Blood cancer UK

Project Grant Guidance for Applicants

Introduction

We're here to beat blood cancer - Blood Cancer UK is the UK's largest dedicated blood cancer research charity. We're a community dedicated to beating blood cancer by funding research and supporting those affected. Since 1960, we've invested over £500 million in blood cancer research, transforming treatments and saving lives.

Survival rates for blood cancer have risen faster than those for other types of cancer as a result of breakthroughs funded by us and others. But there is more to do as 15,000 people in the UK still die of blood cancer every year and there are many more who are counted as "surviving" but still die before their time, either because of their cancer or from the effects of their treatment.

Blood Cancer UK's research strategy focuses on accelerating progress towards the day when no one dies of blood cancer or its treatments. We are looking to maximise our research impact by increasing the amount we spend on research and by targeting that spend in the areas where it will have the most impact. Our research strategy sets out the three areas of focus: Prevention, Early detection and predicting outcomes, and Treatment.

For this open, response-mode project grant scheme, we invite research proposals addressing novel research questions focused on any form of blood cancer or precursor condition that could help to move us closer to reaching our goal of bringing forward the day when no one dies either of blood cancer or the side effects of its treatments.

Additional funding opportunity for projects focused on RUNX1

In addition to the standard Project Grants funded through this round we are working in partnership with the *RUNX1* Research Program to co-fund one project addressing a specific unmet need: preventing the progression from germline *RUNX1* deficiency to hematologic malignancies in individuals with ***RUNX1*** **familial platelet disorder** (*RUNX1*-FPD).

Applicants interested in this specific opportunity can find the full call for applications and detailed remit information in Appendix One of this document. Applications to this additional opportunity will still need to meet all the standard remit and eligibility criteria set out below and applications will be assessed on the same timeline as all other applications to the call.

Timelines

- Call opens: **Thursday 29th October 2026**
- Deadline for submission: **3pm on Thursday 21st January 2027**
- Applicants notified of outcomes: **July 2027**

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Remit

- Project grants are awarded for up to £350,000, for up to three years.
- Project grants provide support for clearly defined research projects that aim to address key questions in the field of blood cancers in line with our strategic aims.
- Applicants must clearly outline the potential impact for people affected by blood cancer.
- Project grants are primarily designed to support discovery and pre-clinical translational research. Small scale clinical studies can be included where justified and feasible within the funding and timeframe available, but applications requesting funding for clinical trials will not be considered through this grant scheme.

  Project grants are also **NOT** designed for:
  - supplementing or making up shortfalls in funding for ongoing research or staff funded by other awards.
  - bridging support between other grants.
  - biobank funding or other infrastructure costs.

Eligibility

- Individuals based at UK universities, hospitals or other recognised research institutions who are able to sign up to Blood Cancer UK's Terms and Conditions are eligible to apply.
- Applicants should have at minimum some postdoctoral research experience, or equivalent, and be scientists, clinicians or healthcare professionals.
- The main applicant should usually have a permanent or long-term rolling contract, with their salary paid by the host organisation for the duration of the award.
- Senior postdoctoral researchers and early career researchers who do not meet the criteria above can apply as the main applicant and include a request for their own salary support if required. However, applicants in this category must include either a co-applicant with tenure based at their host organisation, or a written guarantee from their Head of Department that they will be provided with the required space, facilities and organisational support for the duration of an award.
- Lead applicants with existing Blood Cancer UK project grants are only eligible to apply if there will be less than 12 months remaining on their existing project grant by the time awards are made in July 2027
- This scheme is not open to applicants employed by a commercial organisation.

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Assessment Criteria

Every application for this funding scheme will be reviewed by the Blood Cancer UK Research Funding Committee and by people affected by blood cancer, experts through lived experience. We regard the input from people affected by blood cancer to be a vital part of the review process. We strongly encourage applicants to involve patients in developing their application and, as a minimum, ask that someone affected by blood cancer is invited to review the plain English summary of the project to ensure this can be clearly understood by a lay audience. More details and support on patient involvement can be found on our website.

