



RCGP Scientific Foundation Board Funding Application Guidance 2025

Research & Innovation Team
30 Euston Square, London NW1 2FB

Contents

Introduction	4
General information	4
Eligibility for funding	4
Funding priorities.....	5
Well written applications	5
What the SFB will not fund	5
Common reasons for applications being unsuccessful	6
Examples of work funded by the SFB	6
Annual Research Grants.....	6
Practitioner's Allowance Grants	7
Scoring Criteria.....	7
Previous Grant Recipients	8
How to apply	8
Application timeline	8
Documents to prepare.....	9
The necessary supporting documents	9
The optional supporting documents.....	9
Early career researchers or those new to research	9
Completing your application – Section by section	10
Section 1A: Principal applicant details	10
Section 1B: Principal applicant diversity personal data	10
Section 2: Research project summary	10
Section 3: Principal applicant funding history	10
Section 4: Research governance & ethical approval	11
Section 4A: Research governance	11
Section 4B: Ethics approval.....	11
Confidentiality and data protection.....	12
Section 5: Research sponsor	12
Section 6: Application summary information.....	12
Section 6A: Topic Areas and Methodologies.....	12
Section 6B: Conflict of Interest	12
Section 7: Research proposal.....	12
Section 7A: Background and rationale.....	12
Section 7B: Summary	13
Section 7C: Aims and Objectives	13
Section 7D: Research proposal.....	13
Section 7E: Timeline	14
Section 7F&G: Dissemination, publication and future projects.....	14
Section 8A: Finance support for project.....	15

Section 8B: Breakdown of Costs.....	15
Section 8C: Schedule of anticipated withdrawals	16
Section 8D: Finance Justification.....	16
Section 9: Sources of Advice.....	16
Section 9A: Principal study design advisor/ supervisor	16
Section 9B: Study statistics advisor	16
Section 9C: Study finance advisor	16
Section 10: Co-applicant and research team details	17
Section 11: Supporting documents.....	17
Section 12: Curriculum Vitae – Principal Applicant.....	17
Section 13: Declaration.....	18
Further information and tips	18
Advice	18
Reporting to the SFB	18
Publications	18
Annual and Final reports.....	18
Video presentations.....	19
SFB Board Members	19

Introduction

The Scientific Foundation Board (SFB), established in 1976, reflects the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) commitment to research. The SFB awards grants for research relevant to general medical practice and primary care which is undertaken from a United Kingdom (UK) institution, and normally based on subjects within UK general medical practice. The SFB is currently chaired by Professor Sophie Park (University of Oxford) and Vice chair Professor Helen Atherton (University of Southampton). The board includes experienced researchers and other key representatives, including Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE), in the field of primary care. The application form, supporting documents, and relevant deadlines are available on the [RCGP Website](#).

This document contains information and guidance for applicants submitting proposals for an SFB grant. It is important that applicants must read these guidance notes fully before starting to complete the application form to ensure that they provide the correct information. The activities of the SFB are coordinated by the RCGP Research and Innovation (R&I) team. Any enquiries relating to the process, please contact the R&I team via email (SFB@rcgp.org.uk).

General information

The SFB views research in its broadest sense, including experimental and descriptive studies, primary research using both quantitative and qualitative methods as well as mixed methods, and secondary research (for example, quantitative secondary data analysis, systematic reviews, meta-analysis, scoping reviews and realist reviews)

The SFB offers two avenues for funding:

- Practitioner's Allowance Grants (PAGs), of up to £2,000
- Annual Research Grants, of between £1,000 and £30,000

Our Practitioners Allowance Grants are reviewed by a selection of board members individually and shortlisted by the chair and Vice chair of the board. As these are smaller grants they tend to have a quicker turnaround time and applications for PAGs are open multiple times a year

Our Annual Research Grant applications are reviewed by the board members individually and are then considered in a closed annual SFB meeting. Where appropriate, external peer review may be requested on a case-by-case basis.

The closing date for the submission of applications to be considered is posted on the College website. To apply for the SFB Grant please visit our [Grant Management Platform](#).

Eligibility for funding

Who Can Apply?

- All researchers are eligible to apply; you do not need to be an RCGP member.
- Members of any primary care discipline
- Applicants must be based in the UK
- Applications involving multi-disciplinary collaboration or partnerships with academic departments are strongly encouraged.

