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| ISSF3 Consolidation and Independence Panel: Seeds for Seed AwardGuidance for Applications |

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| **1. Background - Seeds for Seed Awards (up to £20K)** |
| **IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**  **This Round F of ISSF3 will be the final full launch of all ISSF3 research focused schemes (this does not include Public Engagement). Some additional scheme specific calls may still operate to help balance our portfolio of projects and deliver on Wellcome Trust grant expectations but this will be entirely budget dependent. ISSF3 was awarded in 2016 and will continue to operate as a programme until 2021.**  **The programme successfully completed its mid-term review to unlock the full £7M allocation from Wellcome Trust. However, the programme must complete its project spend within the programme period (30th June 2021) and so funded projects need time to recruit, implement and deliver project outcomes. As a result, the budget is profiled to commit the majority of resource by this stage of ISSF3. Some additional schemes may run in 2020 but the timing, which schemes and the budget allocation will not be guaranteed. Public engagement calls are profiled separately so will continue to run into 2020. If you have innovative project ideas then please submit them during this final full round to avoid any future disappointment.**  Following on from the College’s successful award of a third round of Wellcome Trust Institutional Strategic Support Fund (ISSF), funding is available for Wellcome Trust ISSF3 Seeds for Seed Awards. Awards must be led by an early career researcher based in the College of Biomedical and Life Sciences. Collaborations are welcome while noting that the award is designed to catalyse early career future funding opportunities.  Seedcorn Awards were one of the most popular ISSF2 schemes (application numbers: success rates = 69:15). In ISSF3, the Seeds for Seed awards have been refocussed to help early career researchers develop new ideas to underpin external large-scale grant applications such as Wellcome Trust Seed Awards or New Investigators RCUK grants.  Researchers eligible to apply for this award should be within 3 years of starting their first lectureship and must not have previously held (as Principal Investigator) a grant award of excess of £75K per year. The award aims to support research staff time and consumables for the collection of preliminary data leading to submission of a first significant externally funded research grant.  **ROUND F HIGHLIGHT NOTIFICATION** - This award will also fund clinically qualified researchers that have already obtained their PhD but are looking for small scale funding to build preliminary data and test feasibility. There are no restrictions on career stage for clinicians other than the completion of a PhD. All Clinical Researchers should identify a suitable sponsor for their project from within the College of Biomedical Life Sciences and have proven ability to support the career development of the individual. Joint sponsors supporting interdisciplinary skill development will be viewed positively, aligned to our wish to support interdisciplinary research via the ISSF3 award.  **Summary:** The Seeds for Seed Award will fund exciting and innovative cross-disciplinary seedcorn projects which have the potential to significantly help early career researchers develop novel ideas that will go on to form part of applications to the Wellcome Trust or elsewhere. |

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| **2. Application Guidance and Top Tips** |
| The application has different sections, which we use to evaluate your project and complete Wellcome Trust reporting requirements. **Please use the suggested word limit.**  Lay Summary – This new section will be made available to external visitors to the Cardiff University ISSF3 website. Please write for a non-technical audience, and ensure the importance of the activity is clear. For guidance on how to write lay summary, please click [here](http://www.dcc.ac.uk/resources/how-guides/write-lay-summary).  Project Outline – To enable comparison between submitted projects, please provide information about your project using our requested headings: nature of the project, objectives, research plan, hypotheses and expected scientific outcomes. Dissemination of these scientific outcomes will be one of the measures of success that we will report to the Wellcome Trust. **Please provide a timeline for delivery of key research tasks in an Appendix (e.g., Gantt Chart).**  Research Innovation – The College is keen to encourage Wellcome Trust ISSF3 funding to support new emerging research where the collection of pilot data can support submission of subsequent external grant funding. This section provides an opportunity to outline how your project goes beyond current state-of-the-art and advance research in a key priority biomedical question.  Research Sustainability – Our Seeds for Seed award is designed to enable early career researchers to develop evidence for potential funding ideas. In this section, please tell us why this seed award is required and how it will provide a clear pathway to external funding. A common error here is for applicants to list a range of different funding schemes. We are looking for evidence of a more focused approach to sustainability where you have identified a clear funding opportunity where your research aligns to the strategic priorities of that funder and there is a suitable call within a relevant timeframe of completion of your award. The information you provide here will be one of the sustainable measures of success for the project, and provided for monitoring purposes to the Wellcome Trust.  Enhancing Research Careers – Our new Wellcome Trust award focuses on enhancing research careers across the academic lifespan. Please tell us why this award is important to you, and to your career ambitions (e.g., new data, skill sets, project management experience). How will this help you transition to the next stage of your career?  Equality and Diversity – As part of the Wellcome Trust award we are embedding monitoring of equality and diversity throughout all schemes, and wish to learn more about how you will apply this if you are employing staff on the award. Information you provide here will form part of our reporting around this area to the Wellcome Trust.  Justification of Resources – We often receive applications that pay cursory attention to finances, and many that ask for the full amount possible without any justification of this request. It is critical to justify your requested finances, and to provide a clear breakdown using the suggested headings. Consumables should be justified individually rather than providing a single lump sum request. Where finances are not sufficiently detailed, applications will not be considered at the relevant Panel. Please note, conference costs are not able to be supported for ISSF projects.  ISSF project association or resubmission - Within the ISSF programme we have specific rules from Wellcome Trust that prevent continuation funding. Within the programme we also aim to ensure that the portfolio of projects does not include double funding or overlapping projects (from overlapping project teams). This question aims to provide applicants with an opportunity to declare associations with other ISSF projects and submissions. If the idea or concept is similar to other ISSF projects of previous submissions, then please clarify how this new project is substantially different and occupies a separate niche. Within ISSF we welcome reformulations of previously submitted grants, however resubmissions should have responded in a significant and substantive way to the previous feedback. This question will ensure the panel are aware of the efforts you have made to position your project and respond to feedback. Please also ensure you are familiar with the eligibility criteria details surrounding applicants not being able to apply for another scheme in the same pillar grouping in the same round i.e. you cannot be a named PI in the same pillar in the same round.  Statement of Support: This section must be signed by your current line manager to confirm that you have permission from your School that you can devote sufficient time to undertake this project, if your application becomes successful.  Peer Review – To support high-quality peer review, we are providing information about call deadlines well in advance to enable appropriate preparation of grants. We have requested information, therefore, about the individual who has peer reviewed your application, and a tick-box to ensure that School peer review and costing procedures have been followed. |

