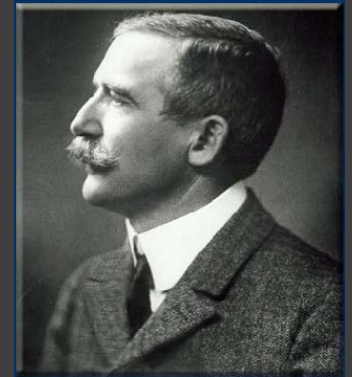


Early Career Research Workshop

Shewly Choudhury
Basic Careers Portfolio Adviser,
Science Funding
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SFI-HRB-WT Biomedical Research Partnership
Information Day
30 April 2012

SFI-HRB-Wellcome Trust
Biomedical Research Partnership



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Overview

- *Part 1*

Overview

Fellowships for Basic Biomedical Researchers

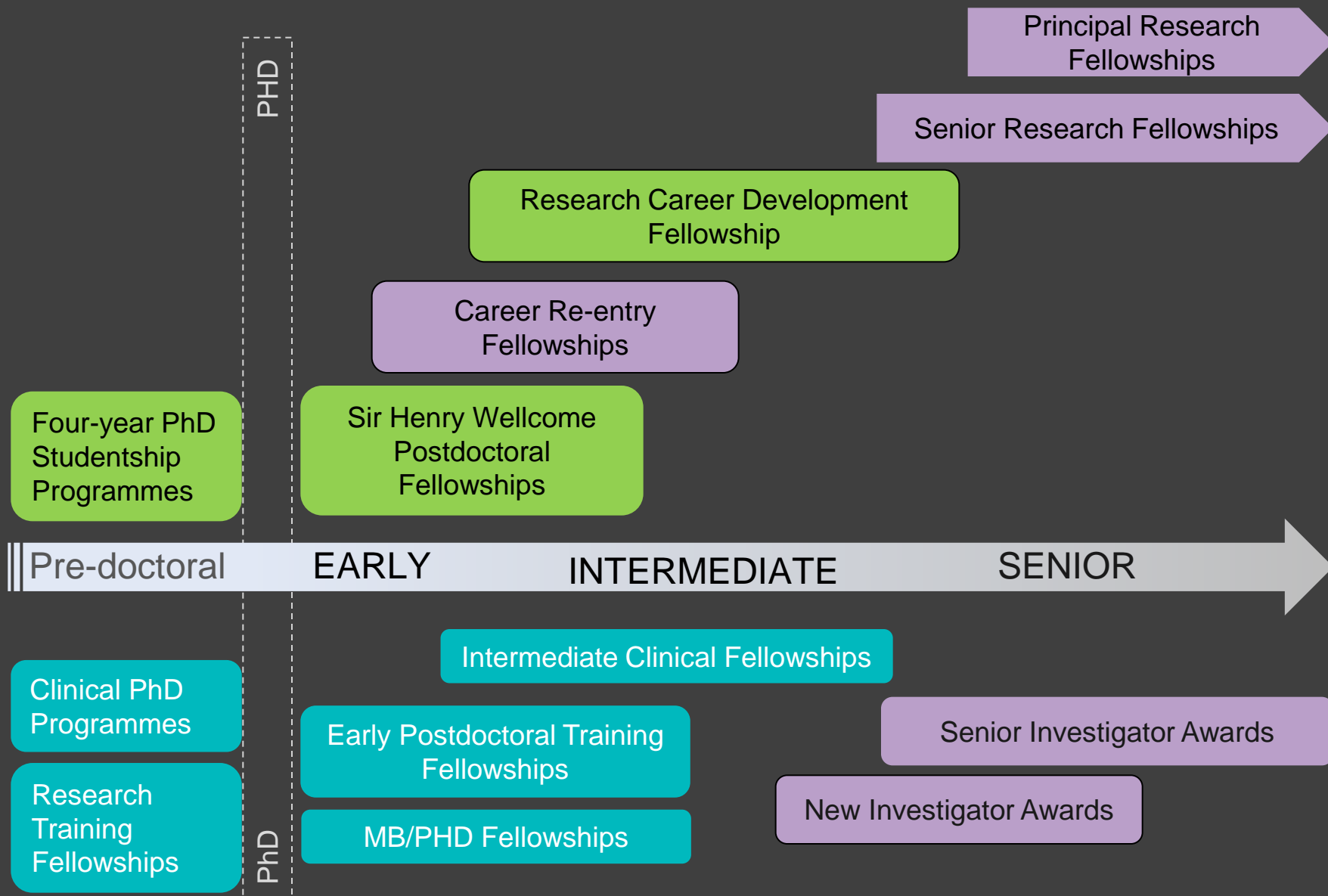
- *Part 2*

Fellowships for Clinical Researchers
& New Investigator Awards

- *Part 3*

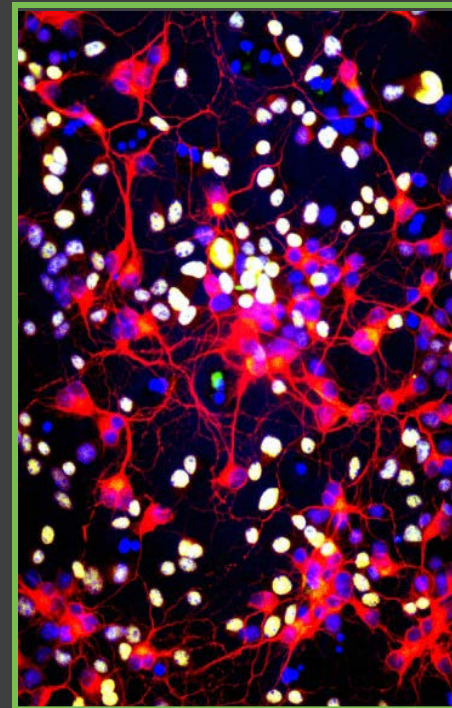
Grantsmanship – some tips!

Supporting people.....

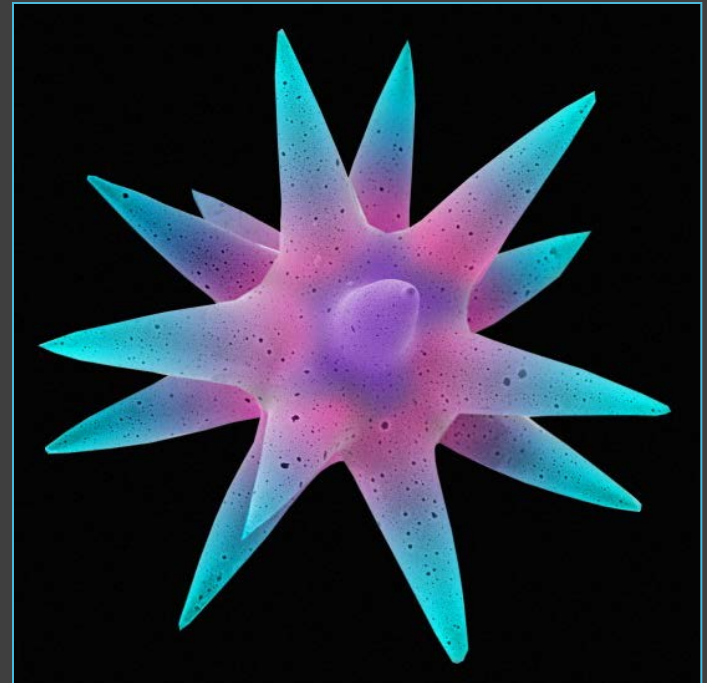


Why Apply for a Fellowship?

