



**British Heart  
Foundation**

# **BHF Fellowships**

**Dr Ross King  
Research Advisor – Fellowships**

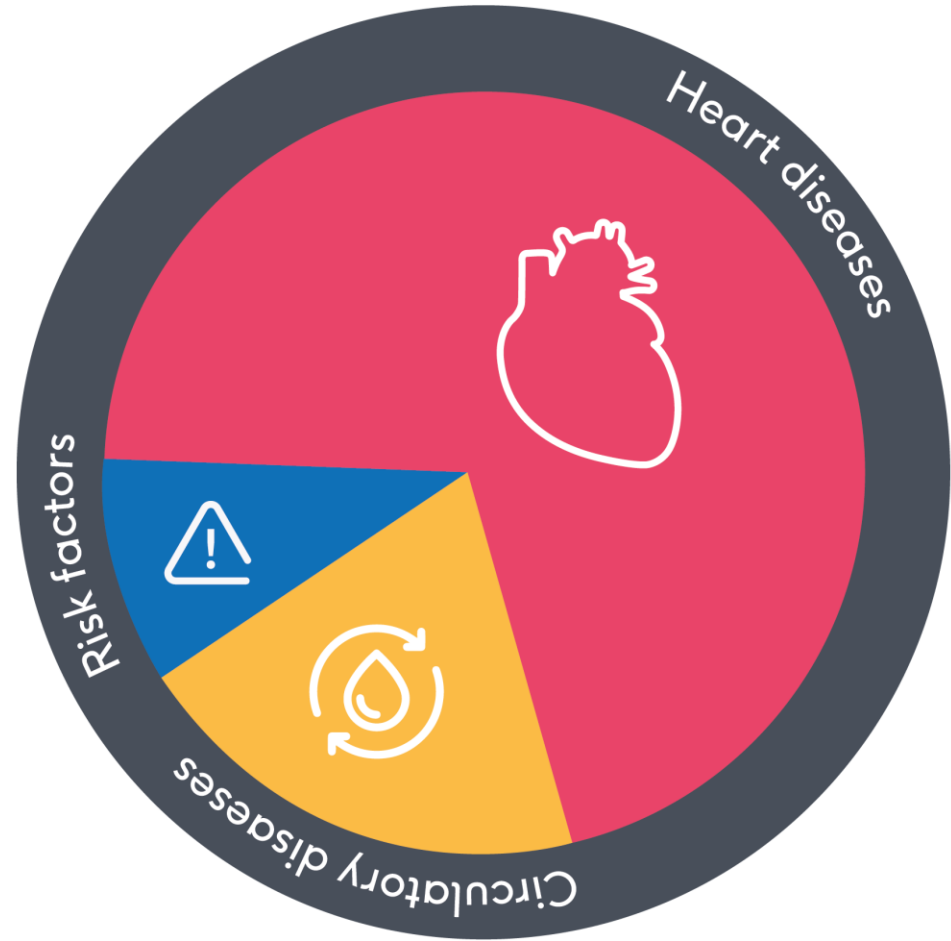
**University College London  
Institute of Cardiovascular Science**

08/11/2018

- 1. BHF funding opportunities**
- 2. What we're looking for**

# What we do

- Biggest funder of cardiovascular research in the UK
- We fund basic, clinical and translational research into heart and circulatory disease and their risk factors:
  - Heart disease
  - Stroke
  - Diabetes
  - Vascular dementia

