WIN Seed Grants

Call for Applications

September 2023

The Wellcome Centre for Integrative Neuroimaging, together with the Oxford Health NIHR BRC Brain Technologies theme, invites proposals for up to £15,000 of scan and research costs to support new research projects. We are particularly interested in proposals from early-career researchers (ECRs); projects using pre-clinical MRI, MEG or 7T human MRI; or projects with potential for clinical translation.

What kind of proposals are being considered?

Proposals should be for a specific research project. The proposed work will often build on the applicant's current research but could be a distinct line of enquiry or development, as long as it can be cmolpetd withn the timeframe. Collaborative elements, particularly new collaborations, and collaborations between ECRs, are encouraged. We also encourage projects aimed at generating pilot results for future (external) funding applications, with the proposal specifying the target funding scheme(s). We will not fund projects that are already well funded. While we will aim to accommodate study requirements, successful applicants may be asked to be flexible on the location of scanning to work around idle scanner time across different WIN facilities.

In addition, you can apply for funds to run Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) projects, either as a pilot to inform new research proposals or as part of a current research project.

A list of previously funded projects is available: [WIN Seed Grant Funded Projects.docx](#)

You need to identify how your project will fit within the priority areas within the scope of the WIN or BRC Brain Technology themes, including:

- Cross-species or cross-scale imaging
- Methods development or applications
- New markers for brain health
- Clinical translation within 5 years

Description of WIN themes can be found at
https://www.win.ox.ac.uk/about/vision/themes and the BRC Brain Technology
theme at https://oxfordhealthbrc.nihr.ac.uk/research/brain-technologies/

Am I eligible?

To be eligible, the named principal applicant must:

- Have a staff post at the University (including post-docs and core staff)[1].
- Hold a contract that extends to the end of the grant period[2].
- Not hold an existing, ongoing, WIN seed grant.

What costs are eligible?

Costs must represent direct expenses associated with the proposed research project.
The total value of awards may not exceed £12,000 for WIN access fees (human
MRI/MEG; preclinical MRI; IT fees) at standard rates, plus up to £3,000 of other costs.

Funds must be spent within 12 months of the start date. The start date can be delayed
by up to 3 months from the date of award. There will be a mid-point follow-up on
grant progress. Research costs that could clearly be covered by existing research funds
will not be considered, and as such applicants must justify why new funding is
necessary.

> All funds **must** be spent by 31st March 2025. There can be no exceptions.

Eligible costs:

- Equipment necessary for the proposed work.
- Travel or time reimbursement for participants.
- Scan fees or other access charges (e.g., cloud computing or microscopes).

Non-eligible costs:

- Salary support or student stipends.
- Personal computers.
- Travel for researchers.

How many awards will be made?

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[1] Current students must have handed in their doctoral thesis by the grant start date.

[2] Supervisors will be asked to verify that a contract is in place, or if the applicant is currently a student, that funds are in place for a post-doctoral position.

We expect to make 5-10 awards.

How will applications be assessed?

An internal review panel will consider all applications and select those to be funded. The panel will rate applications by the following criteria:

- Importance and novelty of the research question.
- Quality of scientific approach and feasibility of the project.
- Track record of the candidate, given their career stage.
- Impact on candidate's career trajectory and future funding.
- Need for seed funding to conduct the proposed research.
- Alignment to WIN/Brain technologies themes and strategic areas.
- Feasibility of completing the project within the time frame

To have the best chance of success, you should explicitly describe how your proposal satisfies these criteria. As we consider this scheme to be a valuable opportunity for ECRs to gain experience in grant writing, we may also consider the overall proposal quality.

Will this call be repeated?

At present there are no current plans to run this scheme again, but the WIN Management Board will consider this in the future.

Do I need to talk to my supervisor?

If you are not an independent PI, you should explicitly discuss potential applications with your supervisor or line manager, who will be asked to indicate their support. We expect the proposed project to exhibit some degree of independence from their portfolio, both in terms of research funding and vision.

How do I apply?

Complete the attached application form and requested attachments and email it to admin@win.ox.ac.uk by 4pm on 9th October 2023. Successful applicants will be notified by late October.