

Peter Horlock Skills Training and Development Award 2026/27

Opportunity for PET Radiochemistry
Technical Staff

Guidance for Applicants

Summary

This document guides you through the preparation and submission of an application for a Peter Horlock Skills and Training Development Award; a funding scheme that is open to technical staff in the field of Positron Emission Tomography (PET).

Applications must be submitted and approved by all signatories and the application received in its entirety before it can be considered by the Medical Research Foundation. All applications must be submitted via our [online grants management system](#). Paper application forms will not be accepted.

We advise that you prepare your application in good time to allow for your Research Organisation's checks and approvals to take place in accordance with its internal timelines.

This scheme has no fixed closing date; applications will be assessed as they are received.

The Medical Research Foundation is committed to making this application process accessible to all and will provide assistance where needed. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with our Research Team if you have any questions or concerns about the application process.

Email: research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk

Overview

The Medical Research Foundation and UK PET Chemistry are inviting applications from UK technical staff in the field of PET radiochemistry who wish to advance their work and careers.

Applicants are invited to apply for funds to support the costs of travel and subsistence for skills training and development activities. This could include visits to centres of excellence in PET chemistry, or attending a specialist scientific conference, with the aim of sharing or learning new skills relevant to PET-based clinical research aimed at improving human health.

Applications can be for visits within the UK or overseas.

Examples of previous awards:

- *Three week visit to a university in America to develop skills in cGMP production and carbon-11 research radiochemistry*
- *One week visit to the Netherlands to learn radiometabolite analysis techniques*
- *Visit to a PET Chemistry centre in Denmark to gain insight into niobium targets and activity delivery capillaries*
- *Visit to imaging centre in France to gain experience in GMP synthesis platforms*

The Funder

The Medical Research Foundation is an independent charitable foundation. Formed by the UK Medical Research Council (MRC) over 100 years ago, we grow and nurture people and ideas wherever we see research opportunities with great potential.

The research supported in this competition is possible thanks to the generous support of Mrs Cathy Horlock in memory of her late husband, Peter Horlock.

Peter Horlock worked as a technical officer in the radiochemistry section of the Medical Research Council Cyclotron Unit. His area of expertise was in effecting innovation and technical advances in the production of cyclotron produced radiopharmaceuticals for clinical research. At the time of his death in 1988, his work was primarily applied in the field of PET imaging.

The Funding

Applicants may apply for up to £3,000 to cover travel and subsistence costs to support their request, over a maximum of a 1-year period. Applications will be considered on their merits and justification, and do not need to be the maximum budget allowed.

Who can apply

This competition is open to UK-based technical staff in the field of PET radiochemistry who are in the earlier stages of their career development and wish to advance their work and careers through their requested activity. Applicants must be:

- Currently employed by and working at a UK academic or NHS healthcare institution and,
- Early career professionals engaged in PET radiochemistry and associated technology and engineering at a UK not-for-profit PET centre that is undertaking, or planning to undertake, PET-based clinical research.

Only one application will be accepted per applicant as a lead applicant, but individuals can hold more than one Medical Research Foundation grant at any one time.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Medical Research Foundation is committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants and aims to create an inclusive environment that encourages excellence in research through good equalities practice. Diversity is important to the Medical Research Foundation, and we are working to ensure that the ways in which we fund research embraces a diversity of thought, people, geographical locations and ideas.

We strongly encourage applications from under-represented groups including female and ethnic minority researchers, and researchers with disabilities or long-term health conditions. We will support our researchers and their teams to work flexibly and in a way that meets their personal circumstances. Guidance on the Medical Research Foundation flexible working policies can be found in our [Terms and Conditions](#). Please contact the Research Team if you have any questions about flexible working: research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk.

Environmental Sustainability

At the Medical Research Foundation we know that [we need to protect planetary health](#) if we are to deliver our vision of a world with better health. We aim to reach net-zero in our activities as soon as possible and influence the activities of others whom we work with and fund.

As supporters of the concordat for [Environmental Sustainability in Research and Innovation Practice](#) we recognise the need to change how the research and innovation we fund is conducted and our part in promoting solutions. We are taking shared action now and into the future to reduce and eliminate our own environmental impacts and emissions and achieve the transition to sustainable practices.

