**Guidance Notes – SRC Applications**

**Criteria for assessment**

**What makes a good SRC application?**

* The question being addressed is clear and is of strategic relevance to the Trust;
* The lead PI has an excellent track record and has the ability to manage multi-investigator led research programmes;
* The best possible multidisciplinary team has been assembled, from different institutions, nationally and internationally;
* The anticipated outcomes, and the benefits these will bring to people with CF, are clear;
* There are training opportunities for the young career scientists employed on the grant.

**Additional factors that will be considered are:**

* Planning for longer term sustainability following the end of the grant
* Whether the SRC brings additional (non-Cystic Fibrosis Trust funded) resources to the centre.

**As detailed in our research strategy, funding by the Trust for research needs to demonstrate attention to the SCORE principles:**

* **S**trategic: demonstrate exceptional relevance to one or more strategic priority.
* **C**ollaborative: demonstrate the clear added-value of bringing a group of researchers together to tackle a major concern in cystic fibrosis.
* **O**utcome-focused: demonstrate a clear understanding of the potential impact of the programme of work on cystic fibrosis outcomes.
* **R**isk-based: demonstrate innovative and diverse, low and high-risk research approaches to achieve benefits for everyone with cystic fibrosis.
* **E**xcellence-driven: scientifically excellent and conducted by an internationally leading research team

**How the SRC programme works**

The SRC programme has been designed to facilitate the clustering of outstanding researchers (wherever based) to carry out joint research activities in areas of strategic importance to people with cystic fibrosis and their families.

This programme recognises the need to move away from the traditional individual project grant funding to one where the research is focused on and used to solve problems for cystic fibrosis. We recognise the need to create multi-disciplinary teams of experts each of whom brings their own expertise and without whom the problem cannot be solved. The SRCs need to demonstrate the added value that such clustering can provide.

We will support the stipends/salaries of young researchers in training to underpin the team. The SRCs will typically comprise a lead Principal Investigator together with four or five co-investigators each receiving a grant for the support of a young scientist/researcher (PhD student, research assistant, early stage career professional or early post-doctoral scientist) and last three to four years. The funding is capped at £750,000 and is non-renewable. Thus, the details, composition of the team and duration of grant are the responsibility of the lead PI within this financial cap. SRC applications must not include requests for capital equipment or overheads.

**The Lead Investigator**

The lead Principal Investigator must:

* Be based in the UK;
* Hold an appropriate contract within a UK based research-focused academic institution;
* Have guaranteed research space for the duration of the grant.

**Co-Principal Investigators**

Co-investigators should be recruited by the lead PI to create the SRC team with the appropriate scientific expertise required to address the research question. In keeping with the overall strategy to recruit the "brightest and best" researchers, the Trust is keen to see the principal investigator pull together, where appropriate, the best possible collaborative team wherever the individual co-investigators are based, whatever discipline is required and (for co-investigators only) regardless of any previous track-record in cystic fibrosis research.

Thus, the location of the co-investigators is not restricted to the same institution as the lead PI or UK-based academic research institutions but rather may be based in any institution world-wide, be in the public or commercial sectors, and is not restricted to biomedical sciences.

**Graduate studentships**

Applications within the SRC for PhD studentships for UK based institutions should include a tax-free stipend for the candidate student, tuition fees (at home student rate only) and the running costs of the project. No provision is made for capital equipment or overhead costs. For applications to this SRC round, stipends are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** |
| **Within London** | **£22,278** | **£24,093** | **£26,057** | **£26,997** |
| **Outside London** | **£19,919** | **£21,542** | **£23,298** | **£23,839** |

It is the responsibility of the principal investigator or co-investigator, and not the Cystic Fibrosis Trust, to ensure appropriate training is in place for any postgraduate students employed by the SRC.

**2022 Call Details**

This year’s call will comprise an open call for applications relating to the strategic aims of the Trust.

All applications will be assessed through the same review process, including expert peer review.

Completed applications should be submitted to researchgrants@cysticfibrosis.org.uk by **5pm on Monday 25 April 2022.**

**Existing PIs applying for a second SRC**

Existing PIs are able to apply for a second SRC providing

* The existing or previous SRC has drawn to a close OR is in its final year;
* The new SRC is not simply an extension or continuation of the previous SRC;
* The PI addresses, in sufficient detail, the distinction between the previous award and the new proposal;
* The PI includes an explanation of how the previous project met its objectives. The informative successes (or failures) of the previous SRC must be highlighted and used to shape the new proposal.

**Queries regarding applications**

If you have any queries regarding the application process, or have any issues submitting your completed expression of interest form, please email researchgrants@cysticfibrosis.org.uk .