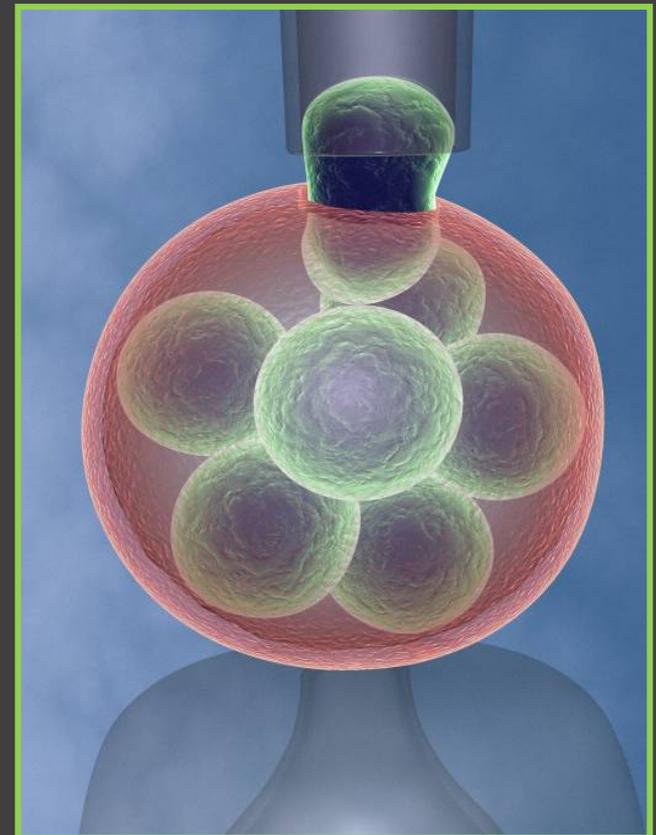


Wellcome Trust Funding Opportunities

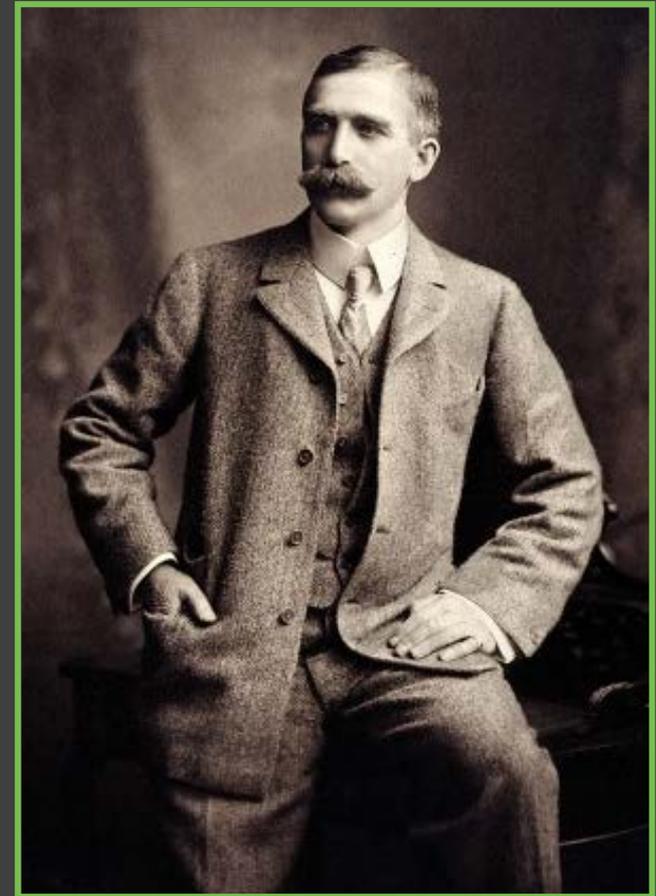
UK Veterinary Vaccinology Network
Career Development Workshop

