



ROS Research and Innovation Grants Programme Grants Assessment Process

Overview

Before funds are committed to research and innovation projects, a rigorous process is followed to ensure that the studies which are funded are of the highest standard (Figure 1). National and international experts in the field are asked to comment upon research proposals. The expert comments are taken into consideration when judging the overall quality and relevance of a piece of research to the ROS strategy. Only after this process has been satisfactorily completed does the Board of Trustees approve funding for any projects. This process is called peer review and is guided by principles set out by the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC).

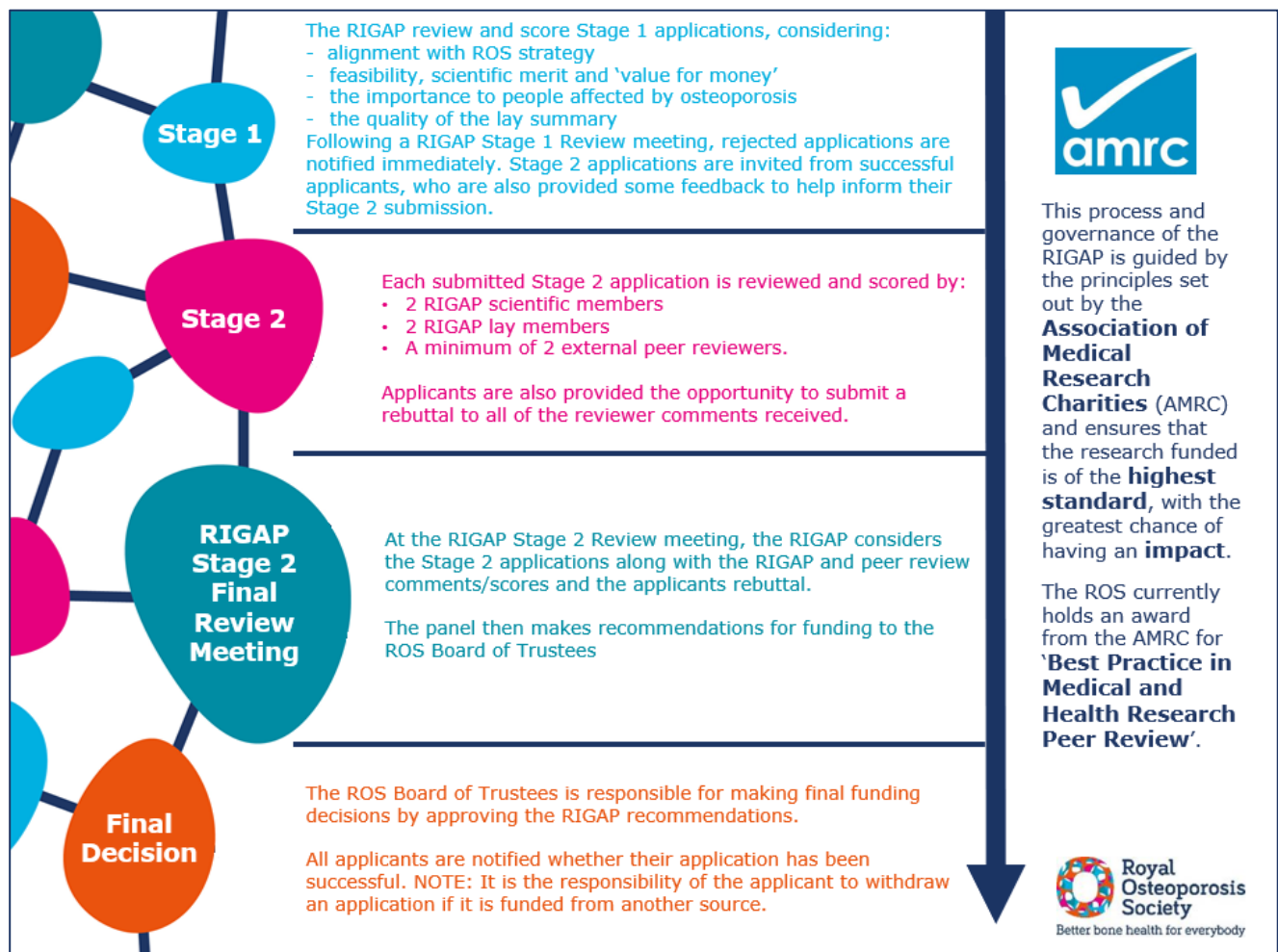


Figure 1. Royal Osteoporosis Society Grants Assessment Process



Stage 1 RIGAP Scoring Process

RIGAP Scoring

Prior to the RIGAP review meeting **Stage 1 applications** circulated to the panel and leads assigned.

- Each application is reviewed by at least **three** scientific RIGAP members against criteria listed in Figure 1 above (aim to assign lead to applications based on area of expertise).
- Lay members read all application **lay summaries** and have a Stage 1 pre-meeting to discuss the applications and produce a united opinion for the main review meeting. (If there were more than 25 applications in total, the lay members may share the applications and review only half of the lay summaries each).

