The Academy of Medical Sciences

Springboard scheme – Guidance notes for completing the online application form: *Round 10*

This document guides you through submitting a full application for the Springboard funding scheme. All applications to the scheme must first undergo triage at an eligible Higher Education Institution (HEI). To gain access to the full application form, you will already have been successful in your institution's internal selection and will have received the link to the portal via email. Some points of guidance on completing the application are integrated into the form, whilst these notes are supplementary to those.

The Academy of Medical Sciences embraces the broad diversity of biomedical research and its non-clinical Fellows represent the breadth of the field. We encourage Springboard applicants from molecular, cellular and structural biology to anatomical, physiological, psychological, epidemiological and public health research areas. You may use experimental or theoretical approaches and be undertaking basic laboratory research through clinical application to healthcare delivery, but your work must reflect the Academy's vision of good health for all supported by the best research and evidence.

Springboard assessment criteria

The key assessment criteria that will be considered are in three areas:

- The applicant (your academic track record; potential benefit of the project to your career; clarity of plans for obtaining further funding; and your career aspirations)

- Research quality (the importance and relevance of the research question; quality and appropriateness of the research methodology; and degree of innovation)

- Research environment and support (quality of the research environment and availability of appropriate support; quality of Data Management and Sharing plans; and satisfactory statements of support from your Head of Department and Springboard Champion)

This scheme is targeted at those who have not yet obtained substantial research funding support from other sources, such as large research grants or large fellowships. The Selection Panel assess need alongside the above three criteria. Candidates in receipt of substantial funding (albeit still eligible) may be deemed not in the spirit of the scheme.

General guidance

Dates

Where dates are requested, you can provide a date to the nearest month by indicating the first day of the relevant month.

Electronic signatures ('Participants')

Before submitting your application, you need to have three accompanying declarations of support confirming the validity of the application. These declarations will be from your Head of Department, Springboard Champion and Finance Officer. To invite someone, simply select 'Participants' at the top of the application summary and click 'Invite' next

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to the corresponding name. These individuals will then receive an email, with a link, inviting them to complete the relevant declarations, and 'Submit' their section of the form. This invitation will expire after ~14 days.

Please note that all declarations must be completed before the applicant can submit the form.

File uploads

Files for upload - such as figures and tables, or collaborator letters of support - should be saved in .pdf format. Where a letter is requested, letters should be signed and on letter headed paper.

Word limits

Please note that the answers for certain questions have a maximum word limit. If text exceeding this length is copy/pasted into the space provided, the passage will be truncated accordingly.

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Application form guidance
Page 1: Contact information

On this page you will be asked to provide details for yourself and your host institution. Additionally, you will need to provide an ORCID iD number.

ORCID ID Number

We ask you to provide your ORCID iD (Open Researcher and Contributor identifier; http://orcid.org/). ORCID is an open, non-profit effort to create and maintain a registry of unique researcher identifiers and a transparent method of linking research activities and outputs to these identifiers. The ORCID Registry is available free of charge to researchers, who may obtain an ORCID iD, manage their record of activities, and search for others in the Registry. The Academy recognises the benefits of this effort and requires that applicants obtain an ORCID iD.

Please enter your ORCID ID using the following format: http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1825-0097.

Page 2: Current post

On this page you will be asked to provide details of your current post including start dates for your current position and clarification of your independence:

How does your current post differ from those you have previously held, and how does this demonstrate your research independence?

To be eligible for Springboard, you must be within five years (FTE) of your first appointment as a group leader. The aim of this question is to understand how this position differs from previous posts at post-doctoral level and determine your independence. You can answer the questions that the Academy uses to evaluate independence of your current position as follows:

1. Are you line-managed or supervised? We would expect the candidate to be line-managed in an independent position.
2. Do you have a salaried position? Is your salary derived from a grant in another PI's name? We would expect independent candidates to be in a salaried group-leader position (your first). Your salary should not be derived from another PI's funding.
3. Are you able to supervise students or other members of staff? We would expect candidates to be able to supervise/manage students and staff in an independent position.
4. Are you able to apply for funding as the PI? We would expect the candidate to be able to apply for funding in their own name in an independent position.

Applicants having already secured a promotion onto a second independent post are not eligible for the scheme (this does not include proleptic appointments). If you are in your second independent position but can prove that it was a side-ways step, and not a promotion please explain in this question.

If you are employed as a Research Fellow on a grant in the name of another PI, you cannot be considered to be fully independent.

