

Excellence Network Project Grants Funding Panel

Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct 2024

This document contains the Terms of Reference and code of conduct for Funding panel members of the [Excellence Network Project grants scheme](#).

Terms of Reference

Introduction

- The [Board of Trustees](#) of Parkinson's UK establish the strategy and policies of the charity and ensure the effective and equitable use of the Charity's resources in pursuit of its objectives.
- The Excellence Network Project Grants scheme is for local, regional and national service improvement projects.
- Each Large grant application (£12,001–£60,000) is reviewed by a minimum of 2 experts and 2 lay reviewers. These evaluations inform the Funding Panel decisions.
- Each Small grant application (up to £12,000) is reviewed by 2/3 members of the Parkinson's Excellence Network [Clinical Leadership Team](#) (CLT), including at least one member who represents the Parkinson's community. These evaluations inform the Funding Panel decisions.

Role of the CLT with respect to the Funding Panel

- Take decisions on how the project grants process is set up and managed.
- **Small grants**
 - Independently reviewing and rating small project grant applications that fall within the scope of the scheme as nominated and required.
 - Joining a monthly panel meeting to make final funding decisions for the Small project grant applications. Note, these meetings will occur during the final 30 minutes of the CLT monthly meeting and will be cancelled if there are no small grant applications to discuss.
- **Large grants**
 - In the scenario of an inadequate number of reviewers appointed independently, review Large Grants project applications.
 - Take the final Yes/No funding decisions (post the full application review period) on Large grant applications. This will be through a half day virtual meeting where all full applications, and the reviewed ratings and feedback, will be discussed.

- A sub-group of this panel comprising the Associate Director of Policy and Health Strategy, one of the Co-Clinical Directors and one of the Parkinson's community representatives from the panel (the 'Panel Subgroup') will be responsible for deciding which pre-applications to invite to the full application stage for the large grants and for taking any final decisions if a consensus can't be reached.
- They are appointed as individuals to fulfil the responsibilities described below as experts in the field of Parkinson's, not as representatives of their employer or interest group, and have a duty to act in the interests of Parkinson's UK at all times. Where a Panel member declares an organisation's views rather than a personal view, they should make that clear at the time of declaring that view.

Responsibilities

- Promptly accept or decline any invitations to review an application(s). Decline to review any application where there could be a real or perceived conflict of interest (see below).
- Promptly accept or decline any invitations to funding panel meeting(s). Decline to participate in discussions or decision-making where there could be a real or perceived conflict of interest (see below).
- In the capacity of a reviewer:
 - examine and challenge, if necessary, any assumptions in the application and ask for explanations of any jargon or concepts that are not clear.
 - review the application(s) using the reviewer evaluation form, ensuring all aspects of the form are completed as fully as possible.
 - complete the review within the review period.
- Join the Funding Panel meeting to discuss the application(s). Each reviewer will share their reviews with the rest of the panel. Each funding panel member will share their views with the reviewers. If for any reason the member is unable to attend, they must inform the Excellence Network Grants team.
- As a funding panel decision-maker, examine and challenge, if necessary, any assumptions in the reviews/evaluations and ask for explanations of any feedback that is not clear.
- Regard themselves as free to question and comment on the information provided or the views expressed by any of their co-reviewers/co-panellists, notwithstanding that the views or information do not relate to their own area of expertise.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times (see below).

Conflict of Interest

- The high standards of integrity expected by the members of the charity and the wider public require the reviewers/funding panel members to avoid situations in which their duties and other interests conflict or where there could be a suspicion of conflict. When invited to review an application/participate in a funding panel meeting, members need to consider whether there are any potential conflicts of interest and if so, inform excellencenetworkgrants@parkinsons.org.uk as soon as possible. The question one should ask is: 'Will I benefit either directly or indirectly if this grant is awarded or is not awarded?' Those involved in assessment or decision-making process must not only avoid conflict of interest between funding panel responsibilities and applications, but also avoid circumstances that might give the impression there is a conflict of interest.

- An absolute conflict of interest, where the individual should decline to comment, is when the funding panel member is:
 - A close friend or related to the applicant(s)
 - A close colleague (either presently or within the past 5 years)
 - Directly involved in the work the applicant proposes to carry out
- Conflicts of interest may also arise from:
 - close links with, or interest in, an institution that has submitted an application
 - a commercial or pecuniary interest (eg where a reviewer or an organisation with which an individual is involved may benefit financially, directly or indirectly, from a decision made)
 - a non-pecuniary interest where a reviewer has other interests that might be thought to influence them, either wittingly or unwittingly
 - personal or family interest with regard to both pecuniary interests (eg from connections with bodies that have a direct financial interest, or from being a business partner, or being employed by a person with such an interest) and non-pecuniary interests (eg any benefit or favour in kind including arising from membership of clubs or other organisations)

