

## UK Diabetes Research Network

### Call for Research Group Proposals 2008

#### **Purpose**

The UK Diabetes Research Network (DRN) provides a national infrastructure for large-scale research in diabetes. The Network currently involves eight Local Research Networks (LRNs) which coordinate the recruitment of patients, participants or clinical teams for the large-scale research studies 'adopted' by the Network. The network also has a Clinical Studies Advisory Group (CSAG) with the remit of overseeing the portfolio, working with the Department of Health and funders groups to set a research strategy and addressing any gaps in the portfolio with input from members of the new research groups. To supplement the CSAG the Network is currently seeking proposals to set up a number of new Research Groups. The purpose of Research Groups is to provide the creative drive of the Network. Each Research Group is expected to turn research ideas into funded studies that are suitable for running within the DRN.

#### **Who should apply?**

Research groups will consist of researchers (ideally between 5-20), some at senior level, who have a research track record in the topic covered by the Group. The researchers should be from multiple academic disciplines and institutions. Research Groups should also demonstrate input from service users and carers who have shown an interest in research in the topic covered by the group. Each Research Group must have a Convenor who will accept responsibility for organising Research Group Meetings and for liaising with the DRN and CSAG. Research Groups are open to members of existing LRNs, however Research Groups do not have to include members from any of the LRNs. Extra weight will be given to groups that include the formation of new collaborations between groups that have not previously worked together. DRN welcome applications from groups that were previously unsuccessful.

#### **What is a suitable topic for a research group?**

A suitable topic will be in an area of diabetes where large scale research projects are likely to obtain funding in the near future. This means that the topic will involve an area that has a major health impact and is in a priority area identified by the Department of Health or other major funding body. Applicants should be aware of other current Funder priorities including experimental medicine, and can link across another Topic Network (eg as Medicines for Children, Stroke or Primary Care) The topic should not be too wide in scope but should focus around a specific area, for example, a disease specific Research Group such as "Type 2 diabetes" would not succeed. On the other hand the topic should not be so narrow as to preclude a program of large scale research. As far as possible the DRN will seek to ensure that

the topics of new Research Groups do not overlap with each other. In the last call for research groups the DRN has funded groups in the areas listed below:

1. Use of neuroimaging to investigate metabolic disorders related to diabetes.
2. Detection and prevention of diabetic complications in children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes.
3. Developing structured education programmes for people with diabetes.
4. Prevention of type 2 diabetes.
5. Developing a programme of work for black and ethnic minority groups with diabetes with a focus on South Asian populations.

### **Application Procedure**

Research Groups will be approved on a competitive basis by the CSAG. The application will take the form of an **Expression of Interest** which should consist of:-

- The name of the Research Group
- A brief outline of the scope of the Research Group including a description of the types of participants, research questions and research methods covered. (200 words)
- A statement describing why the topic is of major clinical importance (100 words)
- A brief outline of three ideas for large scale research in the topic (150 words)
- An explanation of why these ideas are considered likely to obtain funding (100 words)
- A description of the proposed membership of the research group to include:- (i) full CV of the proposed convenor; (ii) brief C.V.s of other participating researchers; (iii) proposals for obtaining service user and carer input.
- Full contact details for the main applicants.

### **Support Provided to Research Groups**

A total of £5,000 will be available to support research groups over two years.

### **Responsibilities of the Research Group.**

The Research Group will be expected to convene one or two fairly large initial meetings to which it will invite a range of UK researchers who are interested in the area covered by the group. This initial meeting should also include some clinicians, people with diabetes and carers with an interest in the area. The DRN Consumer Liaison officer Martin Lodemore ([m.lodemore@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:m.lodemore@imperial.ac.uk)) will be able to help with Consumer involvement. From these initial meetings it is anticipated that a number of much smaller Writing Groups will emerge, whose purpose will be to work up one or more research applications on behalf of the group.



Within six months of inception, each Research Group will be required provide the DRN with at least two **Titles**. A **Title** will consist of a formal indication of an intention to develop a study for running within the DRN and will contain: a statement of the question to be studied, the participants, the study method, and the membership of the Writing Group who are developing the proposal.

Within eight months of inception each Research Group will be expected to have submitted two **Protocols** to the CSAG. The DRN can help with feasibility for these protocols if required. A **Protocol** will contain: (i) one or more hypotheses; (ii) a structured abstract; (iii) a power calculation (if necessary); (iv) a summary of the DRN resources required, including any resources required to help develop the full grant application; (v) an intended submission date for the full grant application, with details of the body to which the application will be submitted; and (vi) an estimated schedule for the recruitment of participants.

Within 18 months of inception, each Research Group will be expected to have submitted two protocols for funding and to have obtained funding for at least one large scale research project suitable for running within the DRN. Each Research Group will also be expected to demonstrate how it is continuing to liaise with clinicians who are active in the area covered by the group.

It is anticipated that successful Research Groups will go on to develop programs of research that will continue to run on the Network beyond the duration of the initial studies.

**If you are interested in establishing a research group please submit your application to the DRN ([e.mariani@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:e.mariani@imperial.ac.uk)) by 14<sup>th</sup> March 2008.**