

## Call for expressions of interest: Research time for clinicians for cancer clinical trial activity

The Wales Cancer Research Centre is seeking expressions of interest from clinicians to take on up to 2 days/week of research sessions, to develop and lead research activity that will advance cancer clinical trials and translational cancer research in Wales.

### Background

CReSt, the first Wales-wide strategy for cancer research, was launched in 2022. Its key aim is to build capacity and critical mass of research around six themes, to strengthen and focus the base of research in Wales. One of these themes is cancer clinical trials. The *Tackling Cancer Through Research* initiative led by Welsh Government also notes the need to increase clinical academic capacity in Wales to strengthen the base for clinical trials, particularly those led from Wales.

This call for expressions of interest from research-experienced clinicians is designed to offer protected time for research that helps highly motivated individuals to expand upon, or progress into, roles as chief or co-investigators of Wales' cancer trials and trial-related translational research of the future.

### Eligibility

This CReSt funding (issued by HCRW to WCRC) is for NHS-employed clinicians working in cancer in Wales, who:

- have existing research experience as principal and/or co-investigators of cancer studies, and
- have fewer than 2 days/week of research sessions within their job plan during the time period for which sessions are being requested.

Applications are invited from consultants in oncology, surgery, and/or other cancer-related disciplines such as palliative care and general practice; and also senior members of other professional groups working in cancer, including nurses, allied health professionals, clinical scientists, or others who are in a position to lead cancer trials/translational research from Wales. Candidates with an existing postgraduate higher degree (MD or PhDs) are encouraged to apply, although trial-active clinicians without higher degrees are also eligible.

Applicants may request up to 2 days (up to 4 programmed activity sessions) per week of research time, depending on the scale of activity they intend to take on. If applicants already have some research time from other sources (<2 days per week), they may request a supplement up to a combined total of 2 days per week. Individuals who have 2 or more days/week of research time already are not eligible to apply.

**Allowable costs and timings**

- This WCRC CReSt funding would cover the clinician's salary for up to 2 days/week until the end of March 2027. Please note that this funding will not cover institutional overheads. No other non-salary costs will be covered.
- The earliest start date for these CReSt-funded sessions would be September 2025, but we ask applicants to agree a realistic start date with their employer ahead of application.
- The latest end date for these CReSt-funded sessions would be the end of March 2027, at which time this funding ends.

**Expected activity and outputs**

- It is expected that this funding will support the clinician to undertake development (+/- delivery) of academic and/or industry cancer clinical trials and trial-related translational activity. Post holders will be expected to bring people and teams together across Wales and beyond as part of this work.
- Post holders will be able to link with academic researchers in CReSt themes to develop trials and any associated translational projects, and to join the WCRC Early- and Mid-Career Researcher Network. Where relevant, posts may also work with the Cardiff Cancer Research Hub on trials supported by commercial sources of funding.
- Depending on the stage of advancement of the work, outputs would include: submission of funding applications on which the individual is a lead (chief investigator) or co-applicant (co-investigator); associated recruitment of patients into Wales-led trials; presentations of methodology or results; and submission of peer-reviewed publications on which the individual is an author.
- The individual will be required to contribute updates on activity and outputs to WCRC's quarterly and end of year reporting to the funder, and may be asked to attend WCRC leadership group meetings on request to provide a verbal update.

**Commercial trial activity extension opportunity (April 2027 to end March 2029)**

Health and Care Research Wales also has commercial research investment programme funding available to support activities that boost commercial pharmaceutical research delivery in Wales. As this goal is complementary to CReSt, as part of this CReSt research time call applicants can apply for an extended period of time if they can justify how specific activities proposed (during any part of their tenure) will increase commercial pharmaceutical research in Wales.

If applying for a period beyond the end of March 2027, please indicate this at the time of application, outlining the activities proposed and how that is commensurate with the level of additional investment required (up to 2 days/week). If the activities directly lead to your role as Principal Investigator (PI) for a commercial trial, profile clearly how this funding will be replaced via commercial trial income on a cost recovery basis during the extended period.

Note: As this extension would be from a separate funding source, if recommended by the CReSt panel, it will be subject to consideration via the Commercial Research Delivery Wales Board, which may require additional information to support consideration. Your request to be, or not to be, considered for this extension does not impact the likelihood of success of your CReSt application for research time up to the end of March 2027.

## How to apply for CReSt funded sessions (+/- commercial trial extension sessions)

To apply, you will need to submit the following:

1. **Your CV**, including a list of academic publications
2. **A personal statement**, which summarises:
  - the number of days/sessions per week you are requesting from the CReSt funding
  - the proposed start date (Sep 2025 onwards) and end date (by end of March 2027 latest);
  - the grade of your NHS role;
  - your research experience and interests (max 200 words);
  - the academic and/or industry clinical trial work you propose to develop through to March 2027 (max 400 words)
  - if you are applying for extended funding (for any additional period from April 2027 up to end March 2029), what activities support growth in commercial research delivery in Wales and justification for the additional time applied for. Include number of days per week and duration (max 400 words)
  - any routes through which you may pursue follow-on funding to continue your research thereafter (max 150 words).
3. **A letter of support** from your line manager and employing organisation, indicating that they are prepared to make time available in your job plan for you to undertake these research sessions, and that they are aware that the overheads will not be covered.

For informal enquiries, contact [wcrc@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:wcrc@cardiff.ac.uk).

Please submit your application by **midday on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025**, by email to [DCG-HR@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:DCG-HR@cardiff.ac.uk) using the email subject line 'Clinical research time application'.

It is anticipated that shortlisted applicants will be invited to a Teams interview on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2025.