

CRUK'S ROLE IN CREATING A POSITIVE RESEARCH CULTURE

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Culture Workshop*

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CANCER
RESEARCH
UK

Together we will beat cancer



WE'RE THE LARGEST CHARITABLE FUNDER OF CANCER RESEARCH IN THE WORLD



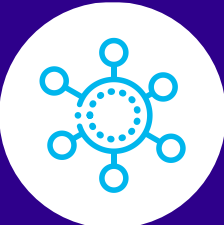
We are the largest charitable funder of cancer research in the world.



The majority of our funding comes through public donations.



We fund around 50% of publicly funded cancer research in the UK.



We fund high-impact research across the research pipeline through a variety of mechanisms.

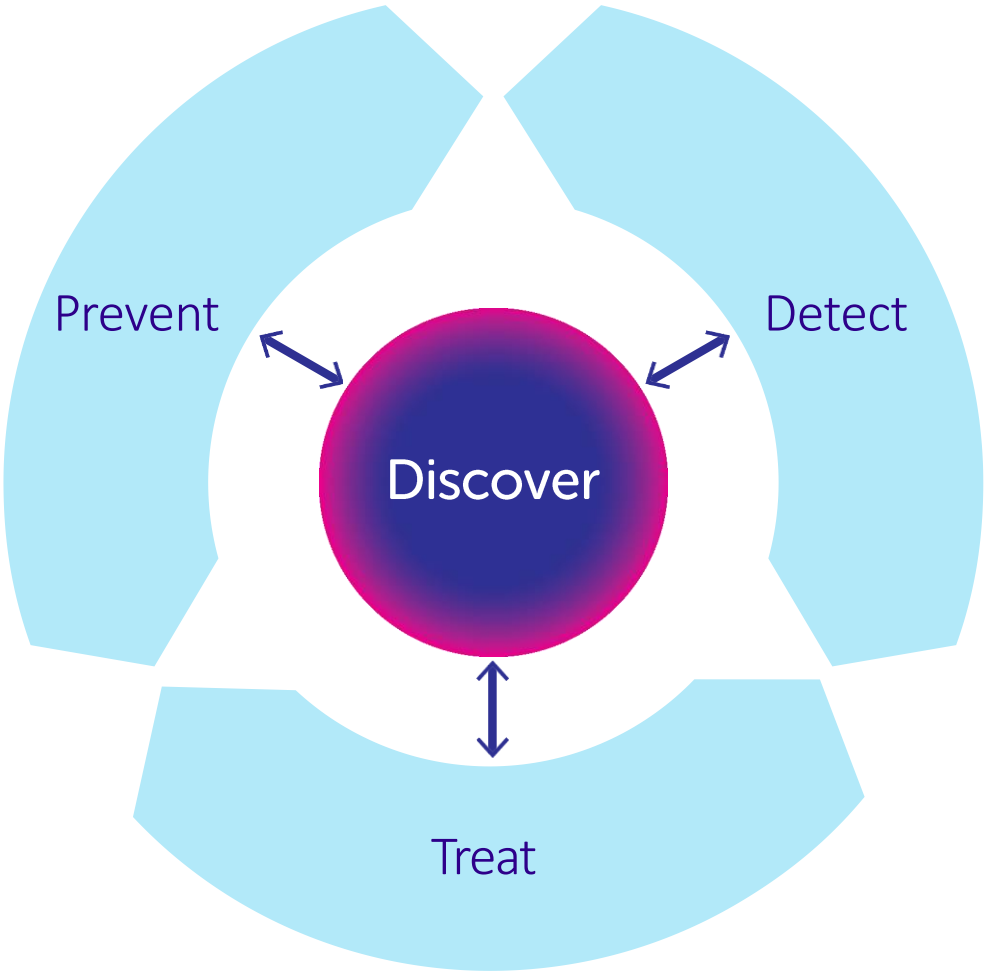


The money we raise is spent on research, information and influencing.



