

Conference grant guidance notes (CG-26)

This document aims to provide you with the necessary information and guidance to help you complete and submit your application to your chosen funding scheme.

We recommend that you submit your application in advance of the deadline so that any technical issues can be resolved in good time.

Moorfields Eye Charity is committed to making the application process accessible to all and will provide assistance where needed. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with our Grants and Research team if you have any questions or concerns about the application process.

Email: moorfields.eyecharity.researchgrants@nhs.net

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The Moorfields Eye Charity Conference grant scheme

The purpose of the conference grant scheme is to support the dissemination of excellent research, evaluation of education and service delivery activities at national and international meetings.

To be considered for an award, we expect that

- You are a Moorfields employee presenting Moorfields derived research and activities, or
 - You are either the principal grant holder or the named researcher on a Moorfields Eye Charity funded Springboard award, or
 - You are a PhD student on a Moorfields Eye Charity funded PhD Studentship grant
- And**
- You will be presenting work that you were responsible for developing and delivering during your time at Moorfields, on your Springboard award or during your Moorfields Eye Charity funded PhD.
 - You are developing and/or expanding the dissemination of your outputs to a wide range of audiences, seeking to gain/expand experience of networking and learning from other conference presenters.

Moorfields Eye Charity is a registered charity and if supported by the charity you are expected to make every possible effort to ensure you secure early bird or the most reasonable registration fees, accommodation and travel costs.

We will not consider your application if you are presenting work which was included in a previously awarded conference/travel grant (from any funder).

Who can apply

To apply for a conference grant, you must be within an eligible employment category and be the first and presenting author on the abstract.

You will normally hold a full time or substantial (at least 50% WTE) contract of employment on, at least, the first day of the conference.

Moorfields NHS Foundation Trust employees

Eligible staff will normally hold a full time or substantial (at least 50% WTE) contract of employment with Moorfields. If eligible, you can apply if you are the person who has generated (in whole or part) the work being presented and are the named presenter at the conference.

Medical Fellows: Can apply if you are presenting research/work, derived from Moorfields activities, at national or international meetings. If you do not have clinical responsibilities, you will have to additionally provide details of your current project funding and why travel and dissemination costs are not covered by this funding.

(Non-medical) Research fellows: Can apply if you are presenting research/work, derived from Moorfields activities, at national or international meetings. You will have to additionally provide details of your current project funding and why travel and dissemination costs are not covered by this funding.

Speciality trainees: Can apply if you are presenting research/work, derived from Moorfields activities, at international meetings only. National meetings will not be considered. You will be expected to claim for eligible expenses via your deanery funding, and the charity will only consider reimbursement of costs that cannot be covered through your deanery funding.

Non-medical research, education, service delivery active Moorfields staff: This includes nurses, optometrists, Allied Health Professionals (e.g., orthoptists, radiographers, pharmacists) and other, non-medical staff. You can apply if you are presenting research/work, derived from Moorfields activities, at national or international meetings.

Honorary staff: Applications from staff with an honorary contract with Moorfields will only be considered if you are a medical graduate **and** appear on a relevant clinical profile in Moorfields at the time of application and the conference. Evidence of this status will be required. For avoidance of doubt, the charity expects you to be part of routine clinical service(s) at Moorfields and as such be seeing patients in a capacity unrelated to research/activity you are presenting at the conference.

Moorfields Eye Charity Springboard award holders

Eligible staff will normally hold a full time or substantial (at least 50% WTE) contract of employment with UCL.

If you are the principal grant holder or named researcher on a Moorfields Eye Charity funded Springboard award, you are eligible to apply if you are presenting research/work derived from the awarded grant activities, at national or international meetings.

You can apply for two conference grants in total over the duration of the award which also includes a time period of up to 12 months after the award has ended. The first day of a conference grant considered under this scheme must be before the end of 15 months after the award has ended. For avoidance of doubt, on an 18 month Springboard award, an application can be submitted for a conference starting within 33 months after the start date of the grant and normally after the first 12 months.

Where a grant has been repeatedly extended, the charity reserves the right not to process an application submitted after the final end date of the grant. Springboard award holders and/or named researchers can apply for a conference grant. Applications made for conferences within the 12-month term after the grant has ended will only be considered if a satisfactory end of grant report and end of grant spend/finance report have been received.

PhD students on a Moorfields Eye Charity funded PhD Studentship grant

If you are the named student on a Moorfields Eye Charity funded PhD Studentship grant that was awarded after 1st December 2024, you are eligible to apply if you are presenting research/work derived from your PhD. You can apply for up to two conferences over the duration of your PhD, for presenting at one international and one UK/EU conference. You will not be eligible to present the same poster/talk at both conferences.

