**Action Medical Research Training Fellowship application instructions**

**When preparing your application please adhere to this guidance – applications that are late, incomplete or do not follow the guidance may be rejected.**

We recommend reading all instructions before starting the application - you may find it helpful to print a colour copy for reference. Frequently asked questions can be found at the end of this file.

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# THE APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

**You should complete the web form including your supporting documents by the deadline of Thursday 25 November 2021 by 5PM earlier applications are welcomed**.

The form includes a section for files you will need to upload (including the finance template). This template and other important documents you need to refer to (such as the example research agreement and grant policy) were sent to the Research Training Fellowship applicant as a link in an email. Guidance on how to complete the templates is on pages 4-8 in this instruction file.

**The web form is completely separate to the main charity website and you can only access the form via this link** [https://actionmedicalresearch-applications.org.uk//fellowship/init.pl](https://actionmedicalresearch-applications.org.uk/fellowship/init.pl)

**Signature pages**: If you need extra time for signatures then you should send a signed version of the Excel finance sheet to us by 9 December 2021. See page 8 for more information.

## Data Protection

Unless otherwise agreed, all information that the Applicants and/or Institution supply to the Charity relating to any applications or Grants awarded will be used for the purposes of processing the Application and/or Grant and for the purpose of peer review, audit and/or evaluation. All Shared Personal Data will be processed in accordance with Data Protection law. Data supplied in the application relating to the applicant(s) and/or individuals funded by the Grant may be used by the Charity for the purposes of grant administration. It may also be disclosed to and processed by external peer reviewers, government and other research and professional bodies including potential joint funding partners.

#

# Please see next page

# HOW TO COMPLETE THE WEBFORM

## ! This section contains important information.

The Research Training Fellowship (RTF) applicant should the application at [https://actionmedicalresearch-applications.org.uk//fellowship/init.pl](https://actionmedicalresearch-applications.org.uk/fellowship/init.pl) The RTF applicant (not the supervisor) should complete the form. **Only one person should be in the webform at any one time to avoid overwriting what others have entered.** A password reset function is also available on this login screen.


## Applications list screen

**Click  on this screen to begin your form.** Once the application is started you can:

 your answers, to the application form , the application form

Or ‘change your password’.

Do **not** click  as this will delete the application permanently

If you need to PRINT a basic copy of your answers this can be done via a button on the  screen. Note you can only access the view button when the website is open for applications.


## Navigating around the form

**!** Don’t use the back button on your browser – please use the , and buttons to move around the form. If you enter a page of information and then click the back button on your browser then you will **lose the information** you typed on that page. Please complete the required fields first. These mandatory fields allow you to save all other answers on that page.


## Save and exit/ Logging on

 allows you to continue at a later time. When logging back in click on continue and **Do not press the  button!**


##

## Structure of the webform and import requirements

Some fields are required fields or have validation rules to enable successful importing into our database. Required fields on the webform are marked with an \*. The form will not allow you to progress to another section and may delete information that you have entered if these fields are not correctly completed. If this happens a **red** error message will appear near the top of the screen, which indicates which question needs to be corrected.

There are five main sections of the online application web form.

* **Part**  covers basic details of the application.  **Required fields -** Question A1 and question A2 – Length of fellowship (in months) and amounts requested from the charity for this fellowship

* **Part**  – **cover RTF applicant and supervisor contact details.** There is space for a maximum of five supervisors. Please leave blank any supervisors sections you do not require. Applicants/Supervisors must be employed at a UK research institute such as a university or hospital. Collaborators from outside the UK or not based at UK research institute (including any patient representatives) can be named in part C of the form as a collaborator and their letters of support submitted as described later in these instructions. **Required fields -for the RTF applicant** The RTF name, contact institution, address details and email address (**Questions:** B1, B5, B6 and B7)

* **Part**  **contains questions about the details of the project and also details of your training and career goals. It includes a non-confidential lay statement (non-scientific description suitable for members of the public).**

* **Part**  **is the file upload section where you upload your completed additional files**  REQUIRED FIELDS finances D1a and protocol D2

* **Part  is a tickbox** (required field) confirming that once the  button has been clicked no further changes to the application can be made online.


## The Review button and the Submit form Button

At the end of section E there is a button called which allows you to carry out a final check before submitting your application. At the end of the review screen there are two buttons:

* The  button returns you to the questions screen so that you can amend your answers

The  button **submits your application**. **Only click submit form when you are sure your application is ready for submission.** Once submitted no further changes can be made online.

