



# Call for Experts - Blood Cancer UK Advisory Panels and Funding Committees

Blood Cancer UK welcomes expressions of interests from leading scientists, clinicians and healthcare professionals to join one of the following advisory panels and funding committees:

- Science Strategy Advisory Panel
- Research Funding Committee (formerly the Research Committee)
- Clinical Trials Review Committee (formerly the Clinical Trials Committee)
- Healthcare Professional Advisory Panel

This 'Call for Experts' document provides information about these advisory panel and committees, the expert profiles being sought, how to submit an expression of interest and the process of selection.

## Introduction

Blood Cancer UK is seeking to set up a new Science Strategy Advisory Panel, in addition to recruiting additional members to our existing Clinical Trials Review, Research Funding Committees and Healthcare Professional Advisory Panel. We also aim to develop a roster of potential candidates for future vacancies to ensure a more rapid and efficient recruitment and onboarding process as the need arises.

## Background

Blood Cancer UK is the largest sole blood cancer research funder in the UK. We have a long history of investing in blood cancer research and a current grant portfolio worth around £40 million. This includes research projects, cell banks and clinical trials. This research has led to huge developments in our understanding of blood cancers, but we know that we need to do more if we're going to beat blood cancer within a generation.

In June 2021, Blood Cancer UK launched a new [Research Strategy](#), setting out an overarching approach to our future research investment, and our short-term priorities. These will always be guided by a focus on both impact, and what matters to people affected by blood cancer.

Across our portfolio, Blood Cancer UK is committed to funding excellent quality scientific research that will improve our understanding of blood cancers, lead to the development of new treatments with fewer side effects and will ensure that more people survive.

To help us deliver our ambitious strategy and ensure that we continue to fund research of the highest quality, while keeping abreast of new advancements in research and emerging opportunities, we will need the support of our research community to provide expert peer review and provide critical insight and knowledge from the field. We would be delighted to receive expressions of interest to join the following expert groups:

### Science Strategy Advisory Panel

Members of this new advisory panel will have a responsibility to provide the Blood Cancer UK Board of Trustees with advice and insight on upcoming scientific areas and opportunities of high importance to people with blood cancer. The panel will have a broad range of blood cancer, scientific and clinical expertise and will provide recommendations to our Board of Trustees on the setting of future priorities and emerging opportunities for strategic investment or collaborative research.

### Research Funding Committee

Members of our Research Funding Committee assess and score new applications for our response-mode grant schemes and make funding recommendations to our Board of Trustees. This Committee has an essential role in ensuring Blood Cancer UK continues to support



innovative research of the highest quality. We rely on our experts to advise us on the quality and feasibility of the research project proposals we receive, in addition to their potential to advance the field and improve the lives of people living with blood cancer, while ensuring that the charity's funding is spent wisely, and costs justified for the work proposed. Members of this committee may also be called upon to provide expert peer review and quality assurance on strategic funding investments on an ad hoc basis when a need for their expertise arises.

## Clinical Trials Review Committee

Our Clinical Trials Review Committee is responsible to the Board of Trustees for the oversight, development, review, and management of the Blood Cancer UK portfolio of awards for clinical trials and clinical trials infrastructure. This Committee reviews and makes funding recommendations in relation to scientific and clinical milestone reports for studies currently in progress. This Committee may also be asked to provide expert peer review and quality assurance for strategic funding investments and partnerships in clinical trials. Members can also be asked to participate in Research Funding Committee meetings as co-opted members to assist with the review of research projects associated with clinical trials when a need for their expertise arises.

## Healthcare Professional Advisory Panel

Our Healthcare Professional Advisory Panel has a membership of expert healthcare professionals from across the UK working in haemato-oncology and associated areas of health and well-being. Members of the panel contribute their knowledge, skills, and expertise to help develop and inform the charity's strategy on clinical and scientific developments, policy and campaigning activities, information and support services and the healthcare professional education and engagement activities. Members may be asked to represent Blood Cancer UK at public meetings, events and in the media.

## What's involved?

Each of our advisory panels or committees are expected to meet at least twice each year, either virtually or in person, usually for one day at a time.



Documents for review will be sent in advance of the meeting and members will usually be asked to lead the review and discussion process for a subset of the applications, progress reports or other agenda items for a particular meeting.

For grant application or progress report reviews, each committee member will be asked to be a Lead Reviewer for a subset of applications or reports for each meeting and to provide a written critique and summary of the Committee's views, for Blood Cancer UK to use when preparing tailored feedback for applicants and grantholders.

In addition to attendance at meetings, some participation may be requested during the year, including participation in specific working groups, video and telephone conferences and interaction via email. Review of strategic funding proposals may also be solicited from members on an ad hoc basis from time to time.

All members of our advisory panels and members are expected to serve in their individual expert capacity and shall not represent any governments, commercial industries or entities, any research, academic or civil society organisations, or any other bodies, entities, institutions, or organisations. They are expected to fully comply with the Blood Cancer UK Conflicts of Interest Policy and Committee Code of Conduct.

Appointed members will not be remunerated for their services in relation to their contributions to the work of the panel or committee. Travel and accommodation expenses of members to participate in meetings will be covered by Blood Cancer UK in accordance with its applicable policies and procedures.

## What expertise are we looking for?

The Blood Cancer UK advisory panels and committees will be constituted as multidisciplinary groups of scientific and clinical experts. Members will have a high standing in their field, and have a range of technical knowledge, skills, and experience relevant to blood cancer research and clinical care.

