

The Stoke Mandeville-Masson Research Awards Committee

Terms of Reference

Contact:

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1.0 Purpose of the Stoke Mandeville-Masson Research Awards Committee

- 1.1 To provide advice to the Charitable Funds Committee of the Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust on decisions relating to the funding and management of research projects.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Ann Masson, a former NSIC patient and medal-winning Paralympian, died in January 2011. Subsequent to her death, a legacy fund was donated to the Stoke Mandeville Hospital aiming to support research into spinal cord injuries. The Research Board of the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville Hospital successfully bid for £240,000 to establish the one-off “Stoke Mandeville-Masson Research Awards”.
- 2.2 The “Stoke Mandeville-Masson Research Awards” are a one-off funding program being managed by the Stoke Mandeville-Masson Research Awards Committee, here forth referred to as “Awards Committee”. The Stoke Mandeville –Masson Research Award committee is a sub-committee of the NSIC research Board (consisting of the Chair of the NSIC Research Board, the Research Director of the Stoke Mandeville Spinal Foundation, and Clinical Director of the NSIC), and will act as a steering group for the Award allocation and management. It will co-opt members as appropriate.
- 2.3 The Awards Committee will advise the Charitable Funds Committee, who have delegated authority from the Trust Board, making recommendations for funding awards to ensure the support of only the highest quality and patient-focused research.

3.0 Remit

- 3.1 The remit of the Award Committee is to provide advice to the Charitable Funds Committee as to whether individual research grant applications merit funding. This involves considering the comments of the Advisory Panel in making a judgement as to the quality and relevance of each grant application.
- 3.2 To nominate members of the Advisory Panel, consisting of expert and lay external reviewers based in either the United Kingdom or abroad.
- 3.3 To oversee the award application process.
- 3.4 To monitor the progress of awarded research projects.

4.0 Membership

- 4.1 The Charitable Funds Committee will appoint a Chair, Vice-Chair and members of the Award Committee.
- 4.2 The Award Committee consists of seven members: three NSIC Research Board members consisting of the Chair, the Research Director of the Stoke Mandeville

Spinal Foundation and the research and development officer of the Buckshealthcare Healthcare NHS Trust), a charitable funds committee member of the Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, the Clinical Director of the NSIC, an external senior clinical research advisor and two patient and public representatives. The Award Committee will nominate members of the Advisory Panel, oversee the Award application process, and monitor the progress of awarded research projects.

- 4.3 The Charitable Funds Committee has the right to change the composition, quorum and membership of the Awards Committee when deemed necessary.
- 4.4 Membership of the Awards Committee will be publicly available on the Stoke Mandeville Spinal Foundation website.
- 4.5 The Award Committee will be chaired either by an independent researcher who is not directly involved in spinal cord injury research; or by someone who has spinal cord injury research expertise, but will not apply for Stoke Mandeville-Masson Research Awards funding for the duration of his or her chairmanship.
- 4.6 The Awards Committee members will be required to disclose any conflict of interest using the ICMJE Conflict of Interest form.

5.0 Operation

- 5.1 The Awards Committee will meet twice per grant round to consider the submitted grant applications.
- 5.2 Members are expected to attend Awards Committee meetings and records of attendance will be kept.
- 5.3 Five out of seven members shall constitute a quorum of the Awards Committee.
- 5.4 The agenda for each meeting shall be prepared by the Chair or any member of the Awards Committee delegated by the Chair.
- 5.5 The agenda for Award Committee meetings shall be made available to members of the Faculty four working days before each meeting by e-mail, with relevant, supplemental documents attached.
- 5.6 The Awards Committee will agree their recommendations to the Charitable Funds Committee during the meetings. Decisions will only be made outside of the meetings in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.7 Minutes shall be distributed to Award Committee and Charitable Funds Committee no later than fifteen working days after the meeting which they record.

6.0 Responsibilities

- 6.1 The Award Committee will nominate members of the Advisory Panel, oversee the Award application process, and monitor the progress of awarded research projects. More specifically, Award Committee members are expected to fulfil the following responsibilities:

- 6.2 To attend Award Committee meetings when necessary. In the event that a member is unable to attend two consecutive meetings, the Charitable Funds Committee reserves the right to request them to stand down.
- 6.3 To review applications and reviewers comments in advance of the Award Committee meeting, and to submit written comments to the Award Committee on assigned applications.
- 6.4 To contribute to discussions the Award Committee meetings to ensure that the Award Committee's recommendations reflect issues of concern to people living with spinal cord injury.
- 6.5 In exceptional circumstances, to contribute to discussions on individual grant applications outside of the Award Committee meetings.
- 6.6 To declare all potential conflicts of interest using the ICMJE Conflict of Interest form.
- 6.7 To give recommendations to the Charitable Funds Committee with regard to the submitted project proposals to be awarded.
- 6.8 To ensuring that all considered applications, comments and correspondence related to the Award Committee remain strictly confidential.
- 6.9 To ensure that outcomes and feedback are communicated to applicants by the Award Committee only.
- 6.10 To monitor the progress of awarded research projects based on provided progress reports and provide approval and/or recommendations where necessary.
- 6.11 The Chair of the Award Committee is responsible for ensuring funding recommendations are in line with budget set out by the Charitable Funds Committee.

7.0 Authority

- 7.1 The Award Committee is authorised by the Charitable Funds Committee to carry out any activity within its terms of reference.
- 7.2 The Award Committee is authorised by the Charitable Funds Committee to obtain legal or other independent professional advice and to secure the attendance of outsiders with relevant experience and expertise if it considers this necessary.
- 7.3 The Charitable Funds Committee will review these Terms of Reference on a regular basis and notify the Award Committee of amendments.

8.0 Signatures

Approved at the first Stoke Mandeville-Masson Research Awards Committee meeting:

Name	Role	Date	Signature

Ratified by the Charitable Funds Committee, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust:

Name	Role	Date	Signature