Assessment criteria used to make funding decisions will include:

- **Relevance and impact potential:** How relevant and timely are the research questions to people affected by blood cancer? Has the research got the potential to lead to a positive impact for patients and how significant is that impact?
- **Originality:** Is the work novel or is it already being undertaken elsewhere? Does the project clearly address a gap in current knowledge?
- **Proposed approach:** Is the research proposal clear and feasible with focused aims and objectives, underpinned by strong scientific reasoning? Is there an appropriate experimental plan and methodology in place to reach the stated aims and objectives? Are there are any barriers to achieving the objectives and have the applicants included plans to mitigate these?
- **Research Team:** Does the proposed research team have the track record and expertise required to achieve the aims of the project?
- **Resources requested**: Is the project achievable with the time, resources and budget requested? Are the funds requested essential for the work and do the importance and scientific potential of the research justify funding at this level?
- **Ethics and regulatory requirements:** Have the applicants clearly articulated how the project will adhere to the highest ethical standards? Is any inclusion of animal research or research involving human samples, data or participants ethically appropriate and fully justified? Have the applicants considered all the necessary regulatory approvals and are there any concerns about those being successfully received?
- **Patient and Public Involvement:** Have the applicants involved people affected by blood cancer in the development of this application and included appropriate plans for Patient and Public Involvement throughout the project itself?

The recommendations from our Research Funding Committee will be sent to our Board of Trustees, who will then make the final decision on which applications we fund. Notification of the outcome of applications will be made after consideration of the Board of Trustees. The Trustees decision is final and non-negotiable.

Online application system

All applications must be submitted via the **new Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal**. The portal is used for submission, peer review, award, and monitoring of all grant applications. Instructions for new users on how to log in and use the portal are provided on our website. Please follow these to complete and submit an application. The application can be stored and edited at any time prior to submission.

The application deadline is **3:00pm on the date advertised (see above)**. No applications will be accepted after the deadline.

Applicants must ensure that any co-applicants, co-investigators, collaborators and the nominated Head of Research Office and Department Head signatories can access the Grants Portal system and are available to provide the necessary input well in advance of the application deadline. For submission, applicants should also allow enough time before the deadline to ensure all the required approvals are obtained. Any issues may result in delays during the preparation and submission of your application.

For any enquiries about completing the application form or submitting your application, please contact funding@bloodcancer.org.uk

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Application Form Question Set

Proposal Summary

Title of Proposal: A concise title should be provided with abbreviations spelled out in full. Maximum 50 words.

Synopsis: The synopsis should be a scientific abstract of the proposed research. This should include the hypothesis and objectives as well as brief details of the methodology. Applicants should also outline the proposed outcomes and impact, and the benefits to people living with blood cancer. Maximum 200 words.

Host Institution: The name of the university, hospital trust or other organisation who will be responsible for administering the grant.

Proposed Start Date: Awarded grants are expected to be activated by the grant holder within three months from the start date indicated in the Grant Award Letter. Applicants should allow enough time to recruit staff members and to gain any required approvals. Your start data cannot be before 01/08/2027

Proposed Duration: The duration of the research in months. The duration should be between 12 to 36 months.

Previously submitted to Blood Cancer UK: Indicate whether the application is a new submission, continuation of a current or recently closed award, or a resubmission. For continuations or resubmissions you will be asked to provide the application number, title and application/award date.

Is your project associated with an existing or planned clinical trial? Indicate whether the application is associated with a clinical trial. If so, state the name of the trial and the EudraCT/ISRCTN numbers. If the trial is supported by Blood Cancer UK, then please also add the grant ref. no.

Plain English Section

This section is intended for a lay audience, and it is the main part of the application that lay reviewers from our Research Involvement Network are asked to review, although Blood Cancer UK will make the full application available to them.

You must ensure that answers to all questions in this section are written in plain English using non-technical language and avoiding unexplained acronyms and/or technical abbreviations.

We regard the contributions made by our patient reviewers as a vital part of the review process. You must involve a patient or member of the public in the review of your plain English section. We would be happy to connect you with a member of our Research Involvement Network if you need a patient to help you develop your application. Please get in touch with us via research@bloodcancer.org.uk if required.

RIN members will be asked to provide comments on:

- The relevance and potential impact of the research to them as someone affected by blood cancer.
- The clarity of the plain English section of the application (and whether they can understand what the project aims to achieve).
- Whether Patient and Public Involvement has been sufficiently considered where relevant, and if they have any feedback or additional considerations to share about improving the involvement of people affected by blood cancer.

