

# St George's University of London

## St George's Research Bridging Fund Scheme for Research Institute Staff

### Policy and Procedure

#### 1. Overview of the Scheme

1.1 The St George's Research Bridging Fund Scheme provides short-term funding for Research Institute staff employed on fixed term contracts to help with the retention of research personnel, who are key to the implementation of St George's research activities.

The Scheme aims to:

1. Provide interim financial support to retain staff in employment where it is anticipated that there will be a short period between the end of one external funding agreement and the commencement of another.

This, in turn, will:

2. Enable St George's to maintain continuity of work and support programmes of research.
3. Help to retain experienced staff and so help sustain research teams and retain expertise built up over a period of years.
4. Enable staff to avoid a break in employment where further funded work, for which they have appropriate skills and experience, will become available in the near future.

#### 2. Conditions and Eligibility Criteria

2.1 The area of research of the intended beneficiary of the funding must be a priority for St George's research activity, and the researcher must be essential for this. Therefore, unless there are exceptional circumstances, the beneficiary should be part of a Research Institute.

2.2 The intended beneficiary must have been employed by St George's for a period of at least 12 months (this may be aggregated service where there have been short breaks between contracts due to the absence of bridging funds in the past).

2.3 The Director of the Research Institute confirms that all other sources of funding have been explored, and that efforts were made to secure further funding at least three months before the expiry of the current funding.

2.4 The relevant Research Institute has prepared an appropriate work programme on which the intended beneficiary will be employed, between the expiry of the present funding and the commencement of the new project. Funding should not be used to support work on an earlier grant award which has simply overrun.

- 2.5 Every effort has been made to agree the earliest possible start date with the funding body, in order to minimise the period for which bridging funding will be required.
- 2.6 St George's Joint Research & Enterprise Services has been notified of a grant or other source of funding on which the intended beneficiary will subsequently be employed. Evidence of a new award must be supplied OR a grant or Fellowship application has been submitted which has a realistic chance of being awarded.
- 2.7 The term of the funding should normally be for a maximum of three months, although in exceptional circumstances a longer term may be considered.

### **3. Calls for Applications**

- 3.1 Applications will be considered by the Research Steering Group three times a year following an initial call for applications.
- 3.2 Applications will be considered in October, February and May of each year.
- 3.3 Applicants must contact a Research Funding Officer, JRES, to confirm the total salary costs of the beneficiary during the proposed term of the bridging fund.
- 3.4 Completed applications for the academic year 2019/20 must be submitted by:
1. Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019, midday
  2. Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020, midday
  3. Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020, midday.

### **4. Process and Decision Making**

- 4.1 Applications must align to the Institute's research strategy. The Director of the Research Institute will confirm whether the Institute supports the application. If the Institute Director supports the application then it can be progressed to submission stage.
- 4.2 Applicants must complete the Research Bridging Fund Scheme application form, which must be signed by the intended beneficiary of the funding, the current grant holder, and the relevant Research Institute Director.
- 4.3 Completed forms should be submitted electronically to the Research Strategy and Development Manager (ycastle@sgul.ac.uk), who will coordinate all applications.
- 4.4 Applications will be submitted by the Research Strategy and Development Manager to the Research Steering Group to review.
- 4.5 Decisions on the allocation of funds will be made by the Research Steering Group.
- 4.6 Applications will be assessed by the Research Steering Group according to the following criteria:
1. Scientific merit of proposed project / programme of work
  2. Coherence with Research Institution's research strategy.
  3. Track record of the intended beneficiary (as evidenced by their CV).
  4. Evidence of the exit strategy (i.e. a new research grant award).

4.7 The outcome of the review will be communicated to applicants by email by the Research Strategy and Development Manager after the panel has met to review all applications for that period (October, February and May of each year). The panel's decision is final.

## **5. Recovery of Bridging Fund**

5.1 There may be occasions when a particular funding body is willing or able to bring forward the date of commencement of an award. If the commencement of an award is brought forward, then monies would need to be reimbursed to the Bridging Fund Scheme.