

Animal Free Research UK Grant Scheme Guidance for Applicants

Pilot Study Grants



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1. Purpose of our Pilot Study grants

Pilot Study Grants of £5,000 provide short-term support for proof-of-concept studies for up to a maximum of 12 months. The purpose of these grants is to allow researchers to explore new ideas in replacement research that might merit further development, and to enable the collection of sufficient data to assist in securing larger funding from Animal Free Research UK or other funding organisations. Primary scientists must not engage in research that contravenes Animal Free Research UK's Policies, Regulations and Conditions of Support.

2. What we will and won't fund

In awarding grants, Animal Free Research UK will only fund research that is animal-free.

Grants are not available simply in support of non-animal research per se. The research must be directed towards replacing the use of animals in current procedures within the Research Group, the University and/or, preferably, in the wider field.

Only research that is directly relevant to human health will be funded. Acceptable approaches may include, but are not limited to, the use of human volunteers, epidemiology, human cell lines, ex vivo or primary human tissues or cells, microorganisms, plants, human sub-cellular components in vitro, biophysical and biochemical analytical techniques or computer technology.

Animal Free Research UK's Large grant scheme will provide support for PhD Studentships or Postdoctoral Research Associates. If and when the Grant Holder, and Primary Scientists associated with the University apply for or acquire additional funding for their research, the source of funding must fully align with Animal Free Research UK's objectives and goals and must not be from organisations which, in the opinion of Animal Free Research UK, undertake activities that are likely to bring the reputation of Animal Free Research UK- Funded Activities or Animal Free Research UK into disrepute.

Full details of our policies, regulations and conditions can be found in the Animal Free Research UK Terms and Conditions of Support for Research Grants on our [website](#).

Animal Free Research UK will not:

- a) support research that requires or involves the use of Living animals, animal tissue, animal cells or cell lines, even though the ultimate aim may be to replace their use;
- b) fund the purchase or maintenance of animals, animal tissue or animal cell lines for any reason;
- c) fund the purchase of animal serum or any animal-based biomaterials where non-animal alternatives exist and can be used.
- d) fund the use of human embryonic or foetal stem cells;

and anyone who is by any means supported by Animal Free Research UK must not be involved in any way in such research or activities for the duration of the Research Project.

Animal Free Research UK shall only consider funding research:

- a) using human cells, if the Grant Holder has provided evidence of cell authentication or incorporates an authentication protocol to eliminate the possibility of misidentification or cross-contamination of cell lines and comply with Good Cell Culture Practice. Guidance on Good Cell Culture Practice can be downloaded from Animal Free Research UK Website. (<https://www.animalfreeresearchuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/GCCPtaskforcereport2.pdf>)
- b) using human foetal tissues, cells, cell lines or embryonic tissues, cells, cell lines, if these have been freely donated by the consenting individual or derived from freely donated consenting individuals and/or their nominated and ethical provider/source. The Grant Holder must provide details of the ethical and consent aspects of donation. Research using human embryonic or foetal stem cells will not be funded. Embryonic and foetal tissue and cell research remains a contentious issue, if the Grant Holder has any concerns or doubts about their use contact Animal Free Research UK;
- c) using human placenta, amnion, and umbilical cord, if these have been freely donated by the consenting individual and/or their nominated and ethical provider/source following normal full-term births, miscarriage or stillbirth. The Grant Holder must provide details of the ethical and consent aspects of donation.
- d) using specific animal derived biomaterials, with the exception of animal serum and polyclonal antibodies, where their use has been fully justified and where there is clear evidence that without their use, the Funded Activity cannot take place. There should also be clear instruction on how the Funded Activity will, during the course of the Funded Activity, aim to replace their use over time. For the avoidance of doubt, Animal Free Research UK will not fund the purchase of any animal serum, or the development and production of de novo polyclonal antibodies.

3. Who can apply?

Applications from any geographical area within the UK are eligible for consideration.

All applications from previous recipients of grants or from previously unsuccessful applicants will be considered on their own merits. Although Animal Free Research UK will have regard to the outcome of the previous grant, any new application will in no way receive preferential or adverse consideration.

Animal Free Research UK will willingly work in partnership with other organisations, such as Universities, charities and industry to fund initiatives beyond the financial scope of a single organisation.

