



Concept Development Fund



Canolfan
Ymchwil
Cancer
Cymru

Wales
Cancer
Research
Centre

What is the WCRC Concept Development Fund?

The Wales Cancer Research Centre (WCRC) works in partnership across Wales to build research capacity, broker collaboration and deliver research-enabling activity. WCRC plays a key role in delivering the [All-Wales Cancer Research Strategy](#) (CReSt). CReSt defines Wales' areas of research strength, outlining six key themes in which we are particularly strong: precision and mechanistic oncology; immuno-oncology; radiotherapy; cancer clinical trials; palliative and supportive oncology; and population-based prevention, early detection, primary care and health services research.

The Concept Development Fund has been designed to provide a platform for talented cancer researchers to complete preliminary work, undertake training, and/or generate pilot data that will underpin larger funding or fellowship applications. Applications are welcome from any of the six CReSt themes, with cross-theme applications encouraged.

Who is eligible to apply?

The Concept Development Fund is open to applicants who are employed by Higher Education Institutes (HEI), or research active staff employed by NHS or social care organisations in Wales who are undertaking cancer-relevant research.

What activity will be supported?

The intention of the Concept Development Fund is to identify talented individuals and groups who are in a position to undertake pilot work or training that will lead to substantial follow-on funding in cancer research. This may be, but is not limited to, producing preliminary data, generating models, or developing skills for future work. The proposed work must have a demonstrable relevance to one or more of the CReSt themes.

When applying, applicants must show that they have a clear vision for what they want to achieve during the funding period, and be able to demonstrate how this funding will be essential for them to progress their work to position them for future funding.

What funding is available?

As the nature of applications will vary, it is expected that some will require limited funds while others may require more, and applicants are asked to cost realistically and focus on what is needed for the desired outcome of the work, rather than targeting costs to hit a particular 'ceiling'.

The panel will be considering the reasonableness of costs when they review, but as a guide, we would expect the majority of applications to be in the £2000-10,000 range.

This fund is available to support pilot work and/or training, and as such the following costs are **eligible**:

- Consumables and reagents
- Research services
- Small items of equipment, if necessary for the proposed work (applications that are requesting funding solely for equipment will not be considered)
- Access to biobank samples
- Access to SAIL or other databases
- Consultancy costs (e.g. to provide expertise to inform translational research: legal/patent costs; MRHA advice; market reports; health economic analysis)
- Travel/networking costs (these requests will be individually assessed to ensure that there is sufficient justification for the travel)
- Support for network-building events
- Patient and public involvement (PPI) costs

This funding will not cover the following **ineligible** costs:

- Salary costs
- Estates or facilities costs
- Any costs relating to animal research
- Any form of tuition fees (e.g. MD/PhD fees)

If the applicant is unsure if their proposed funding requirement would be covered, they are advised to contact wcrc@cardiff.ac.uk well ahead of the application deadline.

Please note that funds must be spent by February 2027 at the latest.



Required outputs and outcomes

At the end of their funding, award-holders will complete a final report for WCRC with details of any outputs/outcomes resulting from the funding. It is also expected that they will continue to report to WCRC for a duration of 2 years after the completion of the funding, to allow us to capture future awards/publications that follow on from this work. This is an important part of showing the impact of the scheme and in WCRC being able to make future opportunities available.

WCRC also expects applicants to define their own outputs relevant to the project, such as (but not limited to): production of pilot work; creation of preliminary data; development of new models; acquisition of new skills; submission of funding applications; presentation of work at conferences; and publishing of work in peer-reviewed journals.

Selection process

All applications will be reviewed by our panel, who will individually review and score each application, and the collective scores will inform the shortlist.

All shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview, which will be held on **Monday 24th November 2025**. The interview will be a 'dragon's den' style approach, where applicants will be asked to present their proposal to the panel. Detailed instructions will be provided at the time of invitation to interview.

The applicants will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Scientific merit of the proposal
- Feasibility of the application – based on funding duration requested, proposed outcomes and outputs, and scale of the work
- All costs outlined in the budget justification are eligible and reasonable, in accordance with the application guidance
- Individual's plans as to how this work will lead to future onward funding or generate other substantial impact
- Research proposal's alignment to CReSt themes
- Research credentials are strong for the individual's career-stage
- Evidence that the applicant holds a salaried position in their host institution for the duration of the funding



Timeline



Wed 8th October 2025
Applications open

Mon 17th November 2025
(midday)
Applications close

Mon 24th November 2025
Interviews

December 2025 - February 2026
Funding begins

How to apply

In order to apply, applicants must submit the documents defined below:

- Application form
 - The application form must be completed in full. Applicants can download the application form [here](#).
- CV - the applicant's CV must:
 - Be no more than 2 pages of A4
 - Include all academic qualifications
 - Include current employment
 - Include any prizes or scholarships awarded to the applicant
 - Include a list of any publications on which the applicant is a named author.

How to submit

Once complete, submit applications via email:

To: wcrc@cardiff.ac.uk

Deadline: Monday 17th November 2025 (midday)

Subject line: WCRC Concept Development Fund application

Attachments: Completed application form and CV

Please note, new applications and/or updates to applications after the deadline will not be accepted. If an applicant wishes to withdraw their application for any reason, they should contact WCRC on the email address below.

Applications are welcome in English and Welsh, neither language is looked on more favourably than the other.

If you have any questions or require further guidance, please contact wcrc@cardiff.ac.uk with 'Concept Development Fund' in the subject line.



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