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**Scottish Ophthalmology Trainee Research Award (OTRA)**

**Background and Guidance Notes 2016**

Applicants should read these notes carefully before completing the application form. Any forms which do not comply with the Guidance will not be considered.

Aims and overview of the scheme

To support NHS-funded Ophthalmology Trainees in developing a research portfolio within their post.

The award provides funding for protected time to contribute to, conduct and lead ophthalmology research. This will strengthen the research culture and increase research capacity within ophthalmology.

The Ophthalmology Trainee Research Award scheme is for trainees who would like to incorporate research into their post. The scheme will support them for one year.

Award holder activities

The scheme will allow the successful applicants protected time for 12 months to initiate and deliver a structured clinical research project. In this time, applicants will also be encouraged to participate in other commercial or non-commercial projects ongoing within their clinical area.

**Details**

NHS Research Scotland (NRS) Ophthalmology Speciality Group is inviting applications from Ophthalmology Trainees for funding for 0.2 whole time equivalent (WTE). Funding is available to cover direct salary costs of the trainee for a period one year, subject to satisfactory review.

**Eligibility**

Ophthalmology Trainees in NHS funded posts are eligible to apply (applicants employed wholly by Special Health Boards are not eligible).

Applicants should identify a Mentor appropriate to their clinical field and proposed research. This would normally be a senior full-time academic clinician either from within the trainees Department or from a partner University.

Mentors will be required to complete section F of the application form.

**Application Process**

Completed applications should be received by Jill Strachan [jillianstrachan@nhs.net](mailto:jillianstrachan@nhs.net) in the TASC office by 27 January 2017.

Any queries should be directed to your local R&D office in the first instance – details of which can be supplied by Jill Strachan ([jillianstrachan@nhs.net](mailto:jillianstrachan@nhs.net))

Interviews will be in mid February with awards taken up by 1st April 2017.

**Process of assessment**

Applications will be considered by a shortlisting panel which will include representation from the NRS Ophthalmology Specialty Group, R&D/clinical management, clinical academic representatives, the CSO and NHS Fife.

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

* quality of the individual
* quality of the mentor arrangements
* quality of the proposed research or development projects/activities.
* commitment of the relevant NHS Board and clinical department towards the project / activities

Shortlisted applicants will be invited for interview in mid February. Selected interview date(s) will be confirmed upon receipt of completed application.

Monitoring

Awards will be subject to monitoring by the relevant R&D office and reviewed against set targets. The Monitoring process will be detailed to successful applicants. Applicants who fail to meet targets may be subject to an action plan to address the situation or the award being be withdrawn.

**Question-Specific Guidance**

Word limits are stated for some answers – for these answers a word count should be provided.

**SECTION A – Your Details**

Please supply your title, name, work contact details and your highest academic qualification. The majority of contact will be via email so please ensure you provide a current and regularly accessed email address.

**SECTION B – Employment History**

Please give details of your current and previous employment history.

**SECTION C – Research Experience**

1 This section is aimed at providing the panel with an overview of your Research experience/training to date including any other academic experience. This should detail all research projects that you have participated in including non-commercially funded, commercial funded and projects without funding.

2 Please list any publications on which you are an author.

**SECTION D - Use of Ophthalmology Trainee Research Award Time**

3 Please provide a personal statement of why you are applying for the Award and how it will benefit you personally both in terms of your clinical and research careers.

5 This section should be completed to describe the research project you intend to carry out over the duration of the award. You should also detail:

a. ongoing research you are currently involved in

b. additional projects you will be involved in if successful

The proposed project must be considered clinical research. A “research project” is defined as a structured activity which is intended to provide new knowledge which is generaliseable. Projects must have a clearly defined “research question”. Clinical research means research which involves NHS patients, staff, data or facilities.

6 This section should put the proposed research into the context of local and/or national NHS/clinical policy in your clinical area.

**SECTION F – Clinical Support**

7 This section should be fully discussed with the local head of service to ensure that if successful the proposed arrangements can be put in place within a reasonable time-frame. It is insufficient to merely state that you have the agreement that your time will be freed up and your sessions backfilled – how this will be done **in practical terms** should be detailed.

**SECTION G – To be completed by the mentor**

The NHS mentor should be selected as an appropriate person to guide your clinical research career during the tenure of the award (and beyond) in terms wider than just specific involvement in the proposed research.

10 &11 It is important for the selection panel to be clear that sufficient support will be provided to the applicant to allow them to be successful. The Mentor should use this space to detail their skills and experience in supervising students and how they plan to supervise the candidate through the award.

If a second Mentor has been selected eg from a partner university, then they should also complete the form.