



WELLBEING
OF WOMEN

Scoring Guide for Reviewers

Assessment criteria:

All proposals submitted to us are scrutinised by independent experts working in the relevant field who assess research proposals based on five core criteria:

1. Importance:

- How important are the research questions that will be addressed?
- How relevant are they to Wellbeing of Women's remit?
- Is the level of innovation likely to lead to significant new understanding?

2. Design and Methodology:

- How good is the scientific quality of the proposal?
- Is the proposal original and innovative?
- Is there a robust methodology and experimental design at the centre of the proposal?
- How well have project risks been identified, and will they be mitigated?
- Is any animal use fully justified in terms of need, species, number, conformance to guidelines?

3. Potential Impact:

- What is the potential economic and societal impact of the proposed research?
- Is the proposed research likely to result in patient or health service benefit?
- Is there identification of the potential impacts of research and plans to deliver these?

4. People and Workplace including PPI:

- How suitable is the research team and collaborators? Please comment on the track record(s) of the individual(s) in their fields and whether they are best placed to deliver the proposed research.
- How suitable is the environment where the proposed research will take place?
- Has appropriate patient and public involvement (PPI) been involved in the study, either in the design or as part of the project?

5. Value for Money:

- Are the funds requested essential for the work and fully justified?
- Does the proposal represent good value for money?

You will be asked to provide a score of 1-6 (scoring to point 5 is allowed e.g. 4.5) and to justify this score within your comments. You should refer to the scoring guide for an explanation of what we expect of applications to achieve each score. Generally, a score above 4.5 is considered fundable. The Research Advisory Committee will not normally discuss applications scoring less than 3.5.

Specific Scoring for Training Grants:

While still taking into consideration the core criteria above, for Scholarship and Fellowship grants, assessment focuses on three inter-related areas, and you will be asked to give an individual score between 1-6 for each area:

1. Qualifications and ability of the candidate (Qualifications must necessarily take account of the level of application).
2. Quality of the project
3. Standard of the host institution, training plan and supervisory team

Entry-level Research Scholarships: The aim of this award is to provide ‘pump-priming’ funds to enable pre-doctoral candidates to be exposed to a research environment and to obtain pilot data that will enhance an application for a research fellowship (PhD or MD). Applications are from individuals who have not previously been involved in substantial research projects.

Research Training Fellowships: The aim of this award is to encourage medical graduates, nurses, midwives or allied health professionals to pursue a career in academic medicine. Candidates are expected to undertake a higher degree (PhD or MD) that will underpin their development as a future clinical academic leader.

Postdoctoral Research Fellowships: The aim of this award is to support early career researchers (lecturers or lecturer equivalent level) to gather data and strengthen their bids for longer-term substantive funding. They are not intended for applicants who have already obtained substantial funding from other sources for the proposed work.

Scoring Guide:

Guide to Scoring		
Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top international project of exceptional strategic importance • Crucial scientific question filling a knowledge gap of strategic importance • Original and innovative; novel methodology and design • Excellent potential for high health and/ or socioeconomic impact • Excellent team, track record, environment and collaborators • Strong potential for high return on investment • Appropriate staff time allocated to deliver project on time 	6
Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internationally competitive and of national strategic importance • Important scientific question filling a knowledge gap of strategic importance • Original and innovative; novel methodology and design • Good potential for high health and/ or socioeconomic impact • Excellent team, track record, environment and collaborators • Potential for high return on investment • Appropriate staff time allocated to deliver project 	5
Very High Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internationally competitive in parts • Important scientific question or knowledge gap or area of strategic importance • Robust methodology and design (<i>innovative in parts</i>) • Potential for high health and/ or socioeconomic impact • Very strong team, track record, environment and collaborators • Potential for high return on investment • Appropriate staff time allocated to deliver project 	4

High Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worthwhile scientific question or knowledge gap or a valuable scientific resource • Methodologically sound study • Potential for significant health and/ or socioeconomic impact • Strong team, track record, environment and collaborators • Potential for significant return on investment • Appropriate staff time allocated to deliver project 	3
Good Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worthwhile scientific question with potentially useful outcomes • Methodologically sound study but areas require revision • Likelihood of successful delivery • Appropriate team, environment and collaborators (<i>scope to strengthen</i>) • Potentially more limited return on investment • Resources broadly appropriate to deliver the proposal 	2
Poor Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poorly defined scientific question • Methodologically weak study • Limited likelihood of new knowledge generation • Poor team • Potentially poor return on investment 	1

Necessary Requirements:

- Ethical and governance issues must be fully considered.
- For Investigations involving animals, we expect all proposals to conform to the NC3Rs guidance [‘Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research: Expectations of the major research council and charitable funding bodies.’](#)

If you have any queries about the acceptability of a proposal which are not covered in the Wellbeing of Women guidance, please contact the Wellbeing of Women research team via email at research@wellbeingofwomen.org.uk or via telephone on 020 3697 7000.

Scoring Guide for Committee Meetings

All proposals which score highly enough during the initial stage of assessment will then proceed to discussion by the full Wellbeing of Women Research Advisory Committee. The Committee are asked to provide a score of 1-10 (scoring to point 5 is allowed e.g. 7.5) referring to the scoring guide below. Generally, a score above 7.5 is considered fundable.

Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses	10	Fundable
Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses	9	
Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses	8	
Very Good	Strong but with some minor weaknesses	7	Potentially Fundable
Good	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness	6	Not Fundable
Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses	5	
Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness	4	
Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses	3	
Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses	2	
Very Poor	No strengths and numerous major weaknesses	1	