plan and explain what the (potential) contribution to the field of oncology would be in the short and/or long-term.

2.2.2. SHORTLISTING

If shortlisted, you will be asked to submit a full breakdown of the financial information (*proposal will not change*), will be offered a 1hr mentoring session and invited to pitch your idea in person to the Innovation Prize Panel.

For more detailed information about the application process please refer to [3. Innovation Prize Application Process](#).

2.3. ELIGIBILITY

2.3.1. LEAD APPLICANT

We welcome applications from individuals and teams.

Early/Mid-career researchers, such as Post-doctoral Researchers, Junior Group Leaders, Clinical and non-clinical fellow are eligible to apply as the Lead Applicant. **However, we don't accept applications led by BSc, MSc or PhD students.** We expect the Lead Applicant to be in receipt of a salary throughout the duration of the Award. Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis and will need to be considered by the office ahead of the shortlisting.

2.3.1.1. LEAD APPLICANTS WHO IDENTIFY AS AT THE ‘DEVELOP INDEPENDENCE’ STAGE OF THEIR CAREER AS PER CRUK’S [COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK](#)

We strongly advise Post-Doctoral Researchers who are leading a proposal to discuss the application with their Group Leader and Host Institution prior to submission. This is to ensure that the appropriate support network is in place to deliver the project should it be funded *i.e.* Co-investigators and/or Collaborators.

In addition to this you must at the application stage, complete the **Skills and Experience form within the application template** and provide a letter of support from your Group Leader and/or Host Institution (see Section [3.2.5 Other documents to submit](#)).

Salary requests for early career researchers listed as a Lead Applicant will be considered on a case-by-case basis so please contact us to discuss this further before submitting your application.

2.3.2. LEAD HOST INSTITUTION

To be eligible to apply as the Lead Applicant, your Host Institution must be based in the United Kingdom (UK). If successful, you will need to submit a letter of support from your Group Leader (*if applicable*) and Host Institution outlining this arrangement.

2.3.3. CO-APPLICANTS

Joint Lead Applicants, Co-Investigators, Collaborators or Named Research Staff do not have to be based at a UK Host Institution. We encourage researchers to assemble the most appropriate team to deliver the project and acknowledge that this often requires international collaboration. It is at the discretion of the Lead Applicant’s UK Host Institution to set up and negotiate required subcontracts with other institutions (*national and international*).

Table 1: Co-Applicant Roles

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| JOINT LEAD APPLICANT | Someone who’s essential to the project and who’ll contribute the same amount of time and intellectual input to your research/project as you (the Lead Applicant). |
| CO-INVESTIGATOR | Someone who’ll give significant intellectual input to your research/project. They’ll also be responsible for the day-to-day running of some of your work. |
| COLLABORATOR | Someone who’ll supply research materials, specific expertise or patient access, but won’t be involved in the day-to-day running of your research. |
| NAMED RESEARCH STAFF | Any named research staff that will be involved in your research. |

2.4. USE OF FUNDS

Funds can be used to cover **directly incurred costs of research** *i.e.* equipment, consumables and salaries for supporting staff – Post-Doctoral Researchers and/or Technicians. You may **not** use the award to support BSc, MSc or PhD studentships.

Funds cannot be used for either directly allocated (including estate costs) or indirect costs on individual research Awards. Awards are provided on the understanding that the Host Institution will meet directly allocated and indirect costs.

Please read our [costs guidance](#) for more information about **eligible and ineligible costs**. And contact us, if there are any costs that you would like to request that are not covered.

2.5. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Intellectual Property (IP) resulting from the Innovation Prize is managed by CRUK's Commercial Partnerships. There may be specific circumstances in which alternative arrangements can be made.

3. INNOVATION PRIZE APPLICATION PROCESS

3.1. PROCESS OVERVIEW

1. You submit your idea

- a. 3-page application (excluding references)
- b. 3-5-minute video pitch (The video would be uploaded as an unlisted video on YouTube and the link included in the proposal)
- c. 3-5 key achievements in your career

2. We shortlist

If your team is shortlisted, you'll receive a 1:1 1hr mentoring session and be asked to submit a break-down of how the funds would be allocated if successful

3. You pitch

Pitch your idea to the Innovation Prize panel in a short presentation

4. We fund

You will only need to submit a full application if recommended for funding by the Innovation panel. This will include a detailed justifications and costings.