Funding priorities

Awards are made on a case-by-case basis, with scientific quality as the primary consideration. The SFB has no research priorities of its own but does encourage applications that address the [College's strategic objectives or clinical priorities](#). In the event of applications of equal merit being received, the SFB will prioritise the following characteristics (with the prime consideration being scientific quality):

- General Practitioners establishing a research career
- Early Career Researchers in academic primary care
- Research projects that demonstrate potential impact on future primary care
- Applicants who have not previously been funded by the SFB
- Demonstrate feasible plans for funding within available time and budget
- Projects that are aligned with the RCGP goals. These can be found on our [About page](#).

The SFB may on occasion support additional themed calls for submission of research grants with partner organisations. These will be considered on their own merits in conjunction with the partner organisation

Well written applications

The SFB suggests that particular attention is paid to the following, which are commonly found in well written applications:

- Clear, specified research questions and/or hypothesis that aim to address a significant evidence gap
- Detailed and well defined methods that will clearly answer the research questions and meet the proposed objectives
- Inclusion of appropriate and valid research tools/ instruments
- Proposed study design and methods that are clearly described and feasible within the timeframe and resources requested
- Evidence of ethical considerations
- Clear evidence of Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) input at different stages of the research cycle (including proposal preparation and research design)
- Plans for dissemination or other outputs (including but not limited to conference presentations, publications, videos, policy briefings and training materials) as well as knowledge mobilisation that are likely to be of benefit to patients and workforce in primary care
- Good value for money
- Potential benefit to career development and /or leveraging future funding (e.g. doctoral fellowship)

What the SFB will not fund

- International projects with no substantial component of the project taking place in UK general practice
- Audit projects or guideline development
- Undergraduate applicants
- University tuition fees – excludes external course fees
- Time for individuals already in receipt of funding for the same research from another source. *
- Institutional overheads as part of its awards
- Supervision fees
- Projects that are already funded by another body, unless there has been a specific theme call.
- Projects that already have funding but have exceeded their budget

- Applications without sufficient support i.e. projects with no plan for support from an academic institution or support from a wider employing body
- Applications with costing wholly for publication fees for open-access academic journals – specific to PAG

*For example, the SFB would not normally consider funding protected time for an individual working in a research practice that was in receipt of R&D support funding. The SFB might, however, consider a request for the protected time from an individual currently employed, solely to undertake one specific research project where such a request would enable them to undertake an additional project. Such an application would be considered on an individual case basis. Applicants requiring locum cover will be required to provide receipts.

Common reasons for applications being unsuccessful

The SFB suggests that particular attention is paid to the following, which are common reasons for rejection of applications, relevant for all parts of the application but particularly in reference to the plans and methodologies:

- Incomplete application forms, missing information and no signatures
- No clearly formulated research aims or research question / hypothesis
- Poorly described methodology
- Research design does not align with research questions and intended outcomes specified in the application
- Lack of a research team including the necessary skills and expertise
- Lack of supervision / support for inexperienced researchers
- Unrealistic costing or unachievable timeframes
- Lack of PPIE input in research

If you are unsuccessful in your application for one of our grants you can resubmit in another grant phase. For more information on resubmissions see the [Applicant funding history section](#) of the application notes.

Examples of work funded by the SFB

Below are a number of examples of titles and research projects that the SFB have funded in the last 10 years:

Annual Research Grants

Title	Research methods
Carer experiences of navigating resources and services for someone with dementia.	Focus groups
Gestational diabetes: women's experiences postnatally and potential role of mobile technology	Semi-structured interviews
The role of locum GPs in antimicrobial stewardship: a mixed methods study	Semi-structured interviews Quantitative data analysis of UK primary care data
Perspectives on contraception amongst ethnic minority groups: A qualitative study	Literature review, Focus groups

Practitioner's Allowance Grants

Title	Research methods
Diagnosis of peripheral arterial disease in primary care: a survey of general practitioners in England	Survey
The hidden workload study: a mixed methods analysis of local demographics and primary care workload.	Semi-structured interviews, Quantitative observational
A systematic review of studies using population segmentation in type 2 diabetes	Systematic review
A realist evaluation of undergraduate medical teaching with remote (telephone and video) consultations in primary care	Semi Structured interviews Questionnaires

