



Research Innovation Grants 2017/18

Guidance for Applicants

Our Research Innovation Grants programme provides up to £75,000 for projects that address emerging issues in alcohol research, employ novel theoretical or methodological approaches, or pilot new work in treatment or service delivery. Successful applications will demonstrate how the outputs will add to public knowledge on alcohol and how the programme of work will develop capacity within the research team.

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Funding Priorities and Criteria

The principal applicant should be able to demonstrate sufficient knowledge, skills and experience to oversee the research.

Proposals must include at least one applicant who meets our criteria as an Early Career Researcher [see Appendix A]. Proposals should also demonstrate a commitment to public involvement in the research development [see Appendix B].

Applicants should read our [Research Strategy](#) and our report on [Public Involvement in Alcohol Research](#) before developing their proposals.

Applicants to this scheme must show clearly how their application aligns with the following research priority and principles.

Research priority: Treatment and recovery today

Our research priority for 2016-18 is *treatment and recovery today*. The alcohol services sector and approaches to both treatment and recovery have undergone significant changes in the last few years. Not only have there been reductions in funding and major structural changes, but also new developments in approaches to treatment and thinking around recovery. These developments have had a considerable impact on some of the most marginalised and vulnerable members of our community. We will be funding proposals that seek to capture the nature of those changes, and aim to produce findings that can have a positive impact on policy and or practice.

In particular, we would welcome proposals that address one or more of the following areas:

- Mental health issues and dual diagnosis
- Pathways through, and barriers to, treatment and recovery
- Health or social inequalities and access to / experiences of treatment and recovery support
- Experiences of minority groups or hard-to-reach communities
- Novel approaches to treatment, peer support and recovery
- The impact of economic pressures / sector restructuring on service provision

This year, we are seeking to promote better public involvement in research development (e.g. service users, experts-by-experience, practitioners, families affected by harmful drinking). Proposals which have no clear plans for public involvement cannot be considered in this funding round.

Overview of the application and decision-making processes

In developing their proposal, applicants should bear in mind that value for money and timely completion are key criteria against which our Grants Advisory Panel evaluates proposals. We encourage applicants to aim for the shortest realistic delivery time.

Timescales

Projects under the Research and Innovation Scheme can be up to 24 months in duration. An offer of funding may be withdrawn if successful applicants wish to change the start or completion dates.

Outputs

Applications should include a clear and realistic description of the intended project outputs. We encourage applicants to consider the full range of platforms for research dissemination and to be creative in their approach.

On completion of the research project, a Final Report and a brief 'Insight' report must be submitted for publication on our website. Guidance for preparation of these reports will be sent to successful applicants.

We strongly encourage applicants to include at least one open access, peer reviewed publication in their list of proposed outputs. Open access costs must be included in the main proposal and can be claimed on confirmation that manuscripts have been accepted for publication. We require grant recipients to maximise accessibility of outputs as far as possible, including the use of institutional repositories where possible. Our full open access policy is available on our website.

Impact and dissemination

All applications must describe how research impact will be maximised. Impact activities should be targeted towards the most appropriate audiences. Applicants must include an Impact Plan, stating who will benefit from the research, how they will benefit from the research and what will be done to ensure that they have the opportunity to benefit from the research. In the plan applicants will have to address how the proposed project will be managed to engage users and beneficiaries, and increase the likelihood of impacts. As well as immediate and intermediate measurable processes and outputs, applicants should specify the anticipated main and longer-term impacts.

We define impact as a *demonstrable change, an identifiable benefit or positive influence*. The Impact Plan should focus on clear deliverables: societal, economic and/or scientific. Focus on who will be affected by your research. Consider the wider potential of your research and broader beneficiaries, the likely impact on them and appropriate mechanisms for realising these potential impacts.

If proposed impact activities include specific costs (e.g. organisation of workshops or attendance at conferences), these can be included in the proposal. However, any requested impact costs will need to be clearly justified.

Evaluation criteria

Applications are judged according to the following criteria:

- Does the project align with the current **research priorities**?
- Is the project **realistic and achievable** within the budget and timeframe?
- Does the project represent good **value for money**?
- Is the **methodology** clearly described and appropriate and does the project team have the requisite skills to implement it?
- Does the proposal include clear and appropriate **public involvement** in project design and / or delivery?
- What kind of **impact** do you expect the research will have and are the impact goals appropriate, realistic and well-targeted?
- Is the project **innovative** in its theoretical approach, methods or subject area?
- Does the project include plans to develop capacity for **early career researchers**?

