



GRANTS PROGRAMME

General information

Revised November: 2020

Next Review: Document currently under review

1. Introduction

The Healthcare Infection Society (HIS) is a UK registered charity (no. 1158172) which exists to foster the advancement of knowledge and education of all those who have an interest in the field of healthcare-associated infection (HCAI). Its mission is to provide healthcare professionals with the knowledge and tools they need to prevent and control HCAs.

HIS believes that good science underpins good clinical practice and views the support of research in the field of infection prevention and control in healthcare as being a vital component of its work. As such, it maintains a designated fund from which it can support research projects within this field. The level of funding is decided by Council and may vary from year to year depending on the quality of applications received and the overall financial position of the Society. Currently, all grants are restricted to research undertaken in UK and Eire.

The availability of all grants is advertised via the Society website <http://www.his.org.uk/awards/>, in the *Journal of Hospital Infection* (JHI), via social media, members' newsletters and through distribution of information at relevant meetings and conferences.

The Research Committee is formed from members of the Society. There are currently 10 members of the Research Committee and their work is supported by Research and Development Manager. Details of the current Committee membership is available on the [website](#).

2. Available grants and awards

2.1 Research Grants

Grants for both small scale research projects (up to £10,000 per annum; awarded twice in each year, for a project duration of 1 year), and major research projects (up to £33,000 per annum for 1 – 3 years, awarded once a year) are available. A Pilot Project Grant (up to £5,000 for a project duration up to two years) is also available for small-scale proof-of concept research projects.

2.2 The HIS Early Career Award

From 2020, in celebration of the 40th anniversaries of HIS and the Journal of Hospital Infection (JHI) award outstanding innovative contributions in the prevention and control of healthcare-associated infections from early career clinicians. The winner of the HIS Early Career Award receives a medal and a prize of £1,000 and is invited to submit an article to the Journal of Hospital Infection or Infection Prevention in Practice and present their lecture at a Society event.

2.3 Fellowships

The Graham Ayliffe Training Fellowship (up to £65,000 pa) is designed to enable trainees and nurses currently working in the field of infection prevention and control to take a one-year paid leave of absence to pursue their specialist area by broadening their knowledge base and imparting that knowledge to the wider scientific community. The recipients of this fellowship also receive up to £5,000 for research project and up to £3,000 for training.

The Mike Emmerson International Fellowship offers support to overseas clinicians undertake the clinical observership (up to four weeks) at a hospital or community setting in the UK or Republic of Ireland. This allows them gain experience in the management of healthcare-acquired infections. The fellowship is open to the healthcare professionals from low-income countries. The awardee receives up to £2,500 to cover the cost of travel, accommodation and subsistence.



2.4 Travel Grants

The Society awards Travel Grants up to £750 for junior and trainee members of the Society requiring support to present at scientific meetings or attend workshops or short training courses. In extenuating circumstances, applications from more senior staff including consultants are also considered.

2.5 Career Development Bursary

Career Development Bursary scheme aims to support the CPD of Full and Associate members. The bursary can be used for a wide range of learning experiences, including traditional learning, workshops, shadowing or specific training designed by an applicant. Recipient of the bursary receives up to £2,500 for UK and international CPD.

2.6 Event Support

Public Engagement Grant supports events where aspects of clinical microbiology, infection prevention and control, and healthcare-associated infections (HCAIs) are promoted to the public. Different types of events are eligible for support, including pieces of art or music, exhibits, workshops or other public events. Up to £1,000 is available for the event.

Sponsored Events Grants of up to £1,000 assist with the organisation of events that focus on the prevention and control of healthcare-acquired infections, to be held in an academic or healthcare setting, and are aimed specifically at healthcare professionals. This can include a single lectures, seminars, cross-institutional events or regional events.

3. The application process

Applications must be submitted using the official application forms, which are available on the HIS website <http://www.his.org.uk/awards/>. Applications and supporting documents are accepted by **email only**, sent to the Research and Development Manager at grants@his.org.uk. Applications are acknowledged on receipt.