- Protected research time
- Competitive edge for future research career



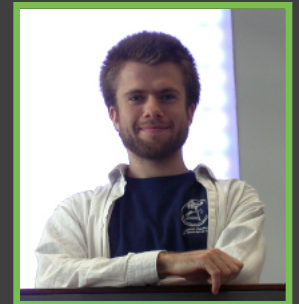
Fellowships for Basic Biomedical Researchers



Sir Henry Wellcome Postdoctoral Fellowships

For the best **newly qualified** post-doctoral basic science researchers

- Eligibility: Final year of your PhD study or have no more than 1 year of postdoctoral research experience
- Identify an important biomedical research question; develop and deliver their own personal programme to achieve their research aims
- flexible support, 4 years - to enhance research skills, career development opportunities and promote independence
- Undertaken in lab of choice – UK and/or overseas
- Up to 20 awards per year. 78 current Fellows.
- Biannual competition – April & November.
Next preliminary application deadline **9 November 2012**

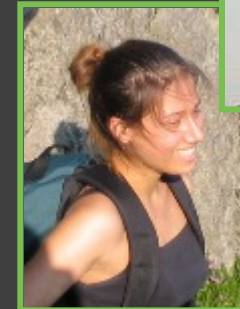


Wellcome Trust-MIT Postdoctoral Fellowships

To enable postdoctoral researchers to undertake research at the interfaces between biology/medicine and mathematics, engineering, computer, physical or chemical sciences.

- 4 years, 2-3 at MIT and 1-2 at UK institution
- Eligibility - about to submit your doctoral thesis or have up to 3 years' postdoctoral experience
- Background in any appropriate field of study (biology, medicine, chemistry or physics)
- Identify and address an important **biomedical** research question;
- Drive the development of their proposal

Annual competition – next deadline for full applications **11 June 2012**



Research Career Development Fellowships

- Candidates must have made intellectual contributions to research that have been **published in leading journals**, and be able to demonstrate their potential to carry out high quality **independent** research
- Awards for up to 5 years
- 3-6 years' post-doctoral research experience
- Includes salary, research expenses and research assistance if justified
- ~ 90 fellows
- Considered twice a year – next preliminary application deadline **Autumn 2012**



Research Career Re-Entry Fellowships

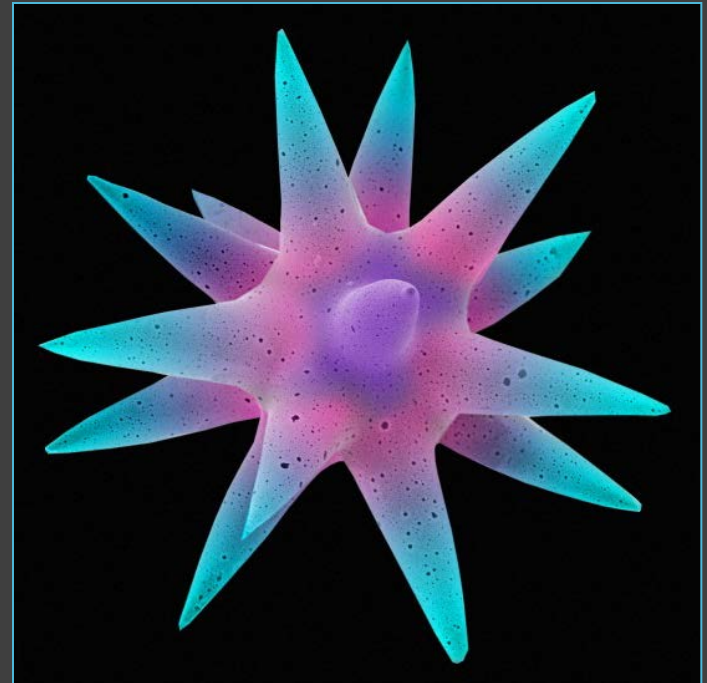
- To enable post-doctoral scientists to return to independent research after a decision to take a **career break** of at least 2 years.
- Awards can be for up to 4 years.
- Possible to include re-training costs e.g. MSc
- Considered twice a year – next preliminary application deadline mid **Autumn 2012**



Questions?