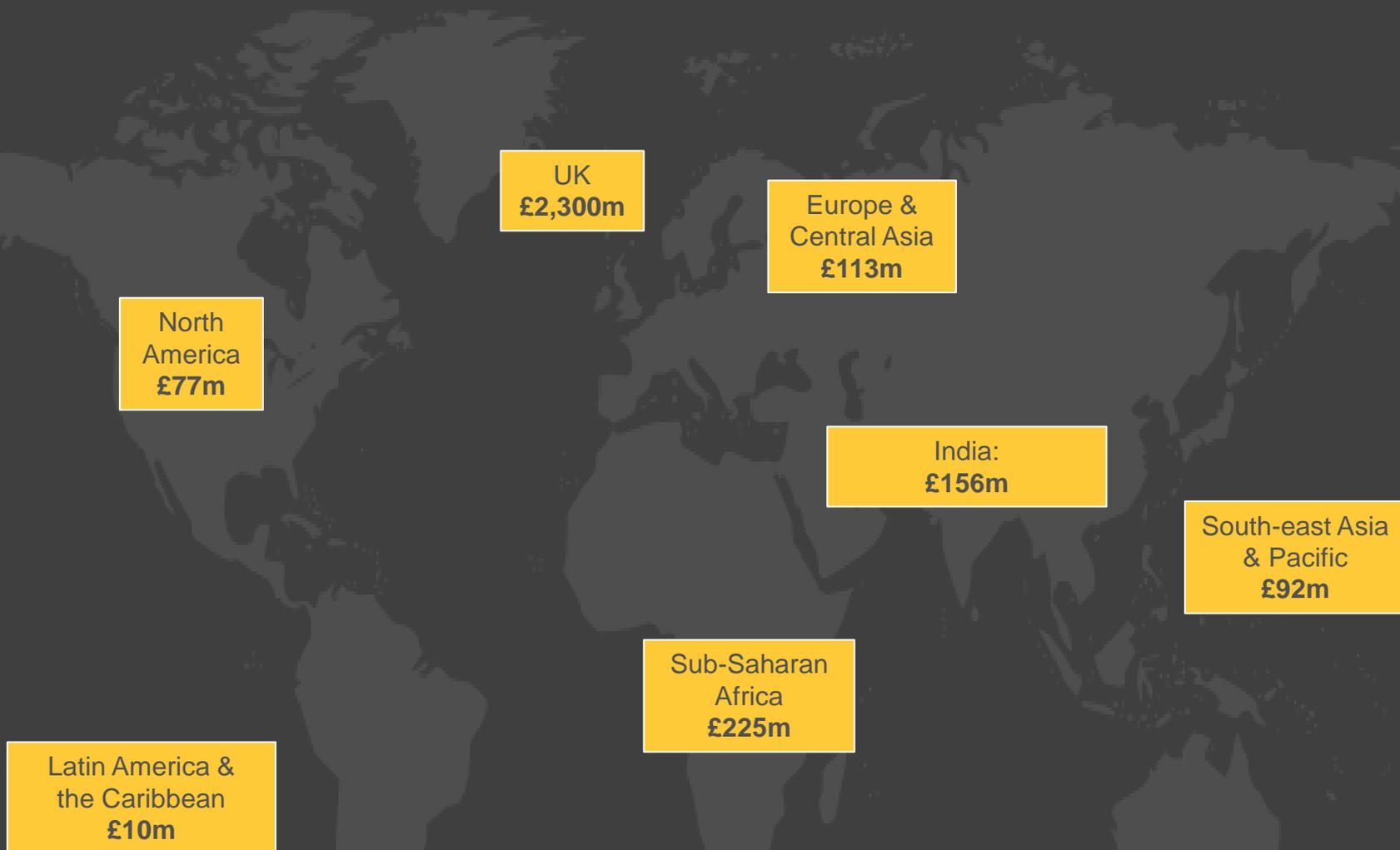
Matthew Thakur and Phil Price
October 2015



Our vision and mission

- We fund health-related research, across the world.
- We pursue new understandings of the body, disease, or the environment we live in, ideas about how to change medicine, culture or even the world.
- We support thousands of curious, passionate people all over the world to explore great ideas, at every step of the way from discovery to impact.