Please note that the accessibility of this section will directly impact the likelihood of your application being recommended for funding as it is part of the scoring criteria used by the Research Involvement Network representatives.

For additional guidance on writing for a lay audience, please see the Resources for researchers page on our website.

Plain English Title: Provide a project title in non-technical language. Maximum 50 words.

Plain English Summary: Provide a lay summary of the proposed project for a non-specialist audience: For further information on writing a clear lay summary, please see the INVOLVE guidelines. Maximum 200 words.

Background, aims/objectives and project plan. In this section, please include:

- The background to this application. Is it a continuation of your existing or current research, or is it a new area?

- Why is this research needed? How many people in the UK are affected by the condition(s) and what treatment options are currently available?

- What are the aims/objectives of this research and what do you plan to do during this project?

  (1000 words max – please ensure sufficient detail on the aims and study plan)

Impact and Benefits:

What will the potential impact of this research be for the research area and for people affected by blood cancer? If successful, what are the next steps you would need to take to move your research towards impact for patients? Does your research have the potential to have a broader impact and relevance to other blood cancers or precursor conditions, in addition to the specific disease/s being studied? Maximum 500 words.

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) - Research Design
Describe how Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) has contributed to the design of this research and how their input has been incorporated. Please include details on the PPI representative(s)/group(s) involved in designing the research (please name them where possible) and whether the PPI representative(s)/group(s) involved in the design have lived experience of the condition/s under study. Maximum 500 words.

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) - Research Delivery & Dissemination
Describe how you will ensure ongoing PPI input in the delivery and dissemination of this research. Maximum 500 words.

How will you keep people informed about research progress and the final results?
This includes PPI contributors and the wider public. Maximum 300 words.

For further guidance, please visit our webpage written for researchers, Patient and Public Involvement in Research. If you do not have a patient representative who can assist you with development of your project or assist with writing and reviewing the plain English section, please contact Blood Cancer UK's Research Team on research@bloodcancer.org.uk at least 6 weeks ahead of the deadline for applications.

Scientific/Technical Sections

Answers to the rest of the questions on the form can be completed using scientific and technical language where required. However please bear in mind that your application will be assessed by both peer reviewers in your field of expertise, and by our wider Research Funding Committee. Please make sure your application is clear and accessible to this general expert audience.

Objectives

Please outline your main research objectives in this section. Up to five objectives can be included but note that the application form can only be validated if a minimum of two are given. Please include one objective per box and detail the key research questions you will seek to answer as part of this objective. Each objective has a word limit of 80 words. These will be used during the assessment of your application and, if your application is successful, in your annual report forms.

Project Details

Please outline the specific details of the project being proposed in this section.

Figures, tables and illustrations cannot be included in the text but can be submitted in the 'Proposal supporting documentation' section underneath and referenced in the text boxes.

Purpose and background: Outline the background and rationale behind the research and describe the gap in existing knowledge or unmet need the research is trying to address.

Please define the blood cancer(s) being studied and the patient population(s) that might benefit from the research. Please summarise the current knowledge that this project will build on and include as much preliminary data as possible. Maximum 1000 words.

This section should also include a summary of the main anticipated direct outcomes and impact of the proposed research and should highlight how the work aligns with the Blood Cancer UK strategy. Longer term impact should be included in the later question on impact potential and downstream plan.

Detailed plan of investigation: With reference to each grant objective:

- Describe the specific hypotheses, aims, experimental plan and methods you will use, including reference to supporting published and unpublished methods and results where relevant.
- Describe any key analyses that will be undertaken (detailed information on specific statistical analyses can be included in a later question).
- Outline the expected outputs of the project and their potential outcomes and impact for blood cancer research and people affected by blood cancer.
- Outline any key risks to delivering the research, and what steps will be put in place to help mitigate or resolve them.

If your proposed research involves the use of animals, please also include:

- The specific species and model you plan to use.
- The rationale behind your choice of model.
- Justification of the number and sex of animals used with reference to considerations outlined in the MESSAGE framework.

