

Research Review Panel

Terms of Reference

1. Remit

- 1.1 The Research Review Panel is responsible to the Grants Committee for the oversight and review of the Royal Free Charity's research awards.
- 1.2 To make funding recommendations to the Grants Committee (in line with SoDA) based on scientific quality, alignment with the Charity's and/or Royal Free London's research strategies and the available budget, ensuring a consistent and high standard of excellence in all types of applications recommended.
- 1.3 To help maintain oversight of the Royal Free Charity's research portfolio.
- 1.4 Keep abreast and inform the Royal Free Charity of new relevant policies, changes in the university and academic research environment, and other external factors that may affect research supported by the Charity.
- 1.5 Where necessary, work with other Royal Free Charity groups and committees to ensure appropriate input into the development of Royal Free Charity strategies and policies.

2. Membership

- 2.1 The Royal Free Charity shall appoint a Chair and members to the Research Review Panel to achieve a broad range of expertise and research disciplines.
 - 2.2 The Chair of the Research Review Panel shall be appointed by the Grants Committee for a three-year term and shall be eligible for re-appointment for a further three years. The Chair will not be in receipt of Charity research funding during their tenure in this post.
 - 2.3 Members of the Research Review Panel will be approved by the Charity's Senior Leadership Team and the Grants Committee notified. Members shall be appointed for a period of three years and shall be eligible for re-appointment once for a further three years. Members can be removed with the joint approval of the Charity's Director of Grants and Services and the Panel's Chair if members fail to attend three consecutive meetings, refuse to engage with the Panel constructively and respectfully, breach the Charity's Conflict of Interest policy, or are deemed to have brought the Charity into disrepute or to risk doing so.
 - 2.4 The Research Review Panel secretariat, with help from the Chair, will decide whether there is appropriate expertise to adequately assess the applications at a meeting, and may recommend co-opting additional experts to attend that meeting only.
 - 2.5 A quorum of 50% of members shall apply to all Research Review Panel meetings.
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2.6 Unless otherwise specifically stated, members are appointed as individuals with a specific expertise to fulfil the work of the Research Review Panel, not as representatives of a particular profession or interest group, and they have a duty to act in the interests of the Royal Free Charity. Members should make it clear when they declare an organisation's view rather than a personal view.

3. Meetings

3.1 The Research Review Panel will meet at least once per grant round to consider the relevant grant applications received by the Charity and, where necessary, to review the progress reports of strategic research grants.

3.2 The Research Review Panel will agree their funding recommendations during these meetings for Grants Committee approval. Decisions will only be made outside of the meetings in exceptional circumstances.

3.3 Membership of the Research Review Panel will be publicly available on the Charity's website.

3.4 Members of the Research Review Panel will be required to submit a completed Declaration of Interest form upon appointment and advise of new potential conflicts of interest on an ongoing basis.

3.5 Members declaring a conflict of interest with an application are required to abide by the Royal Free Charity Conflict of Interest policy.

3.6 The secretariat will be provided by Charity staff.

3.7 Members will ensure that all applications, comments and correspondence remain strictly confidential and that outcomes and feedback are communicated to applicants by Charity staff only.

3.8 Members must ensure that the Research Review Panel has the opportunity to consider opposing scientific views when appropriate. This includes questioning and commenting on the information provided or the views expressed by the external reviewers or any other member, even if these are outside their own area of expertise.

4. Review

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed as needed and not less than once every two years.

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