

# The Deanery Funding Challenge

Deanery of Clinical Sciences

Kate Farrow (Postgraduate Projects & Student Experience)

Matt Bailey (Director of Quality)

# Why?

## From Vitae:

“The ability to generate funding is a real necessity for a career in academia. Outside academia it is also highly prized.

You need to write persuasively, go through the peer review process, adhere to guidelines and deadlines and be aware of opportunities.”

- **Two unmet needs identified by our ECR/PGR societies**
  - Limited opportunities to apply for funding (even as a co-I)
  - Limited access to funding (and experience of managing budgets)
  - Widely recognized as essential for CPD:
  - Many workshops “grant writing 101” type events: [theoretical vs empirical](#)

# What?

- Conceived/inaugurated by the LF Post-doctoral Society
- A small-projects funding round for the Deanery's ECRs & PGRs
- Modelled on external panels:
  - January: Launch event
  - February: submission deadline
  - Feb/March: panel meeting and award
  - July: deadline to spend the award.
- Budget is ~20K (**50% IAD devolved funding** : 50% Deanery)
- *“to support local requirements and initiatives which enhance professional, personal & career development of ECRs, doctoral and masters students including taught and ODL”*
- Project maximum= £2500

# Launch event

- Run by the LF Post-Doc and Post-grad Society presidents
- Presentation to cover the essentials and hints and tips
- Q&A session (with decision panel in attendance)

# The application

- 500 word limit
- Objective/rationale
- Cost plan and justification of cost (including quotes etc)
- Benefit

# The panel:

- Chair: Prof Margarete Heck (Deanery PG Director)
  - Dr Doug Gibson (LFPDS representative; Launch-Lead)
  - Prof Lesley Forrester (PG Director; CRM)
  - Prof Adriano Rossi (PG Director CIR)
  - Prof Matt Bailey (PG Director CVS)
- Chair reads all applications; rest distributed to avoid conflicts
- Scored out of 5 across 5 categories (ie max score of 25)
- The panel meets to discuss the applications in the context of funding

# Scoring framework (given at Launch)

- A. Is this a clearly defined project that is achievable with the funding requested?
- B. Is there clear evidence that this is not just something that is being done in the PhD/PD anyway - i.e. is this distinct from main project?
- C. Will this funding be of benefit to others in lab/Centre?
- D. Does this involve a new collaboration that wouldn't happen otherwise?
- E. Will the funding generate data that would be used in a new funding application in the future?

# Number of Awards:

	Total (£)	Total		Students (All types)	Post-doc Researchers
2018	£19,123	8		5 (£12,081)	3 (£7,042)
2017	£22,449	12		3 (£5,699)	9 (£16,750)
2016	£21,231	10		3 (£7,236)	7 (£13,995)

Typically ~50 applications

Applications commonly from teams



# Feedback

- KF requests and collates feedback:
- “Did you find this useful or not?”
- “Could we use this funding in a different way to support you? ”
  
- “*excellent opportunity to gain experience*” KK. MRC CRH
- “*extremely useful in many regards...developing my research in new areas*”  
CK, CIR
- “*motivated me a lot*” NH, CRM (PhD student)
- “*valuable feedback...even though I wasn't successful*” HC, CVS (PhD student)

# Feedback: Ben Thomas LFPGS President

- “grant writing is a challenging skill to teach in a traditional way”
- ”upmost importance for development”
- “thinking about collaboration at an early stage of career....great advantage”
- “nurtures interdisciplinary research”
- Develops “*academic and networking experience at the same time*”

# Going forward:

- Improved clarity/focus: positive comments for 2018
- Can funding be used to support a laboratory visit?
- Improved feedback from panel to all applicants
- Panel composition: peer-review and assessment (previous winners?)
  
- Note: This is driven by the student (&ECR) voice
  
- Context of IAD devolved funding given DCS has 90% ODL students