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Researchers holding a clinical contract of any kind, including honorary contracts, are not eligible for the scheme – this is a non-clinical scheme. Clinically-qualified researchers who do not hold a clinical contract, and who would not take up such a contract during their award, are eligible.

Page 3: Financial support

On this page you will be asked to provide details of your current financial support, including the funders and your role on the associated grant.

You will be asked to complete two tables:

1. The <u>total funding</u> you have secured within your current post. This funding may expire before the Springboard award.

2. The funding available <u>during the award period only</u>. To be eligible for Springboard, you must not be in receipt of over £150,000 during this period excluding personal salary, overheads or indirect costs.

Total funding
Please list **all** research grants secured during your current post, starting with the most recent. Remember to include any funding which may end before the Springboard award start date. For each research grant you will need to provide the following information:

Name of grant holder	Awarding body (e.g. HEFCE, Wellcome Trust, institution, etc.)	Start date	End date	Total # months	Total amount awarded (excluding personal salary, overheads etc.)	% share of funding

This should include: start-up packages, staff salaries, PhD studentships including stipends and consumables, project grants, equipment grants, collaborative grants etc.

Please do not include: your personal salary, overheads, PhD student fees or indirect costs.

Funding available during the award period only

Please complete the table in this section including any research funding you have already secured that relates to the period from **1 March 2025 - 28 February 2027**.

This should include: start-up packages, staff salaries, PhD studentships including stipends and consumables, project grants, equipment grants, collaborative grants, etc. If

you are a co-investigator on an award or co-supervise a staff member/student, please only include your share of the funding in your calculations.

Please do not include: your personal salary, overheads, PhD student fees or indirect costs.

To calculate you funding secured over the two year Springboard project:

Total funding received excluding salary, overheads etc	*	% share of grant	*	Duration Springboard award overlaps with other grant (# of months) / other grant duration (# of months)	=	Funding value secured over two year springboard award

Page 4: Career history

Please use this page to provide an overview of your relevant qualifications, previous positions, research experience and publication record.

Publications arising from your research
In this section, you should list all research papers in peer-reviewed journals, reviews and contributions to books. You may list publications that are still in press or preprint publications. Please only include conference proceedings if these are considered a major output in your discipline (e.g. engineering).

Please use the below format when citing publications and use an asterisk (*) to highlight your name and do not use '*et al.*':

Bomken S*, Buechler L, Rehe K, Ponthan F, Elder A, Blair H, Bacon CM, Vormoor J, Heidenreich O. Lentiviral marking of patient-derived acute lymphoblastic leukaemia cells allows *in vivo* tracking of disease progression. Leukaemia 2013;27:718-721

Provide details of up to three of your publications, which you consider the most significant or relevant to the application.

In addition to using the format described in the above question when citing publications, please also provide a statement describing the contribution of each author in the study following the CRediT Taxonomy of author contributions. All of the authors listed on the paper should be mentioned in this section at least once.

This question is intended to promote thorough consideration of the content of a publication or other research output, rather than the impact factor of the journal it is published in. The scientific content of a paper is much more important than publication metrics or the identity of the journal in which it was published. This is your opportunity to highlight the impact that your papers have made on your field of research.

The Academy is a signatory of the San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA) and Panel members and peer reviewers are requested not to use journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factors as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles.

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Page 5: Research proposal

On this page you will be asked to give an outline of your proposed research area, research plan and any relevant collaboration.

Proposed project start date

You are required to enter a proposed project start date between 1 March 2025 and 1 September 2025. The Selection Panel will meet in mid-November 2024; the award letters are expected to be released by end of February 2025 following formal approval by the Academy and awardees are requested to start their project within six months of the issue of that letter.

Lay summary

Please provide a brief outline of your research proposal suitable for a lay reader. See our ten tips on [how to write a lay summary](#) on our website.

Research proposal

We are looking for a research proposal of high scientific merit and your application will be peer reviewed to assess this, as well as your research environment and your career plans. Please provide as much detail as possible to help us assess the quality of your proposal. See our tips on [how to write a successful grant application](#) on our website.

Please note that the detailed proposal word limit is 1,500 words, excluding references. You will have the opportunity to present preliminary data, including figures, tables and accompanying legends, in support of your proposal as a separate upload.

Preliminary data

You are specifically encouraged to present preliminary data in support of your proposal, if you have any. You are allowed to submit up to two pages of preliminary data. Please note: if guidelines are not adhered to your preliminary data may be removed from the application.

