Cancer Research UK: Enhancing your chance of success

The following tips have been shared at a Grants Academy *Funder Insights* sessions by Cancer Research UK Programme Managers from the Prevention and Population Research schemes.

Please also refer to the 'Grants Academy UKRI BBSRC/EPSRC/MRC Hints and Tips' document for generic information which is relevant to all grant applications.

BE STRATEGIC

- **What does CRUK want to fund?** CRUKs new research strategy will be launched in Spring 2022. Once published CRUK strongly recommended this is taken into account and the relevance to the CRUK strategy is explained in your bid;
- **Speak to CRUK early to make sure your ideas align with what they are looking for** – the CRUK programme managers are there to help and actively encourage UoA colleagues who are considering applying to contact them for early discussions;
- **Consider who will be reviewing your application –** you can find panel membership on the CRUK web pages. You may know a panel member you could speak to directly;
- **If you're not ready to submit - *DON'T!* -** waiting to the next deadline may improve your chance of success - CRUK do not allow resubmissions.

PATIENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT (PPI)

CRUK applications will be reviewed by a PPI panel as part of the funding decision process this is in addition to review by a scientific panel. The PPI panel's comments, as well as the scientific comments, will be reviewed by the CRUK funding panel**.** Patients and the public should be closely involved in the design, delivery and dissemination of your project where this will add value to the study. Where PPI is used effectively it can enhance the quality and relevance of your research. If you don't already have PPI links CRUK can sometimes assist if you get in touch early, please refer to the CRUK PPI toolkit or you can approach the SMMSN PPI group**.**

PRELIMINARY DATA

- **Does your pilot data justify your approach?** If it doesn't this will be spotted and is often cited as a reason for rejection. If necessary, delay your submission and focus on collection of further pilot data. Make use of internal sources of funding if appropriate.

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READ THE GUIDANCE

- **Read the current CRUK guidance documents** – you need to make sure you understand what the call is seeking and if you can match the expectations;
- **Where requested to do so please ensure you have contacted the CRUK Programme Manager in advance of submitting a proposal** – this is mandatory for some schemes.

CRUK & EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS (ECRs)

- **ECRs** can apply as lead applicants on CRUK project grant applications and request their salaries. CRUK recommend including appropriate mentor/support for less experienced PIs e.g. including a more senior co-applicant. ECRs/mid career researchers should consider their application in the context of the [CRUK competency framework](#).
- **ECRs can apply to observe CRUK committee meetings** – please contact a CRUK manager.

CRUK PROGRAMME MANAGERS' TIPS FOR A COMPETITIVE PROPOSAL:

- **Original and innovative research –** your research question must be valid and important
- **Proposals must fit the remit of the CRUK panel you are applying to** – have you checked this?
- **Communicate your vision for the project clearly -** proposals must be "hypothesis driven, with a line of sight to expected impacts and outcomes"; " explain where the research will go";
- **Preliminary data / previous studies** – strong supporting data is essential to demonstrate feasibility of your proposal and methods. Consider whether your pilot data is sufficient. If necessary consider applying to CRUK, internal or external funders for small grant funding to generate data that would to strengthen a larger proposal;
- **Statistical plan** – ensure any power calculations are adequately explained;
- **Research team** – demonstrate you have included the right research expertise required across the team in order to successfully deliver the project;
- **Value for money** – ensure costs are reasonable, proportionate and justified
- **Patient and Public Involvement** – has this been included in the project is this meaningful – make sure this adds value to your application.

Successful CRUK applicant case studies: [here](#)