Maximum 2000 words

Applicants must attach a GANTT chart outlining a schedule for the completion of the work including objectives, milestones and key deliverables for the entire project period.

Please add a supporting document containing figures, diagrams or preliminary data to support your proposal. This should be combined into one document that should not exceed four A4 pages. Maximum 10 Mb attachment size.

Detail on Statistical Analyses: Provide a full description of statistical analyses to be used, including number of samples in each analysis, the associated level of statistical power, and any potential limitations or biases. This is particularly relevant for high volume data, animal research or clinical studies. Maximum 500 words.

Downstream plan and potential impact: What are the potential outcomes and impacts for people affected by blood cancer, both as a direct result of this project, and in the longer term. Please outline the realistic next steps that would be needed to drive the research toward real world impact for patients if this project were to be funded and successful. This can also include wider impact such as scientific and/or societal impact. Maximum 500 words.

Recommended and excluded reviewers: You are invited to input suggestions of UK and

international experts for Blood Cancer UK to consider approaching to give their views on your application. To avoid conflicts of interest, suggested reviewers should not be from the same research organisation as the applicants, co-applicants, co-investigators or collaborators, and should not have worked or published together in the last 5 years. You can also note any experts you would like us to refrain from approaching if possible, giving a clear justification for requesting their exclusion from the review process. We will take these recommendations into consideration, but please note that Blood Cancer UK reserves the right to seek review comments from appropriate experts in the field for all applications being considered for funding support.

Ethics

Please outline how you have considered the principles of diversity and inclusion into the design of any research involving humans and animals. For animal studies please consider NC3Rs guidance on including both sexes in your experiments and the MESSAGE framework. For clinical studies, please consider all aspects of diversity and inclusion as outlined in the NIHR INCLUDE guidance and MESSAGE framework. Maximum 300 words.

For projects involving the use of animals
All grant holders using animals must adhere to the Guidelines for the Welfare and Use of Animals in Cancer Research as set out by Workman et al, 2010 and implement the principles in the NC3Rs guidelines (including justification of species, details of power calculations and plans to minimise experimental bias).

Grant holders should make use of resources provided by NC3Rs including the online Experimental Design Assistant where appropriate and ensure that they plan to report *in vivo* studies in accordance with the ARRIVE guidelines as far as possible.

Do your proposals include procedures to be carried out on animals in the UK under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act? Please confirm whether or not your research proposal includes procedures to be carried out on animals in the UK as defined by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act.

Animal Species: Please select the animal species to be used from the list or select other and specify the species being used in the textbox provided.

Are any of these animals genetically modified? Please confirm if any of the animals will be genetically modified.

Have the relevant Home Office project and personal licences been obtained? Please confirm if the licences have been obtained or are pending. If they have been obtained, please confirm the licence number. If pending, please state the expected date.

If your project involves the use of animals, what would be the severity of the procedures as per the descriptions given in appendix G of Home Office guidance (p118)? Please select as appropriate and provide further details in subsequent boxes as prompted.

- Please provide details of any moderate or severe procedures. Maximum 250 words.
- Why is animal use necessary; are there any other possible approaches? Maximum 250 words.
- Why is the species/model to be used the most appropriate and what will be done to minimise any pain, suffering or distress? Maximum 250 words.
- Please justify the number of animals to be used per experiment including details of any sample size calculations and/or statistical advice sought. Maximum 250 words.

For further information, please go to the Guidance on the operation of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

Do your proposals involve the use of animals or animal tissue outside the UK? Please select the appropriate option and if yes provide details in the box provided. Maximum 1000 words.

For projects involving human tissue samples, stem cells, personal data, or clinical studies:

Human studies: Does the proposed research involve human tissue samples? Please confirm Y/N.

Does the work involve the use of any human stem cells? Please confirm and if yes, please select the appropriate human stem cell types.

Does the work involve the use of patient data? If yes, please provide details of the datasets you will apply to access and use (250 words max).

Have you obtained the required approvals for your research from the relevant ethical review and governance bodies? Please confirm Y/N/Pending/Not required

Please then respond to subsequent questions as appropriate:

Please provide a brief overview of the relevant approvals you have in place and the dates these approvals were received (100 words max.).

Please provide details of the approvals you have applied for and the dates you expect to receive the outcome of these applications (100 words max.).

