



## Coronavirus (COVID-19)

### Information for Blood cancer UK grant applicants

Over the last few weeks, Blood Cancer UK have been closely monitoring the evolving situation related to the COVID-19 outbreak and following government guidance as it emerges.

As you will know, all of our research funding decisions rely on the input and expertise from members of our review committees and external peer reviewers from around the world, on a voluntary basis. Many of these experts are also working with vulnerable patient groups at this time and in some cases, assisting with the COVID-19 response either in a clinical or research capacity. We are extremely grateful for all of their efforts and have already observed reduced capacity within the blood cancer research community to assist with our grant application reviews at this challenging time.

Given that this is a rapidly evolving situation of unknown duration, we cannot be certain about the longer-term impact of the COVID-19 crisis on our finances. However, we are already expecting and planning for a substantial reduction in our fundraising income, which will unfortunately have implications on the budget available to fund new research this year. In view of these uncertainties, we have therefore, made the difficult decision to defer finalising funding recommendations and outcomes for all grant applications submitted this year to a single decision point in March 2021.

This decision will affect applications currently being processed and undergoing external peer review for the following grant schemes:

- Early Phase Clinical Trial grants;
- Project grants;
- Programme Continuity grants;
- Trial Associated Research Projects.



Where an application has been made for the continuation of funding for an existing grant, bridge funding support will be considered. Please get in touch with the Research team to discuss this further.

All Early Phase Clinical Trial grant applications submitted in February 2020 will undergo external peer review and will be considered by our Clinical Trials Committee on a date to be confirmed in autumn 2020, with funding decisions deferred until March 2021.

Project, Programme Continuity Grants and Trial Associated Research Project grant applications submitted in February 2020 will continue to be processed and undergo external peer review, with review by the Research Committee in February 2021 and funding decisions deferred until March 2021.

If applicants wish to reconsider and make essential revisions to an application already submitted to us, please get in touch as soon as possible to discuss. If these amendments are substantial, we may advise you to withdraw your application and submit a revised version to the next call for applications.

Our next call for Project, Programme Continuity and Trial Associated Research Project grant applications will open as planned in May 2020, with a deadline for applications in early September 2020 and final funding decisions made in March 2021.

Given that for this financial year we will be merging two funding rounds into one, it may be necessary to introduce an application triage or shortlisting step following external peer review to select the most competitive proposals for review by the Research Committee, which will be followed by a meeting of the Board of Trustees where the final funding decisions will be taken.

If you would like to submit a grant application but your host organisation is closed and unable to approve and submit an application as usual, we can do this on their behalf. However, we will require agreement from your organisation to do this. The relevant individuals should email us quoting the application reference, to confirm their agreement.

If you have any queries or concerns, please do get in touch with Blood Cancer UK research team ([research@bloodcancer.org.uk](mailto:research@bloodcancer.org.uk)).

We will update this page as required.