Submission of the application

Applications must be submitted via the grants portal by the **deadline of 16th January 2018**. All applications will be acknowledged. Applications received from 17th January cannot be considered.

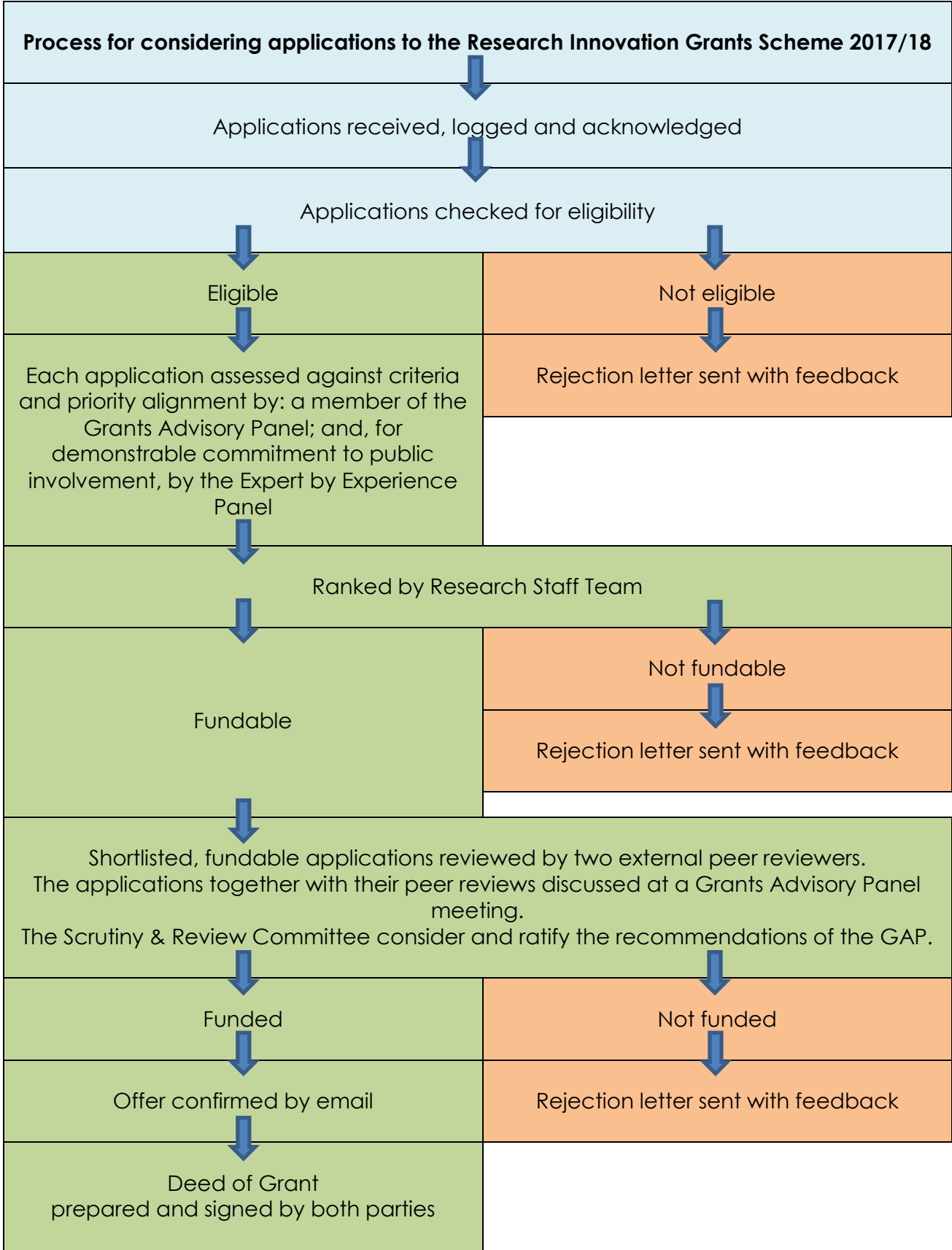
Timeline

Midnight, 16 th January 2018	Application deadline
20 th February 2018	Shortlisting completed and unsuccessful applicants notified
26 th March 2018	An offer of grant will be emailed to successful applicants and unsuccessful applicants will be notified and given feedback

Completion of proposal

Your application should demonstrate why the proposed research is important, what the objectives are and why the proposed methods are appropriate.

Your application will be read by reviewers with a range of expertise, so please ensure it is written in a clear and accessible style.