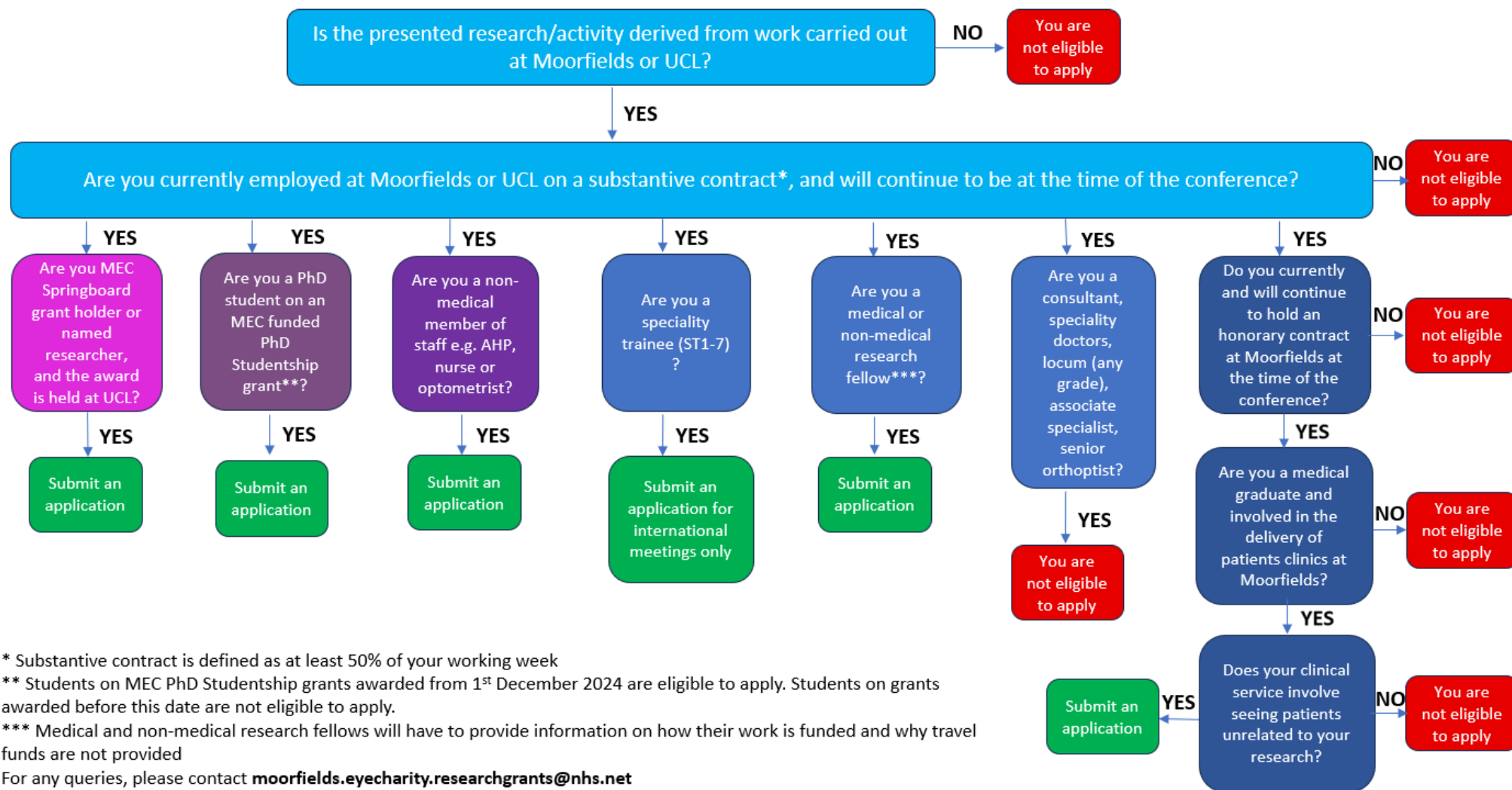
You will not be eligible to apply for a conference which is to be held on a date beyond the end date of your PhD or within your CRS period.

If the named student on the PhD Studentship grant has changed, and the previous student had already received a conference grant, conference travel allowance for the incoming student will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and you should contact our Grants and Research team before starting an application. Email: moorfields.eyecharity.researchgrants@nhs.net

Non eligible staff

Consultants, speciality doctors, locum (any grade), associate specialist and senior orthoptist are not eligible to apply.

Conference grants – eligibility flowchart



Application process

You should aim to submit your application three months prior to the start date of the conference. **It is an absolute requirement that applications must be submitted at least one month prior to the first day of the conference. Applications submitted less than one month prior to the first day of the conference will not be considered.**

Retrospective applications will not be considered.

