

## Starter Grants for Clinical Lecturers - FAQs

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This document provides answers to frequently asked questions regarding all stages of the Starter Grants for Clinical Lecturers funding scheme. More information is provided in the Application Guidance notes, which are available from the Starter Grants webpage.

If you have any other questions about the scheme or would like to discuss your individual circumstances or project, please contact the Office at [clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk). Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the Office at the earliest opportunity, especially if they have any questions concerning their eligibility for the scheme.

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## 1. Eligibility

### 1.1. Who is eligible for the scheme?

A Starter Grant is intended as start-up funding and as such is not intended for applicants who have already obtained substantial funding through, for example, Clinician Scientist Fellowships, New Investigator Awards or large project grants. If in doubt, please contact the Office at [clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk).

All eligible applicants must:

1. Have a PhD or MD.
2. Hold a medical, dental or veterinary undergraduate degree and be registered with the General Medical Council, General Dental Council or Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.
3. Hold a clinical contract.

If you are a clinician in human or dental medicine, you must also:

1. Be a research-active clinical lecturer.
2. Hold an NTN or NTN(A).
3. Be within higher specialty training.
4. Have undertaken a substantial period of research equivalent to a PhD or MD, if you have qualified abroad.
5. Note the following eligibility criteria relating to the timing of your CCT:
  - If your CCT date will fall during the course of your proposed project, you must have secured protected research time for the whole duration of the project (including the part taking place post-CCT).
  - Clinical lectureships in Primary Care are awarded post-CCT and we welcome applications from this group. However, for all other specialties, candidates are not eligible to apply if they have already attained their CCT.

Senior Clinical Lecturers and Clinical Psychologists are not eligible for this scheme.

If you are a clinician in veterinary medicine, you must be either:

1. A research-active Veterinary Specialist in Training (Resident/Senior Clinical Training Scholar) within an approved Specialist Training Programme with secured and protected research time throughout the proposed project.

Or:

2. A research-active Veterinary Clinician or Veterinary Pathologist with Veterinary Specialist Board qualification or eligibility and within the three-year (probationary) period of your first University appointment and with secured and protected research time throughout the proposed project. If your position is that of a Senior Lecturer but are still within the three-year probationary period, then you are still eligible for this scheme.

**For veterinary applicants** - please note we are currently reviewing our eligibility criteria for veterinary applicants. We would encourage you to get in contact with the Office at [clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk) if you would like to discuss your eligibility to the scheme.

### **1.2. I have not yet been awarded my PhD, am I eligible for this round of the scheme?**

In order to be eligible, you must have done the following:

- **by the application deadline date:** have submitted your thesis, completed your viva and be in a position to provide written confirmation that only minor corrections are required, if any. However, if your viva date has been delayed due to institutional closures and the COVID-19 pandemic, we will consider applications from those who have submitted their thesis but are awaiting their viva which will be held **before** the panel date.
- **by the panel date:** have either been awarded your PhD or be in a position to provide written confirmation from your awarding institution that you have fulfilled all the criteria – including the submission and approval of any corrections - for the award of your PhD. The graduation ceremony can be pending.

### **1.3. I have not yet started my current position (human & dental medicine: clinical lectureship / veterinary medicine: relevant post as per the eligibility criteria), am I eligible for this round of the scheme?**

You must be in post by the date the panel meets to consider your application. The panel meetings occur in December and June each year. If necessary, please contact the Office at [clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk) to discuss your individual circumstances and confirm the date of the panel.

### **1.4. I am due to achieve my CCT during the course of the award, am I eligible?**

You may be eligible for a Starter Grant provided that you meet the following criteria:

- You must not have already obtained your CCT. With the exception of Clinical Lectureships in Primary Care and Dentistry, which are primarily awarded post-CCT, candidates from all other specialities are not eligible to apply if they have already attained their CCT.
- If your CCT date will fall during the course of your proposed project, you must have secured protected research time throughout the proposed project (including the part taking place post-CCT). You will be required to detail the plans that will be put in place to ensure that you are afforded sufficient research time post-CCT to complete your project. Your academic supervisor must be in a position to offer such reassurances. Please contact the Office ([clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk)) if you wish to discuss your eligibility to the scheme. More information is provided in the Application Guidance notes, which are available from the [Starter Grants webpage](#).

### **1.5. I have unsuccessfully applied for a Starter Grant previously, can I apply again?**

Unsuccessful applicants are allowed one re-application to the scheme. If this is your second application, you will have received feedback from your initial application and will have the opportunity to explain how your proposal differs from the previous one. For more information, please refer to the Application Guidance notes, which are available on the [Starter Grants webpage](#).

If you have already had two unsuccessful applications, it is not possible to re-apply to the scheme with a different project.