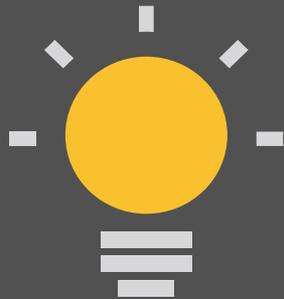


How we work

- **Investments:** We are funded from a private endowment.
- In 1937, the Trustees began work with **£73, 048** in their deposit account.
- Today the assets stand at around **£18 billion**
- **To improve health, we have spent (and plan to spend):**

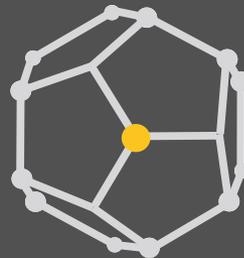


Our framework



Advancing ideas

We support great ideas and inspired thinking



Seizing opportunities

We bring ideas together to make a difference



Driving reform

We change ways of working so more ideas can flourish

Types of funding available

Response mode funding, for:

- **People** (support for excellent individuals and clear career pathways)
- **Teams** (support for excellent groups and collaborative activities)
- **Seeds** (developing ideas)
- **Resources** (to underpin the work of the people we fund)
- **Places** (support for where the people we fund work)

Strategic funding

to transform fields, fill gaps or initiate major new developments.

New Strategic Priorities 2015-2020

We bring ideas together to make a big difference

We identify times when our concerted intervention can accelerate progress towards better health.

We identify a critical need and set ambitious goals.

We connect experts from different disciplines, build partnerships, and lead advocacy, policy development, communications and public engagement.

We do this by providing focused, intensive support that creates a step change over five to ten years.

For more information see

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



New Strategic Priorities 2015-2020

- **Vaccinations:** how to stimulate research, technology development and policy to address critical unmet needs
- **Drug-resistant infections:** how to use and protect existing treatments and encourage development of new ones.
- **Scientific leadership in Africa and Asia:** We will build partnerships in low- and middle- income countries more scientists in these places can pursue world-class research into pressing regional challenges.
- **Our Planet, Our Health:** We will build understanding of how global food systems and urbanisation connect to health, improving the evidence base for public policy.

Our Planet, Our Health's Five year plan

- £75 million over the next five years
 - 3-5 major interdisciplinary research programmes
 - If your prelim is accepted, your funding begins with a small trial award; successful trials will be enhanced into full programmes
 - Emphasis on partnerships + interdisciplinary working
 - First applications: Jan 2016
 - First awards: Oct 2016



Our career schemes



Basic researchers

Predoxloral

Eligibility

Graduate

Four-year PhD Studentship Programmes

4 years

Scheme *Duration*

Postdoctoral

Early

Up to 2 years' postdoctoral research

Sir Henry Wellcome Postdoctoral Fellowships

4 years

Intermediate

Up to 7 years' postdoctoral research

Sir Henry Dale Fellowships

5 years (option to extend for 3 years)

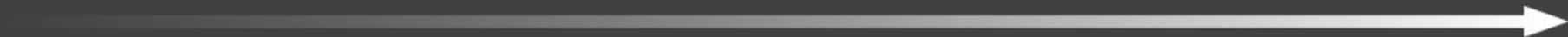
Senior

~7 to 12 years' postdoctoral research

Senior Research Fellowships in Basic Biomedical Science

 RENEWABLE

Up to 5 years



Other funding opportunities

As well as tailored career pathways, we provide opportunities that can accommodate different types of researchers

Predoctoral

Postdoctoral

Early

Intermediate

Senior

Eligibility

• In an established academic post

Scheme

• **Investigator Awards**

Duration

• Up to 7 years

Variable
seniority

10+ years' postdoctoral research

At least 2 years' postdoctoral research and continuous career break of at least 2 years

Principal Research Fellowships  RENEWABLE

Up to 7 years

Research Career Re-entry Fellowships

Variable
seniority

Up to 7 years

Seed Awards

Small one-off grants for innovative and original ideas

Variable
seniority

Collaborative Awards

Grants for collaborative team research

Variable
seniority



Support and flexibility for our researchers

Flexible research careers

We believe passionately that breakthroughs emerge when the most talented researchers are given the resources and freedom they need to pursue their goals. Success in this demands diversity of thought and diverse approaches. We recognise that different people choose different career paths, so we strive to provide flexibility in the range of scientific career opportunities that we offer.

For example, it has traditionally been challenging - particularly for female researchers - to manage a research career with other responsibilities such as family commitments. It can also be difficult for anyone who has taken a substantial career break to return to research. We therefore provide flexible support for women and men at all career stages to ensure that those wanting to continue or return to a scientific career have the best possible opportunity to do so.



Two researchers in a level-two containment lab conducting HIV research.

Flexibility in our funding

We make every effort to ensure we provide a flexible and fair funding system that allows excellent applicants, both women and men, to be successful.

We always take into account time (full- or part-time) spent outside the research environment when assessing grant applications.

