

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.

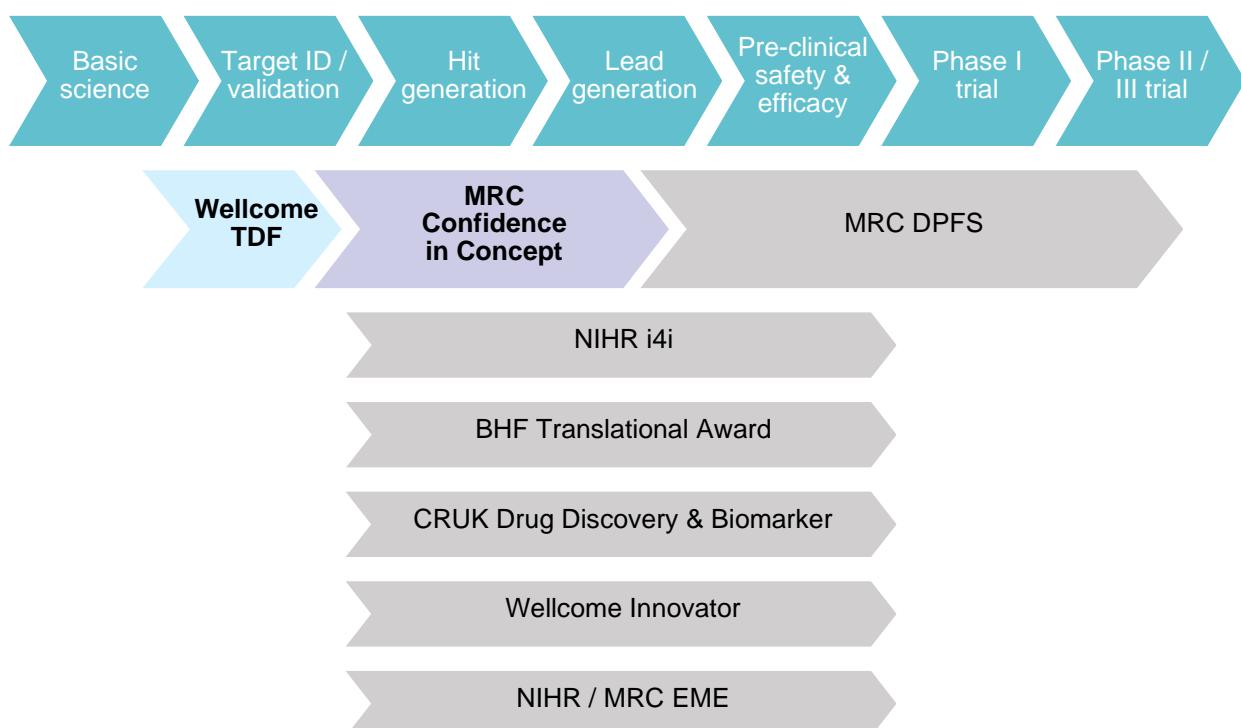


Figure 1: Position of Translational Funds

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 conditions of 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 and provide your **Worktribe Project ID** in the application.

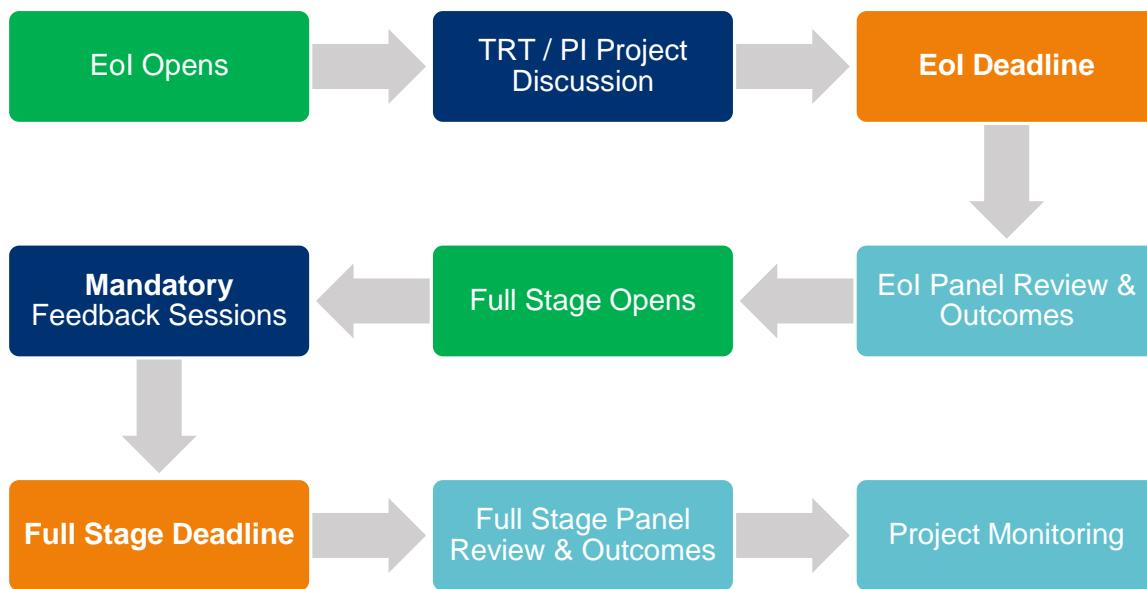


Figure 2: Wellcome TDF Application and Award Timeline

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.

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 the Translational Team Lead 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
Mid-August 2020	Pre-Full Stage Feedback Session
Thursday 3rd September 2020	Full stage application deadline
Friday 18 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.