## **2. Application submission and format**

### **2.1. How do I apply for a Starter grant?**

To apply for a Starter Grant, you will need to submit an online application through the [Academy's Flexi-Grant system](#).

### **2.2. Who else needs to approve my application before I am able to submit?**

In order to submit your application, you need to have four declarations confirming the validity of the application. The required signatories are your Head of Department, Clinical Supervisor, Academic Supervisor and Finance Officer. You will not be able to submit your application without their approvals.

You will be able to invite them through the [Academy's Flexi-Grant](#), however we strongly recommend you contact them yourself **before** inviting them through the system. If they need further assistance, please prompt them to contact the Office at [clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk).

### **2.3 Do I need to send a hard copy in the post, in addition to the online copy?**

No, please do not send us a hard copy as we only accept online applications.

### **2.4. Do I need to submit anything other than the application form?**

No, unless you have not yet been awarded your PhD. In that case, you will need to have had your viva by the application deadline and send us an electronic copy of a letter confirming that only minor corrections, if any, are required to your thesis.

### **2.5. Will you confirm that you have received my application?**

You will receive an automatic confirmation of your submission through the Flexi-Grant system. We will endeavour to also get in touch with you soon after your submission, especially if we want to clarify any aspects of your application.

### **2.6. What can /cannot be included in the budget?**

The focus of this scheme is to support new and directly incurred research costs such as consumables, access charges, access to data sets, essential software and licences, and equipment. Modest allocation for equipment may be considered by the panel, but large amounts will raise questions from the panel and should be well justified within the application form.

The grant cannot cover your personal salary nor the salary of research assistants, PhD students or postdoctoral staff. However, funds can be used to cover the cost of necessary technical support that is already available through your institution. For more information, please refer to the Application Guidance notes on the [Starter Grants webpage](#) or contact the Office via [clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk) to discuss your specific circumstances.

### **3. Selection process, decision, and feedback**

#### **3.1. What does the selection process involve?**

Once the application deadline passes,

- (1) applications are checked by the Office for eligibility – you may be contacted by the Office soon after the application deadline to discuss certain aspects of your application that might be unclear;
- (2) applications are peer-reviewed by Fellows of the Academy of Medical Sciences and other experts in your field;
- (3) applications and reviews are considered by the selection panel, comprising Fellows of the Academy of Medical Sciences.

There is no interview stage.

#### **3.2. Who sits on the selection panel?**

The current panel membership is listed under the 'Selection Panel' tab on the [Starter Grants webpage](#). Applicants should not approach panel members to discuss their application; if you have any questions, please contact the Office via [clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk).

#### **3.3. When will I be informed of the outcome of my application?**

You will receive notification of the outcome of your application within two months of the panel meetings, which occur in December and June each year.

#### **3.4. Will I be informed if my application is unsuccessful?**

Yes – all applicants are informed of the outcome of their application and receive anonymised feedback from the reviewers and the selection panel.

### **4. Post-award:**

#### **4.1. How soon after the funding decision is made will I be able to start?**

If successful, the earliest you can start your award is approximately one month after the decision has been communicated to you. Please also note that the length of time will depend on how quickly you return the necessary forms to the Office. Your project start date must occur within six months of the award offer. Award letters are normally issued within two months of the panel meeting.

#### **4.2. Is it possible for me to make changes to my project after the grant has started?**

Starter Grants must be used for the purpose for which they have been awarded. However, we understand that sometimes changes to your experimental plan, supervisory arrangements, etc., are unavoidable. For this reason, you may apply for amendments to your research project such as changes to your host institution, supervisory arrangements, and budget. Please contact the Office, via

[clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk) to discuss any potential amendments **in advance** of the change, ideally one month before the change occurs. Amendment requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

#### **4.3. My grant is due to expire before I have completed my project and there are funds remaining, can it be extended?**

It is possible to apply for a no-cost, time-only extension to a Starter Grant award. These applications are considered on a case-by-case basis for circumstances including, but not limited to, part-time working, sick leave and parental leave, in addition to delays in accessing materials, equipment, samples or obtaining ethical approval. Please contact the Office, via [clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk), at least one month before the original end date of your grant to discuss your request.

#### **4.4. When and how must I report on my Starter Grant award?**

Starter Grant holders are required to report their research outputs annually by 31<sup>st</sup> March via [Researchfish](#), and to submit a Final Expenditure Report via the [Academy's Flexi-Grant](#) system within three months following the end of their award. We ask award holders to continue to report to us for up to five years after the end of their award, so that we can capture longer-term outputs.

### **Contact Information**

Enquiries about this scheme can be made by email: [clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk](mailto:clinicallecturers@acmedsci.ac.uk).

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