Flexibility in our funding

- Generous maternity/paternity/adoption/sick leave supplements and extensions
- Flexible (part-time) working and career breaks
- *Take into account part-time working, “stop the clock”, eligibility for the primary carer (either the mother or father) irrespective of the actual period of parental leave taken. Each case will be considered individually*

Fellowships

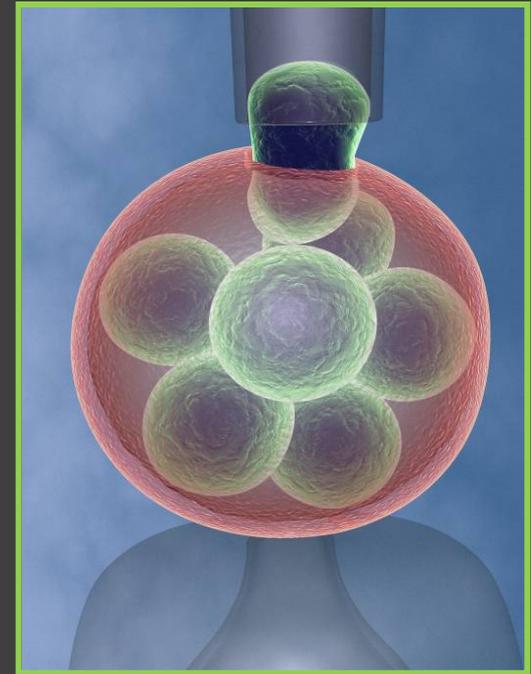
Fellowships - Key Features

- To attract, train and retain the best researchers
- Schemes designed for each stage of the research career
- **Salary** of the fellow provided
- **Plus** research costs – including the salaries of the fellow's research team, consumables, equipment and other expenses



Basic Biomedical Fellowships

- *for non-clinical researchers*
- *research projects can be based in the lab, the clinic or the field and may involve experimental or theoretical approaches*



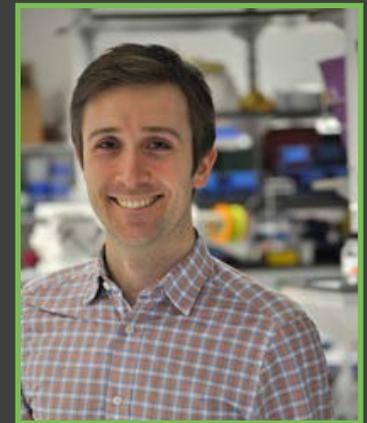
Sir Henry Wellcome Postdoctoral Fellowships

- for outstanding post-doctoral researchers (*up to 2 years from viva*) working in the best laboratories in the UK and overseas
- candidates must identify an important research question and to develop and deliver their own plans to achieve their research aims
- flexible support of £250k for four years to enhance research skills, career development opportunities and promote independence
- Applications considered twice a year.



Sir Henry Dale Fellowships

- For outstanding young post-doctoral scientists to forge an independent research career and addressing an important biomedical question.
- Candidates will have:
 - up to 7 years of postdoctoral research experience;
 - 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.
- 5 year award, potentially renewable for 3 further years.
- Applications considered thrice a year

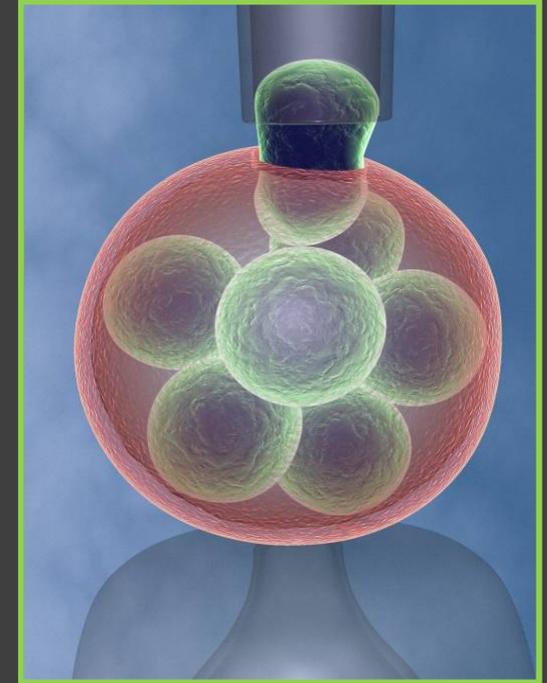


Research Career Re-Entry Fellowships

- For post-doctoral scientists and clinician scientists to re-establish an independent research career
- Applicants must have been away from research for at least 2 years.
- Career breaks may be for any reason (e.g. family commitments, illness, career changes)
- Up to 4 years support, with opportunity for updating research skills (eg. MSc)
- Applications considered twice a year.
- ~15 fellows
- 4 former fellows are Professors



