



## Research Training Fellowships (RTF) Guidelines for Applicants

**Applicants are strongly advised to read these guidelines before they commence writing their application and to note the conditions of acceptance. Failure to follow the format suggested by the guidelines may reduce an Applicant's chance of success or result in the application being rejected.**

### About Wellbeing of Women

Wellbeing of Women is the charity dedicated to improving the health of women and babies across the UK. Every year we invest in medical research projects and allocate funds towards the training of specialist doctors, nurses and midwives. We fund basic science, clinical and translational research on all aspects of obstetrics, gynaecology, midwifery or with a focus on women's reproductive health. Studies in urology and gynaecological oncology are all appropriate to our funding.

### The Research Project Grant Scheme

#### Applicability

Applications are invited for a Research Training Fellowship, to be undertaken in the UK or Ireland. These fellowships are aimed at building capacity in the field of women's reproductive or gynaecological health and awarded to further the training of a medical graduate, nurse, midwife or allied health professional embarking upon a career in obstetrics, gynaecology or with a focus on women's reproductive health.

Wellbeing of Women will fund basic science, clinical, or translational research, including explanatory or feasibility studies and systematic reviews in one of the following three areas:

- Pregnancy, birth and the postpartum period;
- Gynaecological cancers;
- General wellbeing surrounding women's health issues.

Proposed work must have clinical relevance within 5 years from the end of the project.

## Level of Award

Applications may be made for the financial support, for **up to £250,000**, of a Fellowship for up to three years to cover the cost of a full-time salary per annum for Specialist Registrar (or equivalent) and will be consistent with current NHS or academic scales (and Irish equivalents). Registration fees for a higher degree and reasonable research expenses may be allowed and should be specified in the application form.

Applications may be made to support projects that are already in progress, or for a new project, provided a substantial element of training is provided during the course of the Fellowship. However, these awards are not intended to 'top-up' existing project grants and the candidate must be central to the application.

The award of a Fellowship is subject to the acceptance of the Wellbeing of Women's Standard Terms and Conditions.

## Eligibility

Applicants for a Research Training Fellowship:

- Must be a medical graduate, nurse, midwife or allied health professional.
- Must justify that they plan to have a career in the field of reproductive or gynaecological health.
- Will normally be expected to enroll for a higher degree. A Fellowship will only be awarded to an applicant who has been accepted for a place in a department with established expertise in the specified field.
- Must be carrying out a research project related to women's reproductive or gynaecological health.
- Must provide evidence of previous interest and a training component in research methodology.

Both the training and research project must be capable of being concluded within the duration of the award.

## Restrictions

The following restrictions apply to Research Training Fellowships:

- Fellowships are not intended as a project grant and may not be used to fund sub-specialty training
- We do not pay indirect costs or NHS Support and Treatment Costs.
- We do not pay the Apprenticeship Levy.
- We do not pay charges for administration by University or NHS Authorities.
- Funds will not be released without evidence of the relevant Research Ethics approval.

## Review Process

Please note that as funding is strictly limited, all applications undergo a triage process which follows Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) guidance. Each application is sent to two members of our Research Advisory Committee and scored in areas of 'the Candidate', 'the Proposed Project' and 'the Host Institution, Supervisor/Team and Training Opportunities'. Scores are collated and looked at by the Chair of the Research Advisory Committee. Applications scoring above an agreed threshold will then be subject to external peer review. Where appropriate, applications will also be subject to statistical review. Systems are in place to ensure the process is as fair as possible. For successful applicants, the usual discriminator is the quality of the project; at committee level this is the most important element.

**Response to reviewers' comments (rebuttal):** If an application is short listed for peer review, applicants will have up to two sides of A4 within which to respond to comments given by reviewers. Responses should be clearly presented, concise and should not exceed two pages, irrespective of the number of reviews. Additional page(s) will only be granted if the Committee have requested supporting figures that require additional space. The response is to all reviews received and a subsequent response to any late reviews must also retain response text on all earlier reviews and not exceed the specified page limit. Applicants will be informed of the timing of the rebuttal period if short listed for peer review.

## Interviews

Short listed applicants will be asked to attend for interview by the Wellbeing of Women Research Advisory Committee in London. Reasonable interview expenses will be reimbursed.

The interview panel will be interested in the candidate's background, career aspirations and training programme. They will explore details of the proposed research project and the candidate's involvement with it. They will also look at future plans for further research.