Scoring Criteria

Typical descriptors	Category	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very important research questions; likely to result in a strong impact on NHS /primary care practice Excellent research design, very strong team and very good value for money Active participation and influence of service Users at all relevant stages of the project 	10	Fundable
	9	
	8	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good quality research, important research questions Competent and appropriate research team Likely to be productive and have an impact on practice Good value for money Well planned Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) that is likely to lead to user-informed outcomes Concerns about the research approach can be corrected easily 	7	Potentially fundable
	6	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially useful study but only of modest quality Important research questions, but low expectation of success and impact, and questionable impact Some elements of PPI, but not well integrated and of questionable quality Applicants without relevant research experience 	5	Not competitive
	4	Not fundable
	3	Reject
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor/flawed/duplicative; serious scientific concerns Unnecessary duplication of work, would not be productive or have an impact on practice, unlikely to lead to impact Key skills missing from the research team PPI components very limited or lacking altogether Poor value for money 	2	Not fundable
	1	

Previous Grant Recipients

If you have previously received a College grant, you may apply for new funding within the three-year period only if the new project:

- Is significantly different from your previous study, or
- Builds upon your previous project in a substantially developed way

In exceptional circumstances, if a previously funded project requires a small amount of additional funding to be completed effectively, the SFB may consider awarding a supplementary grant.

- This must be justified in advance, with a clear explanation provided.

If you're unsure about your eligibility or have other queries, please contact: SFB@rcgp.org.uk.

How to apply

The application form for SFB Annual Research Grants is hosted on an online platform – Good Grants. Applicants can go in and out of the application form as often as they would like until the deadline. Applicants are reminded to always save their changes as they go.

Online application can be submitted via the link below:
<https://royalcollegeofgeneralpractitioners.grantplatform.com/>

To submit an application you will need to create a Good Grants log in. Once an applicant has an active account please select the relevant application form to begin the application.

We ask that you give the title of your application the title of your research project **not** your name to ensure we minimise bias. Your application will be given a unique code which will be used by the board through the reviewing and scoring rounds.

Throughout the online form applicants will be asked to upload the necessary supporting documents. Applicants should:

- Upload supporting documents must be uploaded as a Word document or converted pdf. Scanned pdfs will not be accepted
- Complete all mandatory sections
- Comply with word count / size parameters

Once an applicant has submitted an application, you should receive an automatic confirmation from Good Grants to confirm your online application was submitted. If you do not receive an acknowledgement of the application, please contact the Research & Innovation Team via email (SFB@rcgp.org.uk).

Application timeline

Practitioner's Allowance Grants (PAGs) application call is open periodically throughout the year. The College will update the [website](#) with information on the opening times. It may be helpful to keep an eye on the College' social media accounts for news as well.

Annual Research Grants call is open once a year scheduled around September/October, for updates on exact opening windows please see the [website](#).

Applications submitted after the deadline, and applications not submitted in full with supporting documents,

will be automatically rejected. Should applicants miss the deadline, we encourage resubmission the following year.

Once you have submitted your application, we aim to get back to you as soon as we can. For PAGs expect to find out 4-6 weeks after the application deadline. For our Annual Grants expect to find out in March around 8 weeks after the annual SFB meeting which is usually held in January each year.

Successful applicants are expected to commence work and request a release of funds within six months of being awarded a grant (extensions are possible at the discretion of the SFB).

Documents to prepare

For your application to be considered you must provide the necessary supporting documents. All grant applications must contain appropriate signatures; these must be submitted as electronic documents.

The necessary supporting documents

- An agreement from your research sponsor (Section 5)
- A reference list for the literature review (Section 7)

The optional supporting documents

- Evidence of ethical approval or application, if applicable (Section 4)
- Evidence of research governance approval, if applicable (Section 4)
- Cost justification, if applicable (Section 8)
- Supporting statement from study supervisor, if applicable (Section 9)
- In re-submission cases, a document explaining, in detail, what has been changed and how the new application is different from the previous one (Section 11)
- Any reference to unpublished materials and/or instrument (research tools such as questionnaires and interview topic guide), if applicable

Early career researchers or those new to research

As a priority of the SFB to encourage early careers researchers and those new to research to apply. We define early careers as: healthcare professionals in training posts or within five years of their first substantive NHS or equivalent position. Although we understand not everyone follows a linear career path, for clarification if you are unsure whether this applies to you email SFB@rcgp.org.uk

It is essential that the appropriate signatures and statements are obtained from the applicant's supervisor and research sponsor organisation. The signature and statement from the supervisor are required as a means of ensuring that they:

- Have read the application research proposal
- Confirm the proposal has received and incorporated relevant advice
- Are satisfied that the application is ready for review by the SFB and has been through any internal peer review process as appropriate.

