The Academy _of_ Medical Sciences

Springboard scheme

Guidance notes for completing the online application form

A. Overview

This document guides you through submitting a full application for the Springboard funding scheme. To gain access to the full application form, you will already have:

- submitted an eligibility check form.
- been successful in your institution's internal selection.

Some notes on completing the form are integrated into the form in Flexigrant. This document is 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 equally 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 mission to improve human health through research.

Springboard assessment criteria

The key assessment criteria that will be considered (and will have equal weighting) are in three areas:

1. **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

2. **Research quality:** importance and relevance of the research question; quality and appropriateness of the research methodology; and degree of innovation

3. **Research environment and support:** quality of the research environment and availability of appropriate support; quality of Data Management and Sharing plans, where provided; and satisfactory statements of support from your Head of Department and Springboard Champion

General guidance

Eligibility form questions

Some questions on the full application form are copied from the eligibility form. Where possible, we have automatically pulled through your answers to those questions. Where necessary, the full application form invites you to complete them again (e.g. to give you the opportunity to include newly awarded grants).

Electronic signatures

Before submitting your application, you need to have three accompanying declarations confirming the validity of the application. These declarations will be from your Head of Department, Springboard Champion and Finance Officer. To invite someone, simply locate the relevant position within the 'Declarations' table and click 'Invite'.

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.

Dates

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

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 letterheaded paper.

Allow time for approvals

The application form requires declarations and supporting statements from senior staff at your institution, including the Springboard Champion. Please ensure that you allow enough time to secure these.

B. The full application form

Page 1: Contact information

Details provided in your eligibility check form will be automatically transferred to the corresponding questions in this page.

Additional questions:

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

Details provided in your eligibility check form will be automatically transferred to the corresponding questions in this page.

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 in 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 to draw out your independence.

For further information about eligibility, please refer to the Springboard FAQs document.

Page 3: Current financial support

Details provided in your eligibility check form will be automatically transferred to the corresponding questions in this page. Please amend this if your current financial information has changed, such as if you have received additional funds. You will be asked to indicate whether or not you have made any changes; this is for administrative processing.

There will be an additional opportunity, around two weeks prior to the panel, to provide an update on your secured funding.

Page 4: Career history

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

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 supporter 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.

Other research outputs

Pre-print articles in bioRxiv, or alternatives for other disciplines, can be included here.

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. Details provided in your eligibility check form will be automatically transferred to the corresponding questions in this page.

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 methodological detail as possible to help us assess the quality of your proposal.

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, which must be presented as tables and/or figures, with accompanying legends. No additional text is permitted.

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 letterheaded paper.

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 during the earliest possible period of the Springboard award (i.e. Feb 2019 to Jan 2021; roughly £75,000 p.a.) of additional research funding, excluding your personal salary. If you are applying for concurrent substantial funding from other organisations, you will be asked to choose between the two awards should you be successful in both applications (and if the substantial funding threshold is exceeded, or the research proposal is the same).

Page 6: 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.

The Academy of Medical Sciences is a signatory of the Concordat on Openness on Animal Research. We are 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.

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. If your proposed research involves animal experiments, we encourage you to consult the NC3Rs Experimental Design Assistant (EDA) to help you design your study. Where non-human primates, cats, dogs or equines are used, anonymised information will be sent to the NC3Rs for review.

Page 7: Human tissues and subjects

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

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 relevant 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 sent to the Academy.

Page 8: Data management and sharing

To maintain research integrity, institutions and researchers must ensure research data is preserved so that results can be verified and data reused in the future. The Academy expects all of its Springboard Grant award holders to maximise the availability of research data.

You should consider your approach for managing and sharing data at this research proposal stage. Particularly where the proposed research is likely to generate data outputs that will hold significant value as a resource for the wider research community (for example genome-wide sequencing data), you are required to submit a Data Management and Sharing plan to the Academy when submitting your application. The Academy will review those plans as a part of the funding decision.

We do not have a set format for Data Management and Sharing plans. You can structure your plan in a manner most appropriate to the proposed research. However, in considering your approach for data management and sharing, you should consider the following questions as briefly and unambiguously as possible.

1. What data outputs will your research generate and what data will have value to other researchers?
2. When will you share the data?
3. Where will you make the data available?
4. How will other researchers be able to access the data?
5. Are any limits to data sharing required - for example, to either safeguard research participants or to gain appropriate intellectual property protection?
6. How will you ensure that key datasets are preserved to ensure their long-term value?
7. What resources will you require to deliver your plan?
8. Does your Institution have a data repository that is available to you?

Page 9: Your budget request

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

Budget
Springboard awards offer flexible funding which can be used for support staff (PhD students, postdoctoral staff, technicians etc), technical support, laboratory consumables, equipment, animal costs, publications, training and travel. Please clearly distinguish costs for support staff from costs for technical support: technical support refers to already available staff/facilities within your institution (directly allocated costs), rather than hiring support staff specifically for this project (directly incurred costs). 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. Funds cannot be used to support your salary, or for indirect costs. Overheads are not covered by this scheme.

Where you are asked to justify your budget request, please explain any unusually high costs or unusual budgetary items, and 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.

Page 10: 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 application 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 11: Monitoring and marketing feedback

On this page we request monitoring information and feedback on our marketing. Please note that monitoring information will not be used in the application review process; it is not provided to Panel members or reviewers. We request this information to monitor the Academy's activities with respect to the beneficiaries of proposals and awards, and the

gender, ethnic origin and disability status of applicants. Marketing information is requested to help us monitor the effectiveness of our marketing activities. This information is also not used in the application review process.

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. You will not be able to submit your application without their approval. Each signatory will receive an invitation to sign this page once their details are entered into the 'Ongoing Declarations' table on the Application Summary page and 'Invite' is clicked.