## Successful Applicants

Please be aware that successful applicants will be expected to reasonably aid Wellbeing of Women with publicity and fundraising. This may involve activities such as providing quotes and/or lay write-ups, speaking at our events or hosting visits at your lab. While we would ensure that any requests were not excessive or disruptive, by applying you are agreeing to reasonable assistance in principle.

All grant awardees also consent to:

- Promptly completing a successful applicant questionnaire once notified of the grant award.
- Keeping Wellbeing of Women informed of any publications and/or publicity arising from the research, where possible in advance.

Details of the number of applications received and success rates can be found on our website [here](#). We endeavor to give brief feedback to all applicants, but this cannot be guaranteed.

## Completing the Application Form

Please use the application form for a Wellbeing of Women Research Training Fellowship, in **font size 10-12 pt.** throughout.

Please save two copies of the application – **one as a Word document** and **one as a fully signed PDF**. **E-mail both versions** to Jeremy Barratt, Head of Research, ([jbarratt@wellbeingofwomen.org.uk](mailto:jbarratt@wellbeingofwomen.org.uk)) **by the closing date**. Electronic signatures are acceptable. Please ensure the PDF submission includes all appendices in a single file (with the exception of the 'SoECAT' and 'Research Questions for Non-standard Animals form')

Late applications will not be accepted under **any** circumstances, so please obtain all necessary signatures as early as possible.

You will receive e-mail confirmation within 24 hours that your submission has been received. If you do not receive confirmation, please phone the Wellbeing of Women office on 020 3697 6350.

The points below relate to specific numbered sections of the application form and are to guide you through completing the form for the Research Training Fellowship funding scheme. Please note that where references are made to UK institutions, applicants from Ireland should complete with reference to relevant equivalents.

### Word limits

Please note that certain answers must be completed within a maximum word limit. If text exceeds these limits, the passage will be shortened accordingly.

### Section 1: Application Details

In this section, you should provide your contact details and those of your proposed Supervisor and Head of Department.

**Proposed Department:** This will be the department where you will be based for the duration of the Fellowship.

**Proposed Institution:** This will be the institution that will act as the contracting institution, should the application be successful.

**Proposed start date:** At this stage this may be an estimate. However, it should be as accurate as possible and reflecting the likely award date in February.

**Proposed duration:** This should be provided in months, up to 36 months.

**Total funds requested:** This should be the total from section 5 (Financial Information) and not exceed the upper funding limit of £250,000.

**Title of the research:** This should be as brief as possible and be relevant to the work to be undertaken.

## Section 2: The Applicant

**2.1 Higher Degree or Higher Professional Qualification:** In this section, you should provide details of the higher degree/qualification that you are currently registered or details of your planned degree/qualification if you are awarded a Fellowship.

**2.2 Honorary Contract with the NHS:** Please confirm whether you will be applying for an honorary Contract with the NHS if you are awarded a Fellowship.

**2.3 Alternative Contact Details (if applicable):** Applicants who do not wish correspondence relating to the application to be sent to their hospital/university address should complete this section. Please provide a number where you can be easily reached.

**2.4 Academic and Professional Qualifications:** Please list any academic or professional qualifications relevant to this proposal.

**2.5 Prizes and Awards Obtained:** Please list starting with your most current award and reading in reverse chronological order.

**2.6 Specialist Clinical Training Details:** In this section, you should provide details of your specialist clinical training.

**2.7 Postgraduate Career:** Please do not include a separate CV. Details of previous posts must be contained within this section of the form. Your list should read in reverse chronological order.

**2.8 Professional Body Memberships:** Please list any relevant professional bodies of which you are currently a member.

**2.9 Publications:** In this section, you should list all research papers in peer-reviewed journals, reviews and contributions to books. You may list publications that are still in press but should not include any abstracts or conference proceedings.

Please use the format from the example below when citing publications. Use an asterisk (\*) to highlight your name:

Tamblyn JA\*, Hewison M, Wagner CL, Bulmer JN, Kilby MD. Immunological role of vitamin D at the maternal-fetal interface. J Endocrinol. 2015 Mar;224(3):R107-R121.

**2.10 Other Research Outputs:** In this section, you should list any other notable outputs emanating from your previous research that is not included in section 2.9 (Publications).

**2.11 Research or Other Relevant Experience to Date:** In this section, you should provide detail of your previous research including training that is relevant to this application.

**2.12 Career Intentions:** In this section, you should talk about your career aspirations.

**2.13 Current and Previous Grants or Fellowships:** Please list all current and previous grants and fellowships that have been awarded to you. Your list should read in reverse chronological order.

