

Sir Peter Tizard Bursary Applications Scoring

The Sir Peter Tizard Bursary (SPTB) is a bursary that allows young investigators to undertake a study with the British Paediatric Surveillance Unit (BPSU) by both covering the costs of running the study as well as providing funds for the successful applicant(s) to undertake appropriate research training.

To be eligible an applicant must be:

- › A member of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health or be a Collegiate Member of the Faculty of Paediatrics of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland
- › Paediatrician working (at least part of their time) in the UK National Health Service or the Irish public healthcare system
- › Specialty trainee (any grade), academic trainee, or new consultant (within 3 years of appointment to consultant post)
- › Applicant must not have previously led a BPSU study
- › The team must not have previously submitted an application on the same topic for consideration by the BPSU scientific committee
- › Any one candidate can only submit one application per year
- › Joint applications (i.e. where two applicants work together on a BPSU study under supervision and share the award) are acceptable

Applications are scored by the members of the BPSU Scientific Committee on review of the application form, according to a marking system that includes the various domains: the applicant, the supervisor and the training environment and wider support (as per the layout of the application form).

1. The Candidate

1.1 Contribution of bursary to applicant's development

4	Plans well articulated e.g. including details of specific courses/training opportunities
3	Plans well articulated but applicant does not identify specific opportunities
2	Plan is described, but substantial gaps
1	Plans poor or unrealistic
0	No plans provided

1.2 Applicant's time available to lead study

4	Estimate of time requirement ≥ 4 h per week and evidence this will be available
3	Estimate of time requirement < 4 h per week and evidence this will be available
2	Estimate of time provided but unclear if this will be available
1	Discussion of time requirement or availability poor or unrealistic
0	No evidence of adequate time provided

1.3 Applicant's skills and experience

4	Experience of other substantial project and description of how skills relate to proposed BPSU study
3	Experience of other substantial project
2	Experience of other small scale project
1	Minimal experience
0	No evidence of relevant experience provided

2. The Project

2.2 Benefits of study (Lay Summary)

4	Evidence of benefit to patients, public health and service delivery
3	Evidence of benefit to patients and service delivery but no major public health impact
2	Evidence of limited benefit
1	Discussion of importance of study poor or unrealistic
0	No discussion of importance of study provided

2.3 Research objectives

4	Concise and achievable
3	Require minor revision
2	Require major revision
1	Specified research objectives poor or unrealistic
0	No research objectives provided

2.4 Case definition(s)

4	Straightforward and workable
3	Requires minor revision
2	Requires major revision
1	Specified case definition(s) poor or unrealistic
0	No case definition provided

2.5/2.6 Other aspects of study design (Expected number of cases and Additional sources of data)

4	Excellent (N of cases likely to be manageable and plans for additional data helpful and achievable)
3	Some concerns re one aspect (e.g. N of cases likely to be excessive (>300 per year))
2	Some concerns re both aspects
1	Major concern re at least one aspect (e.g. N of cases likely to be too few (<30 per year))
0	No information provided on at least one aspect

2.7 Public and patient involvement

4	Evidence of feasible plans for robust public involvement
3	Demonstrates understanding of the importance of PPI and easy to offer guidance from SC
2	Substantial underestimate of public involvement required
1	Discussion of public involvement poor or unrealistic
0	No information on public involvement provided

3. The Training Environment and wider support

3.3 Supervisor's experience: research

2	Experience of leading a BPSU study (or similar epidemiological research project)
1.5	Experience of contributing to a BPSU study (or similar epidemiological research project)
1	Experience of other (non BPSU/epidemiological) research
0.5	Experience of audit/quality improvement/service development projects
0	No evidence of relevant experience provided

3.4 Supervisor's experience: supervision

2	Experience of academic supervision at PhD/MD level
1.5	Experience of academic supervision at Masters level
1	Experience of academic supervision at undergraduate level
0.5	Experience of supervising doctors in training
0	No evidence of relevant experience provided

3.5 Supervisor's statement on applicant's suitability and capacity to benefit

2	Supervisor confident of applicant's suitability and capacity to benefit, supporting evidence provided
1.5	Supervisor confident of applicant's suitability and capacity to benefit, but no supporting evidence provided
1	Confidence in applicant's suitability and capacity to benefit appears limited
0.5	Discussion of applicant's suitability and capacity to benefit poor or unrealistic
0	No information on applicant's suitability and capacity to benefit provided

3.6 Support available to the applicant

2	Excellent: clear statement of adequate supervision and other support
1.5	Some concerns re one aspect of support available
1	Some concerns re two or more aspects of support available
0.5	Discussion of support available to applicant poor or unrealistic
0	No information on support available to applicant provided

On the basis of this scoring schedule, the maximum score that can be achieved by any application for the bursary is 40. Scientific committee members will also have the opportunity to add any general comments that they have about the application, plus any concerns that the application may not be eligible for the bursary.

Scientific committee members will score all applications, unless there is a conflict of interest such as an application from the same clinical team/hospital as the committee member, or if they have been actively involved in helping to develop the application, in which case they should recuse themselves from scoring such an application.

Once all scores and relevant comments have been received from members of the Scientific Committee, a collated score sheet is provided. This scoresheet includes all applications with the mean score achieved, the median scored achieved, and the relative rankings, i.e. the number of times that an application was ranked first, second, third etc by the committee members. Comments will also be included for each study in the collated score sheet.

Decision-making process

The decision on awarding the Bursary will be made at a meeting of the BPSU Scientific Committee, usually held in November. All of the applications will be reviewed and discussed, based on the scores achieved and the comments made. Should a number of applications be considered as potential bursary recipients by those present at the meeting, and the overall mean and median scores for these applications are reasonably close, then a vote should be held amongst those present as to which application each member would support as the bursary prize winner. Consideration will also be given by committee members to the rankings and the comments, especially as regards to public and patient involvement.

Each committee member will vote for their preferred application of those deemed to be potential bursary recipients, and the application receiving the lowest number of votes on each round of voting is eliminated, such that ultimately just one application remains, which is then declared the winner. In the case of a draw at any stage of the voting, the deciding vote will go to the Chair of the Scientific Committee, unless there is any potential conflict of interest (see below), in which case the Deputy Chair will take on that role.

As per the initial individual scoring of the applications, if one of the applications is from the same clinical team/hospital as the committee member, or a committee member has been actively involved in the development of the application, then they should withdraw themselves from any voting that includes such an application, although they can make appropriate comments as so desired, if this is felt to be helpful for the other committee members.