

2022 TANDEM Seed Grants Funding Round

Guidance notes for applicants

1. Overview

This document explains the structure of the TANDEM Seed Grant Funding application form and offers guidance on the information to include in each section.

Please submit your application form as a WORD DOCUMENT – this is required for correct processing of the application. Applications sent as PDF documents will not be processed.

2. Remit of the grant round

The TSA is running the 2022 TANDEM Seed Grant Funding Round jointly with TAND Consortium. The remit of the call is to offer small 'seed' grants to international researchers that will address priority research areas identified in a recent scoping review of all TAND research to date (Vanclouster et al., *Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders*, 2022). The scoping review identified a number of key research gaps including but not limited to a need for:

- more research from low/middle-income countries
- more research on TAND in older adults
- more qualitative research
- an increase in research on the scholastic and psychosocial level
- more research on the overactive/impulsive, eat/sleep, neuropsychological and scholastic clusters
- non-pharmacological intervention research, including caregiver skills training and caregiver wellness programmes
- research that utilizes technologies to increase accessibility of support to families

In order to ensure the most direct benefit to people with TSC and their families, the grant call will specifically encourage small projects that will be complementary to the TANDEM project and/or that can 'bolt on' to the TANDEM project. Successful applicants will have access to data and information from the project. The call is also particularly keen to receive applications from emerging/early career TAND researchers.

During the award round, we ask potential applicants to complete the following documents:

- Application form including full proposal/protocol for the study
- Bio-sketch for each person who will work on the project
- Relevant ethical or other regulatory approval letters
- A use of animals in research form (if applicable)

The Tuberous Sclerosis Association
research@tuberous-sclerosis.org

Main Switchboard: 0300 222 5737

Registered address: The TSA, c/o Nightingale House, 46-48 East Street, Epsom,
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Charity number: 1039549 (England & Wales), SC042780 (Scotland)

Upon receipt of an application and all required documentation, the TSA will review the funding request to check its eligibility and to ensure that the research meets the remit of the call listed above.

3. Assessment criteria

The funding round will be managed by an oversight group consisting of members of the TANDEM consortium steering group and TSA representatives. The oversight group includes:

1. Prof Petrus de Vries – TANDEM steering group member
2. Prof Anna Jansen – TANDEM steering group member
3. Dr Chris Kingswood – TANDEM steering group member and TSA trustee
4. Ms Shoba Srivastava – TANDEM steering group member
5. Prof Liesbeth De Waele - TANDEM steering group member
6. Dr Tosca Heunis - TANDEM steering group member
7. Dr Pooja Takhar – TSA representative and oversight group secretariat
8. Miss Bethan Vaughan – TSA representative and oversight group secretariat

The TANDEM consortium steering group will form a grant panel (similar to Research Committee) (Prof De Vries, Prof Jansen, Dr Kingswood, Prof De Waele, Prof Heunis and Ms Srivastava) that will assess the applications, with Dr Takhar and Ms Vaughan providing a secretariat to the grant panel by overseeing the research governance processes and providing the logistics support.

All applications will be initially triaged by the TSA research team to ensure the completeness of the paperwork and compliance with the application process, funding thresholds, and application guidance.

Where applications do not comply with such requirements and require some minimal quality adjustments, applicants will be contacted and asked to make the necessary amendments within an agreed timeframe. The TSA reserves the right to reject the application at this stage if the applicant is unable or unwilling to make the necessary amendments within the required timescale.

Where applications are significantly short of these requirements, the TSA research team will consult Prof de Vries and Prof Jansen for advice. Again, amendments may be required, but the TSA reserves the right to reject the application at this stage, if advised.

After passing through the initial triage stage, all applications will be subject to peer review by the grant panel.

Your application will be assessed, by reviewers, against the following criteria:

- The overall potential for impact that will improve the lives of people living with TSC; those affected directly, along with their family members and carers
- Impact leading to wider research, including social, economic and health sector benefits

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- The quality of the application and study protocol
- The level of innovation in the study
- The strength and track record of the researchers; in the case of emerging researchers evidence of promise of the candidate's research trajectory
- Value for money
- Plans to ensure that people living with TSC; those affected directly including their family members and carers are at the centre of the study, throughout the duration of the study
- The strength of plans to communicate and disseminate the findings of research to other research professionals, as well as the lay TSC community

4. Before you start

Before preparing your application, you must read and consult these guidance notes (including Vanclooster et al., *Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders*, 2022).

Please contact a member of the TSA research team if you have any queries.

5. Eligibility

Submission and review

- Each applicant must submit no more than one application for project funding as lead applicant.
- Applicants must include, alongside their application form:
 - A full research proposal document (max 1,500 words)
 - Bio-sketches for each named person involved
- Applicants may seek advice on the application process from the TSA or TANDEM oversight group before applications are submitted.
- Once the application has been submitted, no additional unsolicited information intended to support the application will be accepted unless related to new legislative or regulatory change that will have a significant impact on the work undertaken.
- Please complete and return your application form in Word format so that the information can be easily analysed.
- Supporting documents can be returned in either Word or PDF format.