Please provide details of the approvals you will need to apply for and the approximate dates these applications will be made (100 words max.).

Final approval letters: If available at this stage, please provide the final letters confirming approvals from the relevant bodies.

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References

Please attach a document detailing any references you have included in the other sections of the application form.

Up to 3 pages of A4 max; 10Mb per attachment

Existing Funding, Related Applications, Additional Support Requirements and IP

Related applications and current funding (500 words max.)
Please use this section to provide the following information, where applicable:

- If this application has been submitted elsewhere in the past year, detail the organisation and outcome of the submission.
- If this application is currently being submitted elsewhere, please add the organisation and the expected decision date.
- If your related research is currently being supported by another funding organisation, please provide the following details for each grant:
    - Funder name
    - Grant holder name(s)
    - Grant title
    - Total grant awarded (and how much you received)
    - Your role in the research
    - Grant start and end dates.
- Describe how the currently active grants listed above relate to this application.
- If there is active research in your research group/laboratory related to the topic of this application, please explain how this application fits within this broader research activity.
- If you receive additional core funding or support from the proposed Host Institution for the award, briefly describe the resources provided.

Partnering organisations & support from other sources summary
Please list the names of any organisations involved in the delivery of the proposed research and provide a brief description of their involvement.

Please provide a more detailed description of the support from other sources required to deliver the proposed research and of any aspects that will be contracted out to third parties.
Will funding and/or support from other organisations, core infrastructure and/or third-party contracting be required to deliver the proposed research? Provide details and confirm if funding, support and/or formal agreements are already in place or being applied for/negotiated.
Blood Cancer UK welcomes the involvement of commercial partners in the proposed research, where this is sufficiently detailed and justified. If your application involves commercial

partners, please provide strong justification why this project requires charitable funding and cannot not be undertaken as part of commercial R&D.
Maximum 750 words.

Letter(s) of support: Blood Cancer UK strongly encourages the inclusion of letters of support from partner/third party organisations involved in the delivery of significant elements of the proposed research where applicable.
If your application includes any collaboration with a commercial partner (for example the provision of free drug, equipment, or of an educational grant, or of partial funding for elements of the project), you must attach a letter of support from the partner demonstrating their support for the proposed research, outlining any contribution(s) to be made, and that they would be willing in principle to fulfil these contributions subject to funding being secured.

Intellectual Property

IP is defined as patents, copyright, trademarks, trade names, service marks, domain names copyrights, moral rights, rights in and to databases (including rights to prevent the extraction or re-utilisation of information from a database), design rights, topography rights and all rights or forms of protection of a similar nature or having equivalent or the similar effect to any of them which may subsist anywhere in the world, whether or not any of them are registered and including applications for registration of any of them.

Please use this section to provide the following information, where applicable:

- Do you have access to any required background IP? Please outline any third-party IP that you need to access for this project and how you plan to secure these rights to ensure Freedom to Operate.
- How will intellectual property be managed throughout the project?
- Is the proposed research likely to lead to patentable or otherwise commercially exploitable results?
- Have you spoken to your Technology Transfer Office (TTO) regarding the potential patentable or commercially exploitable results? Please include their contact details and a summary of the discussion. Maximum 500 words.

Finance & Costs

As a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities, Blood Cancer UK will only fund directly incurred costs and not the full economic costs of the research. We will not fund directly allocated costs or indirect costs.

Directly incurred costs include:

- Research staff
- Recurrent costs and costs directly attributable to the project
- Equipment specific to the needs of the research.

Staff members: Project grants can support full-time or part-time staff members. Full-time PhD students are not normally permitted to be members of staff on project grants. Eligible staff include postdoctoral research assistants, research assistants and technicians.

Salaries are expected to be costed by the host organisation's research office according to an applicable pay model. Add the following figures to each box in the salary section of the online form in The Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal: Basic Salary, National Insurance, Superannuation, London allowance (if applicable) and Inflation.

The Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal will add these costs up and insert a total figure. Please show the percentage figure used for the inflation addition and for the FTE in the relevant boxes. If your costing tool automatically adds inflation to the basic salary amount then add 0 to the inflation box, but please show the percentage figure used in your calculations in the justification for support section of the form.

