

Terms of Reference of the Big C Research Advisory Panel (RAP):

Purpose:

- To provide expert independent advice on research grant applications submitted to Big C so Trustees are well informed in their decision making
- To provide expert advice to Big C pertaining to the process of their grant giving activity

Panel membership:

- The Panel consists of at least five members appointed by Big C, none of the members will normally be a Trustee of Big C
- The Panel is balanced appropriately in terms of diversity including expertise, institutions and experience
- The Panel will have a Chair and Vice Chair
- Big C will publish the names of the Panel online for transparency and to demonstrate a commitment to sourcing the appropriate expertise to inform decision making

Length of service:

- Panel members are asked to commit to 3 years' service with an option to serve an additional 3 years by mutual consent between the member, Panel Chair and Big C
- Members may serve for no longer than 6 years before stepping down from the Panel for at least three years
- Appointments to the Panel will be staggered in order to maintain continuity

Conflicts of interest:

- Where there is a conflict of interest the Panel member must not be in a position to influence funding decisions – this includes not being present in the discussion or scoring of applications
- In all applications where funding is linked to the Chair, the Panel Vice-Chair should take over the Chair's responsibilities for that round
- Active grantholders will not form a majority on the Research Advisory Panel

Representation:

- Chair of the Panel will attend the Grants Committee Meeting to report on their activity and to share recommendations of funding
- The Chair of the Panel may be asked by the Chair of the Grants Committee to attend Board of Trustees Meetings to report on their activity and to share recommendations of funding
- Panel members may be asked to represent Big C to external stakeholders from time to time, this will be undertaken by mutual consent

Communication:

- Advice and recommendations pertaining to grant application funding will be between the Chair of the Panel and the Chair to the Grants Committee
- Advice and recommendations pertaining to research strategy/process will be between the Chair of the Panel and the Big C Director of Operations

- Advice and recommendations pertaining to research grant operational issues will be between the Chair of the Panel and the Big C Company Secretary
- Individual panel members will communicate with the Chair of the Panel and the Big C Company Secretary as necessary

Operation of Panel meetings:

- The Panel will meet twice yearly as a minimum
- The quorum is three of the members of the Panel (or 50% whichever is the higher) and must include the Chair or in his or her absence, the Vice Chair
- Members of the Panel may attend a meeting in person or by conference call
- The CEO, Deputy CEO and Company Secretary of Big C have a permanent invitation to attend the Panel meetings. The Panel may invite other members of Big C's Executive Team or Big C Trustees to attend its meetings as appropriate.
- Any recommendations to be made to Big C must be taken by a majority of the votes cast by the members of the Panel. In the case of equality of votes the Chair has a casting vote, or in his or her absence the Vice Chair has the casting vote.

Grants timeline:

Date	Activity	Owner
January/February	Meeting of the Panel, Grants Committee, Director of Operations and Company Secretary to inform strategy, plan current grants round and know funds available.	Director of Operations
March (31 st)	Application Deadline – Student Bursary (SB) Programme	Company Secretary
April	Triage of SB applications and forward to Panel for consideration and recommendations	Company Secretary
April (30 th)	Deadline for SB funding recommendations	Panel members
August (31 st)	Main Application Deadline	Company Secretary
September	Triage of applications - eligibility and completeness	Company Secretary
September	Applications sent to Panel Chair for dissemination to Panel for approval of 'applicant suggested reviewers' and suggestions of 'independent reviewers'. Final peer reviewers to be approached to be determined by a meeting of the Panel, members may attend in person or by conference call.	Company Secretary
September/October/November	Written Peer Reviews sourced (identified by Panel). Big C will seek a Service User and Public Involvement (SUPI) perspective for each application considered – through Patient and Public Involvement in Research (PPIRes) in the first instance.	Company Secretary
October/November	Coordination of reviews when received to Panel members.	Company Secretary
October/November	Panel Meeting to agree funding recommendations	Director of Operations/Company Secretary

October/November	Grants Committee and Executive Team meeting to consider Panel's recommendations and fit. Chair of Panel to attend.	Chair of Grants Committee
November	Board of Trustees meet to consider Grants Committee recommendations and decide on funding.	Chair of Grants Committee
December	Applicants are told of decisions	Company Secretary (in consultation with Panel Chair)

Expenses:

All reasonable out of pocket expenses will be paid by Big C to Panel members.