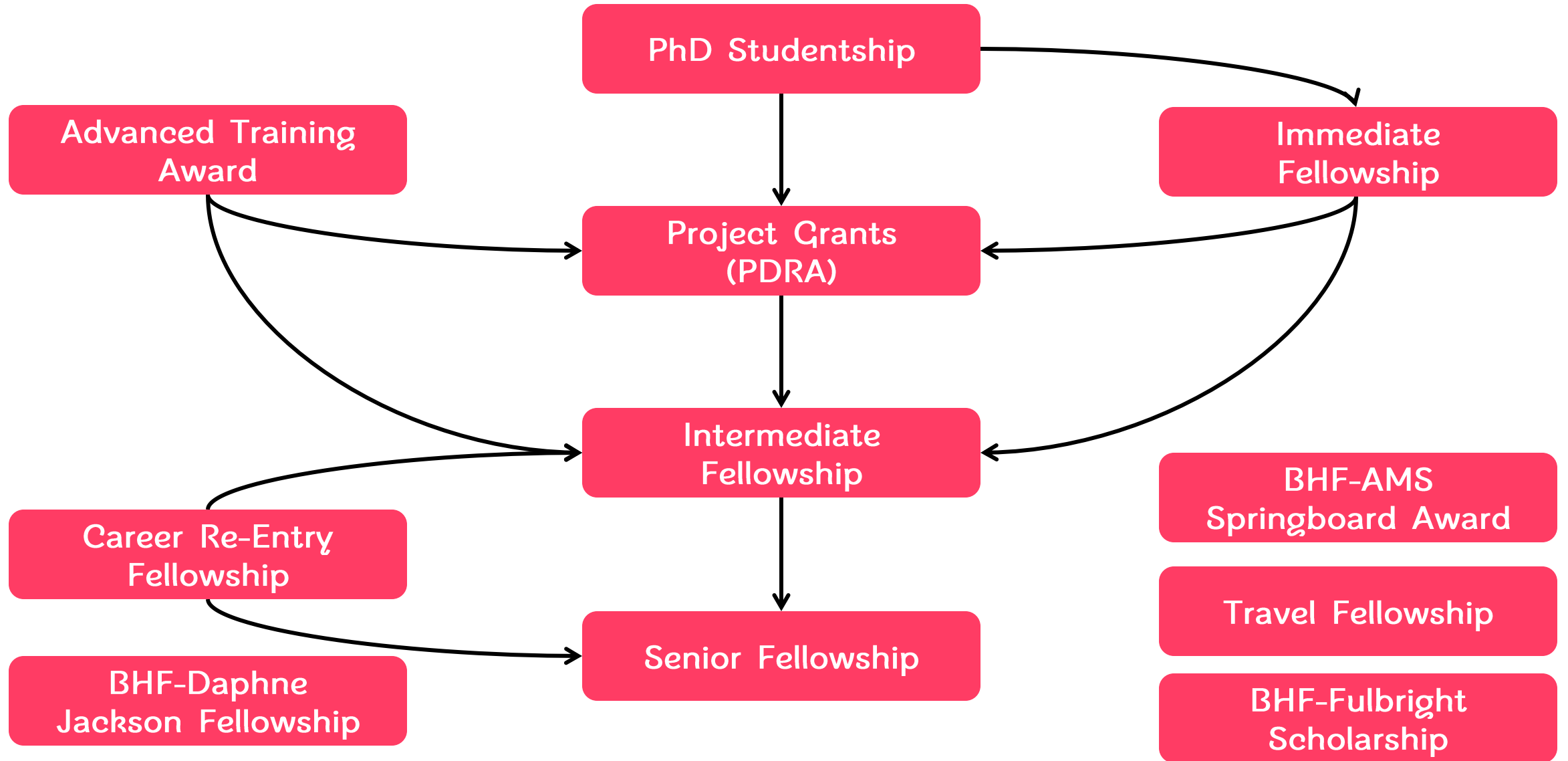


**How can the  
BHF support  
your research?**





# Basic science careers





### Immediate Postdoctoral (4 Years)

- <2 years postdoctoral experience
- Evidence of exceptional research ability
- Should not be carried out in same institution as PhD



Your salary  
Consumables  
Travel

### Intermediate (5 years (+2))

- Usually 3-6 years postdoctoral experience
- Series of first or senior author high impact research papers



Your salary  
RA/Tech salary

### Senior (5 years (renew.))

- Usually 6-10 years postdoctoral experience
- Established track record of research leadership
- Often (but not always!) an IBSRF