Including a supporting statement from a supervisor/advisor is an important requirement for early career or researchers those new to research and it will lessen the likelihood of the SFB either requiring changes to the application before agreeing to fund a study or of rejecting an application because, for example, of major flaws in the study design.

Completing your application – Section by section

Section 1A: Principal applicant details

The principal applicant is responsible for the grant from application until grant closure. The principal applicant will become the grant holder/principal investigator for the research study. This will involve having oversight of the research study and having the responsibility for corresponding and updating the SFB with the study's progress and finances.

If the principal applicant is a member of the College, please provide their membership number and specify the local RCGP faculty.

Where research will contribute towards a higher qualification for the applicant, please include the nature of this qualification (For example MPhil / PhD / MD). Research projects carried out as part of an MSc or other higher degree may be funded, but applications should not include any elements that are normally covered by university fees.

This section allows applicants to enter their current job title and organisation. The current job title should be the most relevant title, if the applicant holds an academic position, then this is the one that should be entered here. Applicants should also highlight, in brief, any other appointments or positions of responsibility that they are currently holding that may be relevant to the application.

Section 1B: Principal applicant diversity personal data

This section requests basic information about the applicant's demographic profile, specifically gender, ethnicity and disability. It includes a 'prefer not to say' option to enable applicants who do not want to share this data to opt-out.

The SFB is committed to promoting research inclusion and diversity within GP research and ensure under-represented groups are able to access funding for their work. To do this successfully it is necessary for the SFB to collect and monitor the demographic data of its applicants so it can respond to any underrepresentation appropriately.

Any data included in this section will be kept confidential and secure and will not be shared with the SFB, peer reviewers, or with third parties. No individual data would ever be published. This data will solely be used for internal monitoring and analysis purposes to promote diversity and inclusion in research funding.

Section 2: Research project summary

You will be asked to provide the following summary information about the grant application:

- Title of project and abbreviated title is relevant
- Full amount of funding being requested
- Anticipated start date
- Anticipated end date
- Total duration of the project (in months)

Section 3: Principal applicant funding history

If the applicant answers 'Yes' to any of this section's questions, a drop-down will appear asking applicants to specify if they have received any previous research grant funding from the SFB, (including if they were named as a co-applicant) and to provide their grant reference number (SFB 20XX-XX).

The SFB does not confer new awards to any applicant/co-applicant if their final report including invoicing from a previously funded project is still outstanding after the twelve-month deadline.

Please note any SFB applications that have been declined for funding are not eligible for resubmission within a three-year period. Previous SFB grant applicants may only re-apply for funding within the 3-year period if the subject matter for their project has been **substantially** developed or is significantly different from their original project. For any queries concerning eligibility on these grounds please contact SFB@rcgp.org.uk.

Any re-submissions should include a document explaining in detail (in Section 11) what has been changed and how the new application is different from the previous one.

If the applicant has applied to another funder for this work, they will be asked to please provide details of whether or not this application has been successful. If the application is still pending a decision, please provide dates of when a decision is expected. Such an application would be considered on an individual case basis.

Section 4: Research governance & ethical approval

Section 4A: Research governance

All applicants must conduct research funded by the SFB in line with the provisions of the [UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research](#). Where relevant, the [EU Clinical Trials Directive](#) which applies to all trials on human subjects involving medicinal products should be adhered to.

For research undertaken in a GP practice, it may be useful to become [Research Ready® accredited](#). Research Ready® is an accessible tool that helps GP Practices ensure they meet the UK's research governance framework.

Where the proposed study involves NHS patients, staff or resources, appropriate ethical approval, and local research governance approval must be obtained. It is essential to ensure that strict confidentiality is maintained and that assurance is given to participants that this will be done. This will, in any case, be required by all research ethics committees.

Applicants should specify if research governance is required by selecting 'Yes' or 'No' in the first field, then provide the relevant information in the drop-down that will appear. Applicants should explain why governance is not required, or alternatively provide details or evidence of research governance requirements.

Section 4B: Ethics approval

Applicants should specify if research ethics approval is required by selecting 'Yes' or 'No' in the first field, then provide the relevant information in the drop-down that will appear.

Applicants should explain why approval is not required, or alternatively specify if approval has been obtained. Where approval has been granted, applicants are recommended to submit evidence from the research ethics committee confirming ethical approval. Where approval is pending, applicants should detail the organisation they have requested approval from and anticipated dates for receiving a response.