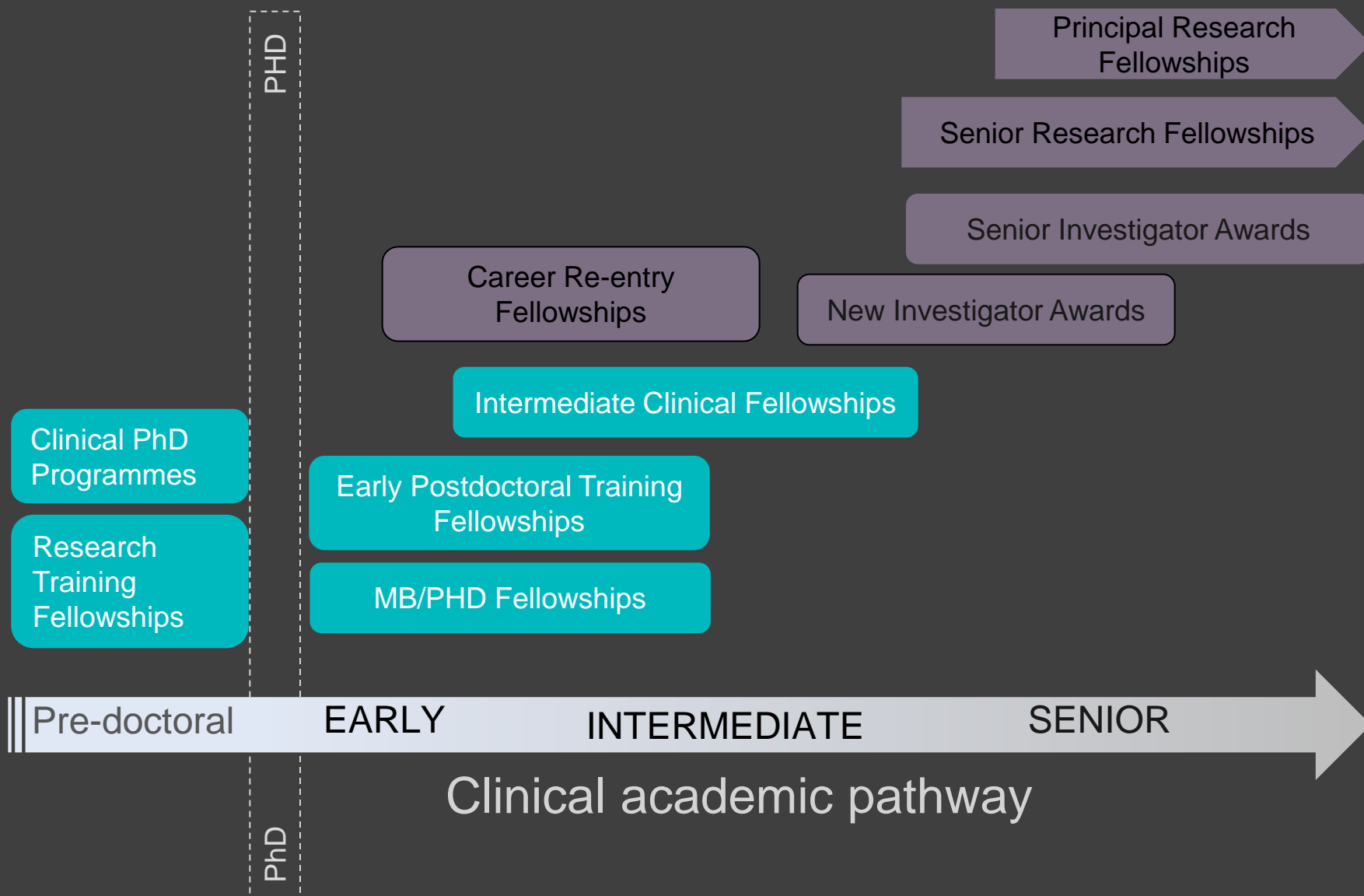


Fellowships for Clinical Researchers



Supporting clinical researchers.....

