

Cancer Research Program Grants – Scoring Matrix

Guidance

Using the Full Range

To ensure that the best applicants get funded, Cure Cancer needs to have granularity across the scoring criteria, however a common issue with grant scoring is that some reviewers will only use the upper or lower bounds of the scoring rubric. To ensure appropriate and fair granularity, we request that reviewers use **the full spectrum** of the scoring criteria when assessing grant applications.

Descriptions are a guide.

The text within each cell should act as a guide to the expectations of the application to review the score but should not be used dogmatically – given the breadth of research funded by Cure Cancer, there is no perfect, one-size-fits-all criteria. Reviewers should use their expert judgement to score an application accordingly to where it best fits within the rubric. We encourage reviewers to think of the scores as being roughly grouped as “Must fund (5,4)”, “Should Fund (3,2)” and “Below minimum standards for funding (1)”. As such, “1” covers a broader range of quality than the other scores but given the competitive nature of the scheme we don’t need additional granularity below this limit.

Relative to Opportunity

Cure Cancer funds **Early Career Researchers**, many of whom have never held substantial competitive grants. Please take into consideration the level of experience that the applicant has (taking into account relative to opportunity / career disruptions) when determining the score.

Scoring Rubric

Group	Must Fund		Should Fund		Below Minimum Standards for Funding
CRITERIA	5 (OUTSTANDING)	4 (EXCELLENT)	3 (GOOD)	2 (ACCEPTABLE)	1 (POOR)
FEASIBILITY (20%)	All aims are clearly articulated, and the proposal clearly and concisely describes how all aims will be achievable within the project timeframe and budget. The research environment is exceptional and will enable the proposed research to be completed on time and on budget.	All aims are articulated and will be achievable within the project timeframe and budget. The research environment is excellent and will enable the proposed research to be completed on time and on budget.	All aims are described well and will be achievable within the project timeframe and budget. The research environment will enable the proposed research to be completed on time and on budget.	Most aims are described but would be improved with more detail. Some concerns around whether timeframe and/or budget is sufficient to achieve aims. Unclear research environment.	Poorly described aims. Timeframe and/or budget insufficient to achieve aims. Concerns about research environment.

SCIENTIFIC MERIT (35%)	Rationale for proposed research is compelling, clearly articulated and well justified. There are strong links between rationale and aims. Proposal is near flawless with no errors. Extremely likely to generate high quality research and significant research data. The proposal clearly describes how this research will improve the lives of people with cancer.	Rationale for proposed research is clearly articulated and justified and there are links between rationale and aims. Proposal is well described with very minor limitations or concerns. Likely to generate high quality or significant research data. The proposal describes how this research will improve the lives of people with cancer.	Rationale for proposed research is described well and mostly justified. Reasonable links between rationale and aims. Proposal is confusing in parts. May generate high quality or significant research data. The proposal outlines how this research will improve the lives of people with cancer.	Rationale for proposed research is describe but not justified. Some links between rationale and aims. Proposal is confusing in parts and/or has some errors. Unlikely to generate high quality or significant research data. The proposal is unclear as to how this research will improve the lives of people with cancer.	Rationale for proposed research is poorly described and/or unjustified. Little to no basis for hypothesis and aims. Proposal is poorly written and/or has significant errors. Will not generate high quality or significant research data. The proposal poorly describes how this research will improve the lives of people with cancer.
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CRITERIA	5 (OUTSTANDING)	4 (EXCELLENT)	3 (GOOD)	2 (ACCEPTABLE)	1 (POOR)

TRACK RECORD AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT (35%)	<p>The research environment described is strongly supportive and will result in enhanced career development of the applicant.</p> <p>The candidate makes a compelling case for their leadership of this project.</p> <p>The candidate has an outstanding track record relative to opportunity.</p>	<p>The research environment described is supportive and will result in enhanced career development of the applicant.</p> <p>The candidate makes a strong case for their leadership of this project.</p> <p>The candidate has an excellent track record relative to opportunity.</p>	<p>The research environment described is supportive but unclear how it will result in enhanced career development of the applicant.</p> <p>The candidate makes a good case for their leadership of this project.</p> <p>The candidate has a good track record relative to opportunity.</p>	<p>Some concerns about how the research environment described will support the career development of the applicant.</p> <p>The candidate sometimes makes a case for their leadership of this project.</p> <p>The candidate has a modest track record relative to opportunity.</p>	<p>It is unclear how the research environment described will support the career development of the applicant.</p> <p>The candidate makes an underwhelming case for their leadership of this project.</p> <p>The candidate has a poor track record relative to opportunity.</p>
CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT (10%)	<p>Proposal clearly outlines how consumers have been meaningfully involved in the development of the proposal, and how they will be involved if funded.</p> <p>Consumers are specifically named and are integral to the project.</p>	<p>Proposal details how consumers have been involved in the development of the proposal, and how they will be involved if funded.</p> <p>Consumers are specifically named.</p>	<p>Proposal details how consumers will be involved if funded, but no mention on how they have been involved in the development of the proposal.</p> <p>Consumers are named.</p>	<p>Cursory to limited mention of consumer involvement.</p>	<p>No involvement of consumers in the development of the proposal or project.</p>