Dr. Claire Potter

Head of Research Delivery, interim Team Lead

Dr. Manuela Carvalho-Gaspar

Translational Project Manager

Alice Sayers

Translational Project Officer

Dr. Jane Gilmour

Translational Project Manager

Nicola Beaumont

Research Delivery Team

Dr. Angela Murray

Translational Project Manager

Guidance for Applicants Invited to Full Stage Submission

Pre-Full Stage Feedback Session

Attendance at this session is a **mandatory** requirement for Full Stage application submission. The session will be chaired by an **expert consultant** with relevant translational experience. There will be participation from a tailored group of staff, which may include the **Translational Research Team, UoB Enterprise and Research Support Services**.

Applicants will receive **written feedback** from the Panel in advance of this meeting and you are expected to attend with a **draft of your Full Stage application**. This draft should be submitted to the Translational Research Team **two working days before your meeting**.

Full Stage Application Guidance

1.3 Project Duration

Projects must be complete with all funds defrayed by 31st July 2021, to comply with the conditions of the core institutional fund award.

1.4 Project Cost

See Section 3 Costings guidance below.

2.0 Ethics & Approval

For any projects involving the use of animals, it is expected that the [Biomedical Services Unit](#) will have been contacted, who can also provide advice on [NC3Rs Guidelines](#) (bmsu@contacts.bham.ac.uk).

It is not expected that an ethical review will be in place ahead of the Full Stage submission deadline, but applicants should be aware that **appropriate ethical approval** will be a condition of starting the award. Please also be aware that ethical approval is a requirement of the University of Birmingham's Code of Practice for Research. For further detail see: intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/finance/Financial-Services/Research-Support-Group/Research-Ethics/index.aspx

2.2 Project Background & Development Team

Explain how each of the **investigators** named in the proposal will work together and outline other major collaborations important for the research. Describe how each person's role will develop the project.

2.3 Project Plan & Milestones

At Full Stage there will be more emphasis on the **implementation of your project plan**. Please provide a **justification of any resources** requested in supporting this project and ensure it is aligned with the resources identified in Section 3.

If **preliminary data** is to be included, text provided should only address the interpretation of the figures. If any inappropriate text is included in the preliminary data, this will be **redacted** before sending to the Panel for review.

Project milestones should be written as **SMART goals** (see details and examples below). Where relevant, **go / no-go decision points** should be included.

Please be aware that your **Pre-Full Stage Feedback Session** will provide you with an opportunity to review your SMART milestones. In addition, if you feel you need any further support or advice please contact your Translational Project Manager.

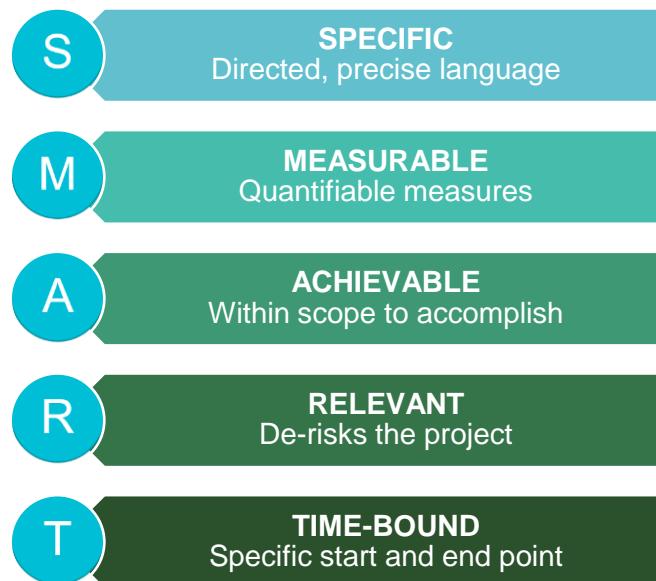


Figure 3: SMART definition

Table 1: Examples of SMART Milestones

Example 1	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Establish fit for purpose primary screening assay
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Primary screening assay established with transient transfection in 384 well format with $Z' > 0.7$ (acceptable 96 well assay, $Z' > 0.5$) at month 2.
Example 2	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate hits from HTS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Re-evaluate hits in single shot and full EC50 mode in primary assay. Re-confirmed hits ranked according to EC50 and chemical characteristics (see target product profile for measurables). Completed at month 6.

2.4 Translational Development Plan

Wellcome ask anyone applying for funding consider their approach to managing and sharing anticipated outputs at the research proposal stage. This section can include a plan of what steps you will take in delivering the ultimate goal for your project. Where relevant, you may wish to include how you will interact with **clinical, patient and industry audiences**. Please include details of any conversations with **funders**. Also note that there will be an equal focus on **commercial and non-commercial enterprises**, for example clinical interventions.

2.6 Intellectual Property

This section applies to **all forms of IP**, including patents for inventions, such as new drugs or medical devices, copyright in software, database rights in large datasets, rights in designs, e.g. for new equipment and rights in confidential knowhow.

Please ensure you have **freedom to operate** in your project and you have considered **any IP that may be generated**. Where appropriate, we expect you to engage with the Translational Research Team and UoB Enterprise.

3 Costings

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. All values reported in Section 1.4 (Project Cost) and Section 3 (Costings) **must** match the **Price to Funder** values as reported in your Worktribe project record.

Please note that we will only honour the quoted value provided in this application. **All** quotes must be appended and **should always include VAT** (e.g. equipment, contract research services, sequencing costs etc.). If you are purchasing services and equipment for medical research **and the supplier confirms** that they will not charge VAT, you may exclude it.

For the avoidance of any doubt, if you have excluded VAT at this stage, it will **not** be included in your award.

4 Authorisations

Email authorisation from your designated Research Facilitator on behalf of Head of Institute / School **must be submitted with your application**.

Final authorisation will be provided by the Translational Team Lead **after** submission of the application and this will include the condition that you have attended the **Pre-Full Stage Feedback Session**.