

The impacts of COVID-19 on your research: Statement for applicants applying directly to us for funding

As funders, we would like to reassure the research community that we are acutely aware of the immediate and long-term impacts of COVID-19 on research activities. Any disruptions to research activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic will be taken into consideration by our panels and committees when assessing an individual applicant's record of outputs, research achievements, and career progression in future grant rounds.

We understand that most researchers will have been affected during this period of disruption. We also recognise that some of these impacts are likely to be felt long after the acute phase of the pandemic, potentially affecting applications for months or years to come.

We strongly encourage those who have been adversely affected by disruptions caused by the pandemic to continue to apply to our schemes, in the knowledge that historic impacts will be considered when assessing new applications. We also want applicants to feel empowered to provide contextual information about the impacts of COVID-19 on their research, so that informed decisions can be made when assessing their application.

Our concern is not the details of what happened, but the impact it has had on the applicant.

We will therefore work to ensure that our processes reflect this and will be welcoming information outlining how the pandemic has impacted both individual's and their team's research activity as part of applications. COVID-19 related statements already form part of the application process for some funder's schemes: in these cases, we expect to continue welcoming statements whilst they remain useful. Applicants should refer to individual funders guidance and webpages to ensure individual processes and policies are followed (for an example, please see [this article](#) from the Academy of Medical Sciences).

The consequences of any COVID-19 related impact on an applicant's research will be taken into consideration by our panels and committees, and peer reviewers will be advised to do the same. Some examples of how applicants might have been affected are below:

- Change in personal circumstances, e.g. illness, additional caring responsibilities.
- Clinical responsibilities (working on the front line, required to back-fill posts, etc) and any ongoing impacts during the transition back to research.
- Impact on access to facilities and normal work environment or furlough.
- Impact on research (including the hiatus of research within the NHS) and the production of preliminary data, development of collaborations or methodological/technique training and experience.
- Impact on publications or other outputs, including markers of esteem, e.g. panel membership, presentation invitations, conference participation.
- Any other way in which the pandemic and/or its impact has affected the applicant, their career, or their ability to deliver their research.

Applicants are encouraged to highlight if and how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted them. Importantly, applicants are asked to only disclose information that they are comfortable with being shared with our committees, panels and reviewers. Applicants are also encouraged to include, if relevant, examples of innovative ways they have responded to the crisis. Providing any information about how COVID-19 has impacted their research is optional and at the applicant's discretion. All information that applicants share will be treated in line with the individual funder's privacy policies.

Panels, committee members and reviewers will be asked to consider the provided information about the impact of COVID-19 as part of their assessment of an application and to make appropriate adjustments where needed. This could include, for example, considering track records and expectations regarding the development of the proposal – including the extent to which preliminary data has been provided – in the context of the applicant's individual circumstances.

This statement is signed by the following funders:

- [The Academy of Medical Sciences](#)
- [Bone Cancer Research Trust](#)
- [Children with Cancer UK](#)
- [Cancer Research UK](#)
- [Department of Health & Social Care](#)
- [Diabetes UK](#)
- [Great Ormond Street Hospital Charity](#)
- [Healthcare Infection Society](#)
- [The Lister Institute of Preventive Medicine](#)
- [Medical Research Foundation](#)
- [Myeloma UK](#)
- [Prostate Cancer UK](#)
- [Sarcoma UK](#)
- [Versus Arthritis](#)
- [Wellbeing of Women](#)

