



Applying for grants

Aim of this factsheet

This factsheet summarises the key hints and tips from the Community of Scholars podcast on applying for grants. It's designed to provide you with a list of key points to cover in any grant application.

What do funders look for?

- Does the project align with their priorities?
 - Does it meet the eligibility criteria?
 - Does it address a clinical need?
 - What is the prevalence and severity of the issue?
 - Does it address a gap in the literature?
 - What is the potential impact of the change?
- What is the quality of the research?
 - Theoretical underpinning and implementation
 - Quality of the study design
- Is it practical to do the project?
 - Is there pilot or feasibility work?
 - Is it possible to collect data in a robust way?
 - Is the funding on offer sufficient to deliver the project?
 - Are the costings accurate and correctly apportioned?
- Can the team deliver?
 - Are there big gaps in the team's knowledge?
 - Do you have a statistician on board?
 - Is each individual's contribution justified?
 - Does each individual have enough time allocated to be able to deliver?
 - Is there a plan to mitigate any risks to delivery?

How can you persuade a funding panel of the need for your project?

- Write clearly throughout - remember the funders might not be specialists in your field
- State how many people the problem affects and what effect it has on their daily life
 - Does it have a small effect on a lot of people, or a large effect on a small number of people?
 - State (and justify) how much of an impact your intervention will have on the individuals affected
- Ensure you have patient and public involvement to support the importance of your project
- State the financial cost of the problem, and justify how your study will reduce this burden

What makes a good grant application?

For ALL studies

- Proposal clearly addresses the issues in the funding call/brief – explain all the key components for the type of study you want to conduct
- Good theoretical underpinning – explain why you expect your intervention to work
 - You could use a flow diagram of the proposed mechanism
- Rigorous methodology (see Community of Scholars podcast on scientific rigour for help with this)
- Be realistic with your timelines and upfront about workloads and expected costs early on to begin negotiations from the outset
- Be clear about your outcomes, sample size, and expected recruitment rates
- Funders are interested in the research outcome – start with the impact and work backwards
- Clear pathway to impact – state how you will ensure your project brings real benefit to health care
 - Workshops? Briefing papers? Communication to policy makers?



For early-phase work (feasibility or pilot studies)

- Appropriate feasibility outcomes: Will people do the intervention? Is it acceptable to the population? Can the clinics run the intervention? Can you find the eligible patients? Are the outcome measures appropriate?
- Appropriate pilot outcomes: Can you run the study as planned? What is the effect size?

For definitive studies

- Feasibility and pilot work already conducted
- Background context from literature search (see podcast on literature searches for help with this)
- Clear evidence of anticipated effect size that matches your sample size calculation and evidence that you can recruit that number in the time.
- Funding boards are slightly more cautious about funding definitive studies if there are uncertainties.
 - Work around this by putting in an internal pilot to first prove recruitment is realistic, giving the funder proof for the definitive study.



Grant application step

Support available

	Grant application step	Support available
Foundations	Be aware of remit and timing of the different funding opportunities available	CoS funding call information CoS funding text alerts
	Understand the process of grant applications	CoS grantmanship resources
	Understand how funders decide what to fund	CoS grantmanship resources
Developing the idea and application	Idea generation	CoS reviewing literature resources
	Team development and networking	CoS network
	Methodological work up	CoS methodological rigour resources The Research Design and Conduct Service
	Patient and public involvement	CoS patient and public involvement resources Health and Care Research Wales research involvement request
	Finances (allocation of HEI and NHS costs)	Centre for Health Economics and Medicines Evaluation (CHEME)
	Dissemination, pathway-to-impact and implementation strategies	Health and Care Research Wales Impact resources
	Gantt chart	
	Completing the e-form	
	Peer review	CoS network
Post award	Ethics and regulatory permissions	CoS ethics resources IRAS helpline
	Contract processes	Health and Care Research Wales Agreements and contracts resources
	Financial processes	Health and Care Research Wales MHS Supports costs and ETCs resources
	Understand the role and responsibilities of the research leader	
	Motivating and managing the research team	
	Project and budget management	
	Dissemination, pathway-to-impact and implementation	Health and Care Research Wales Impact resources
	Project and budget management	