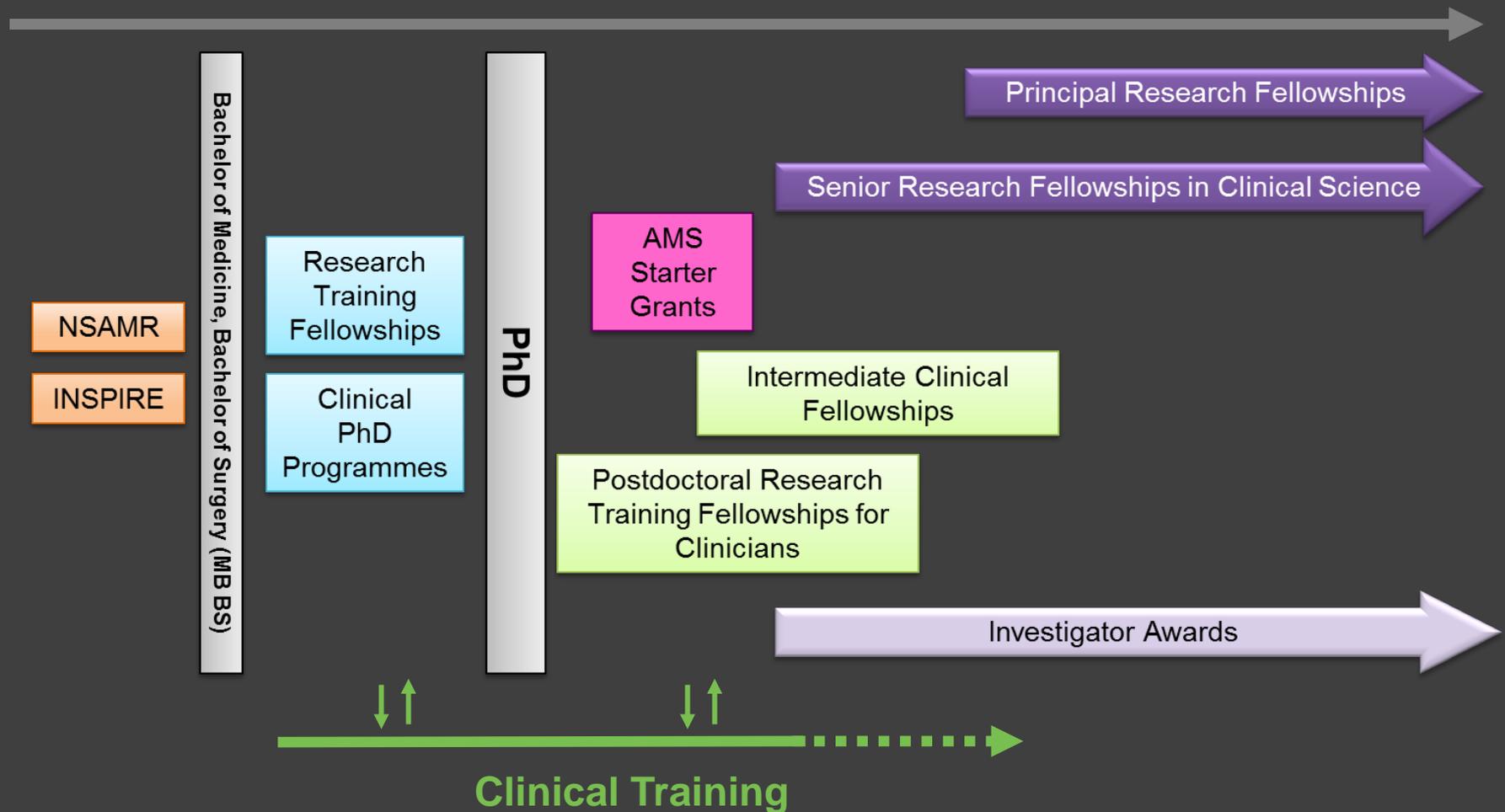
Clinical Fellowships



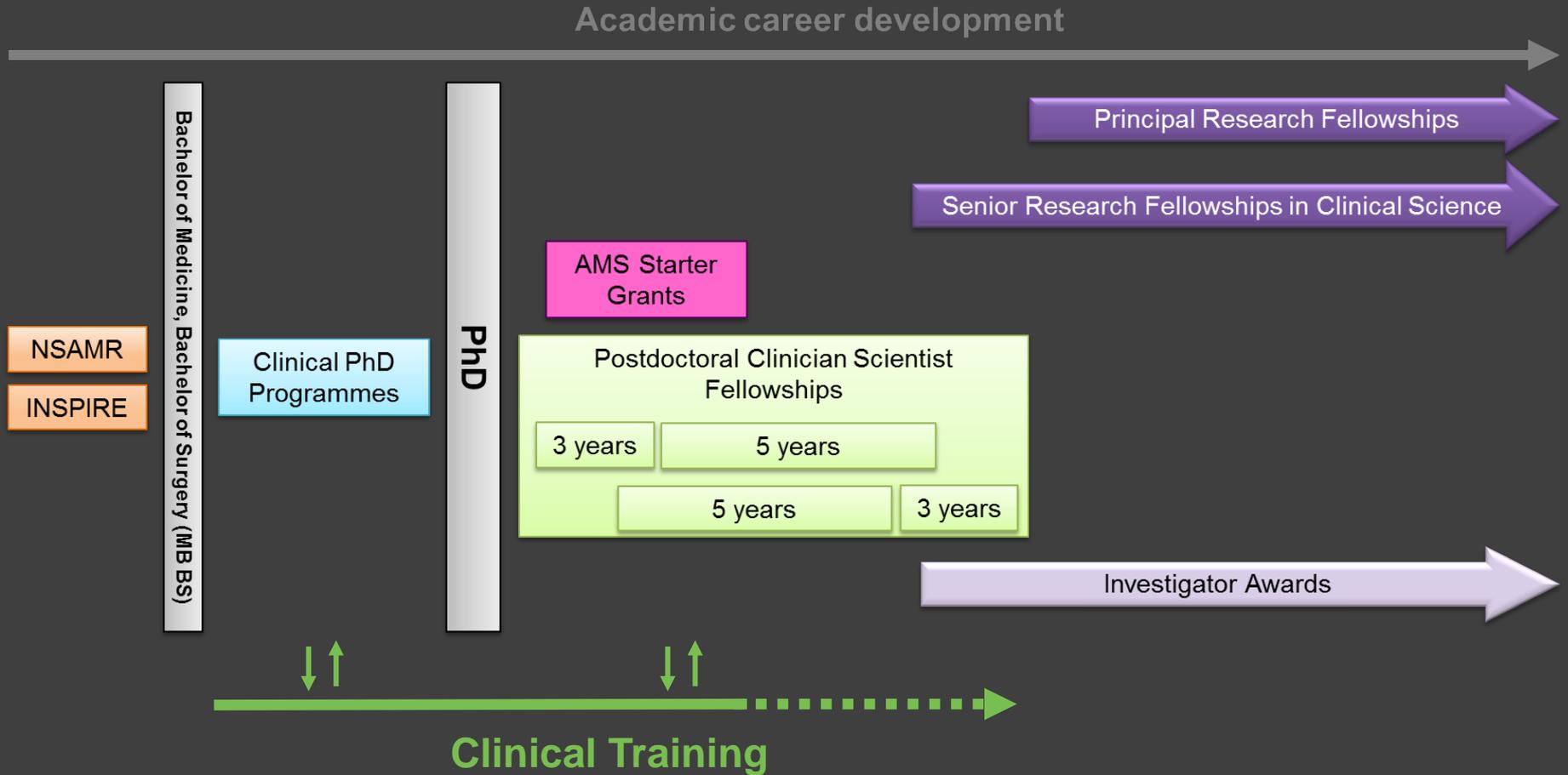
- for medical, dental and veterinary graduates

The Trust's old clinical pathway

Academic career development



New Clinical Pathway



Simplified + 50% more capacity

Postdoctoral Clinical Scientist Fellowship

- 3 > 5 year or 5 > 3 year structure
- Flexible to fit around your clinical training.
- Will accommodate career breaks / extended training
- 50% increased capacity vs Intermediate Clinical Fellowships + Postdoctoral Research Training Fellowships
- First applications: March 2016
- First awards: Autumn 2016