If a half-completed application is submitted, it will be deleted from our system and then will need to be re-entered.

Once the application is submitted the website will send a copy of the application as a PDF. A word/pdf format that is easier to read (including the additional files submitted to us) will be produced by our database for the referees.

## Symbols on the form

* ? can be clicked on to display additional help

***Characters/symbols and the return key (new paragraph) not accepted by the form***

**!** Please note that some characters/symbols are unfortunately not accepted by this version of the online form. Please separate information using punctuation such as commas, full stops, colons and the space bar. Do not use the return key (carriage returns) as unfortunately when we download into our database the carriage returns are automatically removed.

Standard bullet points are accepted by the form but please avoid unusual symbols such as

Less than or greater than symbols < > the euro sign €.

The apostrophe ‘that is under the @ is accepted but a similar character on the top left of the keyboard may not work.

The Word or PDF files that you upload to the application form in Part  (eg the protocol) **can** include these symbols


## Maximum field lengths

Estimated word counts or character counts are given on some fields. This is normally based on 7 characters to a word. Spaces are counted as characters. Characters beyond the limit in the form can be rejected by the form.

## Uploading files including your protocol, finances and supervisor statements file

**-Please label your files with descriptive names eg ‘protocol’ or ‘finances’ or ‘supervisor statement’. Excessively long file names (such as publication titles) cause errors.**

**-Where possible it is preferable that we receive files in portrait orientation so that we can combine them into one file for the reviewers.**

**-PLEASE ONLY SUBMIT ONE COPY OF EACH FILE**

## How to upload files in part D of the webform

Click choose file and select the file you wish to upload. Click UPLOAD to upload the file. If the file has successfully uploaded a green message displaying the filename will appear. You will not be able to click into the file but can upload the file again if you are unsure whether you have uploaded the final version

You can only upload Word documents (.docx), Excel spreadsheets, Adobe PDFs and JPEG files.

## Instructions for completing files that MUST be uploaded to your application

**If these are not included your application will be considered incomplete.**

* **1.** **PROTOCOL**

**Please name the file as ‘protocol’**

The protocol should be written by the RTF applicant but drawn up in consultation with the supervisor. It should NOT be more than six sides of A4 (minimum 1½ line-spacing, not smaller than size 12 font, margins not less than 1.5cm) so that reviewers can easily read the text. You may include references as additional pages (references are not included in the page count). If you have pictures, diagrams, preliminary unpublished data or other essential information necessary for the application these can be included an appendix of no more than two A4 sides in total. While preliminary studies are not required, including such data is encouraged to strengthen your application. The protocol, references and appendix can be submitted as one file. Where possible please keep the file size below 5Mb. **Applications that do not follow this page layout may be withdrawn.**

Please save images as a PNG file (this should retain more detail and be easily viewed) or JPG file. JPG may cause loss of detail on images with high contrast areas (such as text), although if you save at a high quality setting (90 to 95 will still reduce file size) then this will be less of a problem.

The protocol should include:

1. The work to be undertaken during your training including the hypothesis or reasoning behind the study, a brief description of the methods including overall study design, numbers of patients / animals to be used, clinical / laboratory techniques, operative procedures, data analysis and description of any difficulties anticipated.
2. Full justification for consumable expenses sought.
3. The long term relevance of this work to the Charity's interests.
* **2. FINANCES SHEET**

**! Please complete the supplied Excel template only – please don’t tamper with the Excel template as it won’t transfer properly into our system if modified.** Please submit your Excel Finance sheet as an .xlsx file.

**! Please see the 2 pages of instructions at the top of the finances sheet about research costs.**

**! Important note regarding approval from your Institution**

You should check the finances on your Excel finance sheet as soon as possible with your Research Services Office. You will need to send the “conditions for making a grant application”, ”example research agreement” and “MRC Good research practice- principles and guidelines” documents to your Research Services Office along with your application. The email we sent to the Research Training Fellowship applicant contains a link to these files.

Please note, if applicable, a SoeCAT form may also be required. This calculates the different activities and costs associated with clinical research – see point 11 below for further information

* **3. A statement of support from each supervisor**

**Please upload your supervisor(s) written statement**

The statement from each supervisor should include:

1. Details of the suitability of the candidate for a Research Training Fellowship.
2. Details of the Supervisor's experience of research supervision (if no previous experience, please name an experienced co-supervisor).
3. Number of students currently supervised.
4. Details of the Supervisor's recent publications of relevance to the application.