For more information on ethics approval please see below:

- England and Wales <https://hra-decisiontools.org.uk/ethics/> and <https://www.hra.nhs.uk/approvals-amendments/what-approvals-do-i-need/research-ethics-committee-review/>
- Scotland: <https://www.nhsresearchscotland.org.uk/services/research-ethics>
- Northern Ireland: <https://research.hscni.net/approval-research-hsc/> / <https://hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/1983.htm>

Confidentiality and data protection

If a study will use personal data on an individual who can be identified, this may fall under the remit of the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. It is the applicant's personal responsibility to ensure that the provisions of the act are met. Further information on the act may be obtained from the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Email address: casework@ico.org.uk.

Section 5: Research sponsor

Applicants are required to specify the organisation that has agreed to be the research sponsor of the project in accordance with the UK Policy Framework for Health & Social Care Research, [Section 9.10 Sponsors](#).

The SFB itself does not assume the role of research sponsor. In order to secure a suitable sponsor, it may be useful to consult their Principal Study Design Advisor/ supervisor (See section 9), local academic department, primary care research network or local primary care organisation.

The applicant should attach a signed confirmation letter from the Research Sponsor legal representative.

Section 6: Application summary information

Section 6A: Topic Areas and Methodologies

In order to efficiently allocate applications to members of the SFB for review, applicants are asked to indicate the health topic and main methodologies that are to be used within the proposed research. The SFB is interested in funding research across all these topics, but is particularly interested in research that relates to our clinical priorities.

For more information on our priorities, read the [about us](#) page on our website.

Section 6B: Conflict of Interest

Applicants should disclose any potential conflict of interest with members of the SFB. Conflict of interest may arise from a personal relationship (family / partner / marriage / close personal friend), departmental connections, co-working, collaborations, association, publications, competition and affiliation with members of the SFB.

The position and job title of SFB members can be found on the RCGP website.

Section 7: Research proposal

Section 7A: Background and rationale

This section should include a brief literature review and explain how applicants expect to add to the body of knowledge. Evidence of a thorough review of relevant background literature should be provided to support the research proposal.

Citations should be provided in Vancouver style or condensed Vancouver style and recorded in a separate document that can be uploaded at the end of this section.

It is expected that the literature review will be up to date and cite recent examples of primary research papers that facilitated a balanced, objective and comprehensive review of the field and demonstrate how this informs the research proposal. A good review would normally cite a minimum of 20 peer-reviewed references (subject to the maturity of the field being researched).

If the application refers to an unpublished materials/ instrument, the requisite number of copies (see above) should accompany the application.

Section 7B: Summary

Applicants should provide a short summary outlining the proposed study. Including the purpose, aims, research activities and anticipated outcomes of their research project. Please include how the research will impact primary care. This should be no longer than 300 words.

Section 7C: Aims and Objectives

The aims and/or research question(s) of the project should be clearly defined and articulated, with links to the objectives of the study and anticipated outcomes.

For the purposes of the SFB, the aims of the project should be defined as an indication of the intentions of the research proposal, taking the form of a hypothesis. There should be an emphasis on what is to be accomplished (as opposed to how it is to be accomplished).

The research question/s are the key question the study plans to answer. In general, the research question(s) should be clearly stated as testable hypotheses if the study is an experimental one. In some types of study design (e.g., descriptive studies), research questions rather than hypothesis testing may be more appropriate.

For the purposes of the SFB, objectives should be defined as measurable activities from which it can be determined whether or not the aims of the study have been accomplished. It is recommended that objectives are presented as up to six succinct bullet points. These should be precise, focused, outline the more immediate project outcomes, and place weight upon how the aims are to be achieved. The objectives should demonstrate a clear link to the research methodology.

Section 7D: Research proposal

This section should include a plan of the investigation and details of the methodology that is to be used. Applicants may wish to refer to the information provided on the form in Section 6 classifying the methodologies as qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods.

Where College support is required for dissemination of materials (such as surveys and resources), this will need to be discussed prior to submission with the RCGP Research & Innovation Team at sfb@rcgp.org.uk.

Definition of terms: The factors or variables to be studied should be carefully defined and, if applicable, the applicant should demonstrate how these will be measured. If measuring outcomes (for example, of a treatment or intervention) these must also be rigorously defined. It may be necessary to conduct preliminary work in order to define terms or devise or test methods of measurement. In this circumstance, an explicit application may be made to the SFB for funding of preliminary work.