Confidentiality

- The reviews, deliberations and decision-making are confidential to allow free and frank expression of opinion and to avoid premature disclosure of intentions. Panel members must agree to treat as confidential all correspondence and documents sent in relation to the review process, including any pre-publication or proprietary information owned by the applicants.
- Confidential information should be used solely for assessing and making recommendations for funding on behalf of Parkinson's UK. 'Confidential information' means any information contained in the documents and applications that do not fall within the exclusions in the paragraph on 'Exclusions' below.
- Panel members will not, without written consent from both Parkinson's UK and the applicant, disclose the fact that an applicant has applied to the charity for support.
- Panel members will not, without written consent from both Parkinson's UK and the applicant, either disclose confidential information to any third party or use confidential information for any purpose other than the purpose described above. For the purposes of this paragraph, third party means any party other than a Parkinson's UK employee or a panel member and specifically includes others in a reviewer's place of work.
- Exclusions: It is understood that the foregoing restrictions on use and disclosure shall not apply to information which:
 - was in the public domain or which subsequently becomes part of the public domain by publication or otherwise, except by your wrongful act
 - was in a Panel members possession and was not acquired directly or indirectly from Parkinson's UK or the applicant
 - was received by a Panel member from a third party who did not acquire the same directly or indirectly from Parkinson's UK or the applicant and who did not require you to hold the same in confidence
- Papers and minutes in any media format must not be disseminated or discussed outside of the review process and should be kept secure and appropriately disposed of after the review process is complete (electronic files should be deleted securely and

paper copies shredded).

- Parkinson's UK will not use comments provided by Panel members for any purpose other than is necessary for the review process and will not disclose them to any person except as is required for the review process or as is required under the Data Protection Act 2018 (or any other law or regulation to which Parkinson's UK is or may become subject).
- Parkinson's UK will only release anonymised reviewer/ Panel member comments to applicants. Parkinson's UK will not release reviewers' names in connection with any specific comments that are released under the Data Protection Act 2018 without first obtaining permission to do so.
- In reporting the outcome of funding rounds special care will be taken to keep confidential any part played in discussion by individual reviewers/ Panel members, to maintain the convention that any decision is the collective responsibility of the whole panel and to safeguard the anonymity of any Panel members.

Code of Conduct

General

- I will act in good faith and in the best interests of Parkinson's UK and the Excellence Network ('the Charity') at all times.
- I accept the responsibilities of my Funding panel member role in all capacities (whether as a reviewer or as a panellist, as set out in the 'Terms of Reference' above). I will use my knowledge, skills and experience to fulfil my role as a Panel member.
- I will observe the highest standards of propriety, impartiality, integrity and objectivity.
- I accept my duty to act reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to the Charity.
- I accept my duty of confidentiality and will respect operational confidentiality at all times. However, I will never use confidentiality as an excuse not to disclose matters that should be transparent and open.
- I will keep papers and other information submitted secure and confidential. I will abide by the [General Data and Protection Regulation](#) (GDPR) and will not disclose personal information relating to the review process and will destroy all applications and related documents after use for the intended purposes.
- I will seek to be accountable for my actions as a Panel member, and will submit myself to whatever scrutiny is appropriate.
- I will not make public comments about the Charity unless authorised to do so and will inform the Excellence Network grants team of any engagements to speak publicly on any subject related to the work of the Charity. Any public comments I make about the Charity will be considered and in line with its approved messaging.
- I will act with an understanding of Parkinson's with appreciation of the day-to-day challenges of living with Parkinson's.

Managing interests

- I accept my duty to act in the best interests of the Charity and not as a representative of any group – considering what is best for the Charity and its present and future beneficiaries.
- I will conduct myself in a manner that does not damage or undermine the reputation of the Charity or its staff individually or collectively and will not take part

in any activity that conflicts with its objectives or that might damage its reputation.

- I accept my duty to avoid conflicts of interest and unless authorised, I will not put myself in a position where my personal interests conflict with those of the Charity. Where there is a conflict of interest I will declare this in accordance with the conditions under the 'Conflicts of Interest' standards detailed above.
- Where I also volunteer in another capacity with the Charity, I will maintain the separation of my role as an Excellence Network Funding Panel member.

Panel meetings

- I will endeavor to attend virtual Funding Panel meetings as required to discuss applications. If attendance proves problematic I will notify the Excellence Network grants team as soon as possible.
- I understand that these meetings will be minuted and/or recorded.
- I will actively engage in discussion and debate at the Funding Panel meeting, contributing in a considered and constructive way, listening carefully, challenging sensitively and avoiding conflict.
- I accept my duty to act collectively and will actively participate in decision-making. I will accept and publicly support a majority decision of the Funding Panel and will not act individually unless specifically authorised to do so.

Working with others

- I will treat all those I come into contact with at the Charity during my time as a Panel member or reviewer with respect and courtesy. I will respect diversity, different roles and boundaries, and avoid giving offence.

Full Name	<i>[title] [name] [surname]</i>
Job Title	<i>[if applicable]</i>
Place of Work	<i>[if applicable]</i>
Signature	<i>[wet signed and scanned] OR [digital signature]</i>
Date completed	

If you have queries about this document, please contact the Excellence Network grants team on excellencenetworkgrants@parkinsons.org.uk.