RIGAP Stage 1 Shortlisting Meeting

- Conflicts of interest need to be expressed at the beginning of the meeting and must be dealt with in accordance with the **RIGAP Code of Conduct**.
- At the meeting each funding scheme is considered individually, and each application is discussed in turn. Applications to shortlist for Stage 2 are agreed.
- The projects shortlisted for Stage 2 are based on a number of considerations: how the project fits within the charity's Research Roadmap, the potential benefit of the project, the scientific questions being asked, value for money etc.

Notify Applicants

- Applicants are informed of the **decision** – either a **rejection e-mail** or an invitation to Stage 2. NOTE in the **Stage 2 invitation e-mail** specific feedback may be given from the RIGAP which should be considered in the full application.

Stage 2 RIGAP and Peer Review Scoring Process

RIGAP Scoring

- The Stage 2 applications are divided among the scientific members of the RIGAP (two per application), each being assigned the applications most closely related to their area of work. The scientific RIGAP members will need to complete a **Review Report Form** for each application they are assigned.
- The Stage 2 applications are divided equally among the lay members of the RIGAP (two per application). The lay RIGAP members will need to complete a **Review Report Form** for each application they are assigned.

Allocation of Peer Reviewers

A minimum of two external peer reviewers are assigned per application. Therefore, for each application we:

- Aim to use one of the three peer reviewers suggested by the applicant. NOTE: All other suggested peer reviewers are added to the potential list of reviewers in order to build a database of potential peer reviewers for the future.
- Consult our database to identify other appropriate peer reviewers based on expertise, whilst taking into consideration how often that peer reviewer has been approached. Overall, we look to approach a mixture of UK and overseas reviewers.
- Consult appropriate RIGAP members to facilitate identification of appropriate peer reviewers.

Once a list of peer reviewers to approach is produced, we do a final check to ensure the list excludes any with potential conflicts of interest, all research grant round applicants and co-applicants etc. All peer reviewers are then sent a **peer reviewer invitation** - if accepted the peer reviewer is sent an email with the necessary links/attachments. If not, the invitation is sent to another suggested peer reviewer.

Peer Reviewer Scoring

- Reviews are submitted utilising our **External Peer Review Report Form**, which covers several aspects of the application. The peer reviewers must agree to keep the details of the

application confidential, and to disclose any conflicts of interest. They give each proposal a total score from 1 (un-fundable) to 6 (recommended for funding). They will also comment on several other specific points. The peer reviewer will be made aware that any comments made in certain sections will be fed back to the applicant verbatim.

NOTE: If the scores submitted by the two external peer reviewers differ by three or more (e.g. 5 and 2) then an additional third peer review will automatically be sought.

Applicant’s Rebuttal to Reviewers Comments

- Applicants are sent a **response/rebuttal to reviewer comments email** providing an opportunity for applicants to respond to comments raised in the verbatim section of the **RIGAP and External Peer Review Report Forms**.

RIGAP Stage 2 Final Meeting

- Prior to the final RIGAP review meeting **Stage 2 applications, RIGAP Review Report Forms, External Peer Reviewer Report Forms and Applicant’s Rebuttal to Reviewers Comments** are circulated to the panel. Again, Conflicts of interest need to be expressed at the beginning of the meeting and the **Research Grants Code of Conduct** must be followed.
- At the meeting each funding scheme is addressed individually, and each application is discussed in turn and ranked.
- An RIGAP recommendations report is then submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Notify Applicants

- Applicants are sent a **decision – rejection letter** or **grant offer letter** (with necessary attachments) – ONLY once the Board of Trustees have ratified the decisions.

Example: ROS Research and Innovation Grants Round Timeline

	Date	Task
Stage 1	April	Research Grants Round launch
	June	Stage 1 application submission deadline
		Stage 1 RIGAP Chair application allocation meeting
		Stage 1 applications circulated to RIGAP
		Stage 1 RIGAP Chair, Vice-Chair and lay rep strategy meeting
		RIGAP complete and submit Stage 1 scoring
	Stage 1 RIGAP Lay Member Review pre-meeting	
July	Stage 1 RIGAP Review meeting Applicants invited to submit Stage 2 application	
Stage 2	August-September	Stage 2 peer review and RIGAP allocation preparation
		Stage 2 RIGAP Chair application allocation meeting
	September	Stage 2 application submission deadline
		Stage 2 applications circulated to RIGAP and peer reviewers
October	RIGAP and peer reviewers complete and submit Stage 2 scoring (additional peer review sought if necessary)	
	Applicant rebuttal to reviewer comments deadline	
	Stage 2 RIGAP Chair, Vice-Chair and lay rep strategy meeting	
RIGAP Stage 2 Final Review	November	Stage 2 RIGAP Lay Member Review pre-meeting
		Stage 2 RIGAP Review meeting
Final Decision	November	RIGAP recommendation paper submission deadline
	December	ROS Board meeting to approve funding decisions Applicants notified of final decision