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Research Training Fellowships

- For medical, dental and veterinary graduates who wish to develop a career in academic medicine.
- High-quality research training leading to a PhD or MD qualification.
- Need to have an honorary clinical contract from a NHS Trust
- Normally for 2 to 3 years support.
- 124 current Research Training Fellows.
- Considered three times a year.
- Next deadline 15 June 2012



Postdoctoral Training Fellowships for MB/PhD graduates

- To help postdoctoral clinical academics develop their independent research careers by undertaking training in the UK and / or abroad (*max. 6mnths*).
- For MB/PhD Graduates, or those who achieved a PhD during or before starting their medical degree.
- Flexible funding to the needs of the trainee.
- Support for 2-4 years.
- Can do basic research, but some relevance to their clinical activities.
- 9 current MB/PhD Graduate Fellows.
- Considered three times a year.
- Next deadline 10 April 2012



Early Postdoctoral Training Fellowships for clinical scientists

- A new scheme that will provide clinicians with high-quality postdoctoral training to lay the foundations for a successful independent research career.
- Postdoctoral training for clinicians who have recently obtained a PhD
- 2 or 3 years support (max £350k).
- Final year: 50:50, to allow re-integration into clinical training programme.
- Encouraged to spend all or part of the award in a different lab or new research environment, in UK or abroad – *foster collaborations*.
- Considered three times a year: **Next deadline mid-summer 2012**



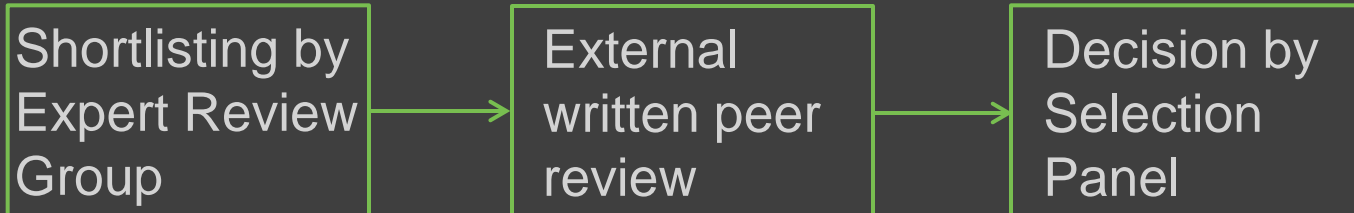
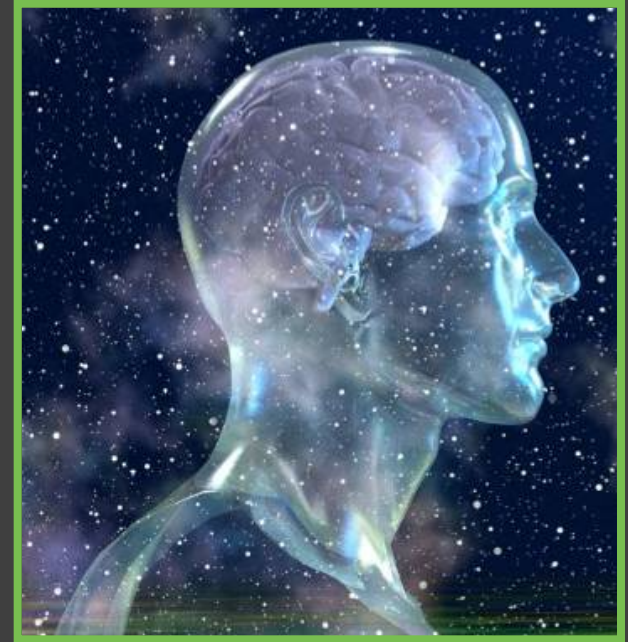
Intermediate Clinical Fellowships

- For clinicians who have completed or within 2 years of completing clinical training
- Should have PhD
- Funding to develop independent research career in academic medicine.
- 4 or 5 years research support (salary, staff, equipment, consumables, fieldwork, animals etc.)
- 42 current Intermediate Clinical Fellows.
- Considered twice a year.
- Next deadline then autumn 2012



