

# Excellence Network Project Grants 2024

## Reviewer Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct

This document contains the Terms of Reference and Code of conduct for reviewers 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. The Large grant scheme is for grants in the region of £12,001 to £60,000.
- Each Large grant application is reviewed by at least 2 expert reviewers and 2 lay reviewers. These evaluations inform the Funding Panel decisions.

#### Role

- Reviewers are appointed to independently evaluate any grant applications that fall within the scope of the scheme.
- They are appointed as individuals to fulfill the responsibilities described below, not as representatives of their profession, employer or interest group, and have a duty to act in the interests of Parkinson's UK at all times. Where reviewers declare an organisation's views rather than a personal view, they should make that clear at the time of declaring that view.
- Reviewers should regard themselves as free to question and comment on the information provided or the views expressed by any of their co-reviewers, notwithstanding that the views or information do not relate to their own area of expertise.

#### 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).
- 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 appropriate reviewer evaluation form (expert or lay), ensuring all aspects of the form are completed as fully as possible. Provide an overall score on a ten-point rating scale and a funding recommendation.
- Complete the review within the review period (the dates have been shared with potential

reviewers in advance).

- If the application proceeds to a full application (and you have reviewed the full application), join a Funding Panel meeting to discuss the application at the scheduled time (there will be 15 minute slots for each application). Each reviewer will share their reviews with the panel and will have an opportunity to change their scores based on the discussion. If for any reason the reviewer is unable to attend, they must inform the Excellence Network Grants team.
- 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 to avoid situations in which their duties and other interests conflict or where there could be a suspicion of conflict. When asked to review an application, reviewers need to consider whether there are any potential conflicts of interest and if so inform [excellencenetworkgrants@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto: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 must not only avoid conflict of interest between reviewers and applicants, 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 reviewer 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. Reviewers 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.

- Reviewers 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.
- Reviewers 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 reviewer's possession and was not acquired directly or indirectly from Parkinson's UK or the applicant
  - was received by a reviewer 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 Reviewers 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 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, to maintain the convention that any decision is the collective responsibility of the whole panel and to safeguard the anonymity of any reviewers. Reviewers should resist any request for information or for explanation of how a decision was reached.

## 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 reviewer role (as set out in the 'Terms of Reference' above). I will use my knowledge, skills and experience to fulfill my role as a reviewer.
- 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 reviewer, 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 will not gain materially or financially from my involvement with the Charity unless specifically authorised to do so.
- 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 laid above under 'Conflicts of Interest'.
- Where I also volunteer in another capacity with the Charity, I will maintain the separation of my role as a reviewer.

### **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 reviewer with respect and courtesy. I will respect diversity, different roles and boundaries, and avoid giving offense.

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

If you have any declarations or queries about this document, please contact the Excellence Network grants team on [excellencenetworkgrants@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:excellencenetworkgrants@parkinsons.org.uk).