Applications must be submitted to reach HIS by 11.59pm on the specified deadlines:

Small Research Grant	1 March and 1 September
Major Research Grant	1 September
Pilot Project Grant	applications welcome throughout the year
HIS Early Career Award	31 January
Graham Ayliffe Training Fellowship	1 March
Mike Emmerson International Fellowship	applications welcome throughout the year
Travel Grant	at least two weeks before the event
Career Development Bursary	1 February, 1 June, 1 September
Public Engagement Grant	1 March and 1 September
Sponsored Events Grant	3 months before the event

Applications received after the deadline are not considered.

4. Selection process

Initially, applications are triaged by the Research and Development Manager and one member of the Research Committee or Professional Development Committee to determine whether they fall within the scope of HIS funding.

We welcome applications that relate to all aspects of IPC in healthcare settings. This includes research projects that propose and evaluate and provide new insight into:

- the epidemiology, surveillance, prevention, control or management of HCAIs and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in healthcare settings

- cleaning, disinfection and decontamination (both environment and equipment)
- the design of healthcare premises
- novel techniques for effective antimicrobial stewardship
- novel techniques (laboratory-based or point of care) for the detection of infection or antimicrobial resistance in the healthcare setting, particularly if these can be used to facilitate infection prevention and control;
- ways to improve understanding of the motivations of safe healthcare behaviour, or describe techniques for achieving behavioural and cultural change
- novel treatments or interventions including clinical trials, where these can be used to facilitate infection prevention and control
- IPC challenges in developing countries (when partnered with a British or Irish institution)
- improving understanding of the use of IT systems in infection surveillance and prevention and control

What we do not fund:

- basic laboratory research that is organism-focused and solely explores aspects such as (but not limited to) genetics, genomics, physiology and pathogenesis
- diagnostics at a proof of principle or an early developmental and pre-clinical stage
- development of *in vitro* or *in vivo* models
- mining for diagnostic markers
- whole genome sequencing that does not inform infection prevention and control practice
- development of novel agents such as anti-infectives or vaccines

For applications involving research element, HIS adopts the scoring system developed by the Medical Research Council for use by independent referees ([MRC Reviewers Handbook 2017](#)), shown in Appendix 1.

Following the initial triage, applications are reviewed and scored by the Research Committee or Professional Development Committee. For all applications, the adjudication of the Committee is final.

Small Research Grants and **Pilot Project Grants** are awarded based on the scoring of the Research Committee.

For **Major Research Grants**, the outstanding applications are shortlisted for external review (based on of the scoring of the Research Committee) and are sent to at least two independent external reviewers for peer review.

External reviewers are asked to comment on the following aspects of the application:

- Relevance of the proposed project to the aims of the Society.
- Quality, e.g., importance and timeliness of research, appropriateness of proposed methodology.
- Whether the requested resources are appropriate and have been fully justified.
- Potential impact of research.
- Ability of applicant/the team to complete the project successfully.

The external reviewers are asked to provide an overall MCR with their comments. The Research Committee reviews the reports of the external reviewers and decides on each application.



Graham Ayliffe Training Fellowships is rated by the Research Committee using the MRC framework and then a recommendation for award is submitted to the Council officers for confirmation. In case when a lot of applications are received, the outstanding applications may be shortlisted and sent for external reviews and interviews with applicants may be arranged to select the most desirable applicant.

Travel Grants are assessed by Research Committee. Unlike other types of funding, travel grants are not competition led. The committee awards all applications which demonstrate that the applicants meet the eligibility criteria and that the events applied for are within the scope of HIS research strategy.

Career Development Bursaries and **Mike Emmerson International Fellowships** are assessed and awarded by the Professional Development Committee.

Public Engagement Grants and **Sponsored Events Grants** are assessed by the Professional Development Committee.

All grant and award decisions are ratified by the Officers of the Society.

5. Feedback and expected dates for decisions:

Turn-around time for applications depends on the volume of applications received for each call. Average timeframes for decisions are detailed below. Applicants are notified if there is a delay from these expectations.

Average decision times:

Small Research G Round 1: Early June Small Research Grant Round 2: Early November

Travel grant: 3 weeks from confirmation of acceptance

Mike Emmerson Early Career Award: Early June

Graham Ayliffe Training Fellowship: Early June

Major Research Grant: Late December

Small Research Grant	Early June and early November
Major Research Grant	March/April
Pilot Project Grant	within three months of application
Graham Ayliffe Training Fellowship	Early June
Mike Emmerson International Fellowship	within one month of application
Travel Grant	within three weeks of application
Career Development Bursary	within three weeks of application
Public Engagement Grant	within three weeks of application
Sponsored Events Grant	within three weeks of application

The Society aims to provide constructive feedback to unsuccessful grant applicants for all grants (except Travel Grants), upon request.