Investigator Awards

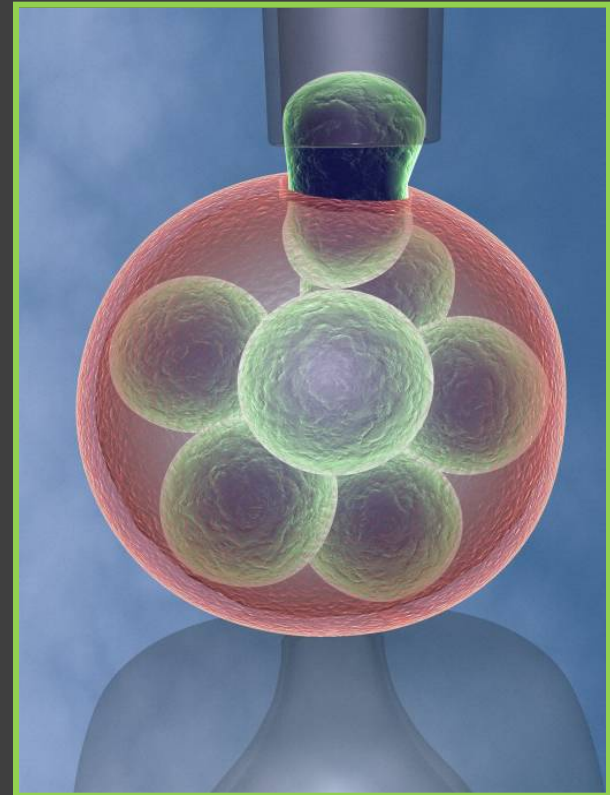
- For researchers who have established academic posts.
- **New & Senior Investigator Awards.**
- Research question drives value and duration of award



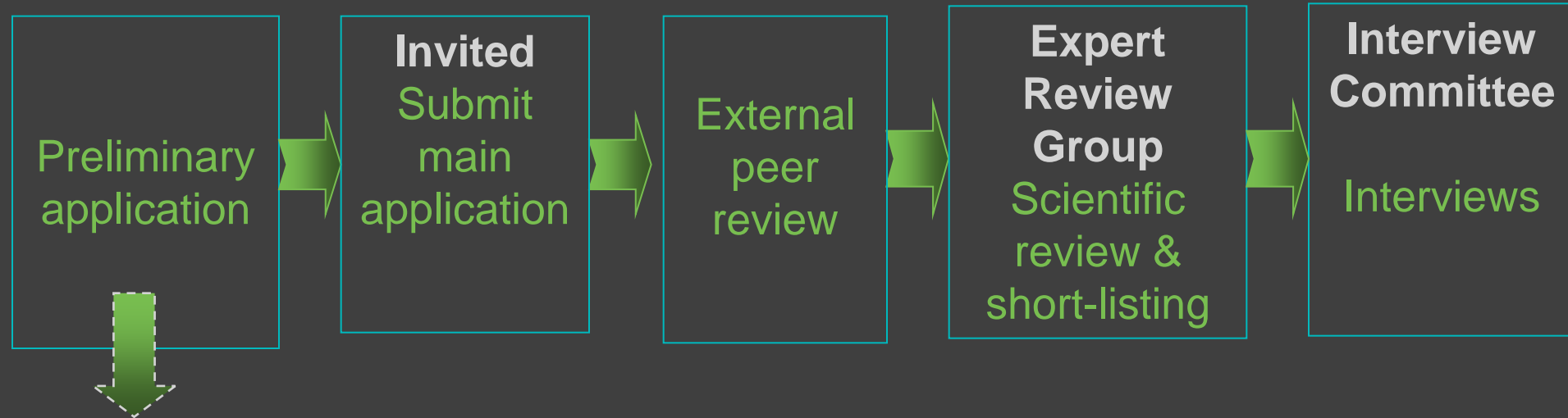
Questions?



