



# Getting Your Clinician Scientist Grant

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CANCER  
RESEARCH  
UK

MRC

Medical  
Research  
Council

OXFORD INSTITUTE FOR RADIATION ONCOLOGY



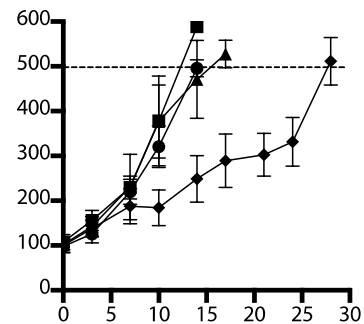
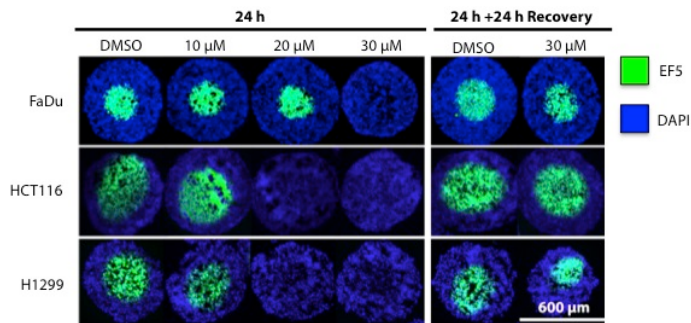
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# Career To Date

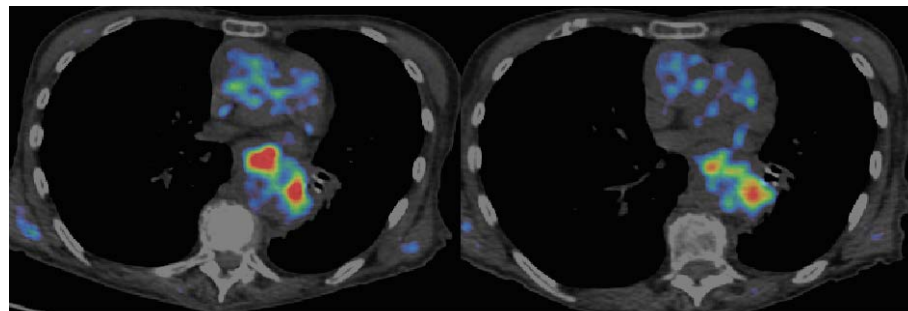
- Edinburgh Med School - 2000
- Edinburgh JHO/SHO Rotation - 2000 - 2003
- Clinical Oncology SpR - 2003 - 2007
- Oxford University D.Phil (CRF) - 2007 - 2010
- CRUK Clinician Scientist Fellowship - 2010 - 2014
- Renewed Fellowship - 2015 - present

# Research Interests

- ‘Improving the efficacy of radiotherapy treatment’
- **Lab research** - Genetic screens/drug screens/drug development



- **Clinical research** – RT/drug combination trials/functional imaging trials



Baseline

7 days post BKM120

# Clinician Scientist Funding

- Key first source of lab funding for independent researchers
- CRUK/MRC/Wellcome Trust
- Typically 4-5 years funding – often renewable
- Salary support for PI
- Staff and consumables costs
- Typically 10-20% success rate

# How can you improve your chances?

- For personal awards the '3 Ps' are key....

**Person?**

**Place?**

**Project?**

**Person:** Track record to date eg publications/funding?  
Predicted career course?

**Place:** Does the host center have the relevant experience/mentors? If not move or change project!!

**Project:** Feasible? Credible? Supporting preliminary data? Potential clinical importance?

# ‘By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail’

- Plan early – up to 18M in advance
- Which funding body and what funding call?
- Multiple or single applications?
- Does your research plan fit the strategy and aims?
- Eg cancers of unmet need
- If unsure – speak with the funding body

# The application - stick to the rules



- Don't submit an application that is illegible/ will irritate reviewers
- Complete **all** of the requested parts of the application form – even the bits that may annoy you (data-sharing, IP etc)
- Stick to the word count
- Funding committees usually receive the entire application

# The application – get help

- Grant application administrator (?)
- Finance department
- Statistician
- Letters of support? HoD? Supervisor?
- Know your department's processes - Research services sign off?
- Consumer involvement?
- CTRad review? Other 'internal' peer review process?

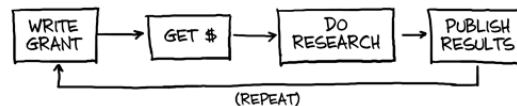


# The application – content

- Clarify the details of your proposal – discuss with peers/mentors/collaborators/supervisors
- Make it clear and easy to understand
- Collaborators? Co-investigators? Credibility?
- Preliminary data is incredibly valuable

## THE GRANT CYCLE

HOW IT'S SUPPOSED TO WORK:

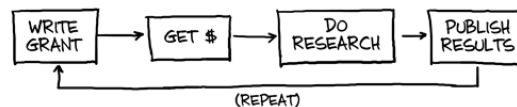


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## THE GRANT CYCLE

HOW IT'S SUPPOSED TO WORK:



HOW IT REALLY WORKS:

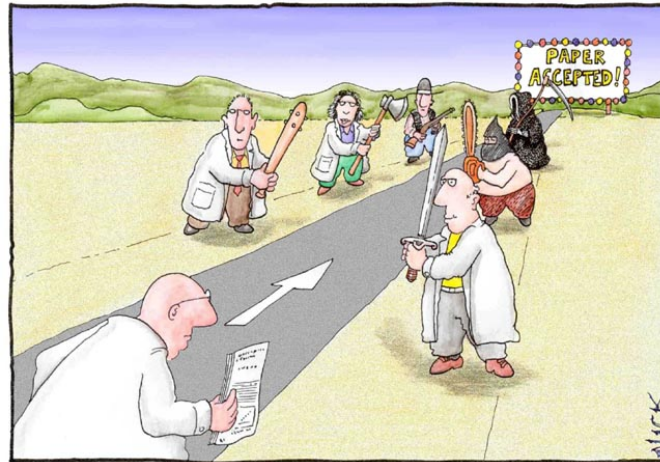


# The application – content

- Volume of work – over/under ambitious
- Fall back plan? Multiple components?
- Circulate drafts internally to honest critics
- Listen to advice and edit accordingly
- Proof read and spell check (UK!) thoroughly before submitting

# Peer review

- QA checked – be available in case queries!
- Sent out to 3-9 reviewers. Can take several months!



Most scientists regarded the new streamlined peer-review process as "quite an improvement."

- May be allowed a chance to respond to comments
- **Politely** address or rebut comments as appropriate
- Reviewers comments don't always reflect scores

# Interview

- Probing, 'mock' interview well in advance
- If allowed to give a presentation – stick to the rules (slides/time)
- Address key reviewers comments(?)
- Try to demonstrate progress since application
- Confident – not arrogant
- Avoid confrontation (if possible!)

# The outcome....

## **If successful....**

- Celebrate!
- Be generous in thanking everyone who helped

## **If unsuccessful....**

- Reflect on feedback
- Resubmit? Alter research plan? Move on?
- No one has a 100% funding record after 30 year career
- ‘Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm’