

WELLCOME TRANSLATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND GUIDANCE

Introduction

The University of Birmingham has been awarded Wellcome Trust funding in the form of an **Institutional Translational Partnership Award (iTPA)**. The award is intended to accelerate the transition from discovery research to translational development by removing specific translational research barriers and creating a culture change in the academic community to further translate their research findings. The iTPA supports various activities aimed at upskilling academics and creating culture change.

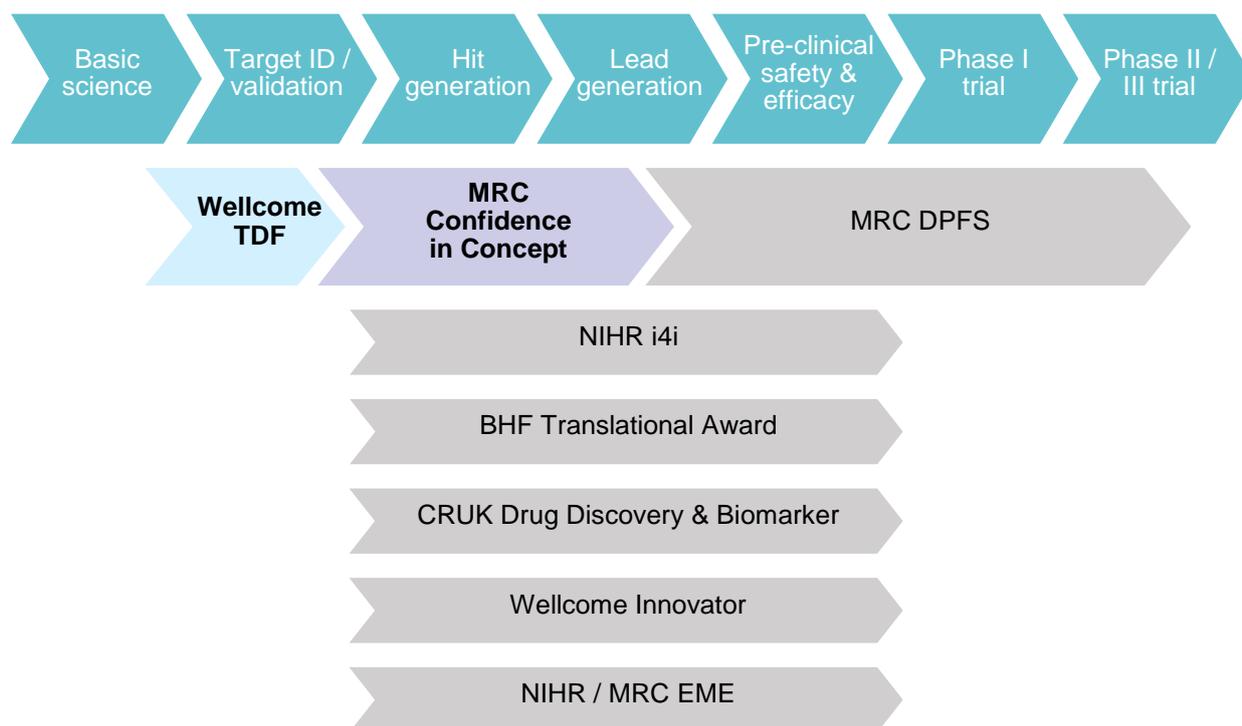


Figure 1: Position of Translational Funds

From discussions with the Wellcome Trust, we recognise that small awards aimed at early stages of translation are not easily accessible. The Translational Development Fund (TDF) provides funding to address early stage barriers, enabling projects to progress along the translational development pathway to ultimately achieve impact. The TDF is focused on the **first step from discovery research towards identification or initial validation of potential clinical, practical or commercial outcomes**.

Awards & Eligibility

The Translational Development Fund will provide up to **£30,000 over 3 – 6 months of directly incurred costs** and is intended to be very flexible in terms of the activities it will support. Applicants should be aware that translational research funding differs from a typical project grant in that the underpinning basic research will already be in place.

Projects must be complete by 31st July 2021, to comply with the core institutional fund award.

All disease areas and modalities of intervention are eligible for support from the scheme, including small molecules, peptides, antibodies, vaccines, gene therapy, devices, surgical techniques and engineering / medical technology, bioinformatics and psychological approaches.

We encourage applications from across the **Colleges of MDS, LES and EPS**, and are particularly keen on interdisciplinary collaborative approaches. Applicants should normally be a University academic employee, or be the holder of a personal research fellowship awarded competitively, with a contract lasting the duration of the project. Teams that actively involve clinicians from partner NHS Trusts (including **Birmingham Health Partners**) are welcome. Please note that a further funding stream, Clinical Innovation Fellowships, will be available for NHS colleagues shortly.

The most important aspect of the award is that the project will progress to a higher stage of translational development. Projects must address an unmet need in healthcare and offer a potential new solution. Projects are expected to take the innovation to a stage at which it is sufficiently developed to be attractive to another party, such as not-for-profit organisations and commercial organisations. The project must overcome a translational barrier – this activity may include, but is **not limited to**:

- Developing a pre-clinical model of disease for target validation purposes,
- Seeking regulatory advice from the MHRA with support from a consultancy company,
- Or developing tool compounds / biologics to explore the feasibility of a therapeutic approach.