The Process & Grantsmanship Tips



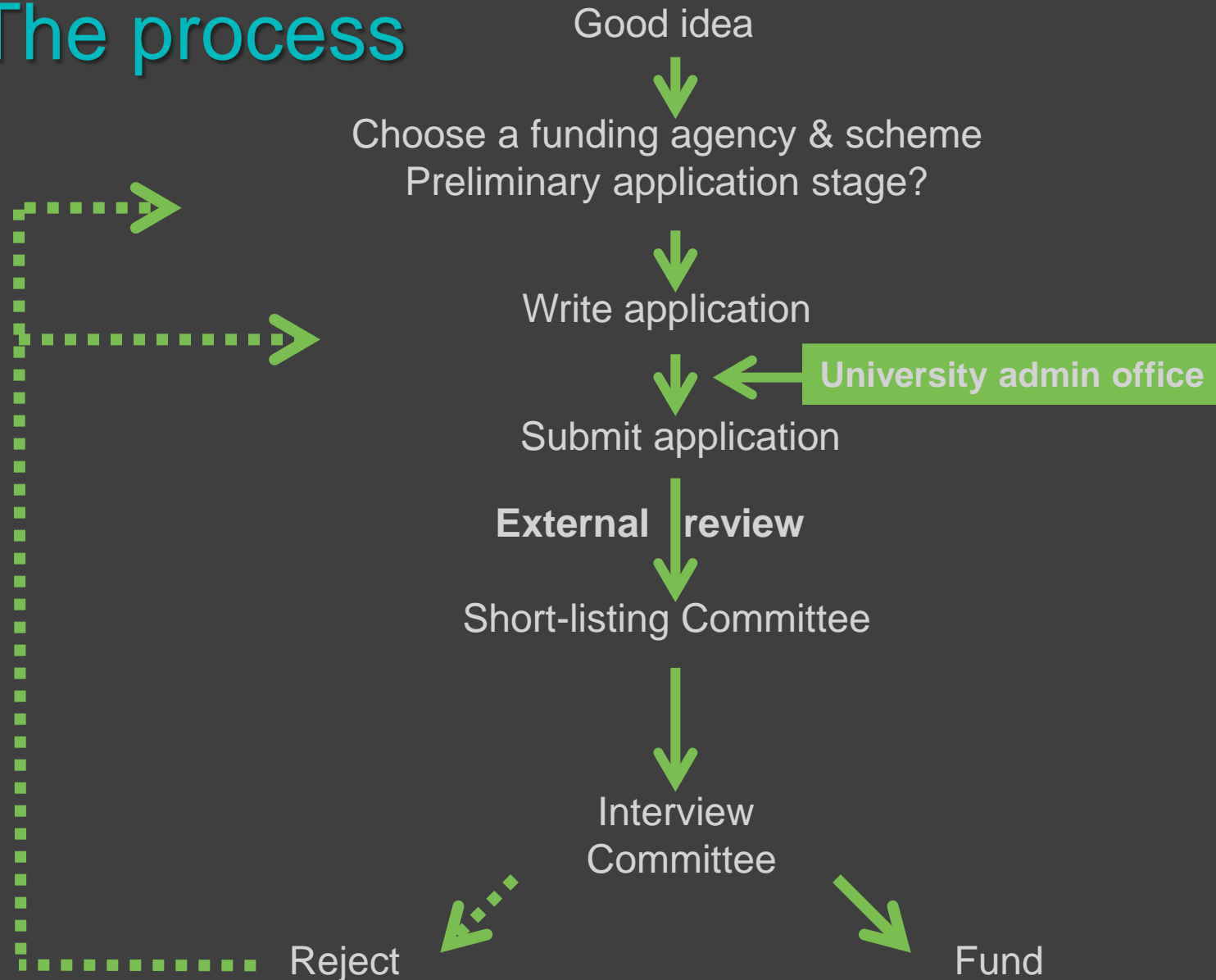
Assessment Process



- ✓ Assess eligibility & suitability for fellowship
- ✓ Publications (can mention submitted) – primary research papers
- ✓ Current funding or awards



The process



What makes a strong fellowship application?

Peer Review Assessment

The P's Process

- Preparation
- Person
- Place
- Project



Before starting your application....

- **Read** the application form and guidance notes carefully
- **Think** about the answers
- Does someone else need to answer some of them e.g. your finance office?
 - Allow time for the application to be processed by the admin office
- **Check deadlines**
- Queries? Concerns? Is your timing right?
Contact the Trust for advice.



