

Discovery Research Committee: Supplementary Terms of Reference

This document sets out the key responsibilities that the Scientific Executive Board (SEB) has delegated to the Discovery Research Committee. It should be read in conjunction with the [General Terms of Reference for Funding Committees](#).

1. Intent of Committee

- 1.1. The Discovery Research Committee is responsible for the strategic development, funding and review, oversight and evaluation of Cancer Research UK's basic research portfolio in accordance with Cancer Research UK's research strategy. This includes research that aims to transform our fundamental understanding of cancer. Cancer Research UK's research strategy highlights the importance of understanding the mechanisms of how cancer develops and progresses to unlock new ways to prevent, detect and treat it..

2. List of award types

- 2.1. The Discovery Research Committee will consider applications for funding through the following award types:
 - Discovery Programme Awards
 - Discovery Programme Foundation Awards
 - Cancer Immunology Project Awards
 - Multidisciplinary Project Awards
 - 2.2. The Discovery Research Committee is also responsible for reviews of the following research units/strategic initiatives:
 - Brain Tumour Awards
 - Children and Young People's Cancer Innovation Awards
 - Other basic science funding initiatives as requested by the SEB.
 - 2.3. The Discovery Research Committee will review relevant research groups at the Cancer Research UK Beatson, Cambridge and Manchester Institutes, as agreed between the Head of Careers and Discovery Research, the Head of Centres and Institutes and the Cancer Research UK Chief Scientist.
- ### 3. Additional terms
- 3.1. The Discovery Research Committee will be supported by Expert Review Panels, comprising standing and *ad hoc* members. These will be chaired by a member of the Discovery Research Committee and supported by up to two additional Committee members where possible.

- 3.2. The Discovery Research Committee will work with other funding committees to ensure training, workforce and infrastructure requirements for discovery research are suitably prioritised and supported across Cancer Research UK.

4. Membership

- 4.1. The Discovery Research Committee will comply with the membership requirements set out in the General Terms of Reference for Funding Committees.
- 4.2. The Discovery Research Committee will have a fixed membership; however, additional experts can be co-opted onto the Committee where required, at the discretion of the Committee Chair and the Cancer Research UK office.
- 4.3. The Chair of the Discovery Research Committee will be invited to join the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB).

5. Meetings

- 5.1. The Discovery Research Committee will meet twice per year.
- 5.2. The Chair of the Discovery Research Committee will provide an update at an SEB meeting on an annual basis to discuss how the Committee is delivering against the strategic priorities of Cancer Research UK; update on portfolio shifts; and discuss new strategic opportunities and/or any challenges relating to the development of discovery research.

6. Research remit

- 6.1. The intent of applications for funding considered by the Discovery Research Committee must relate to one or more of the following areas of research:
- Hypothesis-driven, mechanistic research that aims to uncover novel biological processes relevant to how cancer is initiated, develops, evolves and spreads; this includes research to increase the fundamental understanding of the biology underpinning early, pre-invasive, localised and metastatic disease (including the systemic effects of cancer).
 - Research to understand biological mechanisms of disease aetiology, inherited or acquired cancer risk and premalignant-to-malignant transformation.
 - Identification and validation of new biological targets or pathways with potential for therapeutic intervention.
 - Preclinical research to improve the biological understanding of mechanisms of action and mechanisms of resistance to therapies,.
 - Identification and early-stage biological validation of biomarkers.

- Studies may include multidisciplinary approaches to create or apply novel models, technologies and methodologies.