

Systematic Review Grant 2024

Top tips and FAQs

The Royal College of Occupational Therapists Research Foundation has offered a range of research grants annually since 2007. Over the years, 204 proposals have been submitted to the RCOT Research Foundation and 64 grants have been awarded. Each year, the Research Foundation Advisory Group highlights points for general feedback to applicants. We have developed these points into a list of 'top tips' and FAQs which we hope will be helpful as you prepare your application.

Top Tips

- Consider whether your proposal represents good value for money.
- Be realistic about what can be achieved, and not too ambitious. Build on your existing research strengths and ensure that you have appropriate support to successfully complete a high-quality systematic review.
- Consider how the proposed review addresses one or more of the Top 10 research priorities for occupational therapy in the UK (<https://www.rcot.co.uk/top-10>) and what the benefit will be to the profession and people who access occupational therapy services and/or their families or carers.
- Make it explicit within your proposal what you are intending to do and how. Keep it simple and focused. Include sufficient detail and ensure it is clearly explained.
- Adhere to the application form completion criteria, particularly word limits and font size. Don't append additional documents as these will not be read. All essential facts should be included within the proposal form.
- Allow time to have your proposal peer reviewed prior to submission.
- Be mindful of the submission criteria and deadline, and allow sufficient time for obtaining signatures of any co-applicants, calculation of financial costings and any institutional sign off required.
- Understand the deliverables required if your proposal is successful.
- The ability to begin work promptly is an advantage, but you will need to propose a realistic start date. In determining the proposed project start date, factor in sufficient time for grant contract negotiation and sign off. This could take two to three months following confirmation of a successful outcome.

FAQs

Q: What funding aspects can be included within my costings for a proposed Systematic Review Grant?

A: We expect the funding section of the application form to include actual costs related to

undertaking the project – for example, staff time costs (salary/grade), administrative costs and materials. As a registered charity we do not fund university overheads. The RCOT Research Foundation Advisory Group will discuss whether the costs proposed seem reasonable for the work planned.

Q: Would attendance at a conference be covered by a RCOT Research Foundation grant?

A: Yes - subject to an overall maximum of £500 for a Systematic Review Grant.

Q: Is it necessary to have a co-applicant to apply for a Systematic Review Grant?

A: No – it is not necessary to include a co-applicant in your application, but you should consider whether you need mentorship, additional expertise or support to carry out your review.

Q: What do you mean by peer review?

A: By peer review we mean that someone outside of the research team, but with research experience, has reviewed your application prior to its submission.

Q: Can I nominate external reviewers from within my institution?

A: Yes – but you mustn't nominate your PhD supervisor or anyone from your department or whose involvement in the review process would be a conflict of interest. Additionally, you shouldn't nominate someone who is an employee of RCOT or someone you have conducted research with recently. Ideally, your reviewer would have a doctorate or equivalent practice experience. Please ask permission from those you nominate as external reviewers before putting their names forward.

Further help and advice

If you would like to discuss your project proposal, particularly if you are unsure if it is the right time to submit a grant application or if you have a question about the application process, please contact Angie Thompson, RCOT R&D Officer, in the first instance at: angie.thompson@rcot.co.uk or telephone: 020 3141 4615.

Additionally, Dr Phillip Whitehead, previous Research Foundation grant holder and NIHR panel member, has created a helpful webinar providing information on writing good grant proposals. You can find it on our [website](#), under the heading 'Helpful webinar'.

Finally

You can find other funding opportunities through the R&D Bulletin and discuss research opportunities and issues with other RCOT members via Research Connect, a closed LinkedIn group. You can find out how to access both here: <https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/research-and-development#research-networking>.