



British Society for Research on

Ageing

BSRA Peer Review Policy

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Introduction

All grant applications submitted to BSRA undergo peer review according to the AMRC Principles of Peer review guidelines. Our peer review policies ensure that peer review is robust, balanced, accountable and impartial. Peer review processes are transparent and outlined below, and names of the Scientific Advisory panel and other decision-making entities are given above. We aim to provide peer review and feedback in a timely and efficient manner.

BSRA Peer review process

The BSRA's peer review processes are as follows:

- 1) Applications will be triaged for eligibility by the BSRA trustees according to the conditions set out in our [published research strategy](#).
- 2) Depending on their nature, applications will subsequently be assessed as follows:
 - a. Applications for funds less than £2000 will be reviewed directly by the Scientific Advisory Panel.
 - b. Proposals requesting in excess of £2000 will be assessed by a minimum of 2 external peer reviewers.

- c. Peer reviews will be collated and discussed by the Scientific Advisory panel at their annual meeting.
- 3) Trustees will receive the report of the Scientific Advisory Panel for that funding round. Proposals will be discussed by trustees. The chair of the Scientific Advisory Panel will be invited to attend this meeting.
- 4) Applicants will be contacted and provided with written feedback on their applications.
- 5) A list of funded proposals will be published on the BSRA website (www.bsra.org.uk) together with their lay abstracts.

External Peer Review

For funding applications that exceed £2000, a minimum of two external peer reviewers will be invited to assess the proposal. Applicants are requested to supply the details of two qualified peer reviewers with whom they have not worked in the past 5 years in their initial application. Applicants are also invited to suggest individuals who should not be approached as peer reviewers given appropriate reasoning. Reviewers are expected to disclose conflicts of interests in accordance with our [published conflict of interest policy](#). The trustees retain the right to approach other external peer reviewers at their discretion, who will be appointed according to their area of expertise. External peer reviewers will be given clear direction on assessment of proposals (see '[guidance for external peer reviewers](#)' document).

Scientific Advisory panel

The Scientific Advisory Panel comprises of 6 experts from a diverse range of disciplines and geographical locations (details of our Scientific Advisory panel are given above). Individual researchers may apply for Scientific Panel status if proposed and seconded by members of the Biogerontology community and approved by the BSRA trustees. The panel chair will be elected by the advisory panel members. Panel members will serve for a maximum term of 3 years and will be independent from the trustees. New appointments will be staggered to ensure continuity. Trustees will not comprise more than 20% of the Scientific Advisory panel. Active grant holders will not make up more than 30% of the Scientific Advisory panel at any given time. Trustees and Advisory panel members are not forbidden from applying for funding, but any application must be fully in accordance with our [published conflict of interest policy](#), and the trustee or Advisory Panel member must not attend the meetings pertaining to decision making or discussion in that funding round. The Scientific Advisory Panel will convene yearly to discuss proposals. A minimum of 3 panel members must be present in order for the meeting to be quorate. The Scientific Advisory Panel will be given clear direction on assessment of proposals (see '[guidance for Scientific Advisory Panel](#)' document).

The 3Rs in BSRA research

The BSRA supports the concept of using animals in medical research where appropriate, but are committed to the 3 Rs (replacement, refinement and reduction). We will only fund research that is fully compliant with UK law and conducted according to Home Office protocols. Proposals involving animal research will be expected to provide full justification of the number and nature of animals to be used, and the procedures that will be undertaken. Funding will not be awarded without documentary evidence of Home Office License.

Feedback and outcome of funding rounds

Successful applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications shortly after the trustee meeting. All applicants will receive the external reviewers' reports on their applications.

Justification of final outcome of application may be received from the trustees within 3 months upon written request. Lay summaries of funded research will be published on the BSRA website (www.bsra.org.uk).