6. Terms and conditions

All awardees, the Head of Department, the Head of Research and an authorized signatory from the awardee institute are required to sign a copy of the Grants terms & conditions. For grants involving multiple collaborators, signatories are also required for each institution. Please see the terms and conditions document relevant to your funding scheme which is available on the website. Terms and conditions are not negotiable.



Appendix 1: Scoring system developed by the Medical Research Council for use by independent referees ([MRC Reviewers Handbook 2017](#))

Score	Indicators	Outcome
10	<p>Exceptional - Top international programme or of exceptional national strategic importance</p> <p>Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Highly original and innovative o Novel methodology and design o Excellent leadership (team, environment, and collaborators are amongst the best in a broad field) <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Crucial scientific question or knowledge gap o Potential for high health and/or socioeconomic impact o Internationally unique resource of value to many disciplines <p>Productivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Potential for high return on investment o Very high likelihood of successful delivery (risks well managed) 	Fundable
9	<p>Excellent – Internationally competitive and leading edge in most areas</p> <p>Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Original and innovative o Novel methodology and design o Excellent leadership (team, environment, and collaborators e.g. among the best in a specialist area) <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Crucial scientific question or knowledge gap o Potential for high health and/or socioeconomic impact o Internationally significant resource of value to many disciplines. <p>Productivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Potential for high return on investment o Very high likelihood of successful delivery (risks well managed) 	Fundable
8	<p>Very High Quality – Internationally competitive and leading edge nationally</p> <p>Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Original and innovative o Robust methodology and design (innovative in parts) o Excellent leadership (team, environment, and collaborators) <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Crucial scientific question or knowledge gap or area of strategic importance to the UK o Potential for high health and/or socioeconomic impact o Resource of value to many disciplines. <p>Productivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Potential for significant return on investment o Very high likelihood of successful delivery (risks well managed) 	Fundable
7	<p>High Quality – Leading edge nationally and internationally competitive in parts</p> <p>Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Innovative o Robust methodology and design (innovative in parts) o Strong leadership (team, environment, and collaborators) <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Key scientific question or knowledge gap or area of strategic importance to the UK o Potential for significant health and/or socioeconomic impact o Valuable scientific resource <p>Productivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Potential for significant return on investment o High likelihood of successful delivery 	Fundable
Score	Indicators	Outcome
6	<p>High Quality –and Leading edge nationally, but not yet internationally competitive</p> <p>Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Methodologically robust study o Appropriate leadership (team; environment; collaborators) <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Worthwhile scientific question or knowledge gap o Justifiable scientific resource o Potential for reasonable health and/or socioeconomic impact <p>Productivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Resources appropriate to deliver the proposal o High likelihood of successful delivery 	Fundable



5	<p>Good quality - Nationally competitive.</p> <p>Quality o Methodologically sound study but areas require significant revision fundable o Leadership not optimal (scope to strengthen team; environment; collaborators)</p> <p>Impact o Worthwhile scientific question with potentially useful outcomes o Moderate likelihood of contributing to new knowledge generation</p> <p>Productivity o Resources broadly appropriate to deliver the proposal o Good likelihood of successful delivery</p>	Not Fundable
4	<p>Potentially useful – With significant weaknesses</p> <p>Quality o Methodologically weak study (approach or study design requires significant fundable revision) o Leadership/environment not optimal</p> <p>Impact o Contains potentially useful ideas but requires major revision o Moderate likelihood of successful delivery</p> <p>Productivity o Resources inappropriate to deliver the proposal o Unlikely to significantly contribute to new knowledge generation</p>	Not Fundable
3	<p>Potentially useful – With major weaknesses</p> <p>Quality o Question poorly defined o Methodologically weak study o Poor leadership/environment</p> <p>Productivity o Unlikely to contribute to new knowledge generation</p>	Not Fundable
2	Poor quality science, bordering on unacceptable	Not Fundable
1	Unacceptable quality or has serious ethical concerns.	Not Fundable