Seeds

Seed Awards

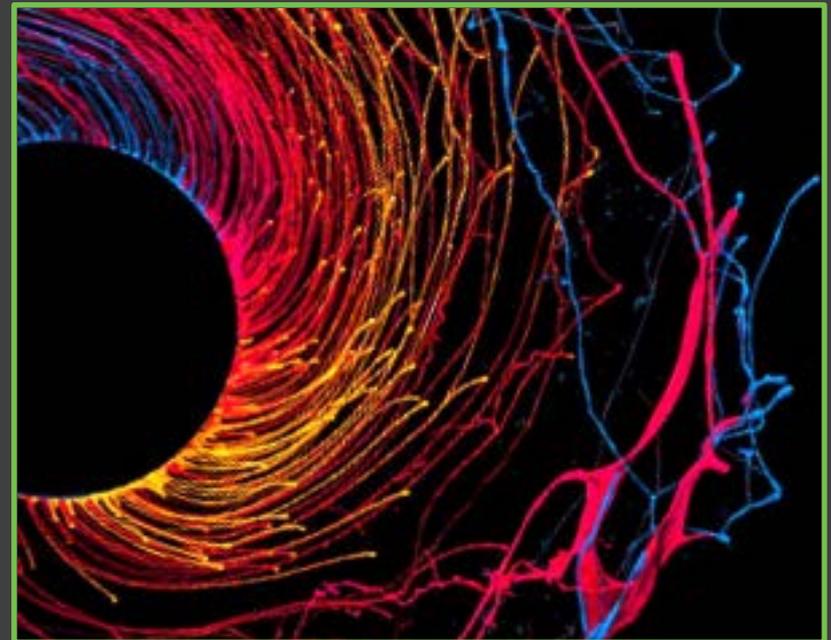
- Enable researchers to develop a novel idea, leading to a larger research application.
- You must have a salaried position e.g. lectureship or fellowship
- Up to £100,000 over 2 years.
- Not for researchers with a current personal award or other seed funding.
- Only one award per lifetime.
- Considered 3 times per year. Next deadline date: 8th Feb 2016



Teams

Collaborative Awards

- Collaborative research projects that can only be achieved by teams working together.
- Single or cross-discipline (but cross-discipline encouraged).
- Up to £4,000,000 over 5 years.
- Considered 3 times per year.
First deadline date for preliminary applications: 20th May 2015
- Awarded following interview.



Applying for a Wellcome Trust Grant

Assessment Processes – Key Features

Early/
intermediate
level
fellowships
preliminary
application
required

Main
application
submission

Written
external
expert peer
review

Shortlisting
by Interview
Committee
with broad
science
expertise &
review & short-
listing

Interview
by
committee
with broad
science
expertise &
in relation to
career
stage/path

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

Note: Seeds = Application only (no interview, only triage)

Assessment criteria

Person

- The candidate's track record
- The candidate's vision of how the funding will contribute to their career development
- The candidate's long-term aspirations

Project

- The quality and importance of the research question
- The feasibility of the approach
- The appropriateness of the resources

Place

- The candidate's choice of research sponsors
- The quality and suitability of the research environment

What makes a strong application?

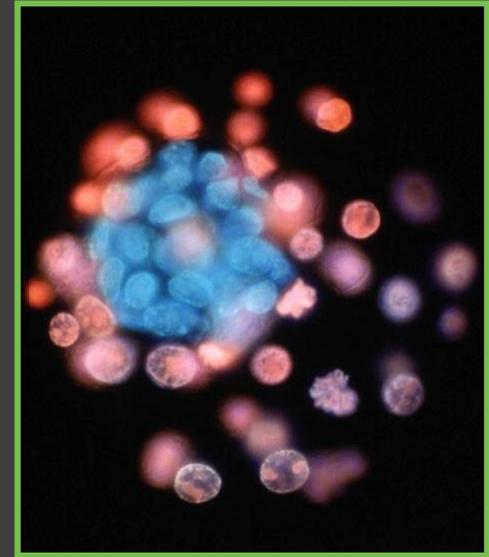
- A strong track record appropriate to the amount of research experience
 - **Potential** (early to mid-career) balanced by achievements (mid-career to senior)
- Evidence that the candidate can do what is proposed and deal with any setbacks as they arise
- Important ideas that will make a significant difference to the field

What makes a strong application?