Lead Applicants

- Senior researchers should be able to demonstrate evidence of a strong research record and should display evidence of leadership. Emerging/early career researchers are encouraged to apply as lead applicants, and should outline how their research career to date shows promise and sufficient evidence of being able to lead a project to completion.
- All lead applicants must be willing and able to agree to the Terms and Conditions if their application is successful.

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Staff Members / Employees

- If the staff member who will be supported by the grant has not yet been recruited or is unknown at this stage, please provide the title of the position to be filled. Further information must be provided as soon as possible after the award letter is issued.
- There is no limit to the number of staff members that can be involved in the application, provided their salary costs can be covered by associated grants.

Collaborators

- There is no limit to the number of collaborators that can be involved in an application, but for each collaborator there must be a signed declaration letter on official letter headed paper which confirms they have consented to co-operate in the programme of research. It should also outline the reasons for collaborating and explain their role in the project.

Ethics

- All appropriate regulatory approvals must either be in place before the work on the research commences or after the award has been granted.

If you are unsure whether your application meets the above eligibility criteria, please contact the TSA's Research Team by emailing research@tuberous-sclerosis.org or by calling the main switchboard on 0300 222 5737.

6. Application form

The following table explains the structure of the 2022 TANdem Seed Grant Award Round application form and offers guidance on the information to include in each section.

Please submit your application form as a Word document – this is required for correct processing of the application. Applications sent as PDF documents will not be processed.

Question	Guidance
1. Project titles	Please enter the full project title, the short project title and the lay project title. The lay project title should be written in plain English and should be understood by a non-scientist.
2. Applicants	Please provide the requested details for up to five applicants, with the principle investigator on the grant round being named as applicant 1 (this will be our main contact throughout the grant evaluation process and the project should it be funded).

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3. Lead applicant details	Please provide the full work postal address and telephone number of Applicant 1, the main point of contact between TSA and the project.
4. Address where research will be conducted	Please provide the requested information.
5. Study duration	Please provide the requested information. There is no set limit to how long a TANDEM Seed Grant can be (minimum or maximum) but as these are small grants, we would not anticipate a project to last no more than 12 months.
6. Short abstract of research project	<p>Please provide a short abstract of the research proposal, maximum 300 words. The abstract should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background – please detail brief background information that is needed to understand the wider context of your application and accompanying documents. • Hypothesis and objectives • Methodology <p><u>Please note: You are also expected to provide a full research proposal alongside the application form (see section 8 of this guide).</u></p>
7. Lay summary of research project	<p>Please provide a structured and detailed lay summary, written in plain English, maximum 300 words. In other words, it must be understandable to a non-scientific person.</p> <p>If your project is selected for funding, the lay summary you provide may be used publicly on TSA and TANDEM project websites as a description of your project. As such, please do not include any confidential information.</p> <p>Here are some of the things you should include in your lay summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly state the aims and objectives of the project – the problem you are trying to address and how relevant it is to TSC and its associated conditions

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly describe what you are going to do in the project, without using scientific jargon • explain how the findings of your research will be of benefit to people living with TSC and their families and carers • provide details of how your project will involve people living with TSC and their families, both as participants and by providing input into the design and delivery of the research • describe what steps you would take to disseminate the results of the research • outline the timescale to impact and reasons why
8. Patient and public involvement	Please provide the requested information. If this is not applicable to your project, please detail how you plan to involve patients and their families in the dissemination of your project results.
9. Regulatory approval	Please provide the requested information. If relevant, please include a copy of any approval letters. Please note that funds may not be released without all necessary approval in place.
10. Animal work	Please indicate whether animals will be used in the project.
11. Summary of financial support requested	<p>Please provide a brief description of the funding requested and the anticipated cost for each item. Provide more details and a justification of how the funds will be used in the main proposal if necessary.</p> <p>Seed funding applications may apply for any amount between €2,000-€10,000 depending on the size and scope of the seed project. We intend to award 3-5 seed grants in this round.</p>
12. Full project description (maximum 1500 words, excluding references)	<p>Please provide a description of your proposed research below. You must include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A summary of relevant background research The aims and objectives of your project An experimental plan and methods Why this research is novel and innovative

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	<p>v. What the outcome/impact of this grant will be in both the short and long term</p> <p>vi. How people living with TSC and their families will ultimately benefit</p> <p>Your proposal should not exceed 1500 words (excluding references). Font size should be no smaller than 11pt and should be in Ariel or Times New Roman. Margins should be at least 2cm on all sides.</p> <p>Figures and tables can be included in this section if you wish – you may find it easier to insert them at the end of the section or include them as separate files.</p>
13. Please provide a separate CV (suggested length – 1 page of A4) for all applicants	Please provide a summary CV for all applicants, provided in the format specified in the above section.
14. Declaration to be completed by applicant	Please read and then initial each statement. Please provide a signature and then print your name and the date below.
15. Checklist for applicant	Please initial the boxes to confirm that the stated criteria have been met.
16. Electronic submission	Details regarding submission – please read these thoroughly ahead of submitting your application.

If you have any further questions regarding completing the application form, please contact us at research@tuberous-sclerosis.org.

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