Equipment: We assume that there is a basic level of laboratory equipment available for the research. Applicants can request essential equipment (including computing and software). Items of equipment greater than £10,000 must include a written quote.

Written confirmation is also required if an item of equipment is to be co-funded by the host organisation. The equipment must not be disposed of during the period of the grant without Blood Cancer UK's prior written approval.

Animals: Include all costs related to the use of animals including costs for purchase, maintenance and experimental procedures listed separately.

Recurrent costs: Details of recurrent costs should be detailed here and fully justified in the 'Justification for support' section of the application.

The following items are examples of common items included under recurrent costs:

Consumables: Please specify major items of consumables with accompanying details.

Access charges for use of specialist equipment can be applied for. A breakdown must be provided.

Travel: Travel for conferences to present research outputs directly from the award is an allowable cost for the staff member(s) employed on the grant. Costs include standard

travel, accommodation, and conference fees. Blood Cancer UK grant holders are expected to acknowledge Blood Cancer UK in all presentations and/or posters.

The maximum allowance for travel to conferences is up to £2,250 per eligible post over three years. Travel costs for conferences must be a separate budget line in the recurrent costs section.

Patient and Public Involvement costs:

Provide details of any reimbursement of expenses and/or involvement payments you have, or will, offer to people involved in your research. For further guidance, refer to the NIHR INVOLVE policy on payments and expenses for members of the public.

EDI related costs: Costs required for specific activities or initiatives needed to help ensure the research adheres to the principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Ineligible Costs

General

- Costs relating to staff recruitment and relocation costs
- Funding to provide maintenance and/or insurance of equipment
- Office stationery costs unless required for the project and justified
- Indemnity insurance
- Publication costs (award holders can apply for publication costs separately during the award)

Directly-allocated costs - shared costs, based on estimates and do not represent actual costs on a project-by-project basis, such as:

- Investigators: the time spent by the Main Applicant, Co-Applicants and Co-Investigators
- Estates
- Shared resources, such as administrative and clerical staff and equipment.

Indirect costs - necessary for underpinning research but cannot be allocated to individual projects, such as:

- Computing and information support
- Central services
- General maintenance and other infrastructure costs

Justification for support

Provide a detailed justification for the costs requested in the 'Finance & Costs' section.

State the roles of the staff member(s), co-applicants, co- investigators and collaborators and how these relate to the delivery of each objective. This should include the day-to-day management of the research. Maximum 1000 words.

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Lead Applicant

Please provide details for the proposed lead applicant or Principal Investigator (PI) of the research award.

The lead applicant has overall responsibility for the delivery and reporting of the grant and ensuring that the terms and conditions of the award are met.

The main applicant should usually have a permanent or long-term rolling contract, with their salary paid by the host organisation for the duration of the award.

Senior postdoctoral researchers and early career researchers who do not meet the criteria above can apply as the main applicant and include a request for their own salary support if required. However, applicants in this category must include either a co-applicant with tenure based at their host organisation, or a written guarantee from their Head of Department that they will be provided with the required space, facilities and organisational support for the duration of an award.

This section will be pre-populated with your name and contact details from the 'Profile' section of your Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal account. Please ensure that the details are accurate and up to date. To amend them, save and close the application and visit the 'Profile' section of your account on the Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal.

The **Education, Employment, Publications and Research Grants** sections will also be pre-populated with the information stored in your Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal profile. Please ensure that these details are accurate and up to date. To amend them, save and close the application and visit the 'Profile' section of your Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal record.

Career breaks

Have you taken a break from research or had any periods of part-time work? (300 words max). This could include periods of parental leave or long-term sick leave, or if you had caring responsibilities. You can also include any periods of time you were not able to work because of the COVID-19 pandemic. These will be taken into consideration when reviewing your track record. Please identify the specific periods of time here, but do not include any detailed reasons or sensitive personal information.

Research Outputs

Describe up to **10** of your most significant research outputs from the last ten years and how they are related to this project proposal. Examples of research outputs and contributions include, but are not limited to, authorship of peer reviewed original research articles (abstracts and literature reviews should not be included in this list), invited presentations at major conferences, authorship of pre-prints, development of datasets, software and research materials, involvement in the development of novel inventions, patents and commercial activity, development of new research partnerships, participation in regional, national or international committees/advisory bodies, receipt of research related awards, design and

delivery of high impact patient and public involvement activities or contributions to real world impact on patients. For peer reviewed publications ensure that your position as author and role is clear e.g., joint first or senior co-authorship. (500 words max.).