We are guided by an ambitious vision and research strategy.

OUR RESEARCH STRATEGY HAS DISCOVERY RESEARCH AND EXCELLENCE AT ITS HEART



Discover: We will understand the mechanisms of how cancer develops and progresses to unlock new and better ways to prevent, detect and treat it



Prevent: We will use biological insights to inform a new wave of preventive interventions that decrease cancer incidence equitably across society



Detect: We will detect cancer at the earliest point of intervention by understanding the underlying biology of cancers and the transition from health to early disease



Treat: We will use biological discoveries about the mechanisms of how cancer evolves to inform clinical studies



OUR RESEARCH STRATEGY IS UNDERPINNED BY OUR PRINCIPLES – IT’S ALL ABOUT PEOPLE

Our principles are:

- to invest in creative people who can deliver research of the **highest quality**
- to support research to **reduce cancer inequalities** and improve outcomes for everyone
- to involve **people affected by cancer** in our work

WHY A POSITIVE RESEARCH CULTURE MATTERS TO US?

- We care about **how** research is carried out
- We want to promote a better more inclusive environment to allow all to thrive
- We consider our role in shaping research culture carefully as we are a funder of researchers rather than the employer

As a funder we can use different levers to help improve research culture:



Improve how we fund research & incentivise good practice



Providing opportunities for researchers to develop and thrive



Making research careers more accessible for different backgrounds



Use our influence as a funder to improve research culture

A LENS ON RESEARCH CULTURE AT WARWICK

- A key objective of developing “happy and healthy researchers”
- More specific aims of:
 - **Tackling bullying and harassment**
 - **Improving mental health and wellbeing**
 - **Improving EDI at every level**
- Other themes of: open science, collaboration, public engagement, translational research

TACKLING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Policy on Dignity at Work in Research

Institutions need:

- To implement their workplace conduct policy effectively
- To disclose investigations of applicants and funded researchers

Our influence

CRUK can:

- Sanction applicants or grant holders
- Sanction institutions if an institutional failure

- Option for reporting directly to CRUK
- Developing sectoral approach via UKRI *Bullying and Harassment Forum*

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- The mental health and wellbeing of those studying and working are chiefly a product of systemic and cultural components of R&I
- Focus on improving research culture areas ‘upstream’:



Employment



Personal development

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

EMPLOYMENT

Flexible
Research
Careers Funding
Policies

Provide fellows and
grantholders with
flexibility and
competitive leave
provision