Finalising the grant

Grant agreements

Alcohol Research UK is a registered charity, which makes grants to further its charitable purposes. An essential element of a grant is that it is freely given and that the grant maker receives no benefit in return. This can be distinguished from a contract for services, where payment is made in return for a supply of services (which benefit the funder) by the recipient. As reflects our intentions in the case of Research Innovation Grants scheme, the funding provided under the agreement is a grant and no benefit is being provided to Alcohol Research UK in return. The obligations that grantholders are required to comply with under the agreements are to ensure that the grant is spent for the charitable purposes for which it was given, rather than to provide any benefit to Alcohol Research UK, and to comply with accompanying grant conditions. This is important for VAT purposes as, crucially, a grant is outside the scope of VAT.

A consequence of the grant being given for no consideration is that the agreement must be signed as a deed and the institution must execute the agreement as a deed in accordance with its own internal processes for such execution.

Publicity for grants

We are happy for you to undertake activities to publicise the award of your grant but please discuss this with us first.

We expect that all successful applicants will have demonstrated a commitment to maximising the impact of their findings. We require all media activity, e.g. press releases for articles and papers, to be carried out in liaison with the Alcohol Research UK communications team. We also request advanced notification of any publications based on funded research, and acknowledgement of our funding in all publications or presentations. Full details of our impact and dissemination requirements will be sent to successful applicants.

Appendix A

Early Career Researcher

We recognise that there are competing definitions of an Early Career Researcher. For Research Innovation Grants, we usually define an Early Career Researcher as someone who has no more than three years employment (0.2 FTE or above) in an academic institution since completion of their PhD. Applicants with six months or less until submission of their PhD completion will also be eligible. Where an applicant has taken a career break for parental or carer's leave, this period may be subtracted from the three years.

If appropriate, the principal applicant may also be an Early Career Researcher. In this case, we would require a more senior member of staff to be a co-applicant.

Appendix B

Public involvement

Research teams must build public involvement into their research proposals. Following the guidelines developed by NIHR Involve, we would define 'public' as including 'patients, potential patients, carers and people who use health and social care services as well as people from organisations that represent people who use services'. For a useful discussion of public involvement see the full NIHR Involve Briefing Note here:

<http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/resource-for-researchers/>

It is also important that you read our report on [Public Involvement in Alcohol Research](#).

Appendix C

Finance

Before submitting your application you must check that the budget is correct and the sums add up.

Eligible costs

As a charitable funder, Alcohol Research UK is unable to cover indirect or estate costs. We do not, therefore, consider applications that include Full Economic Costing. Universities may apply to the HEFCE Charity Support Research Fund to recover some of these costs.

We will only pay direct costs incurred by the project. These include: Staff costs, Equipment, Travel and subsistence, Impact and dissemination costs (e.g. open access charges up to a total of £3,000).

All costs must be broken down and explained.

Alcohol Research UK does not contribute to the running and general costs of organisations, make donations or fund ongoing service provision.

Appendix D

Guidelines on ethical approval

Alcohol Research UK expects the research and development projects that it supports to be carried out to a high ethical standard. The following guidelines are based upon those set out by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

Alcohol Research UK expects the projects that it supports to be designed and conducted in such a way that they meet key ethical principles, and are subject to proper ethical research governance to ensure that these principles are met.

There are six key principles that Alcohol Research UK expects to be addressed, whenever applicable:

- Research and development projects should be designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity and quality.
- Staff and subjects must be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the project, what their participation entails and what risks, if any, are involved.
- The confidentiality of information supplied by participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected.
 - Participants must be recruited in a voluntary way, free from any coercion.
 - Harm to participants must be avoided.
- The independence of research must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit.

To implement these principles:

- The responsibility for conduct of the project in line with relevant principles rests with the principal investigator.
- The responsibility for ensuring that research is subject to appropriate ethical review, approval and monitoring lies with the organisation seeking or holding an award with the Alcohol Research UK.
- Ethical review should always be proportionate to the potential risk.
- Alcohol Research UK will treat breaches of good ethical practice in its funded research as a very serious matter, which could result in the immediate suspension of the individual project and other projects based at or under the coordination of the contracting organisation.

Procedures:

- Alcohol Research UK does not require that ethical approval should be secured prior to submission of a research proposal. A proposal must state whether ethical approval is required and, if so, how it will be obtained.
- During peer review, referees and assessors will be asked to comment specifically on whether they agree with the ethical self-assessment in the proposal.
- If referees or assessors disagree with the proposed ethical review, this will either be grounds for rejection of an application or for a conditional award requiring further review.

- Before the start of a project, funds will not flow until the administering organisation provides written confirmation that the required ethical approval has been received.