Animal Free Research UK reserves the right to make funding decisions based on independent scientific recommendations of its Scientific Advisory Panel and Board of Trustees. Individuals can be involved in more than one Animal Free Research UK grant at a time. The award of a grant does not guarantee any further commitment to funding by Animal Free Research UK.

The Grant Holder is responsible for the leadership, management and execution of the research project. The Grant Holder must be based in the UK at an eligible Research Organisation (RO). The grant holder is expected to hold a PhD in a relevant discipline, with demonstrated research experience and a good publication record.

Animal Free Research UK encourages and supports collaborative research projects and team approaches, especially between academic and industry researchers. Collaborators based in different organisations to the grant holders or in industry can be formally recognised in applications as named project partners. Each project partner must provide a letter of support.

4. Peer review process and notification of decision.

All grant applications will be subject to an initial assessment to ensure they meet the basic criteria for funding.

All applications that meet the basic criteria will be subject to peer review by UK and/or International experts in the field of science of each research proposal.

Following peer review, applications will be subject to further scrutiny by members of the Animal Free Research UK Scientific Advisory Panel (comprising external advisers with extensive expertise relevant to Animal Free Research UK funding priorities). All recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Panel are referred to the Chief Executive Officer of Animal Free Research UK for final decision.

Grants will be awarded based on an assessment of the application's academic quality, novelty, value for money, feasibility of the research plan, competence of the applicant/the research team and suitability of the research environment. Above all the application must meet our strategic goal of funding human relevant, animal-free science.

5. Grant monitoring and publications

It is the policy of Animal Free Research UK to monitor all grants made. To this end, before a grant can be confirmed, conditions will be stipulated appropriate to the work to be carried out and progress will be assessed against agreed targets and/or milestones. Payment of grant instalments will be dependent on the receipt of quarterly invoices and satisfactory progress being demonstrated by providing progress reports bi-annually. Animal Free Research UK reserves the right to withdraw the grant on receipt of unsatisfactory progress reports. Failure to submit reports at the time specified may also jeopardise the continuation of Animal Free Research UK's support.

Visits by representatives of Animal Free Research UK may be expected during the period of a grant for purposes including monitoring of the grant progress, marketing, fundraising and promotional activities.

Following the conclusion of the project, the grant recipient will be expected to submit a final achievement report, normally within one month of the end of the grant, detailing fully the results and outputs from the project.

6. Publication of work and engaging the public

Animal Free Research UK are committed to engaging the public with the science we fund. This is of particular importance as the public fund our scientists and are actively interested in how our research is meeting our strategic aims. Our Grant Holders have a responsibility to consider where and how best to engage the public with their science. Applicants should indicate in their proposal how they intend to communicate their project and expected results to scientific and public audiences.

7. The Application

7.1 Documentation requirements

All applications must be made through the Animal Free Research UK application portal. Links to the various applications can be found on the Animal Free Research UK website - www.animalfreeresearchuk.org/funding/.

During the online application process, applicants will be required to upload and submit additional documentation. A summary of the information required in each additional document is given below.

All documentation must meet the following requirements:

- File format: Office365 compatible - Word (doc, docx) or Excel (xls, xlsx)
- Page size: A4
- Font: Arial/Calibri size 11pt
- Paragraph: Single line spacing
- Margins: Page margins must not be less than 2cm
- References: Can be provided with numbered in-text citations.

7.2 Project proposal

The proposal form provides a summary of the whole project and how the pilot study will provide important proof-of-concept for future grant opportunities. The proposal form and attachments must meet the requirements outlined in Section 7.1.

Heading	Information required
Description of proposed research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for research • Research questions proposed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aim/Objectives • Relevance to AFR UK Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Our overall strategy is to transform medical research and regulation so that the development of treatments for human diseases can be entirely animal free and breakthroughs achieved faster. • Methods to be developed or tested <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enough information to enable an appraisal of the proposed methods, but not a detailed step-by-step breakdown. • Plan of research activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Include timeline/Gantt Chart of planned activities and relevant milestones • Outputs (papers, planned large grant applications, workshops etc) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are you expecting the main outputs of the project to be? • References <p>Maximum of 3 sides of A4 including images & references.</p> <p>Submitted in Section 2 of the Application – ‘Project Details’</p>
Lay Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Free Research UK requires a concise lay summary of no more than 250 words for use in public communications and fundraising activities. This must be understandable by a non-scientific audience. • The lay summary should be submitted directly into the relevant field in the application form.

