



2026 RCR Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships in Clinical Oncology

Guidance Notes

Please ensure you have read these guidance notes before applying.

ELIGIBILITY

Student

The RCR SURFs in Clinical Oncology are available to medical students enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate entry programmes within the United Kingdom (UK). Undergraduate-entry students must be enrolled in their second, third or fourth year of study at the time of applying. (The equivalent will apply if you are undertaking a longer course; please note that those in their first or final years of study are not eligible.) Graduate-entry students must be enrolled in their first, second or third year of study at the time of applying. Students should identify if there is any other funding available for their projects before applying.

Supervisor

Students should apply with a supervisor who must be a Member or Fellow of the RCR Faculty of Clinical Oncology. Prospective supervisors who are still in training should provide a letter of support from their Head of Department with the application.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application form

Title

The title should concisely summarise the intended research topic without use of abbreviations.

Host institution

This should be the institution through which the award will be managed. This must be within the UK.

Intended dates

Please indicate when the student intends to undertake the research project. The majority of the work must be undertaken during the eight week 2026 summer holiday period. Students for whom the vacation period is less than eight weeks, may complete their project using additional vacation time later in the academic year. If the applicant can demonstrate potential to achieve a meaningful project in a shorter period of time during the vacation period, and can explain why they are unable to commit to eight weeks, this will also be considered. Funding is not available to support students undertaking work during term time.

What do you hope to achieve from undertaking a RCR SURF in Clinical Oncology?

Using a maximum of 600 words, the student should detail what they hope to achieve from applying for a SURF. The student should focus on the anticipated impacts on their personal

and professional development, the skills they will gain and how the award will impact on their career progression.

Please tell us about your previous experience of research and oncology

Using a maximum of 300 words, the student should detail their experience of both research and oncology. It is particularly important to outline any areas in which the student's experience is greater than that is expected for their stage of training.

Project description

Using a maximum of 500 words, the student and supervisor should provide an outline of the intended project. This should be pitched at the level of a clinical oncologist with research experience outside of the domain in which the project is to be undertaken (i.e. a big-data project should be readily understandable to a laboratory scientist).

Supervision arrangements

Using a maximum of 200 words, the supervisor should outline who will provide supervision for the student, both in terms of the project as a whole and from a day-to-day perspective.

Specialty insight

Using a maximum of 200 words, the supervisor should detail how the student will be provided with exposure to different aspects of the specialty. This might include through a supervised visit to the radiotherapy department, discussions with allied health professionals relevant to the radiotherapy pathway or through attending a radiotherapy planning session. These activities should form only a small part of the overall time allocated to the project and it is not expected that students will regularly attend clinic.

Ethics & governance

It is expected that ethics and governance approvals will be in place ready for the start of the project.

Ongoing mentorship

Using a maximum of 300 words, the supervisor should detail the mentorship arrangements that will be in place to support the student both during and beyond their project. These should be inventive and should demonstrate commitment from the supervisor and the supervising department to ensuring that the student is supported to gain additional experience and academic outputs in clinical oncology. These awards are granted to provide students with an opportunity to experience academic clinical oncology, and to gain lasting mentorship from senior clinical oncologists. They are also provided in the hope that students will gain tangible outputs and, where possible, we would encourage supervisors to ensure that students have opportunities to publish and present their research work.

Additional documentation

- i) Students should provide a CV of not longer than four pages in length which details their achievements at university.
- ii) A separate letter of support of no greater than 200 words should be provided by the student's tutor.
- iii) Supervising Members or Fellows of the RCR who are in training at the time of application should provide a letter of support for their application from their Head of Department.

What support is provided?

A bursary of £1440 is provided to cover a student's expenses when undertaking the project (i.e. at £180 per week). An additional £500 of funding is provided for the student's supervising department or laboratory to meet the costs of supporting the student. The entire award, including payment to the student, should be coordinated by the host organisation. Funding provided to the student's supervising department or laboratory may be allocated to costs directly incurred by the project, such as those relating to the purchase of consumables, or may alternatively be used to support the student's development, such as by facilitating attendance at a conference.

How do I apply?

The project application form is available at <https://www.rcr.ac.uk/career-development/awards-honours/awards-for-training-education-and-exams/summer-undergraduate-research-fellowships/> Students should apply with a supervisor who must be a Member or Fellow of the RCR.

What should the project focus on?

The project must be in an area relating to clinical oncology.

What are the deadlines?

Applications close at **5pm on Friday 8 May 2026**. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application in May/June 2026.