3.2. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

You'll need to submit your application via email at commercial@cancer.org.uk; please include 'Innovation Prize' in your subject line. Please note that Host Institution approval is not required at this stage, but we strongly encourage you to notify the relevant individuals at your Host Institution if you are intending to apply.

For questions about your proposal contact us at commercial@cancer.org.uk– we're here to help.

Approximately two-weeks after the application deadline, every Lead Applicant will receive an email outlining the detail of the next steps and pitch should your proposal be shortlisted.

3.2.1. THREE-PAGE PROPOSAL

Please use the Innovation Prize template for the research proposal. You can submit a **maximum of three A4 pages** (excluding references and team composition) to tell us your idea and its potential. The text should be in black using Calibri font size 11. References should be included on a separate page. When citing references within the application we request that you adopt a numbering style.

3.2.2. VIDEO PITCH

The Video Pitch helps you to consolidate your motivations for applying for the Innovation Prize, set yourself apart from other candidates, and allows the Innovation Panel to hear about your proposal, experience and achievements first-hand, before the shortlisting.

There are no technical specifications for the video pitch (a camera phone, tablet or webcam can be used), there are also no guidelines about the content or format of the video, and quality of the video will not be criteria for funding. The video would be uploaded as a unlisted video on YouTube and the link included in the proposal.

3.2.3. COSTS

If shortlisted, applicants will be required to submit 1-slide breaking down of how the funds would be allocated if successful.

If recommended for funding, researchers will be required to submit a full application, including a detailed proposal, costings with justifications; and the support letter and approval from the Host Institution is requested.

You should consult CRUK's [costs guidance](#) when preparing your costs' section and categorize items , where possible, according to [Table 2](#) below.

Table 2: costs

| | |
|-----------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | List the costs for all the equipment >£5,000 you'd like to request on your award. Please note, any equipment costs <£5,000 should not be listed here but should be included as a running expense. |
| SALARIES | Please list the costs for any research staff that you'd like to request on your award. You can apply for the salaries of Post-Doctoral Researchers or Technicians, full or part-time to help deliver the project. But we do not fund PhD students due to the award's short duration of 1 year. For more information read our policy on funding salaries of investigators. |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>RUNNING EXPENSES</p> | <p>Please cost all general running expenses for your proposed research. Where possible, please break these costs down into packages (rather than listing individual items). For example, microscopy or histopathology costs.</p> <p>Conference travel and publication costs are ineligible.</p> |
| <p>ANIMAL COSTS</p> | <p>If relevant, please list all animal costs in the financial section of your application. We will also require you to provide a separate breakdown of the animal purchase, maintenance and experimental fees in the Additional Justifications form as described below.</p> |

3.2.4. COST JUSTIFICATIONS

If successful, you also need to submit a Cost Justifications Appendix to outline why the listed costs are required. Please find a breakdown of the sections to include in [Table 3](#) below. If a section is not relevant to your project leave this blank or delete appropriately. Please, add different sections if applicable.

Table 3: Additional Justifications Form Guidance

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUESTED SUPPORT</p> | <p>Please list all costs (<i>staff, running expenses and animal fees</i>) and provide scientific justification for the associated costs in the relevant box.</p> <p>Running Expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General lab consumable costs; • Requested equipment <£5000. <p>Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide details for any items of requested equipment >£5000k; • Include any details of contribution(s) made to the purchase of equipment by the host institution. |
| <p>CELL LINES</p> | <p>Please provide details of any cell lines you will use in your research. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you will maintain good cell culture practices throughout your project; • If new cell lines will be introduced to your lab, please give the source of the cells. If it's not a commercial provider, explain how the cell lines will be authenticated when they enter your lab. If new cell lines will be generated, please tell us how these will be made available for others to use; • Justification for the use of any cell lines that have been misidentified (<i>e.g.</i> Chang liver cells). <p>You can request funding (<i>under running expenses</i>) to support cell line authentication (<i>e.g.</i> screening for contamination by mycoplasma, STR profiling for human cell lines or DNA fingerprinting for non-human cells). You'll need to validate your cell lines according to the Guidelines for the use of cell lines in</p> |

[biomedical research](https://doi.org/10.1038/bjc.2014.166) (doi:10.1038/bjc.2014.166), which you should reference in any publications resulting from the award.

