

Aim

This scheme is designed to build research capacity in the Scottish NHS as such it provides the opportunity for clinical professionals (doctors, dentists, NMAHPs and Healthcare scientists) **early in their career** to undertake a PhD.

Remit

All research funded as part of this training award must fall with CSO's overall remit of early translational (experimental medicine), clinical and applied health research and social care. The proposals must have clear potential for directly benefiting patients/service users, carers and the public in Scotland. CSO does not support basic research and projects for this scheme cannot involve work on animals. As part of the application process, you will be required to assess your proposal and classify it according to the Health Research Classification System - [UK CRC Health Research Classification system](#).

Eligibility

The scheme invites applications from early career clinical professionals wishing to become a clinical academic. This includes Medics, Dentists, Nurses, Midwives, Allied Health Professionals (NMAHPs) and Healthcare Scientists and others in a clinical role. Specific requirements for each category are detailed below. If your specific situation is not covered or you wish to query your eligibility, please contact csofellowships@gov.scot.

NMAHPS, Healthcare Scientists, Pharmacists, Physician associates and others employed in a clinical role (direct care) or a role that supports clinical practice (teaching, facilitation, leadership, management) but can demonstrate a commitment to research and the development of a research career. Salary requests for this category of applicant can be no higher than Band 7.

Medical and Dental Specialists

Applicants are required to hold a Scottish Speciality NTN. Successful applicants who are in training will remain on current salary scales and progress as normal for the duration of the award. The maximum salary payable is the top of the training scale - SpR9

(includes Public Health trainees who do not have a medical degree).

The time out of training for research (OOPR) will need to be agreed by your postgraduate dean before application. Please note that in line with the Gold reference guide for postgraduate specialty training in the UK time out of programme (OOP) will not normally be agreed until a trainee has been in a training programme for at least one year of training and trainees in their final training year will not normally be granted OOPR.

GPs

In recognition of shorter training time GPs are eligible for a period of **up to 4 years** post CCT. **The maximum salary payable is the top of the training scale**

Dental Core Trainees

Applicants who are dentists may be considered if they do not hold a National Training Number (NTN), but they should have achieved satisfactory completion of DCT2 before they take up the fellowship. Prospective applicants should seek to discuss their application at an early stage with the Associate Postgraduate Dental Dean (Core and Specialty Training) and the Dean of Postgraduate Dental Education. Applicants should also show how they plan to get an NTN.

GDPs

GDP's can also apply. To be eligible they must have 2 years of clinical experience after graduation (one in vocational training, one in 'practice') and **a maximum of 6 years' experience** post-graduation.

General Requirements

- **The proposed host must be a Scottish HEI.**
- **The candidate intends to register for and complete a PhD.**

- **Where already registered for a PhD (or MPhil with transfer to PhD), the applicant should not have been registered for more than 12 months at 100% WTE by the time the award starts.**

Filling in the form

The application should be made via the application form on the application portal on the CSO Flexi-grant System.

[My applications - Chief Scientist Office \(flexigrant.com\)](https://flexigrant.com)

Please make sure you apply to the correct scheme, there will be a separate form for Medics and Non-Medics/NMAHPS.

Please check your application very carefully before submitting it to us to make sure that all sections are filled in.

Application Summary

Host Organisation – **Must be a Scottish HEI**

UK CRC Health Research Classification System

You must code your project with the [UK CRC Health Research Classification system](#).

General approach to coding

The strategic aim of coding using the Health Research Classification System is to capture the **main objective of the research taking place during the lifetime of the award** and not the background or future potential downstream applications of the research

Every research project is classified using the two dimensions of the coding system, both Research Activity Codes and Health Categories use the minimum number of codes to reflect the main focus of the research.

Start Date

Successful fellowships can start between 1 August and 1 January following interviews in May. Please state your intended start date.

Section One – Applicant Information

Application category - Medic /Dentist/ NMAHP/ Healthcare scientist

Specialism – for Medics and Dentists please input your training speciality e.g. general surgery. - for NMAHPS and Healthcare scientists please input your Clinical Profession e.g. –Nurse, Physiotherapist, Biochemical engineer.

If you are a medic or dentist still in training, please state your current state of training and give your NTN number.

If you are a GP, GDP, NMAHP or Healthcare scientist please give the date you completed the training to enable you to be eligible for the role. Please state the number of years FTE of work since completion of training till the application deadline. Work in your clinical profession and work in research both count. Time spent on extended leave does not count.