7.3 Supporting information

Each one of the following supporting documents should be uploaded separately into the relevant section of the application form. All documents and attachments must meet the requirements outlined in Section 7.1.

Heading	Information required
CV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short CV is required for the Primary applicant (and co-applicant, if applicable) • The CV should only include information relevant/appropriate to the proposed project. <p>Maximum of 2 sides of A4.</p> <p>Submitted in Section 1 of the Application – ‘Applicant Details’</p>
Budget and justification of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Pilot studies, there is a maximum consumables budget of £5,000. • Please provide a complete budget including breakdown of expenses, for the duration of the project, along with justification for resources outlining the need for the requested consumables. <p>Maximum of 1 side of A4.</p> <p>Submitted in Section 4 of the Application – ‘Finances’</p>
Animal replacement statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement detailing the animal replacement impact of the proposed research including (but not limited to); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Species traditionally used and to be replaced ○ Estimate of numbers replaced ○ Prevalence of this specific animal use in the UK/Europe/Worldwide ○ Include references of example animal studies that have taken place ○ It would be useful to describe - in lay terms - what the animal experiments involve. ○ Explain what animal procedure/experiment/steps their research replaces. ○ How easy would it be for another researcher to uptake the results of their animal replacement method/technology? <p>Maximum 1 side of A4.</p> <p>Submitted in Section 3 of the Application – ‘Animal Use and Replacement’</p>

8. How to apply online – submission process

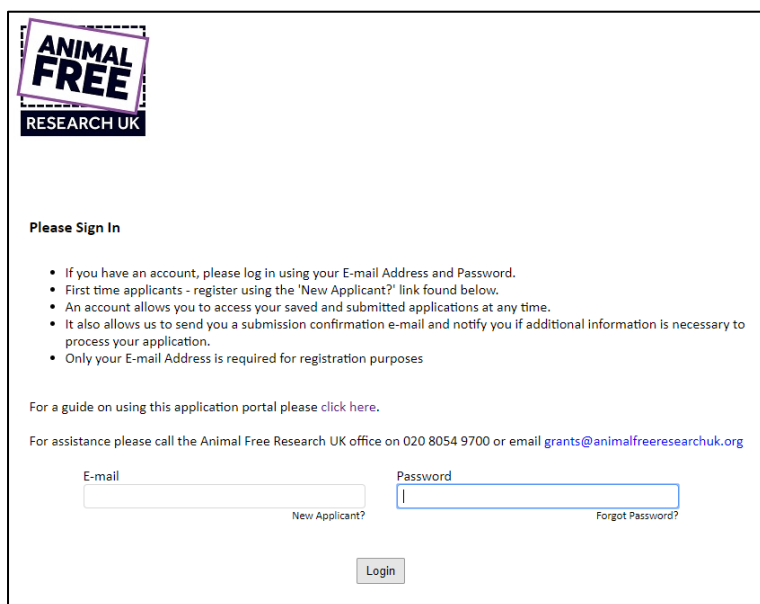
8.1 Blackbaud Grantmaking

IMPORTANT: Late applications will not be accepted, regardless of the reason (computer problems, power outages, internet connectivity issues etc.), so plan to fill in and “SUBMIT” the application well in advance of the deadline. If you are “in progress” at the deadline, you will be locked out of the application. This is the default behaviour of the system and is not a policy of Animal Free Research UK.

8.1.1 To Start a NEW Online Application

Either: Click on the link (from our website or Science e-newsletter) to access the new application screen. You will be redirected to the Application login page (Figure 1) if you are not already logged in, otherwise you will be taken straight to the application page. Links to all application forms and to the portal are available at: www.animalfreeresearchuk.org/funding/

OR: Log into (or create) your online account to access the application form. If you have previously applied using our Online system you can access your account using the following link: www.GrantRequest.co.uk/SID_63?SA=AM



The screenshot shows the login page for Animal Free Research UK. At the top left is the logo with the text 'ANIMAL FREE RESEARCH UK'. Below the logo is the heading 'Please Sign In'. A bulleted list provides instructions: log in with email and password, register as a new applicant, use an account to access saved applications, receive submission confirmation emails, and note that only the email address is required for registration. Below the list is a link for a guide on using the portal. Further down is contact information: call 020 8054 9700 or email grants@animalfreeresearchuk.org. The login form includes an 'E-mail' field with a 'New Applicant?' link below it, a 'Password' field with a 'Forgot Password?' link below it, and a 'Login' button at the bottom.