Person

- Fellowships: **person**, project, place
- **Standing/track record** for their career stage
- Demonstrate **potential**
- How will the award enhance your **career development**
- Contribution to longer term aspirations



Project

- A **strong** hypothesis/research vision/important research question
 - Clear research plan.
 - Not over- or under-ambitious, feasibility
 - Contingencies
- **Easy to understand** and read
- Takes into account the **current literature/relevant background**
- **Appropriate expertise**
- Justified Staff, equipment and materials
- Animal use and studies using human subjects should be carefully **justified and power calculations provided**, where appropriate



Place

- Candidate's choice of **appropriate sponsor (and mentor)**
 - Appropriate expertise/collaboration
 - Vibrant environment, **excellent facilities**
 - Will your **training needs** be met?
-
- **Competition** - Comparison with the same type



The Interview

- **Practice, practice, practice!!!**
- There is no substitute for mock interviews
- Own the project
- Be familiar with recent advances in the field
- Be prepared to provide a concise summary of the proposed project and research career to date



Feedback you do not want to receive!

- ***Get a second opinion, proof read & spell check***
 - “I had only one problem with this application, I had no idea what they were trying to do...”
 - “The poor writing, referencing and proof reading of this application significantly detract from its overall quality”
- ***Clear hypotheses help define your aims***
 - “...this does not appear to be hypothesis driven...there are no specific aims or objectives....”
- ***Persuasive but unbiased arguments are needed***
 - “... done a commendable job of marshalling evidence to support their hypothesis, however, the applicant has put aside facts that do not support their point of view...”
- ***Be realistic about your goals***
 - “...the work described in this application is over-ambitious, it could not be achieved in the life time of the Principal Investigator...”

More comments from reviewers.....

- ***Correct experimental approach is important***
- “...an intriguing hypothesis, however the experiments proposed for testing will not provide unequivocal evidence for or against it...”
- ***Preliminary data is essential***
- “...it involves techniques with which the applicant appears to have no prior experience and for which no preliminary data are proposed...”
- ***The importance of a back-up plan***
- “...one weakness in the proposal is that there is no alternative plan should the proposed approach not yield information relevant to the hypothesis proposed...”

Useful Links - Grantsmanship

- Art of Grantsmanship by Jacob Kraicer

www.hfsp.org/how/ArtOfGrants.htm

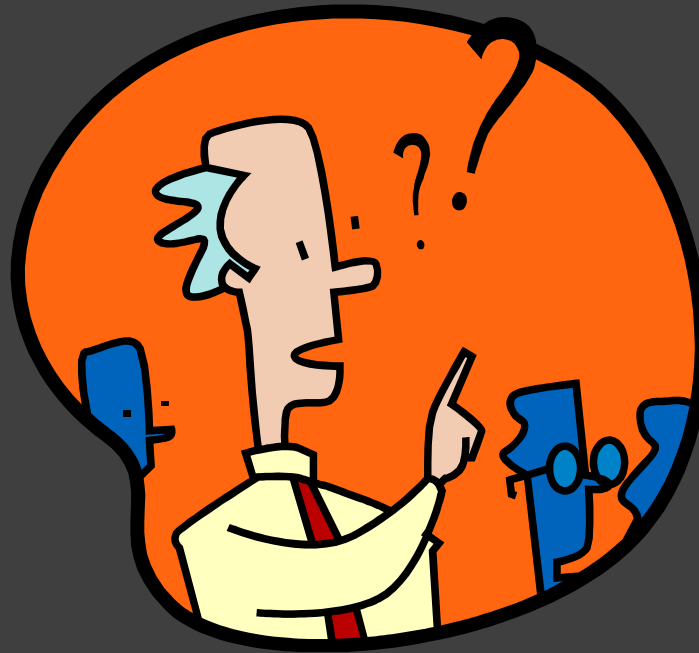
- Proposal Writer's Guide by Don Thackrey

<http://www.drda.umich.edu/proposals/pwg/pwgcontents.html>

- How Not to Kill a Grant Application

http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/previous_issues/articles/0280/abstract_killers_how_not_to_kill_a_grant_application_part_two/

Questions?



<http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/>