**Please combine all supervisor statements into one file. The statements should not exceed one side of A4 per supervisor (additional space is allowed for references).**

* **4. CV up to 2 pages long for the Research Training Fellowship applicant ONLY**

*Please do not include CVs for supervisors. Please do not include CVs longer than 2 pages.*

Please include:

* + A brief summary (maximum of 250 words) of any research undertaken so far, indicating what you consider to be your most important research findings.
	+ Professional qualifications with dates
	+ Details of any prizes or awards
	+ Present position
	+ Previous positions held
	+ Publications. Please list your publications (if any) of relevance to this application.
* **5. Salary scales – please ONLY send the page of the scale that is relevant to the salary of the Research Training Fellowship applicant.** If you do not have a copy of the relevant scale please speak to your research support team or finance office.
* **6. Collaborator letters** If the application includes collaboration with other researchers/groups/patient representatives please provide signed letter(s) of support – if possible please combine letters in one file.
* **7. If required please provide a justification for the use of animals.**

**The charity will only support the use of animals where no viable alternative exists. The application must have regard to animal welfare and advances in the refinement, replacement and reduction of animal use.**

**You will need to answer all of the following questions and include:**

**i**. Home Office licence numbers (institute, project and personal) covering the procedures outlined.

**ii.** Please indicate whether the necessary approvals have been given by an Animal Welfare and Ethical Approval Body.

**iii.** The types of animals to be used, numbers involved and costs

**iv.** The source of animals and how they will be transported and maintained

**v.** Please state the severity of the procedures (mild/moderate/severe) and then give further details of any moderate or severe procedures (no more than 250 words).

**vi.** A brief justification (one side of A4 maximum) on why alternatives, such as human tissue or other approaches, cannot be used, plus evidence that the species chosen is appropriate and the minimum number of animals will be used to give statistically valid results. Give details of any sample size calculation and statistical advice sought.

## List of files that you CAN include in your application

**These files may enhance your application if you are able to include them. We understand it is not always possible to obtain these documents prior to a grant being awarded but if your application is successful you would have to supply them before the grant is activated.**

* **8. A copy of your written ethical approval letter as granted by your ethical committee if applicable to the proposed research. You may not be able to include this if you are in the process of applying or you are not yet able to apply.** Please contact your supervisor or the university/hospital research services department if you are unsure whether you need to supply this document. Do not upload ethics application files, just the approval letter if you have one.
* **9. A sponsor letter (if applicable) for the proposed research from your institution.** Research that involves the NHS, for example patients, patient data, human participants, human tissue or human cells, requires a formal sponsor willing to take primary responsibility for monitoring and enforcement of the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research**.** Sponsorship may be dependent on gaining ethical approval, but we still need an appropriate organisation, such as a UK university or NHS trust, to confirm that they will act as sponsor. Action Medical Research is a funder not a sponsor. Please contact your supervisor or the university/hospital research services department if you are unsure whether you need to supply this document.

The link below provides a more detailed explanation of what a sponsor is. This policy framework sets out principles of good practice in the management and conduct of health and social care research in the UK.

<https://www.hra.nhs.uk/planning-and-improving-research/policies-standards-legislation/uk-policy-framework-health-social-care-research/>

* **10. If applicable, a copy of the front page ONLY of the APPROVED home office project licence.** Please contact your supervisor or the university/hospital research services department if you are unsure whether you need to supply this document. Note: Do not upload the *application* for a Home Office licence.
* **11. If applicable, a SoECAT form. Please send us the 'study information' and 'summary' pages from your SoECAT form as a single PDF with your completed grant application. We may ask for the full form later in the application process.** This may or may not apply to your research proposal, further guidance can be found at <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/schedule-of-events-cost-attribution-template-soecat-guidance/23214> If relevant, you should discuss this with your Finance Department and local AcoRD specialist.

Researchers applying for clinical research funding need to complete a Schedule of Events Cost Attribution Tool (SoECAT) to be eligible for the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) portfolio and the support this provides. This change came into effect on 1 October 2018. SoECAT is designed to make sure costs are attributed in line with the AcoRD framework and that this is consistent across the UK.

You must complete a SoECAT if:

• you’re applying for clinical research funding

• you will carry out your research in the UK

• your research will use NHS resources

• your research requires Health Research Authority approval

You must complete a SoECAT even if you don't think your clinical research will involve excess treatment costs (ETCs).

These are the steps you need to take when you apply for a grant that includes clinical research.