### Section 3: The Research

We are looking for a research proposal of high scientific merit. Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- The qualifications and ability of the candidate
- The significance of the topic and scientific quality of the proposal
- The standard of the host institution, supervision and training opportunities

Please provide as much detail as possible, within the defined word limits, to help us to assess your proposal.

**3.1 Structured Abstract of Research:** In this section, your proposed research including the aims, objectives, methodology, scientific and medical opportunities of the study should be clearly laid out.

Sharing information and knowledge about Wellbeing of Women's research portfolio is central to our mission and if funded, this abstract will be made publicly available along with the applicant's name and institution. Please bear this in mind when preparing this section and do not include commercially sensitive or confidential information in your abstract. If you believe your abstract should not be published as it is highly confidential, you will be able to provide a revised abstract if awarded funding. Please highlight if this applies.

**3.2 Background and Rationale:** In this section, you should explain the need for the proposed research and the rationale for the particular lines of research planned. Please describe any limitations identified in the evidence base and provide details of the prospective outcomes and expected benefits in terms of improvement to women's or their babies' health.

The scientific statement should be self-contained so that a referee should not need to refer to journals. References to current literature are important but should be limited to 20. If unpublished papers have been referred to, copies should be attached in the appendices.

**3.3 Plan of Investigation:** In this section, you should clearly describe the details of the proposed research plan, including the aims and objectives of the research together with descriptions of the overall research design and methodology (paying particular attention to any technique that is new or not well known) and the training to be undertaken. You should include the number of experiments proposed (including the validation of this figure) and the availability of patients (if relevant).

It is important to include as much detail as possible on design and methodology, including justification of sample size, power calculations, sample selection and exclusions criteria where appropriate. Statistical methods should be sufficiently described. The level of expertise of the applicant and of his/her supervisors in the proposed methodology should be indicated.

Please also provide detail of any problems/barriers to be anticipated and how they will be mitigated. Details of any previous or proposed patient and public involvement must be included, or if none, reasons provided why you feel that no involvement is necessary.

Applicants must include a timetable of activities in the form of a Gantt Chart (Word or PDF, one-page limit) and any tables or figures to support this section in the Appendices.

*Applicants are strongly advised to seek the guidance of someone with experience in making a grant application or to contact their local NIHR [Research Design Service](#) (RDS).*

**3.4 Expected Outputs, Outcomes and Impact:** In this section, you should describe what outputs you are expecting from your research and discuss how the outcomes could be translated and adopted into the healthcare service, including the potential impact on the health and wellbeing of women/babies. You should also include your plans for disseminating your research findings.

If your proposed research is likely to generate any commercially exploitable results, please provide detail including any Intellectual Property (IP) that will be generated and how it will be managed. IP may include copyright (software, checklists, protocols, questionnaires, guidelines etc.), trademarks, designs, research tools (assays, cell lines, biomarkers, data analysis techniques etc.) and patents.

**3.5 Special Features/Facilities of the Research Training Environment in the Host Institution:** In this section, you should include the special features or facilities that will be available to you at your host institution and relevant to your proposal.

**3.6 References:** Please include a full list of scientific references from throughout section 3 (The Research) of the application.

## **Section 4: Approvals for Research**

In the event of an award being made, funding will be subject to any required approvals being in place and evidence thereof being provided to Wellbeing of Women.

**4.1 Involving Human Participants or Human Tissue:** Proposals involving human subjects and/or samples must have the appropriate ethical agreement from the [Health Research Authority](#) (HRA) before the study is commenced.

Clinical studies taking place in the NHS also require approval from the host NHS organisation. Applicants should contact the [NIHR Clinical Research Network](#) (NIHR CRN) for further information.

**4.2 Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA):** Proposals involving the use of gametes or embryos must have an HFEA licence. Details on applying for the appropriate licence can be found on the [HFEA](#) website. Approvals for research are managed via [IRAS](#).

**4.3 Research on Gene Therapy:** For proposals involving research on gene therapy, please state the steps that have been taken to obtain the approval of your Local Research Ethics Committee, the University's Genetic Manipulation Committee, the Gene Therapy Advisory Committee (GTAC) and the [Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency](#) (MHRA).

Details on applying for gene therapy regulatory approval can be found on the [HRA](#) website.

**4.4 Use of Animals or Animal Tissue:** Wellbeing of Women is a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) and we support the principle of using animals in research when it is necessary to advance understanding of health and disease and to develop new treatments. Research using animals must only take place where there is no alternative available.

