

Research Grants: Application and Approval Procedure



Mission Statement

“The BDFA’s vision is to bring light to Batten Disease by being the central point of excellence in the UK for supporting affected families and to facilitate research into the disease.”

In support of our mission statement, the BDFA has specific funds which have been raised for research, and chooses to give funds for research and so seeks to fund research grants each year.

Policy

The BDFA seeks to facilitate scientific research into the disease mechanisms, potential cures and treatments for Batten Disease/Neuronal Ceroid Lipofusinoses (NCL). Recognition is given that research may take two forms: pure and applied.

The four main areas in which applications may be made are:

1. Contributions to conferences, seminars, workshops and the publication of scientific literature
2. Part funding of new or existing research projects
3. Funding of research studentships/fellowships
4. Funding of research projects

In making application for a grant the BDFA request that the applicant agrees to apply by the procedure and conditions of the award relevant to the value of the approved grant.

A multi-tiered application and funding system exists based on the amount of the grant application and is divided as follows:

Tier 1	up to £500
Tier 2	greater than £500 up to £5000
Tier 3	greater than £5000 n/a until 2010.

Provisions

As a registered charity, BDFA Research Grants are conditional on recognition of the BDFA Funding contribution in the publication of subsequent research papers and other associated literature and any other form of dissemination.

All grant award(s) must be used to cover direct costs of the project/ investigation and may not be used for overhead costs. Any equipment that needs to be bought for the project will remain the property of the BDFA after completion of the project.

At the conclusion of the grant funded activity any unspent funds must be returned to the BDFA within six months. The BDFA reserves the right to relocate any equipment provided for, or purchased from, the grant if no longer used primarily for Batten Disease Research.

If a recipients research, funded wholly or in part by the BDFA, results in any new discoveries or invention that may benefit individuals with Batten Disease/NCL, the BDFA reserves the right to use, as it deems appropriate, such discovery or invention for non commercial research purposes.

The recipient and/or the recipients institution must inform the BFDA immediately if they are seeking to make any commercial gain, patent application or secure any property rights or to legally protect any discovery or invention (or part of) resulting directly or indirectly from the BDFA funded research.

The BDFA shall be entitled to an equitable share of any patent, proprietary right and/or commercial gain that accrue to the recipient and/or the recipient's institution resulting directly or indirectly from the BDFA funded research commensurate with the level of the BDFA funding to the research.

Tier 1: up to £500

Subject to a maximum of £500 per applicant/per year

Project Specification

It is envisaged that projects within this tier will be to support existing researchers in the field of Batten Disease/NCL to fund or part fund one of more of the following activities:

- a) Attendance at conferences, workshops or seminars to promote awareness though the presentation of scientific papers or to increase knowledge.
This will be funding up to a maximum of £500 per laboratory/group per financial year.
- b) Publication of scientific or applied research papers in recognised journals
- c) Membership of relevant professional or scientific institutes or associations

Application Procedure

All applicants for Tier 1 should obtain an Application Form which is available for downloading from the BDFA website.

Submission of a completed Application Form may be made at any time during the financial year and should be sent to the registered address of BDFA.

The BDFA will accept scanned signatures on the Application Form but reserve the right to subsequently request a hard copy.

Evaluation of Application

Upon receipt of a completed application form, the BDFA Research Team will evaluate the request and communicate their decision by formal letter within one month.

Review Process

All successful applicants within subcategories a), b), or c) should provide a report of the benefit derived from the BDFA grant and, where appropriate, a short lay summary for the Board of Trustees.

It is preferred that these reports are submitted to the BDFA Research Team no later than one month of the conclusion of the conference, workshop or seminar.

Notification of, and a copy of any published material (including presentations) shall be submitted to the Research Team within one month of acceptance for publication.

In the case of a BDFA grant for membership of professional or scientific institutes or associations' proof of membership should be submitted to the BDFA Research Team within one month of joining.

At the conclusion of the grant funded activity and any unspent funds returned to the BDFA within six months. In all cases, a brief financial breakdown of the funds deployed may be requested by the BDFA Research Team.

The BDFA reserves the right to relocate any equipment provided for, or purchased from, the grant if no longer used primarily for Batten Disease Research.

Acknowledgements

All applicants are reminded that the BDFA support should be acknowledged in any publication or presentation.

Tier 2: greater than £500, up to £5000

Project Specification

It is envisaged that projects within this tier will be to support existing and to encourage new researchers in the field of Batten Disease/NCL with the following resources:

- a) Fully or part funded equipment (capital expenditure)
- b) Fully or part funded research materials (consumables)
- c) Part funded technical support, studentships, or post doctoral researchers
- d) Start up or extension of existing research projects

Application Procedure

All applicants for Tier 2 should obtain an application form which is available for downloading from the BDFA website and complete together with the relevant supporting information and Lay Summary.

The BDFA will accept scanned signatures on the Application Form but reserve the right to subsequently request a hard copy.

Supporting Information

For Tier 2 projects, the following supporting information is required as described below:

Categories a) & b)

A description of the purpose, usage period and evidence of the technical personnel funding in relation to the use of the capital expenditure or the consumables, as appropriate, within the project

Category c)

Evidence of the current funding and its period in relation to the completion of the studentship, post doctorate research or employment contract must be provided. Where university fees are applied for a maximum of £5000 can be awarded and any residual amount, in excess of the actual fees paid must be returned to the BDFA within 3 months.

Category d)

A brief itemised budget proposal of the costs (e.g. technical personnel funding, consumables and capital expenditure) for the start up or extension of an existing research project and the submission of the relevant supporting information under categories a), b) and c) where appropriate.

Lay Summary

A Lay Summary is required and should be completed in the space provided on the Application Form. This is very important as the BDFA Research Team will make recommendations to the Board of Trustees, who will make the final funding decision.

Submission of the completed Application Form including the supporting information and Lay Summary can is:

12:00 Hs (GMT) on 13th January 2010

Please note completed applications will only be accepted in the period after the announcement for each Call for Grants and must be submitted before the deadlines above. In exceptional circumstances applications may be considered at the discretion of the BDFA Research Team.

Evaluation of Application

Upon receipt of an application, the BDFA Research Team will evaluate the request and put their recommendation to the Board of Trustees meeting as follows:

13th January submissions February Meeting of the Board of Trustees

The outcome of the Trustees meeting will be communicated to all applicants by formal letter within one month following the relevant Board meeting.

Review Process

At the completion of the funding period all successful applicants within subcategories a), b), c) and d) should provide the following within two months:

1. A report of the outcome and benefit derived from the BDFA grant .This report is intended for the Research Team, relevant panel members and Trustees and can be confidential.
2. A Lay Summary (suggested length 1/2 page) for the Trustees and members of the BDFA and any other interested parties or for use in publicity (such as the BDFA newsletter or website).

Notification of, and a copy of any published material (including presentations) shall be submitted to the Research Team within one month of acceptance for publication.

At the conclusion of the grant funded activity any unspent funds must be returned to the BDFA within six months unless a special request (including a report on the progress of the project and reasons for the proposed extension) is made, in writing to the BDFA to extend the Research Grant funding period. In all cases, a brief financial breakdown of the funds deployed may be requested by the BDFA Research Team.

The BDFA reserves the right to relocate any equipment provided for, or purchased from, the grant if no longer used primarily for Batten Disease Research.

Acknowledgements

All applicants are reminded that the BDFA support should be acknowledged in any publication or presentation.

Tier 3: greater than £5000

New guidelines for Tier 3 will be released in 2010.