Application for an RNID Discovery Research Grant: Full Application

Please note that this a sample form provided for information only – the full application form must be completed and submitted through Flexi-Grant®

Page 1: Lead Applicant Information

Guidance
Please complete the lead applicant section below (this will be our main contact throughout the grant evaluation process and the project should it be funded).

Please note that you can only be named as the lead applicant on **ONE** preliminary application (you can be named as a co-applicant or collaborator on other applications).

For further guidance, please refer to the call and guidelines for the 2025 Discovery Research Grant.

Lead applicants should usually be PhD-qualified tenured or tenure-track research group leaders. Post-doctoral researchers with more than three years' postdoctoral research experience at the time of application are also eligible to apply for a grant as lead applicant. **They must name their group leader/head of department as a co-applicant and submit a letter of support from their host institution as part of the application.** The letter should confirm that the institution will host the project, if awarded, that the researcher is capable of running the project and will receive support to do so.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory and must be answered.

Questions

***Lead applicant information**
Your contact details have been added to the table below as you have entered these previously. Please check the contact details associated with this application are accurate. Please note that you can only be named as the lead applicant on ONE full application (you can be named as a co-applicant or collaborator on other applications).

***Host organisation**
Please ensure that the host institution that will be responsible for approving submission of your application and the administration of any award is the one that is shown in this table.

If you organisation is not available within the searchable list, please contact research@rnid.org.uk to request for it to be added to the list.

***Department**
Please provide the name of the department which will accommodate the project if awarded.

***Hours per week**
Please detail the number of hours per week you will devote personally to this project.

***Proposed start date**
The project start date must be between 1 April 2026 and September 30 2026.

***Project end date**
Please select your expected project end date – projects can run for up to 3 years.

***Are you a post-doctoral researcher who is not yet independently established?**
(Yes/no)

If the answer to the above question is Yes, please upload a letter of support from your institution.
The letter should confirm that your institution will host the project, if funding is awarded, and that the researcher is capable of running the project and will receive all necessary support to do so. (File upload option, acceptable file types: .docx, .doc, .pdf)

Page 2: Collaborators

Guidance
On this page, you should enter details of the contributions of any **collaborators** on your grant application.

You are required to provide, for each named collaborator, either an email from the collaborator (with full message headers), or a scanned letter of support from them (which must be on their institutional headed paper). It should be signed (if a letter), dated within the last three months, and must include details of their contribution to the project and reference the application by grant round and title.

Please select no and proceed to page 3 if you do not have any collaborators.

Questions marked with an asterisk are mandatory and must be answered.

Questions

***Are collaborators involved?**
Yes/No

Collaborators are individuals whose contribution is critical to the success of the project but who will not receive funding from this grant. Their involvement should be limited to supplying strains or reagents, expertise or advice in a particular experimental technique or area of science or providing other specific but limited input.

Individuals who are responsible for delivering any part of the grant-funded work, and may receive some of the grant funding, should be listed as co-applicants via the Participants tab, accessible from your application Summary page.

You can provide details for up to five collaborators within your application.

If Yes:

Collaborator details: *Please provide the following details for each collaborator: full name with title, email, position and institution.*

You are required to provide a letter or email of support for each named collaborator, detailing the contribution that they will make to the project, if funded. (File upload option, acceptable file types: .docx, .doc, .pdf)

Page 3: Project Details

Guidance
On this page you will enter information relating to your research project.

Projects must be defined pieces of research with clearly stated objectives, experimental plan and expected outcomes. Applications to cover solely, or mainly, equipment costs, will not be accepted.

Questions marked with an asterisk are mandatory and must be answered.

Questions

***Project title**
(50 words max)
Provide the full title of your proposed project.

***Project area**
Select the area of the call into which your research proposal falls. If you feel that your project fits more than one area of the call, please select the area which is most relevant.

Select one of the following:

- *Research to underpin the development of treatments for hearing disorders, including tinnitus*

- *Research to improve how new treatments for hearing loss and tinnitus are developed and tested*

***Lay summary**

(500 words max) Describe the proposed research in simple terms in a way that could be publicised to a general audience. This should include details of:

1. *background and need for the research*
2. *aim of the project*
3. *an outline of the research methods; and*
4. *how people with hearing loss or tinnitus will benefit from the research.*

Please be advised that if your project is selected for funding, the lay summary you provide may be used publicly on our website as a description of the project and may also be used for fundraising purposes. As such, please do not include any confidential information.

You must also ensure that the lay summary is written in language which can be easily understood by a non-scientist – if it is not, your application may be returned to you to re-write it.