Out of remit

The funding is not intended to support:

- Entire translational projects,
- Administration costs,
- Industrial partner costs,
- Staff between posts / funding (i.e. as “bridging” funds), or PhD studentships,
- Continuation of normal research grants,
- Costs relating to protection of intellectual property.

How to Apply

The funding call is a two-stage process: **Expression of Interest (EoI)** and **Full Stage** for shortlisted projects. This ensures sufficient input is given to the design of robust translational projects with a high likelihood of delivering significant outcomes.

All applications **must** be discussed with a Project Manager from the Translational Research Team (TRT) prior to EoI submission to ensure your intended project is appropriate for this funding scheme. Additionally, you will need to consult your Institute / School's Research Facilitator for accurate project costs.

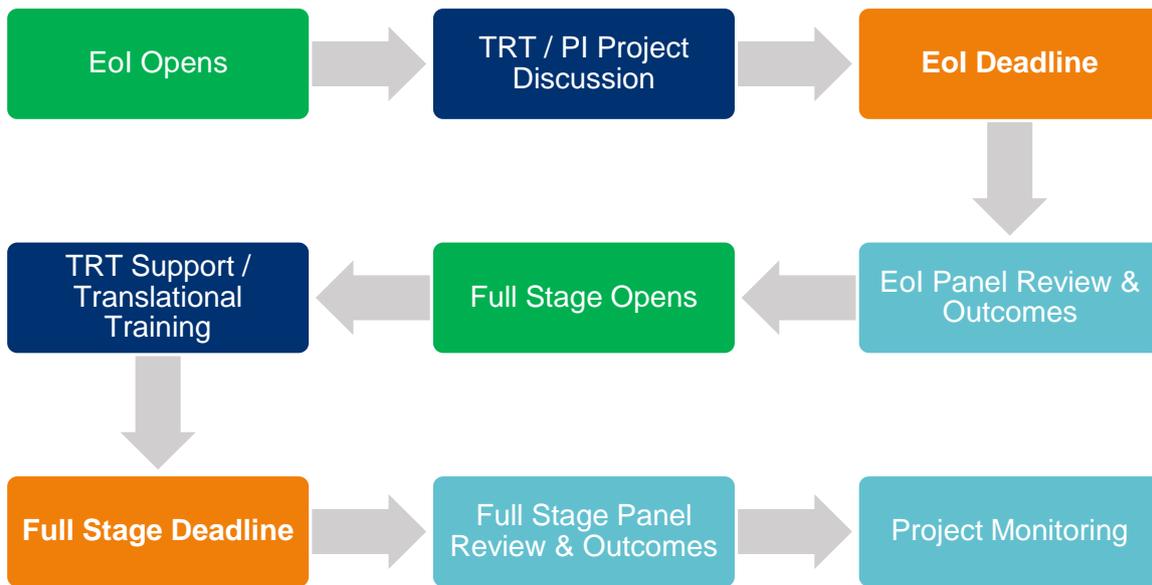


Figure 2: Wellcome TDF Application and Award Timeline

Preliminary data is **welcome but not essential** and **up to two pages** may be appended to the EoI. Programmes of work should be focused around key milestones that **de-risk** specific elements of further development towards commercialisation / translation.

Please note, investigators with **no prior Full Stage applications to either MRC CiC or Wellcome TDF** must attend a mandatory online **Translational Training** session prior to submitting the Full Stage application. Details of this session (due to take place in the period of 20th July – 27th August 2020) will be circulated following the EoI panel review.

Those invited to submit Full Stage applications will be able to access additional support from the Translational Research Team, UoB Enterprise, Business Engagement and external consultants as required. We advise applicants to **engage as early as possible after shortlisting**.

All Full Stage applications must be signed off by a member of the Translational Research Team and your Research Facilitator on behalf of your Head of Institute / School.

The latest internal guidance and application forms can be found on the [Internal Research Funding](#) intranet page.

Assessment

Projects are reviewed and scored by a **panel of translational scientists and clinicians**, including independent experts, chaired by **Professor Roy Bicknell**, Director of Enterprise for the College of Medical and Dental Sciences. The panel consists of scoring members and non-scoring advisors from MDS, LES and EPS Professional Services.

All applicants (successful and unsuccessful) will be provided written feedback following both EoI and Full submission stages. Applicants unsuccessful at either stage will still be able to access TRT support, either to develop grant proposals for external funding streams or new EoIs for the next internal translational funding call.

Timeline

Date	Activity
Week commencing 25 th May 2020	Call open
Wednesday 1st July 2020	Expression of Interest application deadline
Friday 17 th July 2020	EoI panel review
Week commencing 20 th July 2020	Shortlisting / feedback
Period 20 th July – 27 th August 2020	Translational Training
Thursday 3rd September 2020	Full stage application deadline
Week commencing 14 th September 2020	Full stage review panel
Week commencing 21 st September 2020	Panel outcome notifications

Contact

The Translational Development Fund is managed by the **Translational Research Team**, based in **MDS Research Delivery**. The Translational Research Team provide pre-award application support and post-award project management support to awarded projects. If you are unsure which translational funding stream to apply for, please contact the team who can advise where your project best fits.

All enquires, including which translational fund you could apply for, please email the Translational Research Team at TranslationalResearch@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

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