



# Covid 19 update for RIG recipients

The Trust aims to support its grant holders through the ongoing challenges resulting from the Covid 19 pandemic. This message provides information on how we aim to help recipients of Carnegie Research Incentive Grants manage their awards. Our main objective is to ensure that research is not lost or compromised. We do expect grant recipients to be flexible in the way in which they manage their research activities to minimise the impact of disruptions. Where disruptions are such that research may be compromised or time lost, we will consider funded extensions on a case by case basis, as explained below.

## Delaying the start of the grant

If your grant and the associated research activities have not yet started, you can delay the start date up to 12 months from the date of award shown on your award letter. Just email us to let us know your preferred start date. If you are approaching this 12 month cut off and ongoing restrictions mean that it may not be possible for you to start the research activities as originally planned, email us immediately so we can advise you further.

## Managing your budget

### Transferring funds between budget headings

As research activities are rescheduled or adapted to new or ongoing restrictions linked to the global pandemic, you can transfer funds under different budget headings as the need arises. In addition, if you have paid costs for an event, fieldwork or travel which has been cancelled, and these costs cannot be reimbursed or claimed for under insurance, you may claim these against your grant. If you then need to rebook an event, fieldwork or travel at a later date, these costs can also be charged to your grant, offset by savings elsewhere.

**NOTE:** We do expect researchers to be flexible and cover costs within the existing budget, in the first instance. Do email us to confirm any budget changes you have made or would like to make.

### Dissemination budget

If your grant includes a budget for dissemination activities such as conference attendance, stakeholder workshops, or public engagement events which were cancelled or are unlikely to be held before the end of the grant, you can redirect the funding to cover research costs. You can also use the funds towards publication costs, including open access charges, within the limit of the original dissemination budget listed in the award letter.

### NOTES:

It is not possible to extend the grant period for the sole purpose of attending a conference or holding a KE or Public Engagement event.

Transfers that lead to increases in expenditure on dissemination are not permitted.

### No-cost extensions

To allow for disruptions caused by the pandemic, we are taking a flexible and pragmatic approach to requests for no-cost extensions. Grant extensions are possible to reschedule research activities but **not** for dissemination activities unless a solid case is made when applying for an extension.

If it is unlikely that you will be able to finish the planned research within the originally agreed timeframe, please email us in the first instance to discuss an extension.

## Supplementary funding

In exceptional circumstances, the Trust may agree to supplement the existing award if the research activities have been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak and the existing grant budget does not provide sufficient flexibility to cover the additional costs incurred. Example scenarios include:

### Salary costs of Research Assistants or Technicians employed on a Research Incentive Grant

Where the existing award included the salary of costs of an RA or technician, the Trust will consider requests for additional funding if this staff member was:

- furloughed during the grant period and there is a shortfall between the amount paid out under the UK Government furlough scheme and the actual salary costs originally budgeted in the proposal;
- unable to work due to the closure of facilities during the grant period and they were not eligible for the UK Government's Furlough scheme or the scheme was not available through their university. In these cases, we will consider requests for additional salary costs to enable work to resume and an extension of the employment contract;
- unable to undertake the funded research activities because of shielding or caring responsibilities;
- on sick leave as a result of Covid 19 or had to self-isolate during the grant period and could not undertake the research activities. In cases of sick leave, the Trust will consider requests for supplementary funding to cover the difference between salary costs and any statutory sick payments received.

### Animal maintenance costs

We will consider requests for animal maintenance costs for the period of disruption when laboratories were closed where work carried out before the start of the lockdown has to be repeated.

### Travel costs

Where travel arrangements had to be cancelled and no refund is available or costs could not be claimed against insurance the Trust will consider additional support where it cannot be found within the awarded funds.

### Increased costs

Additionally, we will consider requests where costs have increased as a result of the pandemic and there is a significant shortfall between the original costings and current prices.

**NOTE:** Supplementary funding should **only** be requested as a last resort. Principal Investigators are expected to demonstrate that their research will be severely affected without additional funding and that the costs cannot be met within the original budget by transferring costs between budget headings or from university funds.

### Costs that we will not supplement

We will not provide supplementary funding for:

- materials and consumables
- additional equipment, including laptops or video conferencing costs or licenses
- access charges

The above costs should be covered by your existing funds by transfers between budget headings.

The Trust's policy of excluding the payment of indirect costs or overheads continues to apply.

### **How to apply for supplementary funding**

To apply for supplementary funding, you should first be able to either start or resume your planned research activities. You should check with your grant administrator how much has been claimed against the grant already and discuss how the remaining funds can be used against your original plans. Then email the Trust with details of your revised research plans, expenditure to date and proposed budget changes and we will discuss possible solutions with you.

### **Changes to your own personal or professional circumstances**

If your personal or professional circumstances have changed or are about to change, and these changes may have an impact on your ability to carry out the funded research, or if your employment contract will cease before the end of the grant period, do get in touch with us so we can discuss a workable solution.