Additional Applicants

Including the details of a single lead applicant may be sufficient for Pilot Grants. However, if you wish to include additional individuals who will be involved in the project, the definitions and guidance around each role is outlined below. Independent early career researchers applying as the main applicant are advised to consider including a senior colleague as a co-investigator or collaborator. Postdoctoral researchers who are leading a project can be the Lead Applicant but must also include a Co-applicant with tenure based at their host organisation or have a guarantee from their Head of Department that they will be provided with space and facilities for the duration of an award.

Before you add any individuals in this section, they must first be invited to access the application using the 'invite user to register or share application button' in the top right-hand corner of the application form. You will be able to select individuals who already have a Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal account with us. Individuals who do not have an account with us will be asked to register and will be sent details via an automated email. Detailed guidance for new users on adding additional individuals to the grant is available from the Guidance for new users document on our website.

Please note that pre-populated details will be added to the form for each joint lead applicant, co-applicant and co-investigator. This includes Education, Employment, Publications and Grants. These are the details Blood Cancer UK have stored for each applicant so please ask each individual to ensure that these details are accurate. To amend them, each individual will need to visit the relevant sections in their 'Profile' on the Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal.

Joint Lead Applicants

A joint lead applicant is an investigator who will contribute equal time and intellectual input to the research as the lead applicant, who will have equal status on the grant, and equal overall responsibility for the delivery and reporting of the grant, as well as ensuring that the terms and conditions of the award are met.

Co-applicants

A co-applicant is an investigator who will contribute equal time and intellectual input to the project as the Lead Applicant, but who does not have overall responsibility for the delivery and reporting of the grant.

Co-investigator

A co-investigator is an investigator who will provide significant intellectual input, as well as overseeing some aspects of the experimental work.

Collaborators

A collaborator is an investigator who may provide reagents, advice or access to research materials, but won't be directly involved in the day-to-day work. A letter of support, stating their involvement and commitment to the project, must be attached where indicated.

Administrators and Signatories

Please add the relevant individuals who will undertake all the roles outlined below.

Before you add any individuals in this section, they must first be invited to access the application using the 'invite user to register or share application button' in the top right-hand corner of the application form. You will be able to select individuals who already have a Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal account with us. Individuals who do not have an account with us will be asked to register and will be sent details via an automated email. Detailed guidance for new users on adding additional individuals to the grant is available from the Guidance for new users document on our website.

The **pre-award administrator** is someone, in addition to the Head of Research Office equivalent or the Lead Applicant, who helps with certain parts of the application, e.g. finances or text. They will not be able to validate or submit the application (that can only be done by the Lead Applicant), and their role is only relevant during the pre-submission stage. The pre-award administrator should register on the Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal, but CV details are not required.

Adding a **post award administrator** is mandatory. Should your application be successful this is the person that will be the host institute's point of contact for the award documents and for the subsequent claims for payment. Post award administrators should register on the Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal, but CV details are not required.

The **Department Head and Head of Research Office** are required signatories for all applications. Both should have Blood Cancer UK Grants Portal accounts, but CV details are not necessary for these individuals. Once the application has been submitted by the Lead Applicant, the signatories will be asked to approve the application online. Detailed guidance for signatories is also available as part of the guidance document linked above.

Classifications

Target Blood Cancers
Please select each classification relevant to your application from the available list.

Target Population Age
Please select each classification relevant to your application from the available list.

Research Focus Areas
Please select up to four classifications relevant to your application from the Common Scientific Outline (CSO) classification system which groups cancer research grants into six broad areas of scientific focus. For further information on CSO classification system please refer to the International Cancer Research Partnership (ICRP) website.

Strategic Priority Alignment
Please indicate which of the charity's current research priorities are the main focus of your proposed research. You must tick at least one.

Attachment Summary

Mandatory:

- Proposal Supporting Documentation
- Gantt chart
- References
- Early career researchers applying as the lead applicant must include a letter of support for both them as an individual and for the project from the head of the lab or department in which they are working.