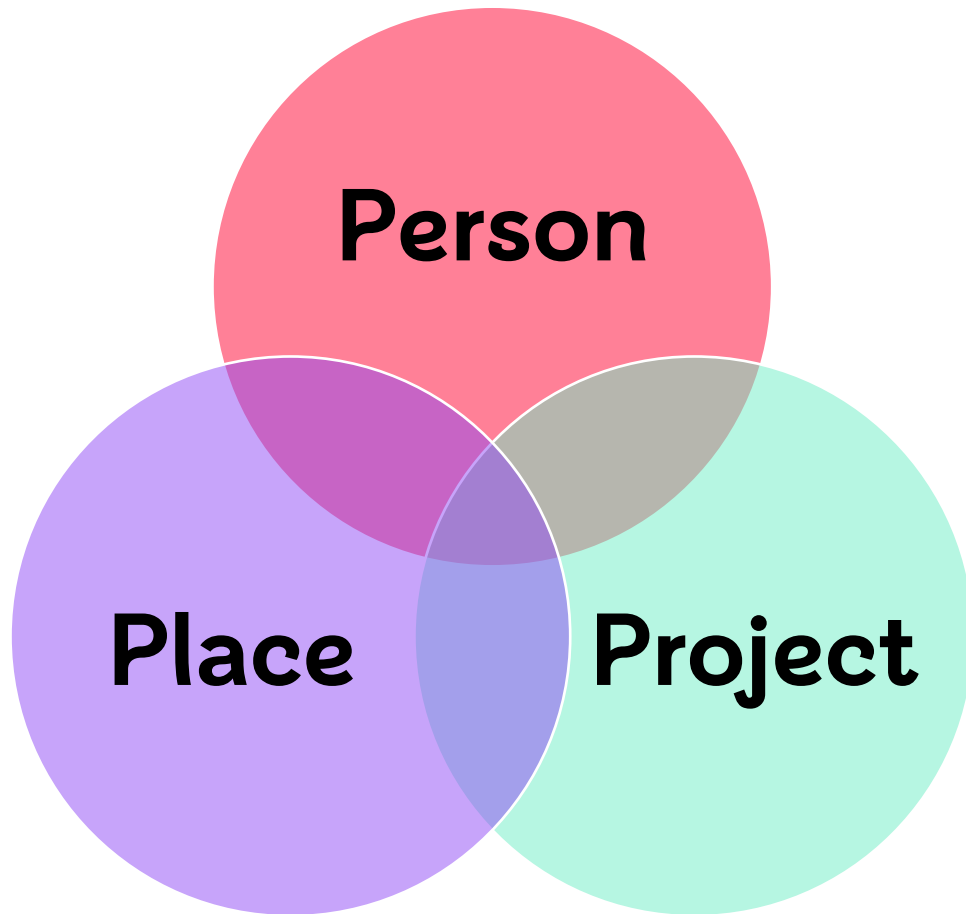
Consumables/equipment  
Travel



**What are we looking for?**



# What are we looking for?



- Most appropriate research environment
- Excellent facilities and resources
- Right co-applicants and collaborators





**Before you  
start...**



# Before you start...

- Think about whether the BHF is the right funder for you
- Consider which grant(s) you may be eligible for
  - We can advise, but ultimately the decision is yours
- Remember that things always take longer than planned
  - Submission to decision *alone* – ~9 months
- Follow our guidelines and formatting rules (please!)
  - Online application form
  - Case for support (6 sides A4)



**What makes a  
good grant  
application?**



# What do we look for?

- **Career statement:**
  - Show how this award will advance your career – what do you hope to achieve? How will it support your progression? Why is this the scheme for you?
  - Strong letters of support from supervisors/heads of department are looked upon favourably – what local structures are in place to support your progression?
- **Co-Applicants (Supervisors):**
  - Demonstrated track record of training and developing researchers, has access to the right facilities, collaborators and networks for your research





# What do we look for?

- **Collaborators:**
  - Not a requirement, but can significantly strengthen an application, where relevant
  - Detailed letters of support are best – “I agree to collaborate with you” is not encouraging. How exactly are they going to contribute/support you?





# What do we look for?

- **Costings:**
  - Detailed justification of all salaries, consumables, equipment and other requests over duration of award
  - “£1,500 per year for biomarker analysis” – not good
  - “£40,000 for sampling device” – fully break this down
  - We heavily scrutinise all applications for potential savings – if the justification is not adequate, we will remove it





# What do we look for?

- **Background and pilot data:**
  - Give a balanced and unbiased summary of the field – the reviewers will know!
  - Pilot data are not essential, but shrewd inclusion of relevant figures that directly support the hypotheses, aims and objectives will demonstrate feasibility and likelihood of success
  - Essential figures, tables etc. can be included in the appendices





# What do we look for?

- **Hypothesis:**
  - The hypothesis must be clear – no vague aspirations
  - Often broken down into a handful of “big questions” or objectives – do your questions actually address your hypotheses?
  - While we often want to measure anything and everything, be focused – what do you want to understand from **this** study?
  - What happens if things go wrong? Aim 4 should not be dependent on the success of Aims 1, 2, 3!







# What do we look for?

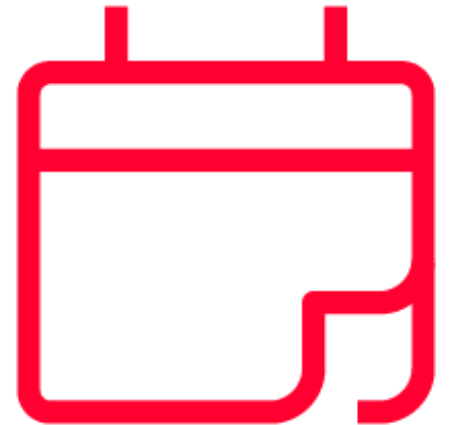
- **Experimental details:**
  - Clear experimental details – models to be used, doses, treatment regimens, timecourses, what will be analysed? How? By who?
  - “Pipette 1mL of RPMI” is overkill
- **Power calculations:**
  - We need to see precise power calculations to understand feasibility, ethicality and costing strategy
  - Grants commonly fall down over concern of being underpowered – this is a waste of our investment





# Small things that can go a long way

- **Gantt Chart:**
  - When will each aspect of the work be undertaken?
  - Gives confidence that the project is feasible
- **Study design:**
  - Useful for complex experimental models/clinical studies - flowchart illustrating patient recruitment, treatment, evaluation, follow-up etc.
- **Working models:**
  - How do your objectives fit together to test your hypothesis?  
How will your findings integrate into "the story"?



[bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk)

**Thank you & good luck!**

**Beat heartbreak forever**

[kingr@bhf.org.uk](mailto:kingr@bhf.org.uk)  
[research@bhf.org.uk](mailto:research@bhf.org.uk)