We will only fund research that complies with the law and support the principle of the 3Rs: to refine, reduce and replace the use of animals in research. Further details on the use of animals in research can be found on the [NC3Rs](#) website.

Guidance for applying for a licence to carry out animal testing can be found [here](#).

If you propose research that involves the use of non-human primates, cats, dogs or equines, you must complete the additional 'Research Questions for Non-standard Animals' form and submit this with your application.

**4.5 Licences and Approvals:** If you have already secured the necessary licences and approvals or your research does not require any then you should answer 'YES'. If you have not secured all the necessary licences and approvals and are yet to submit the relevant documentation, then you should answer 'NO'. If you have not secured all the necessary licences and approvals but all the necessary documentation has been submitted to the relevant authority, then you should answer 'Applications in Progress'.

## Section 5: Financial Information

This section should be as accurate as possible and must be completed by the relevant Research Grants or Finance Officer of the proposed host institution. Full details of how the money requested is to be spent must be provided.

The Research Training Fellowship scheme can only provide a **maximum grant of £250,000** over three years.

Wellbeing of Women will only fund directly incurred costs of research and will not cover indirect costs such as the cost of heating, lighting and office equipment which will normally be met by the host department. Charges for administration levied by the University or NHS Trust concerned will also not be met.

**PLEASE NOTE:** For research that will be carried out in the NHS, applicants must ensure that all costs are attributed according to the [AcoRD guidance for attributing the costs of health and social care research](#), or equivalent.

Please discuss with the relevant NHS Trusts and/or your [Local CRN](#) (LCRN) early to help with study design, cost attribution and availability of resources.

As of 1 October 2018, applicants will need to complete a 'Schedule of Events Cost Attribution Template' (SoECAT) if research in the NHS is proposed. A completed SoECAT form must be submitted with your application to aid peer review. Please be aware that studies that have very high Excess Treatment Costs (ETCs) or Support Costs are unlikely to be adopted by NHS trusts or commissioners, and so may not represent good value for money.

A guide to help researchers, study teams and sponsors to complete the SoECAT during grant application and study planning will be made available and dedicated support can be accessed through [AcoRD Specialists](#) via the CRN.

**5.1 Salary:** The award may be for up to three years and the salary will in no case exceed the top of the Specialty Registrar scale (or equivalent). The amounts should include estimated pay increase for Years 2 and 3. Allowances should be made for employer's contributions for superannuation and National Insurance and this figure should be listed separately. Please note that Wellbeing of Women will not pay the 0.5% Apprenticeship Levy and it must not be included in the application.

Any higher degree fees payable to the employing institution must be clearly specified.

**5.2 Research Expenses:** You should only request funds to cover directly incurred research costs. The amount requested in addition to the salary must not exceed £250,000 overall and all costs must be fully justified.

**Materials and Consumables:** Please include non-reusable items specific to the research. Please list items and give a brief description. All items must be research specific, not just general office costs which should be covered by indirect costs.

**Equipment** Please include any items of equipment that are essential for your research. All equipment must be justified in section 5.3 (Justification of Support), detailing why the item is needed and why it cannot be used/borrowed from elsewhere.

**Travel and Subsistence:** Please include any relevant journey and subsistence costs (excluding any alcoholic beverages). This may include travel for Project Advisory/Steering Group meetings or for fellows to present/disseminate their work, either as an oral or poster presentation, at relevant scientific meetings within the UK or overseas. Full details must be included and will be scrutinized by our Research Advisory Committee. Travel must be by the most economic means possible.

**Dissemination:** Please include a list of costs related to the dissemination activities of the research, including any conference fees or publication costs. Applicants are encouraged to cost for open access publication. Wellbeing of Women support must be acknowledged in all presentations and publications and copies sent to us in advance.

**Patient and Public Involvement:** Please include a list of costs relating to activities involving patients and members of the public within the research. This might include out of pocket expenses, payments for time and any relevant training and support costs for their participation in the research.

**Other:** Please list any other directly incurred research costs that are not identified elsewhere. This might include animal costs, sub-contractors, specialist technical support or computer licensing.

**5.3 NHS Costs:** In this section you should provide detail of the NHS Support and Excess Treatment Costs if the research is funded, including who will pay them. If your proposal involves research in the NHS, you must also complete a '**Schedule of Events Cost Attribution Template**' (SoECAT) and submit it with your application. The form and guidelines to complete it can be found on the [NIHR Supporting and applying research in the NHS](#) webpage.

**5.4 Justification of Support:** In this section you should provide detail of the research costs that have been listed and justify why they have been requested.

