

## **Review of the Charity's responsive Research & Development programmes**

### **Summary**

1. Guy's and St Thomas' Charity ([www.gsttcharity.org.uk](http://www.gsttcharity.org.uk)) provides funding for both R&D and health service improvement. The November 2009 Trustee Board agreed that it was timely to carry out a formal review of the impact of the Charity's investment in R&D projects and fellowships, and that it was appropriate for the review to be executed by a suitably experienced freelance consultant.
2. This document explains the background to the review and describes the process and timetable for selecting the consultant.

### **Background**

3. Prior to 2003 Guy's & St Thomas' Charity used its research funding (c.£7m p.a.) to support Projects & Equipment, Training & Education (mainly PhDs and MDs) and Prize PhD Studentships. As part of a strategic review in 2002/03, these were replaced by a three themed programme (infectious diseases & STDs, emerging diagnostic methods and quality of care) which ran alongside a 'responsive' funding stream, which supported new lines of research, and training and education opportunities for key staff. The responsive theme ran for two rounds and was then withdrawn, principally because of the administrative burden of processing an overwhelming number of applications in relation to the limited funds available. The quality of care and infectious diseases themes ran until 2005 and the emerging diagnostics theme until 2006.
4. Following consultation with its beneficiary NHS Trusts and their academic partners, the Charity reviewed its research strategy in 2006 and decided to focus its research funding on translational research and development. It divided its £6m p.a. investment in research into two programmes: A strategic R&D infrastructure fund (to support the highest quality scientists, equipment and laboratories) and a projects and fellowships based translational research and development programme. In the first year, funding from the latter programme was limited to cover the research priorities and cross cutting disciplines in the GSTFT/KCL Biomedical Research Centre, but has been expanded to also include those within the SLaM/KCL Biomedical Research Centre for the last two years.

### **Review**

5. Although the strategic R&D infrastructure fund projects are of relatively high value (averaging £750,000 each) they usually result in tangible outputs (chairs recruited, equipment bought and laboratories refurbished) and their progress is monitored on a six monthly basis by the R&D Steering Group. There is no similar mechanism for monitoring

the progress of the research projects and fellowships grants. The Charity tracks the expenditure, so is aware when they are completed. In the last two years it has also significantly expanded its web library of grants awarded, where it uploads final reports and links to publications: [https://www.gsttcharity.org.uk/grants/awarded\\_results.html](https://www.gsttcharity.org.uk/grants/awarded_results.html).

6. It is timely to undertake a retrospective assessment of the merits of the projects and fellowship grants that have been awarded, which can inform the Charity's future strategy. 168 research project/fellowship grants with a total value of over £18m have concluded since 2004.
7. Measuring the relationship between Charity funded research outputs and health outcomes will be very difficult to substantiate, but the Charity proposes to adopt/adapt the MRC's evaluation guidelines, which include:
  - Publications
    - a. all primary, peer-reviewed publications that were published in refereed journals, whether electronically or in print
  - Collaborations and Partnerships
    - b. either bi-lateral partnerships, such as collaborations with the biotechnology or pharmaceutical sector, or an agreement to participate in a network, consortium, multi-centre study, or other initiative
    - c. Has this partnership brought a direct financial contribution to your research?
    - d. Has this partnership contributed in non-financial ways to your research?
    - e. Briefly describe the contributions made by you and/or your research team to this collaboration.
    - f. Please briefly describe any notable outputs, outcomes or impacts that have resulted from this collaboration.
  - Further Funding
    - g. Has research on this agreement led directly to further peer-reviewed, competitively-awarded funding for your group. Provide name of funding provider and amount.
  - Next Destination and Recruitment
    - h. Do you know the next destination of any staff members that were part of the research team?
  - Dissemination to Non-Academic Audiences
    - i. details of dissemination and public engagement activities
    - j. what effect the research has had on the patients-i.e benefit and also on the service and policy
  - Research Materials (Tools, Methods and Databases)
  - Intellectual property and Licensing
  - Products or Interventions
  - Spin-outs
  - Awards and recognition

8. The Charity does not have the capacity to undertake the review in-house. It is therefore proposed that a specification is advertised through the Charity's website, the Association of Medical Research Charities and other routes; and a sub-group of its R&D Steering Group members shortlist and interview candidates. The focus of the review would be on all the 168 research project and fellowship grants that have been completed since 2004.

### Process

9. Consultants bidding for the contract will need to describe how they will approach the task, bearing in mind the MRC evaluation guidelines, above.
10. It is anticipated the review will be carried out over the winter and a report submitted to the April 2010 R&D Steering Group. The timetable is as follows:

December 11 <sup>th</sup> 2009	Specification advertised
January 4 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Deadline for completed tenders
January 11 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Interviews
January-March 2010	Review undertaken
March 29 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Review submitted
April 26 <sup>th</sup> 2010	R&D Steering Group

11. Freelance consultants should on less than four sides of A4 describe how they will approach the task, and how their past experience makes them a suitable contractor. It should also describe what the final report will look like, perhaps supported by a template illustrating a single or small number of reviews.
12. The statement above should be accompanied by:
- A CV
  - The names and contact details of two referees who have experience of the consultant's work.
  - A breakdown of their costs associated with this project, including whether VAT is included or not.
  - Confirmation that they will be acting on a self employed basis and will declare any income, costs or expenses paid by the Charity to any relevant authority, including HMRC.
13. Completed submissions should be emailed to [research@gsttcharity.org.uk](mailto:research@gsttcharity.org.uk) by 5pm on January 4<sup>th</sup> 2010. If you wish to discuss your submission then please contact David Jones, Director of Grant Making & Development at Guy's & St Thomas' Charity on 0207 188 1207, or via the email address above.