Impact of COVID-19

This question is to ensure applicants have an opportunity to inform reviewers and Panel members of the impact of COVID-19 to their:

- Research
- Publications
- Funding
- Research time
- Institutional support
- Other

There is a word limit of 500 words for this impact statement.

Reapplications

If this is your second application to the scheme, this is your opportunity to respond to peer review and/or Panel discussion comments made in your previous application and

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explain what changes you have made to the application. Please note that only one resubmission is permitted. A resubmission is classified as the second time that a candidate has been nominated by their HEI and submitted a full application to the Academy – where a candidate has previously applied to their HEI but not been nominated, this does not count towards their two opportunities to apply.

Application remit

In this round, a small number of awards will be available for research that falls within the remit of:
- Diabetes UK, i.e. diabetes-related research.
- BHF, i.e. cardiovascular and circulatory disease related research

Collaborations

In this question, you will need to provide letters of support from each collaborator of this project. The letter should be signed and on letter headed paper. Please note: if letters are not signed and on headed paper they may be removed from your application.

Career plans

The question aims to draw out your broader aims and objectives during the course of your Springboard funding and your ambitions for the future. Please detail any plans to seek further funding following this award.

Other grant applications

You can apply for funding from other funding bodies concurrently with Springboard applications, but the Academy must be informed of this at the time of application, where possible, or at the point of application to another funding body.

You should not be in receipt of more than £150,000 additional research funding over the two-year award period, excluding your personal salary, overheads and indirect costs.

If you receive any additional funding over the course of your application being reviewed, please update the office as this may affect your eligibility for the award.

Candidates who have already secured significant fellowships are not considered to be in the spirit of the scheme. Therefore, if you hold the following fellowships/awards or equivalent you will be deemed ineligible:

- Cancer Research UK (CRUK) Career Development Fellowship
- CRUK Career Establishment Award
- Medical Research Council (MRC) - Career Development Award
- MRC New Investigator Research Grant
- The Royal Society University Research Fellowship
- UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Future Leaders Fellowship
- Wellcome Trust Royal Society Sir Henry Dale Fellowship
- Wellcome Trust Seed Award

The Springboard Selection Panel consider the Person, the Project and the Place when making funding decisions. When evaluating the Person they will also assess the

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candidate's need and the difference the funding would make to their career. Therefore, these candidates, whilst they will still be assessed, may be deemed as not in the spirit of the scheme as their need is less significant when compared to other candidates. This should be carefully considered when submitting an application to the scheme.

If you are unsure about your eligibility, please contact the office to seek confirmation.

Page 6: Budget request

On this page you will need to detail the budget for your research grant application.

Budget
Springboard awards offer flexible funding at the value of £125,000 (minimum budget requested £50,000).
What can be included in the budget?

1. **Support staff**
   - PhD students (incl. stipends, tuition fees up to the value of home student rate, and consumables)
   - Postdoctoral staff
   - Technicians
   - Other staff
   - Publicity and hiring costs can be covered by the grant
2. **Technical support**
   - Facility access costs
   - Staff costs for those not in the PI's group e.g. facility staff
   - Any other fees associated with support, staff and/or facilities available to the group
3. **Consumables**
4. **Animals**
5. **Equipment**
6. **Publications**
7. **Training**
8. **Travel**

Items must be listed separately and **not grouped**. E.g. PhD Student 1 and PhD Student 2, **not** PhD students.

Please clearly distinguish costs for support staff from costs for technical support; technical support refers to already available staff/facilities within your institution. Where funds are requested for the employment of PhD students, the institution must commit to supporting the student past the two years of the Springboard award through institutional funds, if another source of funding is not made available to the award holder. Overheads are not covered by this scheme.

Where you are asked to justify your budget request, please clearly outline:

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- any unusually high costs or unusual budgetary items, giving a breakdown of what this funding will be used to purchase
- how any technical support requested will contribute to the research

Where support for staff or students is requested, you should clarify what their role will be in the project.

Where certain equipment, which is required to conduct the research, but is not to be funded through the Springboard award, please include details of who is providing it.

Successful applicants will be invited to attend an induction event at the Academy's central London offices in the summer following their successful application. Candidates are permitted to use the travel budget to cover any travel or accommodation costs required to attend this event.