Research Instruments: The means by which the applicant will obtain data should be validated, unless the application is for the construction or testing of a new instrument. This applies particularly to the use of

questionnaires, especially where these are scaled to produce scores. Construction and validation of a new instrument is likely to be beyond the ability and resources of a novice applicant. It is almost always necessary to use an existing well validated instrument even if this is not completely suitable. Copies of any novel questionnaires and other instruments should be attached to the application.

Design: The SFB expects a well-written design to produce an answer to the research question posed or meet the specified aim. A good introductory text should be used to explore various designs that may be used and their respective advantages and disadvantages, prior to seeking expert advice. Where qualitative techniques (for example, interviews) are to be used, the applicant should demonstrate familiarity with the rigorous application of these methods, including analysis, and have sought appropriate advice and supervision.

Impact: Applicants should detail the impact they expect their proposal to have on primary care or general medical practice and patient care or outcomes. Applicants can include how the research proposal will support their career as a researcher.

PPIE (Patient and Public involvement and Engagement): Applicants should include PPIE in their research. to be considered for a grant. Applicants should consider the intended impact of their research, what they are aiming to achieve and how many individuals could be affected. Please include in this section any relevant PPIE activity to date, and what this has added to the proposal, and a clear plan for meaningful PPIE at various stages during the proposed project. The NIHR provides excellent [guidance](#) on this, and applicants are strongly encouraged to consider this.

Section 7E: Timeline

Applicants are required to include a brief summary timeline that demonstrates the main activities of the project. Applicant initials can include principal applicant and any co-applicant (included in Section 10).

Example:

From MM/YY	To MM/YY	Member of the team	Activity
01/2426	03/2426	Applicant	Conduct focus groups
04/2426	06/2426	Co-Applicant	Analysis

Section 7F&G: Dissemination, publication and future projects

We expect the research we fund to lead to outputs and impact. This will usually be in the form of published papers and conference presentations. Research funded by SFB may also form the foundation for future larger projects or a research fellowship.

In order for research to have an impact on the field it is important for it to be translated into practice. Applicants are asked to consider long-term benefits of the research to practice and patients and outline dissemination and knowledge mobilisation (if applicable) plans to support the outputs of the research reaching peers within the profession. Applicants should link this 'outputs' section to their aims and objectives.

Specify any plans for dissemination of work and anticipated publication via peer review publication, presentations at local, regional, national and international meetings, translation into education/training materials and opportunities for wider PR activities.

Recipients of grants are required to inform the SFB of their intention to publish research projects and acknowledge receipt of SFB funding in any publication (including but not limited to research papers, conference posters and conference talks). When publication is confirmed, the SFB will aim to support publicity and PR of the research outcomes, where appropriate, to RCGP members and wider national audiences via RCGP's Research & Innovation team.

Where College support is required for dissemination of materials (such as surveys and resources), this will need to be discussed prior to submission with the Research & Innovation team at SFB@rcgp.org.uk. If funding is intended to support work that may lead to subsequent grant proposals, fellowship applications or other forms of funding, the details of the plans should be described.

Section 8A: Finance support for project

Applicants should include the total cost they are requesting from the SFB. If the project has additional funding, please include this in the 'What is the total project cost?' box. If the applicant is requesting the SFB to fund the full study, then leave this box blank.

Section 8B: Breakdown of Costs

Applicants should provide a breakdown of the costs associated with the research project, which you are requesting the SFB to fund. For complex / detailed costings a supplementary document may be submitted. Applicants are required to list the itemised costs under the relevant headings.

Masters, MSc or PhD tuition fees will not be funded, although the direct expenses incurred to undertake research projects carried out as part of an MSc or other higher degree may be funded. This may include travel, consumables, participant reimbursement etc. Applications should not include any elements that are normally covered by university fees.

Budgets for salaries, running costs and equipment costs should be shown separately, with a detailed cost calculation and itemised breakdown for funds being requested in the field entitled 'provide a breakdown on anticipated costs for this project'. Applicants are also required to ensure that appropriate arrangements have been made to enable any national pay awards or inflationary pressures occurring over the course of their project to be honoured.

The SFB will examine all requests for direct research costs (including audio transcription, data access) and office costs, including postage, stationery, photocopying, telephone usage, and mileage. Mileage will be paid at the College rate, currently 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles

When funding for the provision of consultancy services is requested, it should be noted that the SFB will only reimburse the actual salary costs (i.e., salary plus National Insurance and Superannuation costs) of that individual. The SFB will not pay consultancy rates which include an element for institutional overheads and/or a profit element. Individuals acting as a consultant to a project are requested to confirm that they are not in receipt of any other source of income for the hours they are contributing to the project. This confirmation must be included with the application.