***What is your research question?**

(100 words max)

***What are the expected short-term outcomes of this project?**

(250 words max)

- *What are you expecting to achieve by the end of the project?*
- *What would be the next steps in moving the results towards benefit for people with hearing loss or tinnitus?*

***What is the expected long-term impact of this project?**

(250 words max)

- *How could your research make a difference to the lives of those affected by hearing loss or tinnitus in the long term?*
- *How do you envision your research impacting clinical practice and the way that people with hearing loss or tinnitus are diagnosed and/or treated?*

***Scientific abstract**

(300 words max)

Please provide a scientific summary of your proposed project. It is important that this summary contains sufficient information to provide a clear understanding of the overall vision of the project. The scientific abstract will be used by external reviewers to determine whether they have the expertise to review your application and therefore should NOT contain any confidential information.

***Research environment**

(400 words max)

Describe how the scientific or clinical environment(s) in which the research will be conducted will support the delivery of the research outcomes.

- *Provide details of the research environment in which the research will take place, including how the host institution will support the research.*
- *Explain how the research will benefit from facilities provided by the host institution.*

This will help us to assess whether the lead applicant and the project has access to appropriate support and resources, and that the host institution is the appropriate place for the research to be conducted.

***Research proposal**

*Upload a PDF document containing details of your research proposal, **in the order specified**:*

1. *A summary of the relevant background research. Detail relevant prior experimental/technical evidence and explain how these previous results underpin the proposed study.*
2. *Details of research methods and outcome measures*
3. *Evidence that outcomes are likely to be robust*
4. *An explicit timetable for each stage of the research project (a Gantt chart should be included as part of the proposal)*
5. *Details of any potential collaborators and the nature of the collaboration (this should include the contributions of both co-applicants and collaborators)*
6. *A plan for dissemination*
7. *A description of how clinical or commercial exploitation of results could be pursued*
8. *If the application is a resubmission, give details of how the project plan has been amended since the last submission*

The main proposal should be no more than 5,000 words (excluding references). Minimum font size 11pt, Arial or Times New Roman, single spaced.

Please ensure that the uploaded document is named according to this format: SurnameApplicant1_main proposal DRG25, e.g. Smith_main proposal DRG25
(file upload option, acceptable file type: .pdf)

***Is this a re-submission of a previous application to RNID?**

Yes/No

If Yes:

Please provide the application title, scheme and year of submission for each previous submission of this application.

Please provide the requested details.

Page 4 - Funding Requested

Guidance

On this page you will enter details of the budget for your proposed research project.

Please specify the type of funding ("items") requested and the anticipated cost for each year. You should provide a detailed explanation and justification of the requested costs in the 'Budget justification' section, including cross-referencing with your research proposal where appropriate.

Eligible costs

Staff

Research staff who will be employed specifically to work on the project. This can be any type of research staff e.g. post-doc, graduate research assistant, technician etc. **except for PhD students**. Please indicate the position, full-time equivalent (if less than 1) and salary pay point. You should request the total cost of each of these positions here and complete a row in the 'post and tenure' table for each position (see below). The budget justification must detail why a staff member of a specific level of experience is requested, referencing the experimental plan and the skill level needed. If a person is named, please explain why they were chosen.

Research consumables

These costs cover routine research consumables and reagents needed for the project. Examples include glassware, plasticware, tissue culture, molecular biology, immunohistochemistry, earphone inserts etc
Do not include unusual, high-cost, or non-consumable items in the consumables section – these should be listed in the 'Other' section.

Animal costs

Costs for the purchase, importation, housing and maintenance of animals can be included in your budget. Animal research licences/certification and training courses are **not** eligible costs.

Travel costs

Funds for conference attendance are eligible costs. The standard allowance for conference travel is £3,000 in total for each full-time researcher whose salary is paid by the grant. The funds can be allocated across the three years as you choose. Funds for other travel can also be requested e.g. visits to collaborating laboratories but this must be itemised separately to conference travel and justified in the main proposal.

Equipment costs

Funds can be requested for small pieces of specialist or unusual equipment that is essential for the project. This includes specialist computer equipment or

software that is required for the collection or analysis of data (the need for extra memory storage or processing power must be justified). Equipment should usually be purchased at the start of the project.

Other costs
Research costs for specific items or services can be requested here. These usually fall into three main categories:

- High-cost items or experiments, such as microarrays
- Fees for external or internal services, such as antibody production, DNA sequencing, the use of core equipment or statistical support
- Payments for volunteers taking part in the research project

Questions marked with an asterisk are mandatory and must be answered.

Questions

***Requested Funding**
The table has been pre-populated with items under each budget heading. Please edit each item subheading you use by clicking on the pencil icon.

