Pancreatic Cancer Action invites applications for research funding

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UK charity Pancreatic Cancer Action are once again inviting scientists to apply for one of their Early Diagnosis Challenge Award grants. The purpose of these grants is to encourage more research into improving early diagnosis of pancreatic cancer so that more patients are diagnosed in time for surgery, which is currently the only potential for a cure.

Pancreatic Cancer is the UK's fifth biggest cancer killer and 24 people die a day from the disease. The 5 year survival rate is just 4%, a figure which has barely changed in over 40 years. Most pancreatic cancer patients are diagnosed too late.

Pancreatic Cancer Action exists to save lives by optimising early diagnosis. The Early Diagnosis Challenge Award programme is part of the charity's research strategy that aims to invest at least £1 million into research in the next five years.

The charity, which is a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC), says that successful applicants are likely to be those whose applications are in accordance with PCA's research objectives. All research applications must focus on improving early diagnosis of pancreatic cancer and the charity encourages applications for projects that:

Explore a novel approach to diagnosis;

Investigate areas of unexplored potential;

Focus on the novel application of technology;

Grow and access a rich patient/sample cohort;

Have potential for further funding after proof of concept.

Ali Stunt, founder and chief executive of Pancreatic Cancer Action, said: "We invite applications for projects that offer a unique and experimental approach.

"All applications which fit the eligibility criteria are externally reviewed by our Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) chaired by Professor Hemant Kocher, Professor of Liver and Pancreas Surgery, Centre for Tumour Biology, Barts Cancer Institute, which is wholly independent of Pancreatic Cancer Action's Board of Trustees or charity administrative staff."

Earlier this year, the charity awarded £180,000 for four research grants to a variety of unique and exciting projects in the UK. One of the award recipients, John Timms, who is leading *A Novel Approach to the early detection of pancreatic cance*r project**, at University College London** said**:** "Receiving the award from Pancreatic Cancer Action is fantastic news. The funding will allow us to build and test novel biomarker models as blood tests for the early detection of pancreatic cancer. We are using a completely novel approach to combining candidate biomarker data from a unique set of blood samples taken prior to the diagnosis of pancreatic cancer. We hope to translate the findings of this exciting work into a rapid diagnostic pathway for pancreatic cancer."

Pancreatic Cancer Action is determined to get more patients diagnosed early and in time for life-saving surgery, by funding research into early diagnosis, educating medical professionals and raising awareness of signs and symptoms.

Ali Stunt, chair of Pancreatic Cancer Action, said: "Pancreatic cancer has the worst survival rate of all common cancers due to late diagnosis. This is why we are determined to support projects that will ultimately get us closer to getting more patients diagnosed in time for surgery.

"We are very much looking forward to receiving this next round of applications."

Full details of the grants and how to apply can be found online. Grant applications for the 2016/17 round of funding will close on 2nd September 2016.

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