You will be required to submit your application via our grant management system, Flexigrant (<https://moorfieldseyecharity.flexigrant.com/>).

If you have previously held or applied for a Moorfields Eye Charity grant, you will already have an account set up on Flexigrant. Please follow the guidance on our [Advice for Applicants](#) webpage for details on how to activate your account. If you have never applied for a Moorfields Eye Charity grant, please visit [Flexigrant](#) and click register to create an account.

Once you have logged into your account, click on the 'Application Portal' button at the top left of the page. Here you will see a list of our schemes that are open for applications and will be able to start your application.

When you first start your application, you will be asked to enter or confirm your current contact details. Please ensure that you only provide your work address – do not enter your personal address.

In order to submit your application on Flexigrant, you must ensure that you have completed all the relevant sections on the application form. The 'submit' button will not appear until you have answered all mandatory questions on the form.

If the application is considered eligible and suitable for support, a conditional award letter will be issued with any outstanding requirements being detailed in the letter. Subsequent reimbursement of expenses will be subject to satisfactory completion of these conditions and adherence to all other grant conditions for the scheme.

Study leave

Study leave is a formal process within Moorfields. If you are taking study leave to attend the conference, you must apply for approval for study leave by the relevant committee in Moorfields. You are advised to start the process of applying for a Conference Grant ahead of or in parallel to securing relevant study leave approval and acceptance to attend the conference.

For medical study leave requests, you can find more information and guidance on how to submit your request here: [Medical study leave](#)

For non-medical study leave requests, you can find more information and guidance here: [Education funding request process](#). Your line manager will be required to complete the form, and should specify within the form that you are applying/have applied (as applicable) for a Conference Grant from Moorfields Eye Charity.

Annual leave

If you are taking annual leave to attend the conference, it is expected that you will secure the necessary approvals locally.

Acknowledgement of funding support

You are reminded that acknowledgement of charity funding is a requirement of this scheme and therefore you should ensure you have included this in your poster/presentation preparation ahead of the conference.

Our contribution to the conference attendance must be acknowledged in any relevant poster, talk or publications using the format '**Presentation of this work was supported by Moorfields Eye Charity**'. This is in addition to any acknowledgement of Moorfields Eye Charity funding which supported the delivery of the research being presented.

The Moorfields Eye Charity logo must be included where appropriate and will be emailed to you if your application is successful. Please note our brand guidelines: our logo is flexible; it can be placed in any corner of the page, screen or environment. It can also be placed centrally at either the top or the bottom.

Please note that failure to include this acknowledgement will normally result in the withdrawal of funding and no expense claims, even if otherwise eligible, will be honoured.

What's included

There are two types of conferences considered, in person or virtual.

Eligible costs for in-person attended conferences

Funding will be provided against the following areas (only)

1. **contribution towards economy air/train travel to/from the conference**
 - a. Flights - UK/European conference – normal maximum of £200
 - b. Flights - International conference – normal maximum of £800
2. **Standard accommodation** for the duration of conference attended to a max of one night prior to the first day to the night before the last day of the conference
 - a. Normal maximum of £160 per night – please note this rate applies only to conferences taking place on or after 1st April 2026. For conferences taking place before this date the limit is as outlined in your award letter.
3. **Registration fee** for the conference. It is expected that only early bird levels will be requested. Late/on-site registration fees will normally be automatically capped at the early bird level. Membership fees will only be considered at the lowest level and if it guarantees a reduced early bird registration fee.

Cost caps

- £2,000 will apply for an international conference
- £1,000 will apply for a UK/European conference
- £3,000 will apply per individual in any financial year (April to April) but note, the charity has the right to decline an application which would result in a person utilising a large proportion of two financial year allowances within the same 12 month period.

These allowances are absolute ceilings and you should not consider them an 'available budget' to spend up to or that allowances can be moved between categories. Excessive or unreasonable claims will be subject to review and may be reduced or rejected.

Additional considerations

Please note that you are expected not to use air travel for UK conferences and avail of possible train options for UK and EU conferences e.g. Eurostar for Paris rather than flying.

While it is possible to travel to/from the conference via different routes, you are normally expected to either start or end your journey in the UK. Any alternative routes taken will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will not be automatically approved. You are therefore strongly encouraged to keep in mind that this travel cost is likely to be capped at the level of an advance booking on a budget airline for a return fare from London to the conference destination.

Eligible costs for virtual conferences

Funding will only be provided to cover registration fees for the conference. It is expected that only early bird levels will be requested. A total cap of £500 will apply.

What's not included

You cannot include costs for anyone else travelling with you on the trip. If you are sharing accommodation, it is expected that the cost will be split so you only claim for one person's proportion.