You can remove unused rows using the Remove Item button and add additional rows using the Add a New Item button.

Funding will not exceed £75,000 in any given year and will not exceed £225,000 in total.

Please note that as a charity, it is our policy not to fund any indirect costs or the salaries of permanent employees.

***Budget justification**
(300 words max)
Please provide a detailed explanation and justification of the requested costs, and ensure it is cross-referenced with your Research Proposal.

Posts and tenure details
You can apply for salary funding for staff employed on fixed-term contracts to work specifically on the funded project (eg research fellow, data manager, research nurse etc).

Please provide details of all funded posts you are applying for by downloading the 'posts and tenures table' and then uploading a completed version.

You can add additional posts by adding a new line to the table.
(file download/upload option, acceptable file type: .xls, .xlsx)

Page 5: Other Support and Submissions

Guidance:
On this page you will provide information about other applications (planned or in progress) to support this project or work that is closely related to it.

Additionally, please tell us about any patents that your institution has filed, is in the process of filing, or is about to file, on the theme of this project.

If additional funding for this project has been secured or applied for, please provide us with full details, including the name of organisation you have applied to, the amount applied for, and whether the funds have already been allocated (or if not, the date of decision).

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory and must be answered.

Questions:

***Other support**
Is this or a similar application being, or likely to be, submitted to another organisation for funding (including by co-applicants)?
Yes/No

If Yes:

Organisation
Please provide the name of the organisation. If there are multiple organisations, please number each and do the same with the subsequent questions so the details for each match.
Date of decision
What is/was the expected date of decision? Enter a date in the following format (Month, YYYY)
Value of funding
What value of funding was (or will be) requested?

***Current funding**
Please list all current research funding held by the lead applicant. This should include:

- *All core support*
- *Research grants*
- *Collaborative programmes*
- *Start-up funding*
- *Funding that has been awarded but has not yet started*

We use this section to confirm that the research outlined in your application has not already been funded, and to gauge additional resources that are available to support the research.

Please add each instance of funding on a separate line, with the following format:

Name of main applicant on grant, grant funder/funding source, grant identifier/number (if applicable), grant title, grant value, dates of funding, role of applicant on grant

If you have no funding to report, please add N/A to the box.

Overlap or duplication of research
Please give details of how the research proposed in this application overlaps or duplicates research supported by the above funding or application(s). This should include how much overlap and in which area of the project.

Patents
Please give details of any patents you or your institution has filed, is in the process of filing, or is planning to file, on the theme of this proposal.

Page 6: Use of Animals in Research

Guidance:
On this page you will enter details of any animal work to be carried out as part of your proposed research project.

If this is not applicable to your project, please tick 'No' below and proceed to the next page.

All RNID project proposals must comply with the guidance Responsibility in the Use of Animals in Bioscience Research and with UK legislation (the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA), amended 2012).

Research conducted outside the UK must be carried out to a standard that is equivalent to that set out in UK legislation as well as being compliant with all local legislation and ethical review procedures.

You may find the following guidance useful when completing the questions in this section: the NC3Rs' Experimental Design Assistant and webinar on using both sexes in animal experiments.

N.B. If your application proposes the use of non-human primates, cats, dogs or equines, please let us know at research@rnid.org.uk before submitting your application, as a short annex of additional questions must be completed for proposals involving these species.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory and must be answered.

Questions:

***Does your project involve the use of animals or animal tissue?**
Yes/No

If Yes:

***What will be the severity of the procedures? (Please tick all that apply)**

Non-recovery: *Procedures which are performed entirely under general anaesthesia from which the animal shall not recover consciousness shall be classified as 'non-recovery'.*

Mild: *Procedures on animals as a result of which the animals are likely to experience short-term mild pain, suffering or distress, as well as procedures with no significant impairment of the well-being or general condition of the animals shall be classified as 'mild'.*

Moderate: *Procedures on animals as a result of which the animals are likely to experience short-term moderate pain, suffering or distress, or long-lasting mild pain, suffering or distress as well as procedures that are likely to cause moderate impairment of the well-being or general condition of the animals shall be classified as 'moderate'.*

Severe: *Procedures on animals as a result of which the animals are likely to experience severe pain, suffering or distress, or long-lasting moderate pain, suffering or distress as well as procedures that are likely to cause severe impairment of the well-being or general condition of the animals shall be classified as 'severe'.*

***Please provide details of any moderate or severe procedures.**
If your procedures are non-recovery or mild, enter N/A.