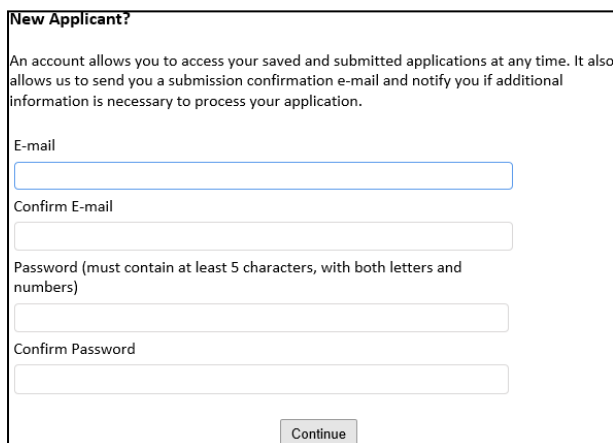
Figure 1 – SAMPLE Screenshot of the Applications landing page

8.1.2 Creating your Online Account

Each applicant must use one online account with a unique e-mail address, so each applicant’s applications are saved individually in one account. This will allow easy access to your online application history. If you create multiple accounts using multiple e-mail addresses, it will become very complicated for you to access your history/documents.

Note the e-mail/password used to create your account. Use this same e-mail/password to login to your account on the grant portal to access your online grant history and any applications in progress.

Add mail@grantapplication.com to your safe senders list to ensure you receive all system communications.



The screenshot shows the registration screen for new applicants. The heading is 'New Applicant?'. Below the heading is a paragraph explaining the benefits of an account: access to saved and submitted applications, submission confirmation emails, and notification of additional information. The registration form consists of four input fields: 'E-mail', 'Confirm E-mail', 'Password (must contain at least 5 characters, with both letters and numbers)', and 'Confirm Password'. A 'Continue' button is located at the bottom of the form.

Figure 2 – Registration screen for first time users of the Blackbaud Grantmaking system.

8.1.3 Accessing Your Online Account

Once you create an account, you will be able to access new or saved applications, and if successful, submit reports and other documentation.

Accessing your saved applications (“in progress/drafts” or “submitted”):

Log into your account at www.GrantRequest.co.uk/SID_63?SA=AM to access your saved drafts and your submitted requests; sign in and select "in progress" or "submitted" in the drop down menu to see those applications (Figure 3).

Do not use the new application form link on the website to access saved drafts. If you use the application form link, it will create a new application each time you use it. If you keep entering the system through the application form link, you will end up with multiple copies of “draft/in progress” applications.

- Select "in progress", to continue working on draft applications which have not been submitted and are still in draft form
- Select "submitted", to view the applications that you have submitted. You cannot edit submitted applications.
- To delete an application, select the rubbish bin icon next to it.

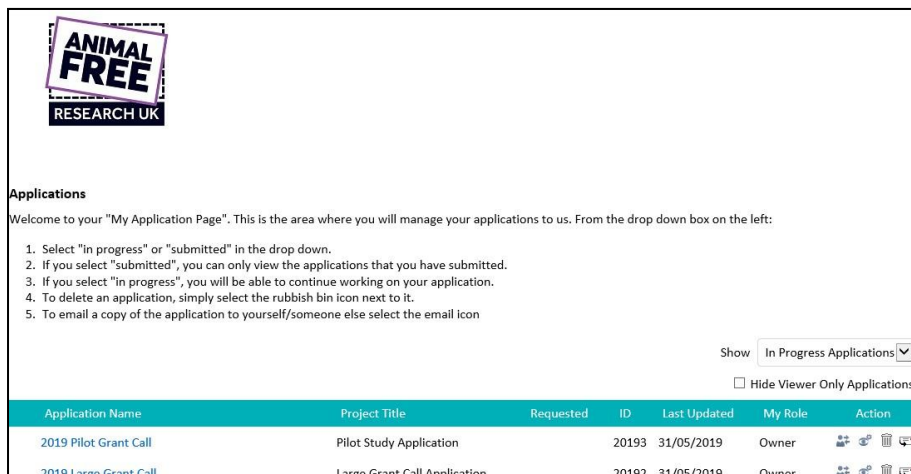


Figure 3 - Your personal applications landing page. This is where all your saved applications will be listed.

8.2 Application Form: “How To” start a new application (Figure 4)

Click on the “new application” link on the Animal Free Research UK website or Science e-newsletter email for Summer Studentships.

