

**BSRA Peer Review Policy**

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**BSRA Scientific Advisory panel**

Professor Professor Anne McArdle (Chair)

Professor Susan Ozanne

Professor Graeme Close

Professor Richard Aspinall

Ms. Sue Armstrong

**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 guidance for each respective award and our [Research Strategy](https://bsra.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/BRSA-research-strategy-web.pdf).
2. Depending on their nature, applications will subsequently be assessed as follows:

Proposals requesting in excess of £2000 will be assessed by a minimum of 2 external peer reviewers.

Peer reviews will be collated and discussed by the Scientific Advisory panel at their annual meeting.

1. 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.
2. In the event of a submission being unsuccessful, we are unable to give feedback.
3. A list of funded proposals will be published on the BSRA website ([www.bsra.org.uk](http://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](https://bsra.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/BRSA-Conflict-of-Interest-Policy-web.pdf). 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 BRSA trustees. The panel chair will be elected by the advisory panel members. Panel members will serve for a maximum term of 3 years. 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](https://bsra.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/BRSA-Conflict-of-Interest-Policy-web.pdf), 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. In the event of a submission being unsuccessful, applicants will not be given feedback and the final decision of the grant panel is not subject to appeal. Lay summaries of funded research will be published on the BSRA website (www.bsra.org.uk).