Section Two – Proposed Research Plan

Please make sure your research plan is within remit:

- must be clinical and applied health research or social care research
- must have clear potential for directly benefiting patients/service users, carers or the public
- no basic research or work involving animals

Plain English (Lay) Summary – this should be a clear explanation of your research understandable to someone without a scientific background. Many reviewers will use this summary to inform their view of your research as they will not necessarily be experts in your topic area. If your application is successful, this summary will be placed on the CSO website. You may find it helpful to involve patients or members of the public in developing this summary to ensure it is appropriately written.

Scientific Abstract – this should be a clear and concise scientific summary of the detailed research plan.

Detailed Research Plan

This is the main part of the application detailing your proposal please ensure the information is accurate, succinct and clearly laid out. Please use all the headings with a total word limit of 5000. Please ensure this section includes your plans to involve patients and the public.

Outline – provide a clear explanation of the problem to be addressed and the impact on patients and how this research will fill an evidence gap.

Why the research is important – clearly identify the health need and outline the value this study will provide. Does the existing literature support this proposal

Research Questions/Aims and Objectives – please summarise the research questions.

Project Plan - Provide an expert description of the project plan of investigation plus any additional points required to support statements made in the previous sections, and include any key references required to justify the points made (e.g. in the use of

particular outcome measures or methods of analysis). You should include where applicable; study design, justification of sample size, selection and exclusion criteria, methods of data collection and analysis, and justification for your choice of methodology.

Project Management – outline the processes put in place to ensure the research will be well managed.

Success criteria – Please set out measures of success you intend to use and also the key risks to delivering this research and what contingencies you will put in place to deal with them.

Dissemination, Outputs and Anticipated Impact

The purpose of this section is for the applicant to describe what the outputs of the research might be, how these will be disseminated and what impact there might be.

Please consider the following questions when completing this section:

What do you intend to produce from your research?

How will you inform and engage the public?

How will your outputs enter our health and care system or society?

What will be the impact of your research?

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI)

By public involvement we mean an active partnership between members of the public and researchers in the research process, rather than the use of people as 'subjects' of research. Public involvement means research being carried out with or by members of the public rather than it being something that is done to, about or for them. Examples of public involvement include: involvement in identifying research

priorities; assisting in the design and management of a research project; being a co-applicant on a research grant or a joint grant holder; carrying out specific research activities; being members of a project advisory or steering group; disseminating research findings.

Patient and public involvement should have been included in the detailed research plan. This section provides more detail. You should describe who has been involved and why this is appropriate, what role(s) they have played and what influence or change has happened as result of their involvement. Answer each section, you can signpost to the detailed research plan to help.

If you have not had PPI training, please include this in the training and development programme for the fellowship.

If it is not considered appropriate and meaningful to actively involve patients/service users, carers and the public in your proposed research a space is provided for you to justify this decision.

For help and resources with PPI – [Patient and Public Involvement \(PPI\) Guidance and Training | NHS Research Scotland | NHS Research Scotland](#)

Training and Development Programme

Please use this section to detail the training and development you will need to undertake, and the resources required for this as part of the Fellowship. This should cover both the training you may need to undertake the research being proposed but also training designed to support your development as a future research leader.

Clinical Commitments

Please indicate what clinical commitments you will have during the fellowship and how/if these relate to the research being proposed. You may allocate up to 20% of your time to Clinical commitments.

Section Three – Finance

Funding will normally cover:

Reimbursement of the basic personal salary (not out-of-hours bands) of the award holder (including superannuation and national insurance), with increments, based on an appropriate point for the individual on a relevant clinical pay scale. Request for salaries should be based on actual costs at the time of application, increases for inflation should not be included. In making requests for salaries please note this is a research training fellowship and maximum salaries apply.

All Medical Applicants – Current grade on the specialty registrar scale, the maximum salary payable is SpR9 even if you would progress above this during the fellowship or are GP with a higher salary.

Other applicants – current grade as long as that is in Band 7 or below.

Research costs up to £30k over three years (i.e. up to £10k per annum for three years or pro-rata for part-time awards) to cover the costs of the research. This budget is intended to cover any laboratory costs, fieldwork expenses, PPI expenses, minor equipment costs (e.g. computer software), printing, postage, travel and stationery. (Computers - desktops or laptops are not allowable). **These costs must be fully itemised and justified.**

NHS Service Support Costs will also need to be estimated separately and stated within the application.