Applicants are encouraged to plan their award activities using the most sustainable approaches available to them, describe these measures within their grant application and provide a rationale for the choices made. For example, if you are considering attending a conference, outline whether you plan to participate online to reduce travel or attend in person and explain why this option is the most appropriate and worthwhile for your research or professional development. Please see [our tips and resources for improving the environmental impact of your research](#) for further suggestions.

Applicants may include direct costs in their budget to support the adoption of sustainable practices, where relevant. All costs associated with environmentally sustainable options such as purchasing more sustainable materials or equipment, or choosing lower-carbon travel options should be fully justified within the application, even if these options incur a higher upfront cost.

Responsibilities of the Lead Research Organisation and the Principal Investigator

Lead Research Organisations

By submitting an application, a Lead Research Organisation (LRO) indicates their formal acceptance of the proposal and resources sought and, if the application is successful, acceptance of the terms and conditions of a Medical Research Foundation award.

Administrative authorities have responsibility for ensuring that resources cited in the proposal are sufficient to undertake the proposed activities and represent good value-for-money.

Principal Investigators (PI)

The PI is responsible for the intellectual leadership and for the overall management of the visit. They will be the Medical Research Foundation's main contact for the proposal. The PI must be based at the LRO at which the award will be administered.

Application guidance notes

The information provided in this section provides guidance on completing the application form online grants management system (<https://medicalresearchfoundation.flexigrant.com/>). Guidance is provided within the system itself and this additional guidance will also be available on our [website](#).

Please clearly label all uploaded files and ensure that all relevant documents are suitable and present.

If you have any questions about any aspects of the application process, please contact a member of the Medical Research Foundation's team research@medicalresearchfoundation.org.uk.

Application form question guidance

Section 1: Principal Investigator (the Lead Applicant) details

Use this section to provide your details and the details of your current employer. If your current employer is not listed, please get in touch with us.

Applicant CV

CVs should be a maximum of two sides of A4 and should cover employment history and qualifications including:

- A description of your current post
- List and description of previous posts (including dates)
- Educational qualifications (including dates)

Career progression disruptions and Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant and variable impact on researchers' careers across the world. The Foundation is committed to helping mitigate this in much as possible through our grantmaking policies and practices, we are pleased to support the UK Academy of Medical Sciences Cross-funder COVID-19 memory statement as co-signatories, please see our [website](#) for further details.

There is a dedicated space within the application form, to detail how your career progression has been impacted by COVID-19. Additionally, guidance will be given to our Panel Members so that they are able to take these impacts on an applicant's career into account when they are making funding recommendations.

Applicants are also provided with space to detail any other career disruptions (e.g. parental leave, ill health) that may have impacted their progression. Please only share details that you are comfortable with being shared with the Panel and do not include identifying information about third parties.

Section 2: Funding Proposal

Case for Support

Provide details justifying the proposed use of the Skills Training and Development Award including how the funding would be used and how it would benefit your research and career development. The funding should be used to develop your research skills or support your research. Please detail why this award would further your career and why funds cannot be sought elsewhere.

Please note that, to allow for application processing and evaluation, any proposed travel must take place no less than six weeks after the application submission date.

If your application includes research that involves the use of animals or human participants, please contact the Medical Research Foundation, as additional information may be required.

Letters of Support

A letter of support from the host organisation / PET centre is required if your application includes traveling to another institute or being hosted at another PET centre to learn skills. This letter should confirm the support of the organisation and give permission for your attendance.

A letter of support from your line manager at your current employer is also required to confirm that they have consented for you to carry out the visit or training detailed in the case for support.

Section 3: Environmental Sustainability

We ask you to confirm whether reducing the environmental impact of award activities has been considered in your application and if so to describe how it has been considered. Please see our [tips and resources about environmental sustainability in research](#).

We understand that sustainability practices vary between organisations. Please indicate that you have planned your award activities using the most sustainable approach available at your organisation that you

can access and describe the support, resources and/or initiatives at your organisation to support you with environmental sustainability in your research/award activities.

Section 4: Funding Requested

The Medical Research Foundation will meet the full direct costs of the skills development and training activities. Direct costs are those that will arise from visit and can be charged as the cash value spent and can be supported by an auditable record. The Medical Research Foundation will meet the costs associated with reducing the carbon footprint of travel, as per our [terms and conditions](#). Like all UK medical research charities, the Medical Research Foundation does not meet the indirect costs of research in the UK.

