

Guidelines for Applicants

Raynaud's & Scleroderma Association

(RSA)

For further information regarding grants please contact:

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Charity Reg. No. 326306

1. INTRODUCTION

The Raynaud's & Scleroderma Association's (RSA) major aims are:

1. To raise funds for research that promises to lead towards a greater knowledge and understanding of Raynaud's, scleroderma and related diseases.
2. To support the highest quality scientific and clinical research into these diseases, leading to better treatments and ultimately a cure.
3. To promote a better understanding of these conditions amongst patients, doctors and other health professionals, concerned with the treatment and care of patients and to provide information and education for the general public.
4. From a combination of the above, to encourage the provision of improved clinical care and welfare support for sufferers.

The Raynaud's & Scleroderma Association (RSA) does not receive Government funding and relies entirely upon voluntary donations to sustain its wide-ranging research, educational and welfare programmes. All applications for support received by the RSA are subject to peer review by a panel of independent medical and scientific assessors. Relevance to the aims of the RSA and medical/scientific excellence are the primary criteria by which all applications will be judged.

2. RESEARCH GRANTS

a) Project Grants

Project grants are awarded to enable support for research which is designed to provide results that will lead to future support being sought from major fund raising agencies. The RSA will consider support of clinical projects relating to pathogenesis, diagnosis or treatment, as well as projects of a more fundamental scientific nature, provided that they offer promise of advancement in the understanding of the two conditions. Project grants are of limited duration, usually up to a maximum of 3 years and may provide for the salary of graduate or technical assistance, running costs and the purchase of small items of essential equipment. The RSA does not expect to fund a named individual's salary for more than 3 years in total, whether on one or more grants. Applications for major items of equipment will be considered only from established units and must be applied for separately. All project grant applications are subject to peer review by a panel of independent assessors and the RSA Trustees based on the quality of the proposed research, and cannot normally be extended.

Applications must be received by 31st March, 30th June or 31st October.

b) Equipment Grants

Requests for small items of essential equipment needed for specific projects should be included in project grant applications. Major items of equipment, must be applied for separately. Applications will be considered only from established units with a track record of research into Raynaud's and scleroderma and the equipment must be able to make a lasting impact on that research over a period of many years. Grants towards the partial cost of a piece of equipment may also be considered. Applications are considered three times a year with closing dates as for project grants and must outline all the research projects to be facilitated by the equipment, stating the objective plan of investigation and staff involved in each project, as well as competitive, accurate and detailed quotes for the equipment requested. Expensive equipment may be purchased by the RSA directly from the relevant company. A site visit to assess the application may be made.

3. ANNUAL REPORTS

Grant holders are required to provide the RSA with a full Annual Report by 1st December of each year, together with a shorter version written in layman's terms suitable for publishing in the Raynaud's & Scleroderma Association newsletters as and when required. Final Reports are to be submitted within 2 months of the formal ending of the grant. Failure to submit an Annual or a Final Report could result in funding being suspended and future applications being prejudiced.

4. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

a) Application forms

- i. All applications for grants must be made on the appropriate forms which are obtainable from: RSA, 112 Crewe Road, Alsager, Cheshire ST7 2JA or downloaded from the internet www.raynauds.org.uk (Research page). Faxed copies of applications are not acceptable.
- ii. All collaborators associated with the application and who are not co-applicants are required to provide a letter of support with the application.
- iii. In order to save administration costs, applicants are required to submit sufficient copies of their application to allow circulation to external referees and the Trustees. Currently, four copies of project grant applications are required, together with the same number of all supporting documents. Four copies of an explanation of the grant in layman's terms is to be provided on an A4 page. In addition, an electronic version must be emailed to: anne@raynauds.org.uk
- iv. All applications will be acknowledged so please ensure that an email address is provided.

b) Salaries

- i. Support for salaries must state the grade and basic salary requested, with separate amounts for any enhancement premium, employers' 'on-costs', London weighting and annual increments.
- ii. Any applicant applying for their own salary must submit the application jointly with a tenured senior member (preferably the head) of the department in which he/she proposes to work.
- iii. Grants must be taken up within 6 months of the award and after this period the Trustees may require re application. The grant will start from the date the person is appointed. Approved equipment may be ordered prior to the start date. Any large piece of equipment should be purchased by the RSA directly from the relevant company. Any grant that has lapsed for longer than 12 months must be resubmitted as a new application. Any monies unclaimed twelve months after the grant has finished, will be reclaimed and held in the Association's research fund.
- iv. Grants must be used only for the purposes authorised and at the salary rates agreed. The RSA will normally meet increases due to nationally agreed pay awards but formal approval from the RSA is necessary. Formal approval must also be obtained from the RSA for any other salary increase sought.

