



Apply for a grant

Grant applications

Do you need a grant to fund your next Spinal Cord Injury research project?

Our 2026 grant call will go live on Tuesday 7th April. Please see below for more information

We now support proposals across a wider range of topics related to quality of life in Spinal Cord Injury. For more information on any aspect of our grant awards, please contact Derek Cutler, Research Director derek.cutler@smsr.org.uk

Stoke Mandeville Spinal Research is an independent charity dedicated to funding research that will help to improve quality of life for people living with a spinal cord injury (SCI).

Up to half a million people worldwide will sustain a spinal cord injury every year and many will experience debilitating complications from their injury. Our Research Grants Programme is focussed on preventing or improving the management of the medical complications of SCI to improve these individuals' quality of life.

We support research that will lead to new treatments and therapies, deepening of understanding, and dissemination of best practice in SCI quality of life issues. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Bladder management (including treatment and prevention of Urinary Tract Infections)
- Bowel management
- Pressure ulcers

- Respiratory care
- Neuropathic pain
- Upper limb function
- Psychological health

We provide grants of up to £150,000 for projects of up to 3 years, but also welcome applications for smaller projects. Applications for feasibility studies and seed funding projects will be considered, particularly if initial results could support larger subsequent studies. You should be realistic and request a level and duration of funding that is appropriate to your proposed activities.

We place a strong emphasis on proposals that will have short-to-medium term clinical impact and a demonstrable impact on quality of life for people with SCI. Furthermore, our emphasis is on the treatment and management of people with non-progressive spinal cord injuries and we expect proposals to have this as their primary focus. We will consider proposals where SCI represents one cohort within broader studies.

We welcome applications from institutions around the world but require that at least one UK-based clinical or academic centre be involved in the work.

All applications will be assessed on scientific quality, clinical impact, and feasibility by our independent Scientific Advisory Board.

SMSR is a proud member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) and follows its best practice standards for peer review, ensuring that decisions on research funding are made in a fair and transparent way.



Timeline - 2026 grant call

Call live: Tuesday 7 April

Deadline for preliminary applications: Fri 16 May, 5pm UK time

Shortlisted bidders invited to submit full proposal: Week of 9 June

Deadline for full applications: Fri 22 Aug, 5pm UK time

We aim to communicate final funding decisions by the end of October.

Application documents and information

These documents relate to our 2025 call and are subject to change for future rounds

Preliminary application form

Guidance for applicants

Standard terms and conditions of grant award

Appeals policy and process

Success rates

Across all our grant rounds (2019-2025) we have received 77 applications and awarded 9 grants, giving an overall success rate of 12%

In our first grant call in 2019, we awarded a total of £317,111 across 4 projects. We received 21 applications, giving a success rate of 19%.

In our September 2021 call we received 12 applications. No grants were awarded. Our Scientific Advisory Board were impressed by many of the applications that were put forward. However, following the peer-review process, the board concluded that none of the projects were sufficiently strong across **all** criteria to recommend funding. We are hopeful that some of the projects, which came close to the high standards set by the charity, will reapply in a future call and be successful following improvements to the proposals.

In a call in September 2022 we received 14 applications of which 2 were awarded grants, giving a success rate of 14%.

In our September 2023 call we received 7 applications and awarded 1 grant, for a success rate of 14%.

In our January 2025 call, we received 23 applications and awarded 2 grants, for a success rate of 9%

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