- A clear research vision or goal
- Sufficient information for reviewers to understand:
 - What is proposed
 - What approaches will be taken
 - Whether it is likely to work
- Access to required collaborations, resources and technology

Don't forget to:

- Highlight institutional support:
 - Designated lab or office space
 - Access to students
 - Start up costs
- Highlight collaborations/projects you are responsible for
- Use all sections of the form



Before starting your application....

- Read the application form and guidance notes carefully
- Think about the questions to address and who you may need to contact before you can answer some of them
- Identify colleagues who have previously been successful in obtaining grant support:
 - Study their proposals, and use them as models
 - Discuss ideas with colleagues in the relevant fields
- Check deadlines to avoid rushed applications & allow time for the application to be processed by the admin office
- Queries? Concerns? Contact us for advice



Avoid common mistakes

- Have you considered the following?
 - Be realistic
 - Submit relevant evidence
 - Be analytical and critical
 - Do not depend on your track record alone
 - Dedicate sufficient time to the project
 - Don't assume reviewers will know what you've done – even those in your field
 - Justify your budget
- **Proof read the application and ask others to read it critically before submission – you will need to give them plenty of time to do this well!**

Project (and comments you do not want to receive).....

Strong hypothesis/research vision/important research question help define your aims

- “...this does not appear to be hypothesis driven...there are no specific aims or objectives....”

Be realistic about your goals - feasibility

- “...the work described in this application is over-ambitious, it could not be achieved in the life time of the Principal Investigator...”

Relevant experimental approach

“...an intriguing hypothesis, however the experiments proposed for testing will not provide unequivocal evidence for or against it...”

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...”

Project (and comments you do not want to receive).....

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...”

Preliminary data and appropriate expertise

- “...it involves techniques with which the applicant appears to have no prior experience and for which no preliminary data are proposed...”

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”

The interview



- Prepare and practice!
- There is no substitute for mock interviews
- *Listen* to the questions
- 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



If in doubt, get in touch.....

We're keen to talk to you about your ideas in person, by phone or email.

Extensive information about our funding is available on our website.

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

The screenshot shows the Wellcome Trust website for Biomedical Science Funding. The browser window title is "Biomedical science funding | Wellcome Trust - Windows Internet Explorer provided by the Wellcome Trust". The address bar shows the URL "http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/Funding/Biomedical-science/index.htm".

The website content includes:

- Navigation:** Home, Blog, Wellcome Trust websites, Media office, Jobs, Contact us, eGrants, About, Log in.
- wellcome trust logo**
- Our vision:** Funding, Managing a grant, Education resources, News and features, Investments, About us.
- Biomedical science:**
 - Support research into all aspects of biomedical science: from molecules and cells vital to life, through the spread of diseases or the vectors of disease across the globe, to clinical and public health research to improve the quality of healthcare.
 - Research can be based in the laboratory, the clinic or the field, and may involve experimental or theoretical approaches.
 - We do not just fund scientists - through our biomedical science grants we support undergraduate and doctoral students, clinicians, dentists and veterinarians. We fund the best researchers with the most innovative and exciting ideas, and we devote a significant proportion of our funding to support those working overseas, in the form of personal and research support, collaborators and support for symposia, conferences and workshops.
- SEE ALSO:** Staff profiles, Careers.
- About biomedical science:**
 - We support molecular, cellular and structural biology, as well as clinical, physiological, psychological, epidemiological and public health research.
 - Examples of our funded work.
- Our funding schemes:**
 - Investigator Awards:** Funding for world-class researchers and clinicians with a compelling long-term vision for their research.
 - Followships:** Funding for non-tenured researchers and clinicians at every stage of their career.
 - Strategic awards and other initiatives:** Funding for ambitious research and initiatives.
 - PhD funding and undergraduate opportunities:** Support for...
- GRANT ENQUIRIES:** For help with your application or existing award.
- ALTM:** Support for researchers in low- and middle-income countries.
- RESEARCH CAREERS 2009 and 2010:** results from survey of award holders' careers.



If in doubt, get in touch.....

Please feel free to email us!

contact@wellcome.ac.uk

Matthew Thakur:

M.Thakur@wellcome.ac.uk

Philip Price:

P.Price@wellcome.ac.uk