Requests for these should include a recent CV of the candidate, letters of support from the Head of Department and all named grant holders and assessments from any internal or external staff review committees supporting the decision on which the recommendation for the salary increase is based.

- v. If a grant holder wishes to employ someone at a higher salary level than that originally agreed, a reasoned case must be submitted to the RSA including a CV of the candidate and a full financial breakdown of the additional amount required over the remaining period of the grant. If a suitable candidate is found at a lower salary level, the difference will be retained by the RSA.
- vi. The host institution concerned must accept an individual paid from an RSA grant as one of its employees for the duration of the award.
- vii. In line with the other medical research charities, the RSA does not provide funds for the administrative costs of an RSA grant.
- viii. If a grant holder wishes to move to another institution, the RSA must be informed in advance and funding for the grant will be subject to review.
- viii. In view of the short-term nature of grants, the RSA cannot be responsible for the future career of individuals employed on project grants.
- x. Where awards are potentially renewable, such renewal cannot be guaranteed but may be granted subject to rigorous scientific review.

c) Maternity Leave

- i. In common with other medical research charities, the RSA does not pay the cost of maternity leave for research assistants employed on RSA grants. Normally the grant will be 'frozen' in the absence of the employee and will be reactivated when the employee returns to work. The RSA must be informed of the proposed arrangements prior to the commencement of the maternity leave.
- ii. On the firm understanding that no additional funds will be made available, the grant holder may appoint a temporary replacement during the period of maternity leave.
- iii. If the grant holder feels that the research will not be compromised, the RSA will normally agree for the returning research worker to work half-time for a year rather than full-time for 6 months, if this is the period remaining on the grant. However, prior approval must be obtained from the RSA.

d) Ethical Approval

- i. Local ethical committee approval must be obtained for research which involves clinical trials or investigations involving human subjects. Written evidence of such approval should be submitted with the grant application. No grants will be confirmed until documentary evidence has been received by the RSA.

e) Experimental Animals

- i. All Home Office, general or local regulations about the use of experimental animals must be observed and written confirmation that appropriate licences are held must be submitted with the grant application. The RSA will not support the use of experimental animals in research unless there is no alternative. The species and numbers of animals to be used must be appropriate and fully justified. The RSA emphasises the importance of refinements of procedures to minimise any pain or distress and support for a project does not exempt the investigator from personal responsibility.
- ii. The research protocol must include: why the use of live animals is necessary and what other approaches have been considered; why the species requested is appropriate especially if animals are being used as a model for human disease; the case for the number of animals required to achieve statistical significance.
- iii. Applicants must provide written evidence that: their institution holds a Certificate of Designation under the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986; the Home Secretary has granted a Project Licence under the Act or have been applied for.

f) Equipment

- i. Under the VAT Act (1983) Schedule 5, Groups 14 and 16, medical or scientific equipment purchased by

charitable bodies, such as the RSA, is zero-rated. Proof of purchase is required for all items of capital equipment exceeding £500.

ii. Equipment obtained through an RSA grant becomes the property of the host institution which is responsible for its housing and maintenance. All such equipment must prominently display a plaque acknowledging it has been funded by the RSA. If the grant holder transfers the grant to another institution in the UK, any equipment purchased under the grant is to be transferred at the expense of the new institution.

iii. Host institutions are required to provide appropriate insurance cover for equipment purchased by the RSA.

g) Intellectual Property

i. Any intellectual property arising from RSA-funded work should be commercially exploited when appropriate, for the benefit of the RSA and the institution.

ii. The RSA waives any claim to the ownership of intellectual property or data arising from the commercial exploitation of RSA funded research, on the condition that grant holders and their administrative authorities, agree to keep the RSA fully informed of the development of any patentable property and to include the RSA as an equitable partner in any revenue-sharing agreements that may result from this.

h) Supervision and Dissemination of Research

i. The host institution is responsible for the proper supervision and dissemination of RSA funded research together with a suitable policy and mechanism for dealing with putative fraud.

j) Acknowledgments

i. Due acknowledgement to the RSA, quoting the appropriate grant reference number, must be made in any publications or presentations resulting from work carried out under a grant. Copies of published papers to be sent to the RSA on publication.

ii. Because the RSA is a charity relying on voluntary donations for its funds, grant holders are required to support any press releases made in connection with the award, progress and results of their grant, in order to generate publicity for the RSA's work. Any significant findings resulting from RSA-funded research may be suitable for an official press release and the grant holder should contact the RSA Chief Executive for further advice.