***Does your research involve work with genetically modified animals?**
Yes/No

***Has the research proposed in this application been approved by the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body at your institution?**
Yes/No

***Species, methods and sample size calculations**
(750 words max)
Please provide the following details:

a) *The species of animals to be used, justifying why this species is best for this project.*
b) *The total number of animals to be used, justifying this number, and providing details of any sample size calculations or any other statistical advice you have sought.*
c) *Describe the proposed sex balance of animals or samples/data relating to animals in your study. If you do not plan to involve both male and female animals (or samples/data from both male and female animals) in your project, explain why. If biological sex cannot be determined in your proposed experimental model (eg for some developmental biology studies), please briefly explain.*

d) *Why non-animal alternatives are not possible in this project, and how you have considered the principles of the three Rs (replacement, refinement, and reduction of the use of animals in research) when designing your experiments.*
e) *Methods of anaesthesia and/or euthanasia to be used.*

***Where will the animal work you are proposing take place?**
In the UK/Outside the UK

If outside the UK:

***For proposals involving the use of animals outside the UK, does the proposed research comply with the guidance "Responsibility in the Use of Animals in Bioscience Research"?**
Yes/No

***Please describe how animal welfare and animal research practices are monitored or inspected at your research institute to ensure compliance with all local and national regulations.**

***Does your research involve the use of rodents?**
Yes/No

If Yes:

***Please download the additional questions on the use of rodents overseas and upload a completed version.** (File download/upload option, acceptable file types: .docx, .doc, .pdf)

Page 7: Use of Human Patients and Tissue

Guidance:
On this page you will enter details of any work involving human volunteers or human tissue in your proposed research project.

If this is not applicable to your project, please tick 'No' below and proceed to the next page.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory and must be answered.

Questions

***Does your research involve work with human participants or human tissue?**
Yes/No

If Yes:

***Are the appropriate ethics approvals in place from the relevant authority in your country?**
Yes/No

If No:

***Ethical approval plan**
(200 words max)
Please give details of:

a. *Your plan for obtaining the necessary approval(s) to conduct your study*
b. *How you will ensure that this will fit within the project's timeframe*

***Please describe how you have taken factors such as age, sex, gender or ethnicity into account when designing your research project.**
(250 words max)
Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of characteristics which may be relevant.

If you have not taken these factors into account when designing your project, please explain why this doesn't apply or is not feasible for your study.

You may find the following guidance useful: INCLUDE guidance on improving inclusion of under-served groups in clinical research

***Please describe the proposed sex balance of human participants or samples/data relating to humans in your study.**
(250 words max)
If you do not plan to involve both male and female human participants (or samples/data from humans or animals) in your research, explain why.

Please note that this question refers to biological sex.

Page 8: Declaration

Guidance:
On this page you will confirm your commitment to the project and that the details provided in your application are a fair and accurate representation of the proposed project.

It is very important that all co-applicants and collaborators named on the application have read the Data Protection Statement and are happy to be included.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory and must be answered.

Questions

All tick boxes

***The application is complete, accurate and has been completed according to the guidance supplied with the application form.**

***I have read the Discovery Research Grant Scheme Call & Guidelines and, if the application is successful, agree to work closely with RNID staff as appropriate. As the lead scientific applicant I shall be actively engaged in and in day-to-day control of the project.**

***My Head of Department has read this application and confirms that, if granted, the work will be accommodated and administered in their department.**

***All necessary licences and approvals have been or are being sought.**

***I have read the Data Protection Statement about how RNID will use my personal data and give consent for my personal data to be used in this way, including for my data to be shared with reviewers outside the UK if necessary.**

***I confirm that all named co-applicants and collaborators have read the completed application form and have given their consent to be included in the application**.

***I confirm that all named collaborators have read the Data Protection Statement about how RNID will use their personal data and have indicated to me that they give consent for their personal data to be used in this way, including for their data to be shared with reviewers based outside the UK if necessary.**

Page 9: Administrative Authority Declaration

Please note: this page should be completed by an appropriate authority at your institution, not by the lead applicant.

Guidance:

On this page you will approve the submission of this application as the Administrative Authority, on behalf of the Host Institution.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory and must be answered.

Questions:
***Administrative Authority declaration**
[tick box to agree]

- *I confirm that the application has been submitted with the agreement and support of the Host Institution and, if awarded, the Host Institution will administer the grant which will be used only to support the work for which it was intended in the manner proposed.*
- *I confirm that I have read the Terms and Conditions on behalf of the Host Institution.*
- *I confirm that the Host Institution will endeavour to maintain support for the Head of Department's research team during the period of the grant.*
- *I also confirm there are no existing matters which would be a breach of any of the Terms and Conditions which have not been brought to your attention in writing.*

***Full name of administrative authority**

***Position**

***Email address**

***Telephone number**