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**ROYAL PAPWORTH HOSPITAL INNOVATION FUND**

**GUIDANCE NOTES**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The Royal Papworth Hospital Trust Strategy 2020-25 committed to:

* Foster a research environment that encourages all staff groups to participate in and lead research activities
* Include involvement in research and development activities in all staff job descriptions by 2021
* Introduce an Innovation Fund to pump prime new ideas and support development of research projects
* Foster and expand the Research Fellowship Programme to include all other staff eg Allied Health Professionals and nursing staff
* Strengthen support for innovators in the commercialisation of ideas and inventions
* Work with universities to set up a process to allow clinical researchers to secure university affiliations to be able to access grant funding in their own right
* Develop closer links between research and education

This has been further strengthened by the publication of the Trusts Research Strategy in December 2022.

It is recognised that feasibility or pilot work may be required before a grant application of the high standards required for NIHR or other funding bodies. To this extent, through the R&D Department and Research and Development Directorate (RDD) Group, the Trust has made an innovation fund available in order to enable preliminary research activity and thus facilitate high quality applications to external funding sources.

1. **AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

The innovation fund is intended to support feasibility or pilot work that will provide results or other information that will permit or otherwise enhance the likelihood of securing external peer-reviewed grant funding.

In addition, the fund aims to support innovations which will have either have a direct impact on patient care both locally and nationally or support the Trust’s values framework / one of the key themes from the Trusts Strategy (2020-25). These innovations could be either clinical or non-clinical.

The aim is to not only increase the amount of externally funded research but more specifically to provide access to funding to pump prime projects and ensure equity of access to the funding for all staff groups across the Trust. **Non-medical researchers are encouraged to apply for the awards, as are staff carrying out non-clinical projects.**

1. **ELIGIBILITY**

The scheme is open to all employees of Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. Applications from individuals with Honorary Contracts with the Trust are welcomed providing that the grant will be held at RPH and the project is conducted in collaboration with a named Trust employee and/or that the Trust will be the named lead institution and grant holder in any subsequent application to external funding sources.

Individuals who are in receipt of a current Innovation Fund award are not able to apply for another award as the main applicant.

**4. LIMITS AND SCOPE**

The Innovation fund is not designed for service evaluations or lab-based / basic science research projects.

Investigators must include justification of why there are no suitable external funding bodies for the proposed project or access to suitable internal funds*.*

The funding cannot be used to cover costs on existing projects however, it could be used to fund a separate sub-study.

All applications must be fully costed (full support is available from the R&D Department).

There are no fixed limits on the duration of projects although it is expected that most will complete within one-year.

Funding is intended to enable either:

* Preliminary research / project activity - this may include systematic review or other forms of secondary research, feasibility work or pilot studies to provide baseline results.
* Projects which will have either have an immediate direct impact on patient care and / or support the Trust’s values framework / one of the key themes from the Trusts Strategy (2020-25).

**The maximum amount of funding available for any project is £50,000.**

Eligible costs include project staff time, equipment, consumables and publication costs. However, the costs of attendance at conferences including travel costs, and the costs of bridging research staff between other research grants are not eligible. Overheads, administrative and maintenance costs, will not be met from the award.

**5. APPLICATION PROCESS**

There will be an annual call and applications can be made at any time of the year. Further information is available from Dr Vikki Hughes, Senior R&D Manager (01223 639678 or Email: victoria.hughes1@nhs.net). All applications must be submitted using the official innovation fund application form which is attached.

Applicants are reminded to complete the checklist on the cover page and attach a copy of the project protocol / proposal. All applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the R&D Department for advice before making an application. To help ensure the scientific quality, applicants are expected to have sought literature search, statistical, financial (research costs) and clinical (peer-review) advice prior to submission.

Completed applications and supporting documents should be submitted electronically by email to R&D using the above email address.

**6. REVIEW PROCESS**

Review Process

1. Eligibility check - All applications will be reviewed by:
   1. Library & Knowledge Service Manager to check the originality of the application
   2. Clinical Project Manager to check eligibility in line with the Guidance Notes
2. External Peer Review - once Eligibility has been agreed all projects will then be subject to external peer review which will include:
   1. Independent review (number of reviewers will be dependent upon the size of the funding requested)  
      <£15,000 one independent review will be requested  
      £15,000 to £50,000 two independent reviews will be requested at least one of which must be external
   2. Lay reviewer
3. Review by the Innovation Fund Committee
   1. The committee will be made up of representatives from across the Trust
   2. The committee will evaluate applications according the following criteria:

- Relevance to Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

- Feedback from external peer review

- Skill mix and experience in project team

- Project management arrangements including recruitment timelines

- Adequate consideration of ethical, legal and social implications

- Appropriate costing and value for money

**7. CONDITIONS FOR AN OFFER OF A GRANT**

Successful applicants of the Innovation Fund will be required to accept the following terms and conditions from the Innovation Fund Committee and Royal Papworth Charity to ensure the funding provided is being used in line with the Charity’s purpose to benefit NHS patients.

1. The grant has been awarded on the basis that the expenditure will not deviate away from the intended purposes as set out in the approved application
2. The funding will be utilised within 12 months of the date of approval unless otherwise agreed.
3. The project funded must commence within six months of the award. If the account remains inactive at the end of this period, entitlement to the funding will be reviewed by the Innovation Fund Committee and possibly withdrawn.
4. Annual update reports will be submitted to the Innovation Fund Committee for review. A final update report will be required, detailing fully the results and outputs of the project within 3 months of the conclusion of the grant period.
5. Projects which require multi-year funding will be reviewed on an annual basis. The committee will require additional reassurance and evidence at the end of each 12 month grant period to release the outstanding commitment to the project.
6. The grant will not be increased for any reason.
7. Grants awarded will be held in a Trust research account and the applicant will draw down their required funding and payments processed via the Oracle procurement or ePay systems using the relevant research account code provided.
8. If total expenditure is less than the value of the grant the balance of the grant will then be returned to the Innovation Fund.
9. If joint funding has been secured, written confirmation that this funding for the project or phase of the project, as presented in the application, will be required.
10. Monitoring visits and financial audits by Royal Papworth Hospital R&D Unit may also be conducted, particularly in the case of larger projects or multi-year commitment.
11. Royal Papworth Hospital support of feasibility or pilot work of this project must be acknowledged in all future presentations and publications.
12. Grant recipients will support Royal Papworth Charity with requests to promote the studies funded, to raise awareness of the impact of the Innovation Fund and to facilitate fundraising for the Innovation Fund from a variety of sources.