PPIE representatives should be paid in accordance with current NIHR [guidance](#) and this should be included in the costings.

The SFB will consider funding appropriate expenses to respondents or research subjects, provided these are fully justified and are in proportion with the scale of the study.

Time taken by NHS staff in relation to the research may be funded through NHS R&D support funding

mechanisms and applicants should explore the availability of such funding.

All applicants should factor in open access publication fees and conference presentations within their application.

Please note that applicants will be unable to claim for Full Economic Costing (FEC) due to the RCGP being a charitable body. For more information on research costings the SFB recommends applicants to look at [NIHR Schedule of Events Cost Attribution Tool \(SoECAT\)](#).

Section 8C: Schedule of anticipated withdrawals

Applicants are also required to provide a total project cost, and a quarterly breakdown of anticipated withdrawal throughout the project. The funding given by the SFB is in respect of the direct attributable costs of the research and it will not fund accommodation, Human Resources, IT or Finance Department support, or any type of hosting fee such as full economic cost.

The schedule starts in quarter 1 20XX/XX as this is the earliest a contract could be signed should grant be awarded will be quarter 4 20XX/XX. Applicants can add additional quarters if necessary.

The schedule starts in quarter 1 20YY/YY as this is the earliest a contract could be signed should grant be awarded will be quarter 4 20YY/YY. Applicants can add additional quarters if necessary.

The purpose of the schedule of anticipated withdrawals is to help applicants plan expenditure over time. It is not intended to be a fixed Direct Debit payment schedule. Applicants, and their finance teams, should track expenditure over the course of the grant and invoice accordingly providing receipts for each withdrawal.

Section 8D: Finance Justification

In this section applicants should provide any justification and reasons for the support being requested; it is likely that it will draw on information presented throughout Section 7 of the form. Applicants are advised to consider the advice given above for Section 7D.

Section 9: Sources of Advice

Section 9A: Principal study design advisor/ supervisor

The role of the Principal Study Design Advisor/ Supervisor is to provide advice on the design of the protocol prior to the applicant submitting their proposal. This is of particular importance where the applicant has little or no research experience, as proposals which do not offer a reasonable chance of meeting their objectives will be declined funding. Sound advice will also reduce the likelihood of the SFB either requiring changes or rejecting an application, for example, because of flaws in the study design.

Applicants are required to confirm details of their Principal Study Design Advisor and briefly detail advice they have received from them. This person may also act as their statistics and finance advisor.

Section 9B: Study statistics advisor

If the application uses quantitative methods, the SFB will expect applicants to have sought statistical advice when preparing their application, and for information relating to this to be included. Not all studies require a statistics advisor, and this section should be completed only if applicable

Section 9C: Study finance advisor

Applicants are required to briefly specify the advice they have received from their finance advisor. Applicants are recommended to seek financial advice before submission.

Section 10: Co-applicant and research team details

The **principal applicant** is expected to use this space to name additional co-applicants and research team members. **Co-applicants** are those who are collaborating for research. **Research team members** are individuals (or applicant can list support facilities) that are available and relevant for the applicant to complete the research proposal.

Enter the names of all co-applicants should be provided, along with supplementary information. For each co-applicant please include:

- Title and Name
- Email (co-applicant only)
- Organisation they work for
- Outline how this person will support this research study. If they are a co-applicants please include their job title, their highest qualification and how their experience is relevant to this research study

Section 11: Supporting documents

Applicants can now add up to 5 more additional documents, they believe will enhance their application. This section is **optional**.

Previously applicants have been asked to submit:

- Evidence of ethical approval or application, if applicable (Section 4)
- Evidence of research governance approval, if applicable (Section 4)
- Agreement from research sponsor (Section 5)
- Reference list (Section 7)
- Cost justification, if applicable (Section 8)
- Supporting Statement from study advisor (Section 9)

If applicants are re-submitting an application for a study that has been substantially altered, this is where applicants should upload a document explaining, in detail, what has been changed and how the new application is different from the previous one.

Please title all additional supporting documents clearly.

Section 12: Curriculum Vitae – Principal Applicant

We ask the principal applicant for the following details on their professional history, summarising skills, achievements and experience.