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| **3. Application Process & Review** |
| All applications should be submitted on the appropriate application form, with attention paid to the requirements for each section. Please note that additional information/appendices (beyond our requested timeline, see Project Outline) are **not** allowed and will be excluded from the application at review. Applicants should **not** exceed the permitted word count for each section (including table and figure legends); if they do, the application will not be considered at the Panel. Similarly, a lack of detailed justification of research costs will result in the application not being submitted to the Panel.  Applicants should **not be Lead PI** on an application for more than one funding scheme within the Consolidation and Independence Panel at the same time. This restriction is designed to reduce the number of applications the panel has to review, and encourage researchers to consider applications aligned to the right scheme at the right time in the research delivery timeline.  All applications will be reviewed by an experienced and representative panel of Cardiff University staff. For these panels we aim to ensure representation from across the College, both in terms of scientific expertise, diversity and seniority. Early career researchers may attend these panels as observers, and be provided with applications (in confidence) to help them learn more about grant reviewing processes.  Alongside assessment of the scientific quality of the project, and potential to deliver sustainable external funding, the panel will be encouraged to consider alignment with the Wellcome Trust ISSF3 career framework and College research priorities. They will also consider the benefit to early career researchers.  Strategic decisions when applications are tied for funding will be made based on College research priority and consideration of current PI-held Wellcome Trust ISSF3 funding. Regarding the latter, we are keen that the Wellcome Trust Funds are used to the maximum benefit for the many talented researchers we have in the College, and researchers should consider carefully which schemes to apply for aligned to their research aspirations. Similarly, consideration of budgets can mean that the full requested amount of funding may not be awarded. |

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| **4. Governance and Panellists** |
| Wellcome Trust ISSF Schemes are reviewed by separate panels aligned to career stage (currently Training, Consolidation & Independence, Collaboration and Public Engagement). The Seeds for Seed Award is considered at the Consolidation and Independence Panel.  Our panellists are all experienced at grant reviewing, with each panel including representation from both junior / senior researchers, as well as across all Schools in the College. Panellists undergo equality and diversity training to ensure as fair and transparent process of assessment.  Panels provide recommended decisions which require ratification by the Wellcome Trust ISSF3 Board. Panellists are not allowed to provide information about outcomes from panel decision-making, similar to external grant reviewing panels. The contact for all queries relevant to applications, panels and outcomes is via [ISSFAdmin@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:ISSFAdmin@cardiff.ac.uk).  Due to the high number of submissions to our Wellcome ISSF2 Panels it has not previously been possible for the College to provide detailed feedback to applicants. For ISSF3, we hope to ensure that early career researchers obtain feedback from applications to help them develop their skills in grant writing. This will be developed as we start to understand the demand for our dedicated early career researcher schemes, and how we might best enhance the opportunities for our more junior researchers. |

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| **5. Submission Deadline** |
| All applications should be submitted to [ISSFAdmin@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:ISSFAdmin@cardiff.ac.uk) by **17:00 GMT, Monday 4 November 2019.** Applications submitted after this time will **not** be accepted. All applications need to be subjected to the normal review and costings procedures within the submitting School. Please submit a Microsoft Word version of the application. |