If you are trying to access an application already in progress (and NOT start a new one), see “Accessing Your Online Account” above and use the account URL not the “new application” link.

When working on the application: always click the “SAVE” button at the bottom of the page before closing or your work will not be saved.

You do not have to complete the application in one sitting. To come back and work on the application later: Click “SAVE”, and sign out. You can then sign back into your account later to complete and submit it at a later time (directions below). Click “SAVE” regularly in case of computer or internet issues or power outage.

The application will not be submitted to Animal Free Research UK until you click the “SUBMIT” button.

When the application is in your account as an “in progress” draft, Animal Free Research UK cannot see or access the application.

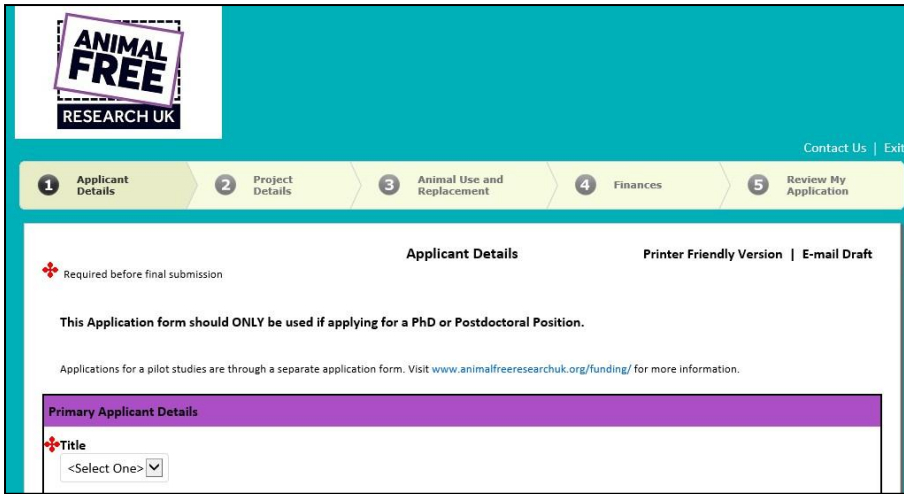


Figure 4 – SAMPLE application welcome screen.

8.3 Contact Information

The contact information relates to you, the applicant, not to a Grants/Programme Manager at your organisation. If these details (for a Grants/Programme Manager) need to be provided, then please use the “Request Contact” field ONLY, as this information will be added as a secondary contact.

The e-mail address listed on your application form as the “organisation e-mail” is used as your unique identifier, so each applicant must have a unique e-mail address. If you use the same e-mail address as the “organisation e-mail” for different applicants, the account/records may be merged by the system when importing, possibly deleting important information related to the specifics of an application.

When filling in an application, you MUST use your organisational contact info (e-mail, phone, mailing address) in the fields listed as “Organisation”. Do NOT use your personal (home) information in these fields.

8.4 Filling in the Form

You can work directly in the application window and save and return to it when necessary.

PLEASE NOTE: the application form does not ‘auto-save’ any data entered until you press the NEXT button (or the save and return button) at the bottom of each page.

- Fill in the application form, by entering your data directly in the fields.
- To navigate through the pages, use the buttons at the bottom or the tabs at the top of the page.
- Limit the use of bullets, extra lines as spaces and other formatting. For points in a list in a field form, use a dash then enter your text.
- “SAVE” the application as “in progress” using the buttons at the bottom to come back and work on it later.

To return to your application DO NOT use the new application form link on the website. Log into your account here:

https://www.GrantRequest.co.uk/SID_63?SA=AM. **If you use the new application form link, it WILL create a new application each time you use it.**

- Remember to “SUBMIT” the application prior to the application deadline. If the application is open and you are working on it when the deadline cut-off occurs, the system will close and will not allow the submission past the deadline.

8.4.1 To print a paper/offline copy of the questions

If you prefer to read through a print copy before entering your answers in the online form, or read through the questions then draft your answers in a word processing program to then copy and paste into the online form fields, you can ‘export’ a copy of the questions by following the instructions below:

Open the application and select “Printer Friendly Version” (Figure 5). Note: the check box answers will not print off unless you select each of the boxes.

You can then read the form, draft your answers in a word processing program, then copy and paste each answer into the appropriate field in the online application form.