ANIMAL STUDIES

You should complete this section if you are proposing to use animals in your research. You should ensure you are familiar with the relevant [NC3Rs guidelines](#), in particular the [Responsibility in the Use of Animals in Bioscience Research](#) document, the [ARRIVE Guidelines](#), and the [NC3Rs Guidelines: Primate Accommodation, Care and Use](#). When completing this section, you should describe how your proposed research adheres to the expectations set out in these guidelines.

Animal Costs

- Please include a full breakdown of the purchase costs and husbandry costs (e.g. per mouse per week) listed in the 'Costs' section of your application on eGMS;
- Please list animal purchase, maintenance and experimental costs separately.

Justification of Proposed Animal Research

Using the table provided in the Additional Justifications form, please briefly justify the use of animals by outlining:

- Why animal research is necessary for your award and details of all species you propose to use;
- Why the species/model you have chosen is the most appropriate physiological model to use for the research objective(s);
- If you are developing any new models why this is necessary and how you will ensure that these will be disseminated to the research community more broadly;
- The efforts you will take to minimise animal usage.

For your critical experiments, please provide an outline of your experimental design and power calculations. Where details of specific experiments are not known, you may provide an illustrative example. This should include:

- An overview of the experimental approach summarising; primary and secondary experimental outcomes, number of experimental and control groups, the number of experimental units in each experimental group, the total number of experimental units to be measured and the number of times each unit will be measured, number of independent replications of each experiment and how you plan to minimise experimental bias (e.g. randomisation and blinding) or an explanation of why this would not be appropriate;
- An explanation of how effect sizes have been calculated and a justification of their biological relevance;
- The power calculations used to determine your sample size (or a principled explanation of an alternative basis for calculations, justifying why you haven't used statistical calculations). Explanations based solely in terms of 'usual practice' or previously published data will not be considered adequate;
- Details of breeding strategies that will be implemented (if applicable);
- A brief description of your planned statistical analyses in relation to the sample size and list any statistical advice available;

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may present this in the form of a table or diagram, if appropriate. <p>Please note that the NC3Rs website includes a number of useful experimental design resources, including the Experimental Design Assistant (EDA), a free online tool to help optimise experimental design. The EDA can be used to create a visual map of your planned experiments (or a few of them) that may be useful in discussions with your team and statistical advisors. If you use the EDA, you are encouraged to submit the EDA report as a PDF upload along with the Research Features template (and you need not replicate information in the Research Features template that is covered in your EDA report).</p> <p>Please note that applications proposing research on specially protected species or pigs must undergo an additional independent peer review by the NC3Rs. If your research involves specially protected species or pigs, please contact the office as soon as possible so that we can coordinate this review by emailing pioneeraward@cancer.org.uk.</p> <p>Funding Animal Work Overseas</p> <p>For any animal studies to be performed outside of the UK, we also require a letter to be uploaded from the relevant Co-Investigator leading this work to confirm that the research proposed will adhere to all relevant local regulatory systems, and also that the welfare standards will be consistent with UK standards. We also require you to complete the form provided in the additional justification form for each relevant location/Host Institution outside the UK where rodents will be used.</p> |
| HUMAN TISSUE | <p>All human tissue used with CRUK funded studies must be registered with UKCRC Tissue Directory.</p> |
| STATISTICAL ANALYSES & EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN | <p>Provide additional information on reproducibility, and explain the steps taken to ensure the reliability and robustness of the chosen methodology and experimental design. You do not need to duplicate information that you have already presented in other sections of the application, for example relating to animal studies (section 1) or clinical studies (section 2).</p> <p>You should complete this section where applicable, particularly if you intend to use clinical data, transcriptomic, sequencing, metabolomic or proteomic techniques, or other methods generating high volume data.</p> <p>For each relevant research goal or objective, please justify the experimental approach, sample sizes and the statistical analysis you'll use, highlighting any potential limitations. You should ensure you include the following:</p> <p>Experimental Approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary and secondary experimental outcomes to be assessed; The numbers of samples that you'll include in each analysis, describing what you can achieve with this number of samples. <p>Sample Sizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How any effect sizes have been calculated and justify how they are biologically relevant; |

