

## **BACKGROUND TO THE WELLCOME TRUST AWARD**

The University has been awarded a block grant from the Wellcome Trust's Institutional Strategic Support Fund (ISSF) for Translational Biomedical Research. The ISSF aims to translate the excellent biomedical discovery science underpinning our world recognised research strengths to:

- Understand the links between biological mechanisms and human diseases;
- Identify and develop biomarkers for patient stratification;
- Identify novel lead compounds for discovery science and clinical development;
- Influence future clinical practices.

## **PURPOSE OF THE PILOT FUND**

A portion of the award is being used to run the Translational Pilot Fund, an internal scheme to fund pilot projects, which aims to support translational development of biomedical discovery science in the University and Medical School, to build and sustain the future drug discovery portfolio. Projects should be directed at infectious diseases or new therapies for cancer and other major non-infectious diseases. This pilot fund will support exploratory studies to enable new drug targets arising from discovery science projects to access key resources that are required to bridge from discovery to translational science. We aim to enable both strong clinical target validation and entry into the drug discovery pipeline.

For this round, up to £100k is available. We envisage this may be used to pilot new projects, establish new methodologies, develop cross disciplinary facilities, and establish links between discovery scientists and translational drug discovery and/or clinical colleagues. It is not expected that individual projects will exceed £30k unless the request is for multi-user equipment.

The Pilot Fund is intended to be flexible and creative and to support a range of needs. For example we will:

- Fund extensions and bridges for PhD students and Postdocs at the end of their current project, who show a desire and ability to progress to a translational phase, and by doing so enhance their skills and career progression. Extension funding will usually not exceed 6 months.
- Fund training for PhD students and research staff in key translational research skills, either within the Sussex Translational Platform or externally.
- Support a PI wishing to take one aspect of their research into a translational phase, by funding resource additional to their current discovery science funding to, for example, transfer a cellular assay developed in the discovery laboratory into a high-throughput format.
- Fund the purchase of reagents, facility access or studies at external Commercial Research Organisations, that would enable a PI to take a translational step in a project funded on a discovery science basis.

## ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The scheme is open to PIs, Research Fellows and PhD students across the University and BSMS. Applications involving multiple applicants are encouraged. Generally we expect the principle applicant to be employed during the Wellcome Trust Award funded project period and also during any proposed externally funded project(s) which would occur after the Wellcome Trust pump-priming activity. Staff on teaching-only contracts are ineligible to apply. If you are unsure of whether you are eligible to apply please contact Carly Brownbridge, [C.Brownbridge@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:C.Brownbridge@sussex.ac.uk) ext 3664.

## PILOT PROJECT DATES

Projects which do not need to recruit staff would normally be expected to begin within 1 month of notification of award. If you need to recruit staff please allow enough time (at least 3 months) for the recruitment process when selecting a start date.

The earliest start date is 1 February 2019 if no staff are to be recruited, and the latest start date is 1 May 2019. Projects are expected to be up to six months in duration but the scheme will fund up to twelve months in exceptional circumstances.

## ELIGIBLE COSTS

Standard Wellcome Trust eligible costs apply, see <https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Costs-guidance-2018-March.xlsx>

- Research Assistant. If you plan to hire an RA as part of your project, please include recruitment costs in your budget.
- PhD fees / maintenance
- Materials and consumables
- Animals
- Equipment and access charges
- Travel and subsistence
- Public engagement and dissemination activity

## INELIGIBLE COSTS

The funding is **not** intended to support:

- Permanent staff time e.g. PI, Co-I (however funds can be used to reallocate staff time from the 'pool' of researchers in the Drug Discovery Centre).
- Administrative costs

## APPLICATION PROCESS

A single Principal Investigator should be identified as the lead or co-ordinating applicant.

Applications are structured as follows:

- Part 1: Cover sheet
- Part 2: Project description and methodology.
- Part 3: Outcomes
- Part 4: Budget and justification of resources
- Part 5: Licences, ethics and intellectual property

Applicants should submit their completed application to Carly Brownbridge [C.Brownbridge@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:C.Brownbridge@sussex.ac.uk) by **12 noon on Thursday 6 December**. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed.

## KEY COMMISSIONING DATES

Call issued	Deadline	Decision to applicants	Earliest project start date (if no staff to be recruited)	Latest start date (if staff to be recruited)
7 November 2018	<b>Thursday 6 December 2018, 12 noon.</b>	By 18 January 2019	1 February 2019	1 May 2019

### REVIEW PROCEDURE

Applications will be reviewed by the ISSF Leadership Team: Professor Laurence Pearl (ISSF Institutional Lead), Dr Ruth Murrell-Lagnado (Acting Director of Sussex Drug Discovery Centre), Professor Tony Carr (Director of the Genome Damage and Stability Centre) alongside Professor Sarah Guthrie (Head of School, Life Sciences) and Professor Chris Pepper (Professor in Cancer Studies, BSMS).

Successful applications will facilitate advancement of a basic biomedical project towards an early-stage drug discovery project amenable to progression to external funding through the translational research 'platform' based in the School of Life Sciences.

### REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Successful principal applicants will be expected to submit at least two reports: one detailing progress and outcomes 6 months from the start of the award and a second follow-on report 6 months after the project end date.

Reports should address the following:

- Progress towards anticipated outcomes.
- Priorities/planned activities for next period.
- How the work accomplished has contributed to the promotion of translational research within Life Sciences

### FURTHER INFORMATION

All applicants are welcome to discuss their planned proposal with the ISSF lead:

- Laurence Pearl, [Laurence.Pearl@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:Laurence.Pearl@sussex.ac.uk)

All public engagement queries should be directed to:

- Katy Petherick, [k.petherick@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:k.petherick@sussex.ac.uk)

All costing queries should be directed to:

- Carly Brownbridge, [C.Brownbridge@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:C.Brownbridge@sussex.ac.uk) ext. 3664