If copying and pasting from a word processing program, limit your use of bullets, and other formatting. Use a dash (-) instead of bullets (•).

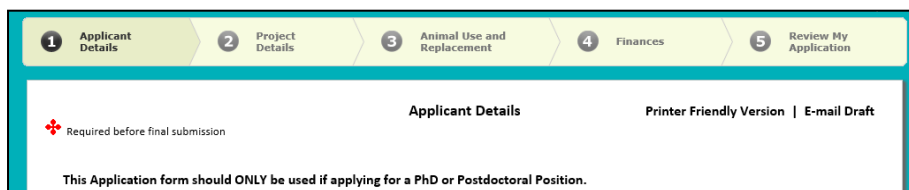


Figure 5 – Click ‘Printer Friendly Version’ to get an overview of the complete application. You can copy+paste the questions and any inputted text into a word processing document if you prefer to complete the application offline.

8.4.2 To e-mail a copy of the draft application

To e-mail a copy of a completed (but not submitted) application or a draft version of an application to yourself or to someone else for review or discussion, select “e-mail draft” (Figure 5). Note: the check box answers will only print the ones that have been selected. If no choice/option has been made these will appear blank on any email/printed version of the application form.

8.4.3 Attachments

Attachments are allowed (where requested in the application) up to a **MAX of 20 MB per application (not per file uploaded)**. If you have very large images or additional documents that need to be submitted with your application, it is better to provide a link to an online storage solution (Dropbox, Google Drive, OneDrive etc.) from where we can download the files. If you have multiple documents (such as letters of support) it is best to either scan or copy and paste them together to combine them into one document to upload.

When attaching electronic files, use **PC compatible file formats** (.doc; .docx; .xls; .xlsx etc.). We will not be able to open/process MAC-only compatible files/formats.

8.5 How to Submit the Completed Application

NOTE: Late applications will not be accepted, regardless of the reason (computer problems, power outages, internet connectivity issues etc.), so plan to fill in and “SUBMIT” the application well in advance of the deadline.

When your application is complete: you must click the “SUBMIT” button on the final screen of the application form, and submit the application before the deadline.

Once you “SUBMIT” successfully you will receive a confirmation e-mail (sent to the registered e-mail) with a copy of your application.

If you do not see the e-mail in your inbox, which should arrive within a few minutes of submission, check your “junk” or “spam” folders. Add mail@grantapplication.com to your safe senders list in your e-mail program to ensure you receive all system communications.

If you still do not see the confirmation e-mail, log out and log back in to your Blackbaud Grantmaking online account – if the draft is still “in progress” then re-submit.

8.6 Browser Compatibility for the Online Application Portal

Supported Browsers (latest versions preferred) for PC or Mac:

Internet Explorer 10, 11 for Windows Edge for Windows
Mozilla Firefox for Windows or Mac Chrome for Windows or Mac
Safari for Mac

Issues Common to All Browsers

- Viewing is best using a resolution of 1680 x 1050 or larger. Lower resolutions may require use of full screen mode (F11) to access some buttons or fields.
- Custom modifications to the default browser settings may cause compatibility issues.
- Zoom levels (more than 100%) may cause loss of scroll bars.
- If your browser blocks cookies (especially third party ones), you may experience problems logging in.

Known Browser Issues

Internet Explorer

If using IE and your computer is blocking the site, or not allowing pop-ups, please use following steps: Setup/Verify Pop-up and Security Settings

- Go to Tools > Pop-up Blocker > Pop-up Blocker Settings.
- Add the Online Applications site to the list of Allowed Sites in your Pop-up Blocker: <https://www.grantrequest.com>
- Click Close.
- Go to Tools > Internet Options > Security tab.
- Click Trusted Sites and then click the Sites button.
- Add the Online Applications site: <https://www.grantrequest.com>

Firefox

Scrolling may not be available In Firefox for Windows: When using Firefox, you may encounter scrolling issues depending on which version of Firefox you are using. Screens may not display horizontal and vertical scroll bars. If scroll bars are present, the scroll wheel on your mouse may not work.

The workaround: As an alternative, use the arrow keys to navigate the website. If scroll bars are displayed, you can click and drag the scroll bar to move through the page. If the issue persists, it is recommended to use IE/Chrome.

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For further information/enquiries/queries, contact Animal Free Research UK.

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Animal Free Research UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (No. 1146896) and Scotland (No. SC045327) and a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (No. 08015625).