• Complete a SoECAT, which you can download from the NIHR website https://www.nihr.ac.uk/researchers/collaborations-services-and-support-for-your-research/run-your-study/excess-treatment-costs.htm

• Get your form signed off by an AcoRD specialist. There are different ways to contact a specialist, depending on where you are in the UK:

o England: NIHR website

o Scotland: NHS Research Scotland website

o Wales: email research.fundingsupport@wales.nhs.uk

o Northern Ireland: HSC R&D division website.

You should contact an AcoRD specialist as early as possible in the application process.

• Send us the 'study information' and 'summary' pages from your SoECAT form as a single PDF with your completed grant application. We may ask for the full form later in the application process.

• If we award you a grant you must tell your AcoRD specialist. In England, very expensive ETCs may need further assessment by an NHS panel.

Further guidance on how to complete the form can be found here <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/how-to-complete-a-soecat/23415>

* **12. If needed, a copy of a supporting publication in press (up to two publications ONLY)** Please use short file names to avoid errors
* **13.** **Other supporting documentation (pilot data is encouraged) may be included providing it is not more than two pages in total. This is intended to allow you to submit a document that is important to understanding your project and not simply an ‘extension’ to your protocol document.**

**List of files that we definitely DON’T want in your application**

**⌧ DON’T** send multiple copies of each file

**⌧ DON’T** send a covering letter unless you have an important point to address

**⌧ DON’T** send a copy of your application for a Home Office licence or application for ethical approval

**⌧ DON’T** send CVs for your supervisors

**⌧ DON’T** send full economic cost documents or other internal university/hospital research forms

**⌧ DON’T** send volumes of extra information. We will not accept excessive additional information. Our external advisors have limited time to read applications.

**Note about videos in applications.**

Videos are currently discouraged due to problems with large file sizes and also because reviewers may not have the software to open the files. If a video is really needed then they should be brief, relevant and in a format that can easily be opened by most computers.

## What happens after you submit your online form

Once your application has been submitted the Research Training Fellowship applicant will receive an email containing a PDF of your webform answers for your files. *Please let us know if this email does not reach you as it may mean that the application has not been processed.*

Over the next few months Action Medical Research will carry out a full peer review process. We will contact the RTF applicant by email if further information is required. The outcome will be sent to the RTF by email.

# How to submit your signatures

Please submit signatures by 9 December 2021. We accept signature images in the uploaded Excel finance file or scanned copies of the relevant pages emailed to applications@action.org.uk.

* The finance file must be signed by the applicant, the Officer responsible for administering any award made (eg Finance Officer, Bursar, Registrar), your main Supervisor and the Head of Department where the research training is to be given.

If you do not have access to a scanner please send hard copy signature pages by post to the Research Department address on page 9.   **Do not send a paper copy of the whole application, we only need the signed signature pages.**

**Who can sign as the Head of Department?**

The person(s) responsible for the allocation of resources and staff for the project can sign as Head of Department. Typically, this would be the Head of Department but in some circumstances the acting Head of Department can sign.

## Action Medical Research Contact details

Action Medical Research

Research Department

Vincent House

North Parade

Horsham

West Sussex

RH12 2DP

Email: applications@action.org.uk

Phone: 01403 327407 or 327416

Office hours: Monday - Friday 9am to 5pm

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS/TROUBLESHOOTING

**Login problems I’ve tried everything, and I can’t get my password to work- what should I do?**

* Please check that you are using this website

[https://actionmedicalresearch-applications.org.uk//fellowship/init.pl](https://actionmedicalresearch-applications.org.uk/fellowship/init.pl)

(This is not the main charity website).

* If you ‘copy and paste’ your password and your password is not recognised by the system, it may be some extra white spaces were caught on the end of the copy. Please try copy and paste again ensuring that white spaces are not included. The password is case sensitive if you prefer typing it in.
* If the issue is not resolved please contact us.

**Calculating finances Should I use my current or future salary scale?** Please calculate your finances in accordance with the salary scale that would be relevant at the time the research would start if awarded as this reflects the cost of the research to the charity. Your finance team will help and they can include an estimate for nationally agreed cost of living awards if appropriate. A likely start date for awards from this round would be between April 2022 and October 2022.

**What costs can I apply for?** Two pages of detailed instructions about eligible costs are given on the first two pages of the excel finances sheet. Please scroll up to the top of the spreadsheet.

**Uploading files Should I upload word files, Excel files or PDF files?** Please send the finances file as an Excel file. Most other documents are usually submitted as Word or PDF files. Please don’t submit multiple copies as different file types.