- That statistical power calculations are grounded in justifiable and explicit assumptions about both anticipated effect size and variability of the experimental effects;
If statistical power calculations cannot reasonably be applied, please provide a principled explanation of the choice of numbers (explanations based solely in terms of ‘usual practice’ or with reference solely to previously published data will not be considered adequate).
- Statistical Analysis Plans:**
- Provide an overview of the planned statistical analyses in relation to the primary outcomes and sample size;
 - Include details of any statistical / methodological design advice sought (you may cost a relevant expert, *e.g.* statistician, into your proposal if necessary and justified). A letter of support from the expert involved is permitted but not mandatory.

3.2.5. OTHER DOCUMENTS TO SUBMIT

3.2.5.1. KEY RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS FORM

In this form, you’ll need to highlight your **3-5 Key Research Achievements**, including both research outputs (e.g. preprints, training delivered, contribution to consortia, community outreach, patents, key datasets, software, novel assays and reagents etc.) and publications that are of particular relevance to your application. You can write up to one-page maximum, describing what you have discovered/developed, why it’s important and what its impact and influence have been in your field.

Please note that **each Lead Applicant, including Joint Lead Applicants**, named on the application who is **not** an early career researcher who identifies as at the ‘Develop Independence’ stage (i.e. postdocs, clinician scientist fellow) will each need to complete their own separate one-page Key Research Achievements form. Please note the form is within the application template.

3.2.5.2. SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE FORM

You should **only** complete this form if you are an early career researcher who identifies as at the ‘Develop Independence’ stage of their career listed as the Lead or Joint Lead Applicant on the application. Note that applicants completing the Skills and Experience form do **not** also need to complete the Key Research Achievements form.

When completing the Skills and Experience form, please refer to [CRUK’s Competency Framework](#) that outlines the range of skills and experience and the types of examples that CRUK might expect at the ‘Develop Independence’ career stage. This form shouldn’t exceed **2 pages**.

Please use the Skills and Experience form within the application template to provide details on the following aspects:

- Your research outputs and impact, including a list of your 3-5 key achievements relevant to your application;
- Your current network and highlight how this network contributes to you achieving your own research goals;

- Your future research ambitions and what your plans are for during the year of the award;
- Your plans to develop personal and scientific skills and knowledge to drive the development and commercialisation of your research;
- Your clinical experience (if relevant);

3.2.5.3. TEAM COMPOSITION

Where appropriate, at application submission stage, please submit (within the application template) a list of your team member (collaborators, co-investigators etc.), indicating the specific skills and /or contribution to the proposal.

3.3. PREPARING FOR PITCH

3.3.1. MENTORING

If your proposal is shortlisted you will be offered a 1:1 mentoring session at [CRUK's headquarters](#) in Angel, London. We will aim to notify you of the date at the shortlisting stage. Please note, the mentoring session will take place in early March. It is not compulsory, but we highly recommend you attending and to take this opportunity to help you prepare for your Interview Pitch.

3.3.2. YOUR PRESENTATION

If your proposal is shortlisted you will be invited to pitch your idea in person to the Innovation Prize Panel at [CRUK's headquarters](#) in Angel, London.

The Pitch consists of a:

- **10-minute presentation to the Innovation Prize Panel;**
 - Slides need to be sent to the office in advance;
- **20-minute Q&A with the Innovation Prize Panel.**

Please note that in addition to the Lead Applicant we permit one additional person to attend the Pitch session. They must be making a significant contribution to the project and so be listed as part of your team.

The funding recommendation is made that day. All applicants will hear back from us within 1 week of Pitch, receive dedicated feedback from the Panel and the funds will be awarded within 1 month after this meeting.

4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4.1. USEFUL DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

For help completing your application, you can use the following resources:

- [Policies that affect your grant](#)
- [Grant conditions](#) – includes a link to our [Privacy Policy](#), which details how we'll use your data under the Data Protection Act 1998

4.2. USEFUL CONTACTS

For queries regarding your application please contact Alessia Errico at commercial@cancer.org.uk; please include 'innovation prize' into the subject line.