## **Section 6: Previous Applications and Current Submissions**

It is important that you indicate whether any financial support from another funding body has been sought, or is already provided, for the same or closely related research. If a decision is pending, please indicate the month when a decision is expected. Any previous applications made to Wellbeing of Women for this or closely related research must also be listed.

All resubmissions must include a covering letter stating how the previous proposal has been modified.

## **Section 7: Declarations and Signatures**

No application can be accepted without completion of this section by the **Applicant**, his or her **Head of Department** and the **Finance Officer** responsible for administering the grant. For research involving NHS patients, a signature is also needed from the **R&D Director or Deputy** confirming that the project will be carried out within the NHS research governance framework.

## Section 8: Lay Description

**8.1 Lay Title:** This should be as brief as possible and easily understandable by a lay audience.

**8.2 Lay Summary:** In this section, you must give a simple description of the proposed research which will be clear to an educated lay audience. You should provide context for the research with reference to the issue it will address and including the aims and objectives together with the techniques to be used and potential applications and benefits.

The following points should be addressed:

- **About the research:** What is the research about? What problem(s) will it tackle? How will it impact on the health of women and/or babies? Does it build on previous research?
- **How will the research be carried out?**
- **What happens next?** What outcomes do you hope to achieve? How will you disseminate the results? Will this lead to further research? What is the long-term goal?
- **About the researcher:** What is the relevant experience/track record and career aspirations of the applicant?

**Please devote some time to this section – it is extremely important, and the quality of the lay summary is considered in awarding the grants. The final decision in awarding grants is taken by our Trustee Board which consists predominantly of lay members.**

Sharing information and knowledge to our lay supporters is central to our mission and if funded, this summary will be made publicly available along with the applicant's name and institution. Please bear this in mind when preparing this section.

## Section 9: Keywords

In this section, you should provide keywords which will help us to classify the proposed research, as well as where you found out about this funding call.

## Section 10: Suggestions for Possible Reviewers

In this section, you should provide the contact details (including e-mail) for at least three people who have suitable expertise to act as an independent reviewer. Potential reviewers must not be in the same institution as, or have collaborated with, any of the applicants within the last three years. The nomination of reviewers does not guarantee that they will be contacted.

In addition, applicants may indicate any individuals who should not be contacted with regards the application. The reasons for this must be clearly stated. Please note that this section may be seen by reviewers.

## Supporting Statements: Proposed Supervisor / Current Head of Department

Your proposed Supervisor and current Head of Department should complete this section. If you have recently moved departments and have been working in your new department for less than six months, you may prefer to seek a statement from your previous Head of Department.

## Appendices

Only supporting documents from the list provided will be accepted.

**Please note that these guidelines must be *strictly* adhered to. Failure to do so (such as: wrong font size; excessive word count; disallowed additional materials) *will* be taken into account. Applications may and *have previously* been rejected for deviation from the guidelines.**

## Additional Information

### Open Access

Applicants are encouraged to cost for open access publication and include this expense.

### Requests for Cost-Extensions

Cost extensions are not normally considered, but applicants may put in a new proposal for consideration if they wish to continue the work. This proposal would be considered in competition with other applications and should include a report on the work undertaken to date. The application should be in the form of a new application using the guidelines in this document.

### Important

The Wellbeing of Women Terms and Conditions must be accepted if funding is awarded. They are available on our [website](#).

### Resources

The MRC, NIHR and HRA support toolkits to help researchers and funders:

[Clinical Trials Toolkit](#): Provides practical help to guide researchers to design and carry out clinical trials of medicines, including links to all approvals that are required.

[Data and Tissues Toolkit](#): Helps researchers who are carrying out research using patient data or tissue.

[Experimental Medicines Toolkit](#): Experimental medicine is research undertaken in humans to understand how diseases develop or demonstrate proof-of-concept information. It is often done before clinical trials, although it may involve NHS patients.

NIHR [Research Design Service](#) (RDS): The RDS helps researchers to develop and design high quality clinical research applications.

Universities UK [Innovation Explorer](#): An online map of health-related research infrastructure showing geographical connectivity, or to find organisations with a particular thematic interest. So far, users can see Academic Health Science Networks (AHSN), Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP); Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's) and Local Education and Training Boards (LETBs) will be added soon.

Ethical Review: The HRA have developed 2 tools to help researchers work out if [their project is research](#), and if it needs [NHS REC approval](#).

[INVOLVE](#) is a national advisory group that supports greater public involvement in NHS, public health and social care research. They have many useful resources to help researchers involve members of the public in research.