



**SAMANTHA DICKSON  
BRAIN TUMOUR TRUST**

Head to head with brain tumours

## **Programme Grant for Brain Tumour Research**

### **Call for Expressions of Interest**

#### **Introduction**

Samantha Dickson Brain Tumour Trust invested in its first programme grant in 2008, to establish the Samantha Dickson Brain Cancer Unit at UCL. We are now looking to make a further strategic investment in another UK institution.

We are inviting institutions to express their interest in applying for a grant of this nature. Further details of the vision and scale for these grants, and the application process, can be found in the following information.

Please direct all enquiries about this initiative to the Research team at SDBTT on 01252 749990 or [research@sdbtt.co.uk](mailto:research@sdbtt.co.uk).

Please note that any institution/researcher interested in an SDBTT programme grant, may also be interested in our current research project and clinical trials grant rounds. If you are not already aware of these, please see: [www.braintumourtrust.co.uk/grantround](http://www.braintumourtrust.co.uk/grantround)

#### **Requirements for Expressions of interest**

The deadline for expressions of interest is 29<sup>th</sup> March 2012. The format for the expression of interest would be a letter signed by an appropriate senior authority at the institution, indicating interest in the scheme. It should not be more than 2 pages in length, and it should be submitted electronically to [research@sdbtt.co.uk](mailto:research@sdbtt.co.uk).

At this stage, we are not looking for institutions to develop their proposals, but simply to indicate that they would be interested, as a call for proposals will be issued at a later stage. The purpose of this is for us to understand whether there is interest among the research community for this type of grant and to determine the likely number of applicants in order to assist us in planning the grant round. The expression of interest will not be put through any assessment or peer review process.

Please note that this expression of interest stage is not a formal stage of the grant round, and an open call for applications will be made at a later date. Those who submit an expression of interest will be contacted with the call for applications at the time it is

launched. The grant round will be conducted in accordance with the principles of the Association of Medical Research Charities, of which SDBTT is a member.

This call for expressions of interest has been sent to all UK research contacts on the SDBTT database and is available on our website. Please feel free to pass it on to colleagues who may not have received it.

## **Guidelines for Programme grants**

The following details outline our plans for SDBTT Programme grants.

### *Funding*

Five year funding totalling £1.5 million, and a requirement that the institution matches this with £1.5million of further funds, giving a total budget of new resources of £3million.

The £3million should be allocated to cover direct costs for staff within the unit, including salary, consumables and equipment. Requests for capital / infrastructure will not normally be considered since it is expected that laboratory space will be available at the Host Institution.

### *Area(s) of research*

Any research relevant to primary paediatric or adult brain tumours.

### *Strategic vision for programme grants*

- Multidisciplinary team including expertise in basic science and translational research, and further links with disciplines such as psycho-social, neuro-imaging, pharmacology, etc., as appropriate to area(s) of research.
- Applicants must demonstrate evidence of research excellence and will be required to provide details as to how these successes would be built upon and how the other objectives would be addressed
- Strong leadership of and vision for the proposed Centre should be evident
- Proposed Centre must have demonstrably strong clinical links with health care professionals, ideally across paediatrics and adults, and clinicians must show willingness to contribute to research, e.g. including through banking and sharing of tissues and participation in clinical trials
- Evidence of existing research collaborations and willingness to develop further collaborations
- Centre will comprise expertise with the appropriate facilities and resources to plan and establish major programmes of work into brain tumours
- Proposed Centre should act as an appropriate training environment for researchers
- The proposed Centre must be able to contribute to developing the necessary infrastructure to support an ambitious programme of research relevant to brain tumours
- The applicants must demonstrate strong institutional support to both the establishment and staffing of such a Centre

- Expectation that the award would lead to both substantial external grant funding and institutional support
- The applicants must demonstrate a willingness to engage with patients, the public SDBTT supporters and donors, through and about their research, including for example promoting the SDBTT support helpline and potentially hosting an information day organised by the SDBTT support team.
- The applicants must demonstrate a willingness to brand the centre as an SDBTT Centre

#### *Future Review*

All new Programme grants will be subject to independent review three years after funding begins. At this point, Units may seek renewable funding beyond the initial five-year period on a similar scale. Subject to the outcome of the review, unit support may also be terminated at the end of the 5-year funding period.

### **Programme grant selection process**

Samantha Dickson Brain Tumour Trust is a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities, and follows its best practice guidelines for grant award and monitoring.

The details of the selection process will be finalised by the Trustees after the Expressions of Interest have been received. This is likely to broadly use the following format, although this may be subject to change and will depend particularly on the likely number of applicants:

- a.) Open call for applications
- b.) Outline applications to be submitted on the appropriate form
- c.) Outline applications will be subject to international peer review
- d.) GRAM and Board meetings produce shortlist
- e.) Respond to applicants, and invite shortlisted applicants to submit a full application for submission with deadline
- f.) Full applications subject to international peer review and site visit assessment by representatives of SDBTT's Grant Review and Monitoring committee
- g.) Final decisions

The timescale is likely to be around 12 months from the call for applications to the decisions.

Those who provide an expression of interest will be kept updated about the launch date for the grant round. The next update is likely to be provided in May 2012.