Applications should be costed at today's prices and inflation should not be included.

Enter the funding requested using the Budget Table provided and describe the budget requested and provide details of any costs to be met through other funding sources.

Sections 5-7: Authorisation and Declarations

Authorisations and/or declarations are needed from the following application participants:

- Principal Investigator (Lead Applicant)
- Financial Administrator at your current workplace
- Head of Department/employer/line manager/group leader

Participants should be invited to complete their sections of the application by following the instructions under the participants tab on the Application Summary page. Please check which email address they would like to use, as they may already be registered on Flexi-Grant and mistakes may lead to a delay in processing the application.

The Applicant (Principal Investigator) can keep track of the progress of submission completion status on the Application Summary page. Applicants can issue a reminder email to the invited participants through the participants tab on the Application Summary page. If the instruction email from the Medical Research Foundation has not been received please: a) double check the accuracy of the email address supplied on the application form; b) advise the intended recipient to check their spam filters/junk folders; c) contact the Medical Research Foundation with an alternative email address for the recipient. The Medical Research Foundation is happy to help where possible but cannot be held responsible for automated emails that are not received due to address errors or spam filters.

All declarations must be signed by the appropriate persons prior to the submission of the application. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that approval of the application by the Lead Research Organisations is completed before the closing date.

Principal Investigators

Principal Investigators are required to report any conflicts of interest. Each lead applicant is required to declare that they will abide by the Medical Research Foundation's Terms and Conditions and will be actively engaged in the proposed visit.

Financial Administrator

This section should be completed by individuals at the Lead Research Organisation responsible for the administration of funds. They will be contacted regarding financial arrangements and other contractual agreements, if your application is successful.

Head of Department

The Heads of Department (or employer/line manager/group leader if more appropriate) should be invited to approve the application.

It is the responsibility of the lead applicant to inform the Head of Department of the deadline and liaise with them to ensure that they have received their invitation with instructions to participate in completion of the application.

Review and selection

Timeline for application processing

- Deadline for application submission: rolling deadline, applications will be assessed as they are received.
- Feedback on funding decision: within two months of application

Review and selection process

Applications will be reviewed by experts and assessed by an Expert Review Panel with delegated authority from the Board of Trustees. Applications will be assessed on their scientific quality and impact, and the potential to enhance and support the applicant's research and/or career progression.

- Suitability of the candidate – does the applicant meet the scheme criteria?
- Potential impact – what is the likelihood of this activity advancing the career of the applicant?
- Value for money – does the visit represent good value for money in respect of the resources being requested?

The scoring criteria to be used by reviewers can be found in the appendix.

Confidentiality

The application and any additional details submitted may be sent 'in confidence' to the UK PET Chem Advisory Committee Review Panel. While assessing proposals, our experts may sometimes need to consult with colleagues, in confidence, about individual applications.

Declarations of Interest

If a proposal presents a potential conflict of interest for any of the Advisory Committee or the Medical Research Foundation Board of Trustees or team, the individual with a conflict will not be involved in the discussion of the application and in the decision-making process.

Terms and Conditions of Award

Awards made through this competition will follow standard Medical Research Foundation [Terms and Conditions](#). The Medical Research Foundation terms and conditions spell out the responsibilities of the Principal Investigator and the Lead Research Organisation. The Principal Investigator and the Lead Research Organisation are required to indicate their formal acceptance of the application, their acceptance of the terms and conditions of a Medical Research Foundation award, and the approval of the resources sought in the application. The Medical Research Foundation may add additional conditions to a prize award to reflect the particular circumstances and requirements of the funding, or the nature of a particular award. Acceptance of an award constitutes acceptance of both the core conditions and any additional conditions.

The Medical Research Foundation reserves the right to vary these terms and conditions.

Following successful awards, a post-visit report will be sent to applicants to complete and return. This is an essential part of the award process and allows us to measure the impact of the award. Final invoices will not be settled until the post-visit report has been received.

Appendix

Scoring Range for Reviewers

6	Exceptional proposal – the visit is very likely to have a high impact on the applicant's skill development and career
5	High quality proposal – the visit is likely to have a high impact
4	Very good quality proposal – the visit is likely to have an impact
3	Good quality proposal – this visit may have some impact
2	Poor quality proposal – the visit is unlikely to have an impact
1	Ineligible for funding