Cardiomyopathy UK
the heart muscle charity

Catalyst grants - guidance for applicants

Purpose and scope

- We will only fund projects that directly address our strategy and research priorities.
- Our catalyst grants are intended for researchers to test new ideas, develop proof-of-concept studies or gather data that could help them attract further investment from other sources.
- Applications are invited for grants of up to 24 months and for a maximum of £25,000.
- Catalyst grants are not to be used to top-up existing grants.

Eligibility

- Applicants should read our catalyst grant terms and conditions before completing the application form.
- Grants are tenable at a UK university, research institution or NHS trust.
- Principal applicants should hold employment contracts with the host institution that extend beyond the period of the grant.
- Applicants can be at any stage of their research career and/or be new to cardiomyopathy research.
- No more than one application can be submitted by a principal investigator per application round.
- We welcome applications from researchers working across all fields of cardiomyopathy research, including allied healthcare professionals.
- We actively encourage people from all sections of the community to apply for grants, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.

Application procedure

- Email research@cardiomyopathy.org to request an application form.
- Application deadlines and timelines are listed on our website.
- All applications must be written in English.
- Applications and accompanying documents must be sent to research@cardiomyopathy.org by the deadline. Applications received after this date will not be accepted.
- Applicants will receive an email confirmation once an application is received. Unless the charity requires further information there will be no further correspondence until the results are notified.

Costing the application

- Applicants must justify the funds requested.
- Applicants should seek the advice of their institution's finance or research office on costing the application well in advance of the application deadline.
- In line with the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) guidance, Cardiomyopathy UK will only reimburse direct research costs. The charity will not fund directly allocated or indirect costs:
    - Allowable costs
        - **Directly incurred costs** are costs that would only be incurred if the project were to go ahead. They include salaries for staff dedicated to the project, consumables, animals etc.

    - Non-allowable costs
        - **Directly allocated costs** are costs of resources used by a project that are shared by other activities and based on estimates (e.g. principal and co-applicant costs, estates costs).
        - **Indirect costs** are non-specific costs charged by host institutions across all projects that are based on estimates (e.g. HR and finance services, library costs).
- **Staff costs**: Basic salary should be stated for each individual. Provision for London weighting, superannuation and National Insurance should be shown separately in the space provided. An appropriate grading and salary must be quoted even where a named person is not specified. Both grading and salary should have the approval of the appropriate administrative officer of the institution.
- **Research expenses**: Details must be given. Grants do not cover administrative expenses, costs involved in attending conferences or publishing costs.
- **Animals**: The species, number and unit cost of all animals must be shown.
- **Inflationary rate**: Inflation will not be paid in year one; inflation in year two is allowable up to 3%.

Review procedure

- As an introductory member of the AMRC, Cardiomyopathy UK abides by and applies the AMRC principals of expert review to our processes of awarding research funding. All applications will be reviewed by members of our Research Grants Committee (RGC) and external reviewers as required.
- Applications which involve non-human primates, cats, dogs or equines will be sent for additional review by the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs).
- Applications will be considered by our RGC at an online meeting against the following criteria:
    - potential impact of the research for people affected by cardiomyopathy
    - quality of the proposal
    - quality of the researcher and team
    - value for money
    - budget and infrastructure
    - if the proposed research involves participants, whether people would be likely to take part
- The RGC's recommendations will be submitted to the charity's board of trustees for approval.

Unsuccessful applications

- Edited comments from the combined reports of our expert reviewers will be made available to unsuccessful applicants. There will be no further discussion with Cardiomyopathy UK staff or reviewers.

Cardiomyopathy UK
the heart muscle charity

Writing an application for a catalyst grant

We will only fund the best quality research that will benefit people affected by cardiomyopathy. Below are some tips when writing your catalyst grant application to give you the best chance of success.

Make a good impression

- Read the Cardiomyopathy UK catalyst grant terms and conditions – make sure your requests are allowable by Cardiomyopathy UK.
- Ensure figures make sense and are correctly referenced in the text.
- Make sure everything in your research proposal is correctly referenced.
- We suggest you ask at least one independent person to proofread your application.

Write a good plain English summary

- Our experts by experience bring the unique and valuable perspective of people affected by cardiomyopathy into the funding decisions made by Cardiomyopathy UK. This ensures that their priorities are reflected in our research.
- Researchers may not have personal experience of cardiomyopathy and therefore may not consider some of the issues that are highlighted by people affected by the condition. This is why the input of our experts by experience is so important. Applicants are similarly encouraged to seek the views of people affected by cardiomyopathy as part of their submission process.
- Our experts by experience may have considerable personal experience but little specialised research knowledge, so it is important that you think carefully about your reader when writing your plain English summary.
    - Avoid using jargon, abbreviations and technical terms wherever possible – if you have to use them provide a clear explanation.
    - Avoid complicated language or uncommon words.
    - Use active not passive phrases, for example say ‘we will do it’ rather than ‘it will be done by us’.
    - Keep sentences short - try not to use more than 20 words per sentence.
    - Plan the order and structure of your summary.
    - Break up the text, for example using bulleted lists or headings.
    - Use online tools to check the readability of your summary, and assess your language reading age.
    - Ask someone without a research background to read your draft and advise if anything is unclear.
    - If your study involves participants, ensure you have included details of what will be involved for them and how they will be supported.
    - Be realistic about any likely benefits which could arise from the research for people affected by cardiomyopathy and give realistic timescales.
- See NIHR guidance on plain English summaries for more information.

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

- We want to ensure the voices of people affected by cardiomyopathy are at the heart of research, and that research represents their diverse experiences. As such we encourage PPI and EDI. For more information see:
    - NIHR briefing notes for researchers - public involvement in NHS, health and social care research
    - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Science and Health – practical tools and guidance

Cardiomyopathy UK
the heart muscle charity

Clearly demonstrate how your research relates to cardiomyopathy

- Cardiomyopathy UK only supports research into cardiomyopathy. We want to fund research that has the greatest chance of improving the lives of people affected by the condition.
- Applications at the basic science stage must clearly demonstrate how the research relates to cardiomyopathy and how it could provide valuable insights for future research.
- Our expert reviewers have a lot of knowledge of cardiomyopathy and expect applicants to demonstrate a good understanding of the condition. Applicants whose expertise and publication record primarily relates to another field should seek to collaborate with relevant experts in cardiomyopathy and people affected by cardiomyopathy where necessary.

Ensure your research proposal is clear and logical

- Make sure your hypotheses are clear and are reflected in the methodology.
- Show how the experiments and stages of proposed research relate to each other.
- Give clear information on what the outcome measures will be.
- Identify and address any potential challenges – what will you do if your first proposed experiment doesn't result in the outcome you expected? Or if you have challenges with recruitment or retention of participants?
- Provide sufficient detail on the experiments and how they will be carried out to show your understanding of what you're doing.
- Give realistic sample sizes and power calculations based on evidence.
- Clearly describe the future benefits and timescales of practical changes that could result from the research.
- Ensure your application includes details of how the results of your research will be shared.

If you have any questions about our catalyst grants or the application process, please contact research@cardiomyopathy.org.