Costs and
conditions

Allocating multi-year
awards in single
instalments to enable
longer contracts

Interventions,
programmes,
funds

Fellowships
structured to provide
long-term support
needed for
independence

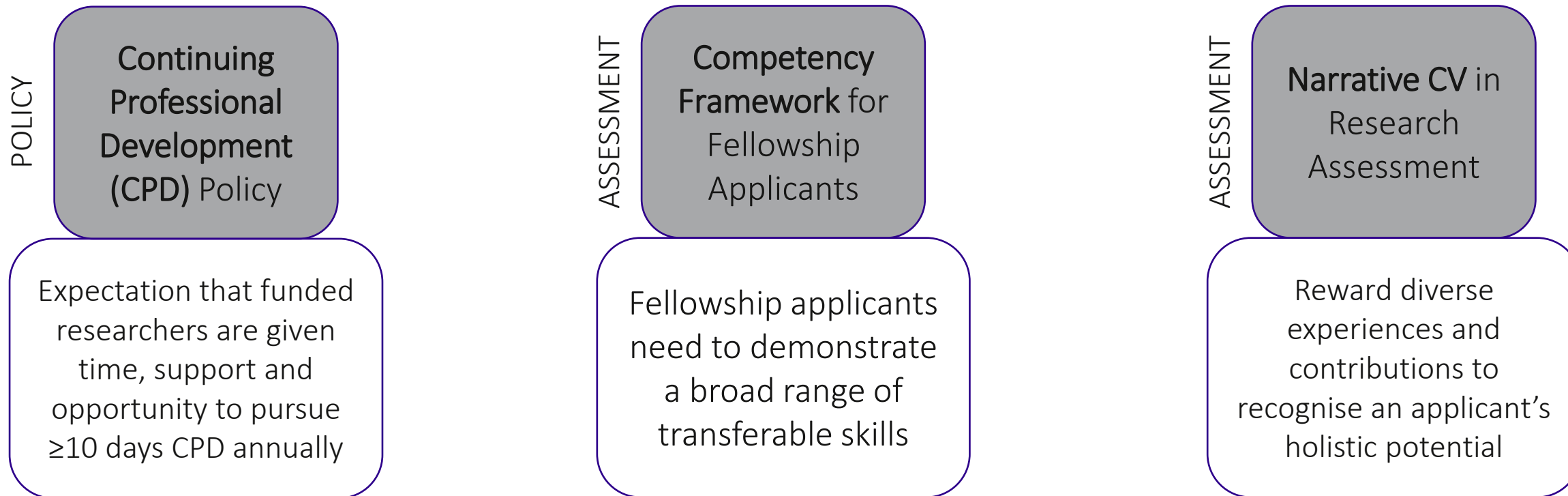
Our
influence

Establishing levers for
reducing career
precarity

- CRUK has a strong track record of developing future cancer research leaders
- Looking to evolve the offer for more junior postdoc phases

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



- Using research assessment as the principal lever to incentivise personal development and academic citizenship at local level

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Costs and conditions

Funded researchers expected to spend 80% on research; PhD students can spend \leq 10% teaching

Interventions, programmes, funds

Pro bono coaching;
Planned: Postdoc Development Programme

Case example: Observing Scheme for Funding Panels and Committees

>100 ECRs have shadowed review panels and/or committees

Our influence

Concordat sub-group to develop a clear distinction between project-based skills and career skills

- Personal development is a key area of influence, where CRUK can support and complement institutions aspirations in fostering diversity in their workforce

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



Employment



Personal development

➤ Supporting better wellbeing through:

- Policies that require flexible working and personal development
- Assessment processes that reward a broader range of research activities and researcher profiles
- Interventions, programmes and funds that give tangible support
- Addressing precarity and access to CPD beyond the cancer research field

IMPROVING EDI AT EVERY LEVEL

Flexible
Research
Careers Funding
Policies

Standard conditions
for any researcher;
Designed to support
variety of personal
contexts

Costs and
conditions

Improved stipends
and a ringfenced
training budget for
PhD students

Our
influence

Cross-sector group on
New Deal for PGRs;
Member of **EDIS**

- CRUK can create and advocate for stronger conditions that attract and retain individuals in academic research

IMPROVING EDI AT EVERY LEVEL

Gender equity

Women of Influence
mentorship scheme;
Postdoc Futures event
for women researchers;
Women-specific
Entrepreneurial awards

Racial equity

StellarHE Diverse
Leaders Programme;
**Black Leaders in
Cancer** PhD Scheme

Disability- Positive and Neuroinclusive

*Planned: Formalised
and inclusive support for
applicants and
grantholders*

Enabling mobility

Placements through
in2science and
in2research for young
people from low-income
and/or disadvantaged
backgrounds

- CRUK's EDI Strategy also encompasses 'Inclusive research design' and we report annually on our 'diversity data'
- Commitment to ensuring **fair, robust** and **transparent** peer review during research assessment

MEASURING RESEARCH CULTURE AS A FUNDER

- We care about **how** research is carried out
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Institutional reviews

- **Research culture approach of Centres/Institutes assessed by Panel.**
Focus on: EDI, inclusive culture, integrity, training
- **Joint funder assurance *planned*:** assess compliance with funders' policies

Researchers

- **Narrative CV:** includes research culture reviewed by Panel
- **Fellowships:** competency framework highlights importance of broader skills. Panel allocates score for 'person' (potential to develop and grow as future leader)

THANK YOU!

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