Strongly recommended if applicable:

- If appropriate, the final letter of approval from the Research Ethics Committee
- If appropriate, collaborator(s) letters of support
- If appropriate, written cost estimates for equipment
- If appropriate, any other relevant documents.

Submitting your application

To complete your application submission:

1. Once you are sure all questions have been completed correctly you can submit the application by navigating to the attachment summary page of the application and clicking the 'submit' button at the bottom of the page.
2. Your chosen signatories will then be automatically emailed simultaneously and must log in to approve submission of the application

3. The application is then submitted to Blood Cancer UK, and email confirmation is sent to the lead applicant.

It is only upon your institutional signatories' approval that the application is finally submitted to Blood Cancer UK so please ensure there is time to complete this step before the 3pm deadline.

By submitting the application, the Host Institution confirms that they can accept the terms and conditions of any Blood Cancer UK grant, and that space and facilities will be provided for the duration of an award.

Get in touch

If you need assistance at any point during the application process, please do get in touch with the Blood Cancer UK Research Office at research@bloodcancer.org.uk and one of the team will be more than happy to assist you.

APPENDIX 1. Remit details for the co-funded RUNX1 focused project grant

Defining the earliest origins of blood cancer in *RUNX1* familial platelet disorder

Background

The *RUNX1* Research Program (RRP) and Blood Cancer UK have partnered to support quality research addressing a significant unmet need: preventing the progression from germline *RUNX1* deficiency to hematologic malignancies in individuals with *RUNX1* familial platelet disorder (*RUNX1*-FPD).

Individuals who carry a germline *RUNX1* mutation face a markedly increased lifetime risk of blood cancer, yet only about half will progress to leukemia, and we cannot currently predict who will progress or when. Understanding the biological processes that unfold in the years and decades before overt malignancy is therefore central to our shared goal of developing rational approaches to early detection, risk stratification, and cancer prevention. All proposed projects submitted to this opportunity should be oriented toward advancing that goal.

Priority research areas

We are particularly interested in proposals that illuminate how germline *RUNX1* deficiency reshapes the earliest stages of haematopoietic evolution, before the onset of overt malignancy. Questions of high priority include, but are not limited to:

- Whether germline *RUNX1* deficiency alters the clonal architecture and dynamics of haematopoiesis, for example by producing a reduced or dysfunctional stem cell pool, progressive oligoclonality, replicative stress, or differential ageing across lineages, and whether such changes are present from early life or emerge over time.

- Whether *RUNX1* deficiency increases somatic mutation burden or gives rise to distinctive mutational processes, including whether it directly impairs DNA damage response and genome maintenance or whether the changes observed reflect chronic replicative demand.

- How clonal evolution proceeds over time in *RUNX1*-FPD, and how these processes relate to the transition from a stable premalignant state toward malignancy.

- How the biological features above might inform candidate biomarkers of malignant risk or define windows for early intervention.

Additional areas of interest

While the priority area above reflects our highest current interest, this is an open call, and we also welcome strong proposals addressing other important questions in *RUNX1*-FPD that advance our shared prevention mission. These include the role of inflammation and the immune system in disease progression; whether germline *RUNX1* deficiency directly impairs DNA damage response and genome maintenance, or whether the mutational processes observed arise secondarily from chronic replicative demand; the determinants of clonal selection in *RUNX1*-FPD, including which acquired mutations drive, or conversely restrain, the expansion of adaptive clones; functional characterisation of *RUNX1* variants; and mechanistic or translational work that advances early detection, risk stratification, or future gene correction strategies.

We encourage

- High-impact research that is unlikely to be performed without the support of this award.
- Studies using primary human *RUNX1*-FPD samples, supported by a clear and feasible plan for sample access.
- Rigorous, high-resolution approaches well matched to the biological question, capable of characterising clonal architecture, somatic evolution, or mutational processes in *RUNX1*-FPD.
- Longitudinal study designs that can capture clonal dynamics over time.
- Collaborations that bring together complementary UK and international expertise.
- Proposals addressing promising, innovative directions not yet funded by other agencies.

Equal consideration will be given to junior and senior investigators.