Each advisory panel or committee will also have at least one member with personal experience of blood cancer, to provide insights from a patient's perspective.



Lay advisory panel and committee members have been recruited in a separate call for experts by experience.

We have an immediate need for new members for the Science Strategy Advisory Panel and Healthcare Professional Advisory Panel and to fill several gaps in expertise on our Research Funding Committee and Clinical Trials Review Committee.

We welcome expressions of interest from clinical academics and basic biomedical scientists with expertise in any area related to our current research priority areas as outlined below:

### Improved understanding of fundamental disease processes

- Including underlying areas such as disease origin, transformation and relapse, so that we can better predict, and in the future, prevent, blood cancer.

### Improving treatment options for the individual

- Including personalised approaches and immunotherapies, resulting in improved survival with fewer side effects (due to less toxic treatments).

### Developing novel approaches to the use of data

- Advancing our understanding through analysing large and rich data sets to facilitate benefits across blood cancers.

For our existing committees we currently have gaps in the following blood cancer specialities and technical expertise:

- Paediatric oncology
- Clinical trial statistics and methodology
- Myeloma
- Lymphoma
- Myeloid malignancies
- Leukaemia (Acute Myeloid and Acute Lymphoblastic)
- Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia
- Genomics and gene regulation
- Chromosome biology
- Haematopoiesis and stem cell biology
- Animal models
- Bioinformatics
- Big data processing and machine learning.



We would also welcome applications from suitably qualified experts from outside the UK.

For the **Healthcare Professional Advisory Panel**, we would welcome applicants from the following fields:

- Consultants and registrars with clinical experience in haematology/haemato-oncology;
- Professionals with significant expertise in supporting the emotional and psychological wellbeing of people affected by blood cancer;
- Haemato-oncology nurse specialists;
- Allied health care professionals working in haematology or haemato-oncology;
- Healthcare professionals with significant experience in clinical research and clinical trials.

In recognition of the need for a regular, phased rotation of panel and committee members, we are seeking to constitute a list of suitably qualified experts to fill gaps in advisory panel or committee membership as they become available. Therefore, anyone with a potential interest to be considered for selection for Blood Cancer UK membership during the course of the next 24 months is encouraged to apply now.

## How do I register my interest?

To register your interest in being considered for a role on one of our advisory panels or funding committees, please email [research@bloodcancer.org.uk](mailto:research@bloodcancer.org.uk), with a copy of your CV and a cover email stating which panel or committee(s) you would be interested in joining, a summary of expertise and how you meet the assessment criteria below.

Please note the closing date for receipt of expressions of interest is **COP Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2021**.

## How will I know if I have been invited?

We will review Expressions of Interest applications received following the deadline and will get back to you by Friday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2021 to let you know if you have been invited to join a panel or committee.



Expressions of interest will be reviewed and selected by the Blood Cancer UK Director of Research, Services and Engagement, the Deputy Director of Policy, Campaigns and Engagement, the Head of Research, relevant panel or committee Chair(s) and members of the Blood Cancer UK Board of Trustees, as appropriate.

The following (non-exclusive) criteria will be used to assess applications:

- Expertise in research areas relevant to blood cancer research;
- Track record of conducting and leading internationally respected research as a senior scientist or clinician;
- In depth knowledge of experimental design, techniques or statistical methods;
- Experience of leading or involvement in strategic projects or collaborative research across multiple disciplines;
- Experience of reviewing and assessing applications, with an understanding of how funding decisions are reached;
- Affiliation with a university, research institute, industry, or other independent organisation.

Selection of members for the **Healthcare Professional Advisory Panel** will be made by Blood Cancer UK in its sole discretion, taking into account the following (non-exclusive) criteria:

- Expertise in clinical care for people affected by blood cancer;
- Knowledge and experience of implementing change to address needs of blood cancer community;
- Experience of leading or involvement in health innovation projects across multiple disciplines;
- Experience of presenting and advocating at public events or to the media.

Selection of new members will also take into account of the need for diverse perspectives, and we will strive for a balance across blood cancer diseases, scientific disciplines, gender, career stage, ethnicity, and geographical location, while endeavouring to ensure that less than half of members are beneficiaries of Blood Cancer UK funding at any one time.



Selected members will be sent an invitation letter, the Terms of Reference, and a Declaration of Conflicts of Interest Form. Formal appointment as a member of a Blood Cancer UK advisory panel or committee will be subject to the invited individual returning to Blood Cancer UK a signed copy of the Terms of Reference and Declaration of Conflicts of Interest form.

Blood Cancer UK reserves the right to accept or reject any expression of interest, to annul the open call process and reject all expressions of interest at any time without incurring any liability to the affected applicant or applicants and without any obligation to inform the affected applicant or applicants of the grounds for Blood Cancer UK's action.

Blood Cancer UK may also decide, at any time, not to proceed with the establishment of the Science Strategy Advisory Panel, to disband an existing panel or committee or modify the work of a panel or committee.

Blood Cancer UK shall not in any way be obliged to reveal, or discuss with any applicant, how an expression of interest was assessed, or to provide any other information relating to the evaluation/selection process or to state the reasons for not choosing a member.

We may publish the names and a short biography of the selected individuals on the Blood Cancer UK webpages.

Appointments will be limited in time as indicated in the letter of appointment – usually three years, renewable once. If you have any questions about this call, please contact [research@bloodcancer.org.uk](mailto:research@bloodcancer.org.uk)

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