**Joint NIHR Imperial Biomedical Research Centre, Ovarian Cancer Action Research Centre and Brain Tumour Research Centre**

**CALL FOR PILOT PROJECTS**

**Deadline: 1pm 14th July by email to** [antonia.gould@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:antonia.gould@imperial.ac.uk)

Funding is available for small pilot projects of up to £40,000 from [NIHR Imperial BRC Surgery and Cancer Theme](https://imperialbrc.nihr.ac.uk/research/surgery-and-cancer/), the Ovarian Cancer Action Research Centre and The Brain Tumour Research Centre (one per funding source)

**1. Scope and Criteria**

**Proposals will be assessed against the following key criteria:**

***NIHR Imperial BRC***

Will the proposed work help deliver clinical and biomedical research that meets the Surgery and Cancer Theme objectives in the following areas?

* 1. *Diagnosis and Detection*
  2. *Precision Management*
  3. *Evolution and Adaptation*

***Ovarian Cancer Action***

Will the work help deliver clinical and biomedical research that meets the Centre’s key objective in Precision Management? *Understanding how ovarian cancer adapts over space and time, and turning that knowledge into new treatment strategies.*

***Brain Tumour Research Centre***

Applications should address one of the following:

1. *Precision imaging to delineate and monitor diseases more sensitively*
2. *Novel technologies to visualise and detect tumours*
3. *Development of novel therapies for clinical implementation*.

***Additional Criteria***

* Are the financial expenditure plans achievable within the time period?
* Does the proposal provide evidence for operational readiness (e.g. ethics, consent, samples, staff in place) so that expenditure can begin immediately?
* What outcomes will be delivered as a result of this funding?
* Proposals should be scientifically sound and innovative.
* Proposals should aim to deliver benefits to the NHS and its patients.
* Plans should be sufficiently realistic and detailed to deliver the proposed outputs.
* Are there any risks to delivery and how have these been mitigated?
* Cross-BRC Theme and cross-Department/Faculty engagement is encouraged.

**2. Project Costings**

* All costs must be justified in the application.
* Proposals that include salary costs must be developed using WorkTribe. Departments should select internal scheme and costings will need to have been agreed in outline by the relevant Department.
* The WorkTribe record should be attached to your application.
* Budgets need to be broken down into financial years (Apr-Mar). Carryover of budget between financial years is not automatic.
* Applicants are reminded to consider and include any costs that may need to be incurred within Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust (ICHT) to deliver proposals (particularly around the use of the iCARE Trusted Research Environment).
* Projects will be funded for a maximum of 12 months starting no earlier than 01 Oct 2025 and must be completed by 31 Dec 2026.
* Any salary costs requested should not duplicate resources already provided by the BRC.
* New posts are unlikely to be recruited in time to deliver significant value and therefore will not be supported.
* Eligible costs may include salary support and consumables. Animal costs and equipment costing more than £5K are ineligible for BRC projects. However, animal costs are permissible for OCA and BTR projects.
* These awards will not support any estate costs, indirect costs or PI time.
* Projects must adhere to all BRC contractual terms and conditions.
* External collaboration and the use of external samples and datasets are permitted. However, all expenditure must be incurred within ICL or ICHT.

**3. Eligibility**

Any academic member of staff with an employment contract with either Imperial College London or ICHT may apply. Priority will be given to junior and mid-career applicants. All applicants must hold a contract of employment which extends to at least the end of the proposed project and all applicants must have secured departmental approval prior to submission (Divisional Manager email will suffice).

As well as ICHT, applications are eligible from Imperial College London substantive employees who are attached to either Chelsea & Westminster NHS Foundation Trust or The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust. BRC-funded project work must take place within the NIHR Imperial BRC and therefore a substantive employment association with Imperial College London is required in these cases.

**4. Application Review**

The deadline for submission of proposals is 1pm Monday 14th July 2025 to [antonia.gould@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:antonia.gould@imperial.ac.uk). Proposals will be assessed by a panel of reviewers and our community partners. Final decisions will be made by the Surgery and Cancer BRC theme Executive Committee. Applications will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria outlined above. Key dates are as follows:

Monday 14th July 2025 Deadline for submission of proposals

Wednesday 10th September 2025 Funding decisions meeting

Wednesday 1st October 2025 Earliest project start date

Thursday 31st December 2026 Latest project end date

**5. NIHR Imperial BRC Reporting & Monitoring Requirements**

Successful awardees will be required to show evidence of expenditure beginning as indicated within the proposal plan. If progress and/or expenditure is deemed unsatisfactory, continuation of funding may be terminated and funds re-allocated.

A brief final report showing outputs and deliverables achieved with this funding will be expected within 1 month of project end date.

**6. Acknowledgement of BRC Funding**

All publications arising from BRC-funded work (either fully or in-part) must [acknowledge support](https://imperialbrc.nihr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Acknowledgments-Leaflet-current.pdf) by the NIHR Imperial BRC and, where appropriate, failure to do so can result in funding being withdrawn.

**7. Enquiries**

General enquiries relating to the scope and objectives of this call should be directed to the Theme Leads Iain McNeish ([i.mcneish@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:i.mcneish@imperial.ac.uk)) and Amanda Cross ([amanda.cross@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:amanda.cross@imperial.ac.uk)).