

Scientific and Medical Committee Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of the Committee

- 1.1. To provide recommendations to Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI (LLNI) on decisions relating to the funding and management of research projects.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Board of Trustees of LLNI establish the strategy and policies of the charity and ensure the effective and equitable use of the Charity's resources in pursuit of its objectives.
- 2.2. The Scientific and Medical Committee will advise the Chair, who has delegated authority from the Board of Trustees, in making recommendations for funding awards to ensure the support of only the highest quality of research. The Scientific and Medical Committee is not a grant making body.
- 2.3. The Scientific and Medical Committee are expected to ensure their recommendations have a benefit to people affected by leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma and associated blood cancers and make effective use of charitable funds.
- 2.4. All Committee members are responsible for ensuring the recommendations for funding are in line with LLNI's current Research Strategy. The Scientific and Medical Committee will work within LLNI policies, plans and budgets.
- 2.5. The Scientific and Medical Committee will consider applications for funding for basic, translational and clinical related research.
- 2.6. LLNI will revise these Terms of Reference on a regular basis and notify the Scientific and Medical Committee of amendments.

3. Terms of Reference

- 3.1. To provide advice to LLNI as to whether individual research grant applications merit LLNI funding. This involves considering the comments of expert and lay external reviewers in making a judgement as to the quality and relevance of each grant application.
- 3.2. To recommend, where appropriate, alternative sources of funding for research projects which are only indirectly linked to blood cancers and may be equally eligible for funding by other health charities or grant-making organisations.
- 3.3. To provide advice to LLNI on funding procedures, types of award and refinement of the charity's research funding process.

4. Operation of the Scientific and Medical Committee

- 4.1. The Scientific and Medical Committee will meet as appropriate to consider the grant applications received by LLNI.
- 4.2. The Scientific and Medical Committee will agree their recommendations to the Chair during these meetings. Decisions related to grant applications will only be made outside of the meetings in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.3. Research Network members of the Scientific and Medical Committee will have the opportunity for a preparation briefing prior to the Panel meetings.
- 4.4. Membership of the Scientific and Medical Committee will be publicly available on the LLNI website.
- 4.5. Scientific and Medical Committee members will be required to submit a completed LLNI Conflict of Interest form. In line with the Charity's policy this will be made publicly available.
- 4.6. All Scientific and Medical Committee meetings require a quorum of 50%

5. Membership

- 5.1. When positions become vacant on the Committee LLNI will issue an open call for applications.
- 5.2. Following an open call for applications LLNI and the Chair of the Committee will assess applications and invite applicants to become members to the Committee.
- 5.3. When the Chair or Vice Chair position becomes vacant LLNI will assess applications and invite selected applications to the Committee.
- 5.4. The Scientific and Medical Committee will be chaired either by an independent researcher / clinician who is not directly involved in blood cancer research; or by someone who has blood cancer research / clinical expertise, but will not apply for LLNI funding for the duration of their chairship.
- 5.5. A Vice-Chair will also be appointed, but will be eligible to apply for LLNI funding, either as an applicant or a co-applicant.
- 5.6. In the case of a Chair being unable to attend the Scientific and Medical Committee meeting and a Vice Chair being an applicant or co-applicant on a grant submitted to the Committee and interim Chair will be appointed by LLNI.
- 5.7. Following resignation from the Scientific and Medical Committee after two consecutive terms, committee members are eligible to apply for committee membership after a period of absence of three years.
- 5.8. Individuals will be invited to be members of the Scientific and Medical Committee for a term of three years. This can be extended for up to three years by agreement between LLNI, the Chair of the Committee and the individual concerned, to ensure a rolling turn-over of Scientific and Medical Committee members.
- 5.9. Scientific and Medical Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs will also be invited for a term of three years, which can be extended for up to three years by agreement with the LLNI.
- 5.10. Membership can comprise of a wide range of expertise that is relevant to blood cancer research and ensure that a broad range of methodological expertise is represented across the committee.

6. Scientific and Medical Committee member Responsibilities

- 6.1. To attend Scientific and Medical Committee meetings when necessary. In the event that a member is unable to attend two consecutive meetings, LLNI reserves the right to request them to stand down.
- 6.2. To review applications and reviewers comments in advance of the committee meeting, and to submit written comments and scores to LLNI on assigned applications.
- 6.3. To contribute to discussions at Scientific and Medical Committee meetings to ensure that the Committee's recommendations reflect issues of concern to researchers and people affected by blood cancers.
- 6.4. In exceptional circumstances, to contribute to discussions on individual grant applications or cost-extensions outside of the Scientific and Medical Committee meetings.
- 6.5. To declare all potential conflicts of interest using LLNI's Conflict of Interest Form.
- 6.6. To uphold LLNI's Code of Conduct for grant review, specifically:
 - 6.6.1. Declaring any conflicts of interest
 - 6.6.2. Ensuring that all applications, comments and correspondence remain strictly confidential.
 - 6.6.3. Ensuring that outcomes and feedback are communicated to applicants by LLNI only.
- 6.7. To review annual and final reports for currently funding research grants throughout the year to ensure that projects are meeting their aims and objectives.

7. Expenses

- 7.1. LLNI will reimburse reasonable expenses for attendance at Committee meetings – for example the cost of standard class travel.

8. Secretariat

- 8.1. Secretariat to the group will be provided by staff from LLNI

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