- Qualifications (MRCP, PhD, DPhil etc)
- Professional registration: (Name of body, registration number and date of registration.)
- In addition to MRCP membership, which was included in Section 1
- Previous and other appointments - Include previous appointments in the last 5 years and other current appointments.
- Research experience - Summary of research experience, including the extent of your involvement. Refer to any specific clinical or research experience relevant to the current application.
- Research training - Details of any relevant training in the design or conduct of research, for example in the Clinical Trials Regulations, Good Clinical Practice, consent or other training appropriate to non-clinical research (e.g. qualitative research methods training). Give the date of the training, if possible.
- Relevant publications: - Give references to all publications in the last two years and any other publications relevant to the current application.

Section 13: Declaration

By signing this declaration, the applicant acknowledges that they have read and understood the application form, guidance and that the application is eligible for submission to the SFB.

Further information and tips

Advice

Studies which do not, in the opinion of the SFB, offer a reasonable chance of meeting their stated objectives will be declined funding. In the absence of any previous research experience, applicants are expected to seek advice on the design of the protocol before making an application. If the application relates to a quantitative study, the SFB will expect applicants to have sought statistical advice when preparing their application and for information relating to this to be included in the application.

Advice may be obtained from the SFB and, in the first instance, an approach should be made to the Research team.

If required, continuing advice may be sought from the SFB by successful applicants throughout the course of their project.

Possible outcomes

The outcome of the SFB's consideration of applications will normally take one of the following forms:

- Approve an application in its entirety
- Approve an application, with suggestions for the applicant that do not impact the award of the grant if they are not adopted
- Approve an application, with conditions for the applicant that must be adopted in order to receive funding
- Request further clarifications prior to making a final decision
- Invite a revised application, prepared in the style requested by the SFB. The SFB will not consider a revised application unless one has specifically been requested
- Request external peer review
- Decline funding (for example, where the study falls below the bar for funding, or when it is deemed fundable, but of insufficient priority to be funded within the funding envelope for this call)

Reporting to the SFB

Publications

Successful applicants are contractually required to report any publications or presentations at regional, national and international level to the SFB via SFB@rcgp.org.uk. When publishing or presenting the grant holders are required to **acknowledge the SFB as a funding source**.

Annual and Final reports

All principal applicants/ recipient organisations should submit a report in line with the SFB's proforma at the conclusion of their project. This must follow the SFB's format. This report should include details of any published output(s) resulting from the project. The content may be used on the RCGP website and in other open access locations of the RCGP.

The final report should be submitted by June, within twelve months of the expected end date of the project.

If it appears that it will be difficult to meet this deadline, the Chair should be contacted as soon as possible, via the Research team, to seek an extension. This should include a copy of the annual progress report sent to the ethics committee (if relevant).

Progress on the project should be recorded in the form of reports. Principal applicants are required to submit an annual report by 30 June each year throughout the course of their grant. In the first year of their award, grant holders do not need to submit an annual report if the start date for the grant was between January and June of that year. For awards which started from 1 July onwards, an annual report must be submitted by the last day of June of the following year. Each report should contain a predicted end date for the project and indicate what progress has been made towards this.

It is the SFB's policy not to grant new awards to any applicant whose final report from a previously funded project is still outstanding after the twelve-month deadline.

Video presentations

When returning the Agreement, The College reserves the right to request a short video at the start and the end of the Project from the grant holder which may be used as promotional material. Guidance on what to include in the video will be provided upon The Colleges request for the video. We will be using these videos to promote funded awards through the College website and social media.

SFB Board Members

Professor Sophie Park (Chair)

Professor Helen Atherton (Vice Chair)

Dr Steve Mowle

Dr Munro Stewart

Professor Rupert Payne

Professor Carolyn Chew-Graham

Dr Nicholas Thomas

Dr Julia Hiscock

Dr Mark Lown

Dr Kathryn Hughes

Dr James Prior

Dr Sarah Tonkin-Crine

Dr Rachel Johnson

Dr Patricia Schartau

Dr Jessica Watson

Dr Hajira Dambha-Miller

Dr Helen Cramer

University of Oxford

University of Southampton

RCGP Treasurer

RCGP Vice-Chair of Policy and Research

University of Exeter and SAPC

Keele University and SAPC

RCGP Clinical Lead for Research

Bangor University

University of Southampton

University of Cardiff

Keele University

University of Oxford

University of Bristol

University College London

University of Bristol

University of Southampton

University of Bristol



Royal College of General Practitioners
30 Euston Square, London, NW1 2FB

RCGP is a registered charity in England & Wales (No. 223106) and Scotland
(No.SC040430)