Fees for registration for a PhD (at appropriate home student rates at the relevant institution)

Research training costs up to £3000 where appropriate. Training in clinical skills, even where related to the proposed research, will not be funded. Costs for attending

conferences should not be applied for under this heading as these can be applied for later by successful Fellows and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. PPI training should be included unless this has already been completed by the applicant.

Open Access Fees These should not be included. All CSO grants are eligible to apply for up to £8,000 up to 18 months after completion of the award. The application is made separately on Form 6a after acceptance of the paper.

Conference Fees These should not be included. Successful fellows will be eligible to apply for support to attend up to 3 conferences during their fellowship on Form 6c.

Please note that The CSO financial year runs from 1 April to 31 March and required costs must be split by financial year.

Please fill in all relevant boxes in this section and ensure it is signed by the finance officer.

Section Four – Support

Supervisor – All named supervisors must fill in the form and sign to show they have agreed to take on this role. It should be clearly shown that supervisor support addresses all areas of the proposed work.

Head of Department – of the prospective host institution must fill in the form and sign to indicate their formal approval of the application, their willingness to offer an appointment to the individual (if successful) for the tenure of the award subject to their normal employment practices, their approval of the salaries sought, and the acceptance of the terms and conditions associated with a Scottish Clinical Academic Training Fellowship.

Postgraduate Deans Statement – if appropriate – This must be completed for all medical and dental candidates who are still training.

Letters of Support – Other letters of support are not required. If you wish to submit other letters of support, they must be included in the one application document, or they will not be included in the review.

Section Five – Declarations

This must be completed to show ethical considerations have been taken into account and all the relevant approvals have been sought. No payments can be made for research projects until all ethical approvals are in place.

[What approvals and decisions do I need? - Health Research Authority \(hra.nhs.uk\)](http://hra.nhs.uk)

The form must be signed by the applicant, Grantholder and Sponsor and if appropriate the NHS organisation.

Contact information for administration of a successful award must be given.

By signing the form, applicants are confirming that CSO may hold and process, by computer or otherwise, all personal information supplied with the application.

Reviewer Nomination Form

Each application must be accompanied by a completed reviewer nomination form which makes suggestions for people to approach to obtain a peer review on your application. They should be people that can appropriately review either the clinical area of your research or the proposed methodology. Suggested reviewers should not be employed at the institution you are intending to do your research they should also not be current collaborators of any of your supervisors.

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

All applications are assessed by a process of peer review and assessment by a Panel assembled by the Chief Scientist Office for this purpose. Comments from the expert referees from the peer review process assist the Panel in reaching a decision in the shortlisting process. Candidates who are short-listed will be invited to an interview held by the Panel

Outcome of the Assessment

Applicants will be informed as soon as a final decision has been taken on their application. Candidates who are interviewed will usually be notified of the decision as soon as possible after funding arrangements have been confirmed. The decision of the Panel is final, and no appeals will be considered.

Re-application

Applicants who are unsuccessful may re-apply once. If you re-apply a covering letter stating how the previous proposal has been modified must be enclosed with the new application.

The selection panel will use the following assessment criteria when reviewing your application:

The Applicant

The Panel will look for evidence of commitment to a clinical academic career. Supporting evidence will include productivity, e.g. any publications from previous research and proof of clinical skill e.g. prizes. The Panel will also look for evidence that the applicant has the potential to become a leader in their field and to lead a research team. Applications where the applicant wishes to gain a PhD purely for the purposes of career progression are unlikely to be successful.

The Project

The Panel will wish to fund high quality applications both in terms of the individual and the project. The Panel will seek to judge the scientific merit of the research taking into account its originality and importance and judging the extent to which it will increase knowledge relevant to improving health. The factors they will be considering include:

- Has the candidate been involved in the writing and design of the project?
- Has PPI been used in the development of the project and is it a continued thread throughout the project?
- Is the methodology appropriate?
- Is the work achievable, feasible and deliverable within the timeframe?
- Will the research benefit patients?

Supervision and Research Centre

The panel will look for confirmation that the supervision for the candidate and the research is of high quality and is able to cover all aspects of the training and supervisory requirements of the individual. They will also judge the standing of the proposed research centre in the field.