



Non-clinical PhD training awards

Guidelines

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1. Introduction

We're committed to developing the next generation of researchers by providing a world-class, supportive, flexible training environment that is essential for developing a successful academic career. We therefore expect our funded students to receive exceptional, high quality training packages as described in our [Expectations for PhD Training](#).

We fund non-clinical doctoral training through our Centre Training Awards (CTA). A CTA grant is an award paid by us to a research organisation for the provision of postgraduate study. Much of the detailed management of training funding, such as review of projects, selection of students and the financial management of the grant is devolved to centre leadership, including training leads, supported by centre governance boards. These guidelines are intended to support programme and training leads in managing the CTA and should be used alongside the Expectations for PhD training. All CTA grants are subject to our [Grant Conditions](#), [Special conditions for Cancer Research UK's centres](#) and [Expectations for PhD Training](#).

Acceptance of a Centre Training Award constitutes acceptance of both the conditions and these guidelines.

For all queries regarding your Training Account, please contact the Research Careers & Culture team at research.careers@cancer.org.uk

2. Recruiting PhD students

PhD student posts can be allocated to whichever trainees and research programmes are appropriate. They must abide by the centre's strategy, the university's local regulations and eligibility criteria, and take account of a number of our conditions as outlined in our [Expectations for PhD Training](#).

Please contact the Research Careers & Culture team at

research.careers@cancer.org.uk if there are any unforeseen difficulties with PhD recruitment.

3. Managing the centre training account funding

3.1. The level of funding

The value of each CTA is based on the funding amount agreed at the beginning of the quinquennium to fund the allocated number of students. We recognize that changes to PhD student stipends (see our [Costs Guidance](#) for current rates) mean that the amount awarded each year for stipends will not always cover costs for the number of students allocated.

Centres can manage this shortfall in stipend by utilizing underspend from running expenses within the CTA, recruiting fewer students, or, in exceptional circumstances, using underspend from the centre's core award (please contact the Research Careers & Culture team at research.careers@cancer.org.uk or the Centres & Institutes team at centres-institutes@cancer.org.uk before utilizing core funding). Please inform the Research Careers & Culture team if in any given year, the number of PhD posts differs from the allocated number.

Should the centre be successful in leveraging additional funding, we permit additional students being supported partially via the training award. Centres have flexibility over how the money is spent in this situation but please contact the Research Careers & Culture team at research.careers@cancer.org.uk to discuss your plans.

In these cases, at least 50% of the total cost of the studentship must be drawn from the training account, the remaining costs may be funded from other sources, such as the centre's or university's funds or from other research partners. A student must not be expected to bear the cost of any shortfall in funding. It is important that it is clear in the annual reporting which students are funded fully or partially (other source of funding to be provided, too) from the training account.

The CTA Award will be issued in the form of an annual grant award letter (GAL) that combines funds for non-clinical PhD studentships as appropriate.

Annual installments of the award, which cover full duration costs for one annual cohort, are issued in March, following an annual review process.

See our [Costs Guidance](#) and [Expectations for PhD Training](#) for allowable uses of PhD funding.

3.2. UTILISING UNDERSPEND FROM PHD FUNDS

The Research Careers & Culture team should be informed of any underspends on your award. Any funding remaining after supporting the allocated number of four year PhD studentships may be used for other costs associated with research training undertaken in the centre. We have listed some options how you could use underspend from your annual CTA below.

Suggested uses of remaining funding may include:

- partially funding another PhD student in the centre (if additional funding also available)
- student travel to collaborating group to undertake specific training relevant to their PhD studies, or to attend a skills-based training course directly relating to their work
- support for skills-based or career training
- support for Equality Diversity and Inclusion related activities to promote diversity and inclusion among undergraduates with the aim to attract prospective PhD students
- support for mentoring activities for PhD students
- support for scientific and networking meetings (locally and regionally) for students working in cancer research

- support for talented PhD students to attend workshops and programmes to provide training in the preparation of postdoctoral fellowship applications
- costs of parental or other long-term leave taken by PhD students

Please contact the Research Careers & Culture team at research.careers@cancer.org.uk if you would like to discuss any uses of your CTA underspend.

3.3. Information gathering and sharing

Gathering information about students

Annually, the centres will be asked to report on key achievements and challenges that are relevant to the centre's training objectives and overall training strategy through the annual review process.

Centres will also be asked to provide data on new students and any changes to currently active students via the annual review process. Please also indicate which students are funded fully or partially (other source of funding to be provided too) from the CTA award.

As explained in our [Expectations for PhD Training](#) all students must register their projects on Flexigrant within one month of their project start date. Students will be asked to register a ResearchFish account, our official research reporting tool, and to submit their research outputs on an annual basis and for those students who have finished their studentship, to share their career plans after their PhD. This information will be invaluable in helping us to improve the support and training offered to current and future students.

Gathering information about the host centre

We are interested to learn how the PhD student training is progressing throughout the year and how we can best support you. Therefore, we are keen to hear about

any challenges that you may face and any suggestions on how to improve support for the students. We encourage you to share this information with us through biannual centre managers and training leads meetings and informally through our site visits, emails and phone calls throughout the year.

Please get in contact with the Research Careers & Culture team at research.careers@cancer.org.uk if you would like to us to visit or attend any relevant meetings/ events at your centre/host institution.