

## NC3Rs guidance for writing a “Case for Support”

- The guidelines below list general points that you should consider when writing your “Case for Support”.
- Each proposal is unique, and it is your responsibility to ensure that all relevant information is provided.
- Along with this document, when writing your “Case for Support” you are advised to refer to the [NC3Rs Grant Assessment Criteria](#), which is provided as guidance for peer reviewers.

### Format and length

- The case for support should be written in Verdana 10 pt, with margins of 2cm at the left, and 1.5cm on all other borders.
- The maximum length of the case for support is 8 sides of A4 (including references, figures and figure legends).
- If you wish to supply letters of support/collaboration, quotes for equipment, or extra details on ethical issues, please do so using Annexes.
- All information that you wish to be considered as part of your research proposal **must** be attached with your application form. Your application cannot be supplemented by further information after the deadline for submissions.

### Content of case for support

Before beginning, please ensure you are clear as to which area of the 3Rs your proposal contributes. See our website [here](#) for definitions of the 3Rs.

#### 1. Title

#### 2. Importance

- You should explain exactly how the research will directly replace, refine or reduce the use of animals in research/testing. It is important to include measures of impact (e.g. scale of reduction in the numbers of animals used; changes to severity level due to refinement of procedure, etc). In addition, it is important to describe how the proposed work will impact the 3Rs locally (i.e. within your own laboratory) and in the wider research community.
- How will the research advance knowledge in replacement, refinement or reduction? Please be clear as to which ‘R’ your research will contribute to. See the [website](#) for more information

- You should explain the need for research in this area and how, if successful, it will benefit medical, veterinary or biological research. In some instances it is useful to include letters of support from your research community as a measure of this need. If the work has potential application to other research areas, it also may be beneficial to describe this.
- Justify the research in terms of its impact on the 3Rs. As well as this, does the proposed model/technique have scientific advantages over traditional ones?
- What, if any, additional steps will be required before an advance in the 3Rs can be implemented? Think about how your work, if successful, would be considered by industry? Does it tackle industry needs? Letters of support from industrial collaborators can be included in the application.
- Give sufficient details of other past and current research to show that your aims are scientifically justified, and to show that your work will add distinct value to what is already known, or in progress.

### **3. Scientific potential**

#### **3.1 Research plans**

- Give details of the experimental approaches, study designs, and techniques you will use. It is not necessary to describe each experiment, but you must give enough detail to show how why your research is likely to be competitive in its field and that it has been carefully planned to provide useful and reliable results:
  - Describe any animal experiments in as much detail as possible.
  - Include details about animal care, housing and husbandry, refinements to procedures, and any welfare assessments that will be carried out.
  - Include details of experimental design including: the number of animals you are proposing to use, an explanation of how this number was arrived at (please provide a sample size calculation if possible), how the experimental design will minimise the number of animals to be used, what measures will be used to reduce bias in experimental design (e.g. randomly allocating animals to treatment groups, and blinded assessment of results), and how experimental outcomes will be assessed and analysed.
  - Highlight plans that are particularly original or unique.
  - Explain in greater detail how new techniques, or particularly difficult or risky studies, will be tackled and describe plans for alternative approaches should these fail.
  - Identify facilities or resources you will need access to.
- If this is a pilot work or proof of principle proposal – give a brief description of likely subsequent proposals if your work is successful.
- It is very important to explain your plans for promoting/disseminating your research to the scientific community. These should include plans over and above standard presentations and publications.
- If successful, what will be the next steps for evaluation, validation and implementation? How will you achieve this? If you have discussed these plans with an industrial partner, it is important to include this and give details.
- Explain opportunities or plans for pursuing commercial exploitation. These must be realistic and credible and if discussed, please include the appropriate industrial links.

### **3.2 Environment, people and track record**

Describe how the scientific environment in which the research will be done will increase the chances of success. Does your proposal include suitable expertise? Are all appropriate areas covered?

- Explain how the research will benefit from facilities provided by the host institution.
- Describe any collaborations needed to support the research, or to help translate it into practice. Please include letters of support.
- All applicants (Principal and Co) should include a *curriculum vitae* in the electronic application form. These should clearly show why the group is best placed to successfully undertake this research. However, if it is not obvious, you may wish to elaborate further in the Case for Support.
- The electronic application will include details of other research funding you hold. Describe the research support (aims, value, staff) you have which is relevant to the NC3Rs proposal.

### **4. Ethical Implications**

- Briefly describe any ethical issues.
- Describe the ethical review and research governance arrangements that would apply to the work done.

### **5. Data preservation for sharing**

NC3Rs expects valuable data arising from NC3Rs-funded research to be made available to the scientific community with as few restrictions as possible. For this reason you must include a data sharing and preservation strategy statement, following where appropriate the MRC's policy ([MRC Data Sharing Policy](#)) and data access principles ([MRC Data Access Policy](#))

### **6. Public engagement in science**

- Your electronic application form will include a statement, in not more than 400 words, to explain to a non-specialist audience the nature of the proposed research, the prospective outcomes and the expected advances in replacing, refining or reducing the use of animals in research.
- In the case for support, state what additional plans, if any, you have for communicating information about your work to the public. How are these plans supported by the host institution's own policies and facilities for communication with, and education of the public?

### **7. Intellectual property, exploitation and dissemination**

- Is the proposed research likely to generate commercially exploitable results? What arrangements and experience does the research group or the host institution have to take forward the commercial exploitation of research in this area?

### **Further information**

For further information please contact the NC3Rs team at [enquiries@nc3rs.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@nc3rs.org.uk) or 020 7670 5331