Applications related to the following will not be considered

- Training courses (even if part of a research conference)
- Educational courses (even if part of a research conference)
- Conference attendance only applications
- Applications where you are presenting the same or very similar work at more than one conference

The list of disallowed costs here is **not considered exhaustive** and you are reminded that expenses can only be claimed against registration fees and membership costs where they make the total cost lower. The charity may query and/or remove any costs that are deemed to be outside the charities' funding remit, the spirit of the scheme and/or considered excessive. The charity also reserves the right to update/amend the allowed and disallowed costs as and when considered necessary. Individuals are expected to book well in advance of conferences and therefore late bookings may result in a cap in reimbursement if not robustly justified.

The following are examples of disallowed costs

- Travel to/from home to departure station/airport charges
- Subsistence costs
- Taxis
- Above economy travel
- Checked baggage on UK/European flights
- Insurance (any purpose)

- Tips and gratuity
- Room service
- Car hire
- Mileage
- Fees for social/networking events and meetings (even if part of a conference)
- Training courses/seminars even if part of a conference/meeting
- Early/late check out fees
- Phone calls
- Internet/Wi-Fi access
- Booking alteration

What you need to do after the conference

On your return from the conference, you will need to complete the following steps:

1. Submit a **Conference attendance report form**
2. Submit **Claim form(s)** for your expense claims

Instructions on how to complete these steps are outlined below. Please note that expense claims will not be reviewed or paid until you have submitted your conference attendance report form and this has been approved.

Conference attendance report form

You are required to take time to provide a considered and complete report form. Please follow the guidance within the form, answering all the questions as appropriate to your conference and work presented.

The form can be completed via [Flexigrant](#). To access the form:

1. Click on 'Application portal' at the top of the screen.
2. Next to your conference grant application click 'Reporting'.
3. Click on the three dots next to the report titled 'Conference attendance report' and click 'Complete form'.

Proof of attendance to the conference such as a certificate of attendance and/or a Continuing Professional Development certificate must be submitted as part of this form. You will also be required to upload evidence of how you acknowledged Moorfields Eye Charity in your conference presentation.

Expense claim forms

Expense claims must be made **within three months** of the end date of the conference. Please note that this requirement of three months is less than standard Moorfields Eye Hospital requirements. Failure to comply with this request will result in the rejection of the claim. You are advised to keep a copy of the receipts/paperwork for your own records.

You will be asked to submit your expenses via a maximum of three claim forms, **one for each expense type** (as applicable):

1. Registration fee
2. Travel
3. Accommodation

The claim forms can be completed via [Flexigrant](#). To access the form:

1. Click on 'Application portal' at the top of the screen.
2. Next to your conference grant application click 'Reporting'.
3. Under the claim forms section, click 'New claim'
4. Once you have entered the relevant details, press 'Save', and then 'Submit'
5. Repeat this process for each claim type (registration fee, transportation costs, and accommodation costs) as applicable, submitting a maximum of three claim forms

As part of the claim form, you will need to upload a single PDF which combines all the necessary receipts for that specific claim type. Where possible please highlight the total being requested within the receipt.

Please review the guidance on the [eligible costs and cost caps](#) before submitting your claim.

Please note, failure to include any of the required information on the claim form will result in the return or rejection of the claim.

Receipts must be provided for all claims.

- Dated, legible receipts are required for all items claimed.
- Any claims/part of a claim submitted without receipts will be automatically removed without notice.
- Receipts must be detailed enough to include a full breakdown (summary/total receipts will not be considered) of items making up the receipt with the total costs also provided.
- Where more than one person's costs are included in the receipt, the items attributable to the claimant should be highlighted and subtotalled, i.e., the division of the total by the number in the party is not sufficient.

Exchange rates

- Receipts for foreign currency expenses paid for in GBP must be accompanied by bank/credit card statement* which details the transaction i.e., cost in foreign currency, exchange rate (using www.xe.com/currencytables/ rates on the day the transaction was incurred), bank charges and final GBP cost.
- If relevant bank/credit card statements are not supplied, MEC will apply the following
 - Foreign currency expenses paid for in that currency will be calculated by using the rate on the day the transaction was incurred (using www.xe.com/currencytables/)

*When providing copies of bank/card statements, you are strongly advised to cover any unnecessary and unrelated information. The name of the statement holder and last 4 digits of the card/account are all that are required in addition to the relevant transactions.

Providing additional information on any aspect of the claim

If a submitted claim includes any variations from the allowed costs and/or required presentation of receipts, it is your responsibility to provide details of this within the claim form explaining the variation. This does not imply that the variation will be allowed or supported

but without this explanation, variations, errors or unsupported claims may be automatically discounted from the submitted claim.