Page 7: Animal use

If your proposal features the use of animals or animal tissue, you will need to explain why this is necessary and justify the choice of species and number of animals used.

Does your proposal involve the use of animals or animal tissue?

It is important for us to know if any animals will be used in your research project and, if so, that you comply with the Academy's Policy and Position on the use of animals in research. The Academy is committed to being open about when, how and why animals are used in the projects we fund. In addition, we aim to ensure that every effort is made to replace, refine and reduce animals in research. For more information, please see www.nc3rs.org.uk.

Applicants proposing to use animals in their research must ensure that the use of animals falls within the regulations stipulated in the UK Animals (Scientific Procedures Act) 1986 and subsequent amendments. Welfare standards consistent with the principles of UK legislation must be applied and maintained, wherever the work is conducted.

If your proposed research involves animal experiments, we encourage you to consult the NC3Rs Experimental Design Assistant (EDA) to help you design your study. This complements the ARRIVE guidelines (Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments) for reporting animal research. Our awardees are required to follow these guidelines when conducting research using animals to improve the design, analysis and reporting of animal research, maximising information published and minimising unnecessary studies. Further useful guidelines and practical information in the use of animals can also be obtained from the 3Rs resources library.

This section gives applicants the opportunity to explain the use of animals involved in their project proposals and measures in place to ensure openness about their use. Where non-human primates, cats, dogs or equines are used, anonymised information will be sent to the NC3Rs for review.

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Page 8: Human tissues and subjects

If your proposal features the use of human tissues or subjects, you will need to confirm that the study has been approved and enclose details of the approval.

Does your proposal involve the use of human tissue or subjects?
Research involving human participants is governed by principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki, the Nuremberg Code, and the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS), all of which set out requirements with regard to the rights and safety of research participants and standards for research design and conduct.

The Academy requires researchers to have the relevant regulatory and ethical approvals in place before the proposed research begins, although you may apply for funding before this. In the event of an award being made, commencement of any research involving human participants will be subject to these approvals being in place and confirmation of this being sent to the Academy.

Page 9: Outputs management and sharing

To maintain research integrity, institutions and researchers must ensure research outputs are preserved so that results can be verified and data reused in the future. The Academy expects all Springboard award holders to maximise the availability of research outputs. You should consider your approach for managing and sharing research outputs at the research proposal stage.

We do not have a set format for output management and sharing plans. You can structure your plan in a manner most appropriate to the proposed research. The information submitted in plans should focus specifically on how the outputs will be managed and shared, detailing the repositories where data will be deposited. However, in considering your approach for outputs management and sharing, you should consider the following questions as briefly and unambiguously as possible.

1. What outputs will your research generate and what outputs will have value to other researchers?

2. Where and when will you make the outputs available?

3. If the research output is of high public interest, how will it be made accessible not only for those in the same or linked field, but also to a wider public audience?

4. Specify whether any limits will be placed on the outputs to be shared, for example, for the purposes of safeguarding commercial interests, personal information, safety or security of the data.

5. How will data and metadata be stored, backed up and preserved, to ensure their long-term value?

6. What resources (to include financial and time) will you require to deliver your plan?

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7. Does your Institution have a data repository that is available to you?

Page 10: Marketing information

On this page we request marketing information from the applicant. This requested to help us monitor the effectiveness of our marketing activities. This information is not used in the application review process.

Page 11: Applicant declaration

In order to submit your application, you need to sign the declaration at the bottom of this page thereby confirming the validity of the application. Information that you have supplied within this form will be used to process your application and for the purposes of any audit and/or evaluation. Please read the undertakings on this page carefully and ensure that you fully understand the obligations you are agreeing to before signing the declaration.

Page 12-14: Supporting statements and declaration

In order to apply to Springboard, you must have been short-listed by your institution and have the support of your Head of Department and Springboard Champion. Their support and confirmation of your short-listing has to be demonstrated through the statements of support in this section.

Your **Head of Department**, **Springboard Champion** and **Finance Officer** will need to approve your application by signing the declaration on this page. The Finance Officer is required to provide a statement confirming that they have checked the finance details included in the application. They should confirm that the applicant's budget request and the funding the applicant is in receipt of is correct.

To invite these individuals to access the form, select 'Participants' on the application summary page and click 'Invite' next to the relevant role title. These individuals will then receive an email, with a link, inviting them to complete the relevant declarations, and 'Submit' their section of the form. Please note that all declarations much be completed before the application can be submitted.

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