



Innovation Seed Fund – Call and Guidelines 2026

Purpose

To pump-prime innovative research into the causes, treatment and diagnosis of hearing loss, tinnitus and other hearing-related conditions.

Through the Innovation Seed Fund, we want to support novel research ideas that, if effective, will lead to successful applications for further funding. The aim is to make these new research ideas more competitive and able to secure follow-on funding.

The scheme will also support small-scale translational research projects, such as proof-of-concept studies or pre-clinical validation studies, again with the aim of making novel approaches more competitive for further funding. (Translational research is defined here as research that seeks to advance and apply discoveries from basic research through preclinical studies towards clinical trials.) Development of drugs, diagnostics and devices are welcomed.

All proposals should be able to demonstrate how they will contribute to ultimately bringing benefit to people with hearing loss, tinnitus or other hearing-related conditions. They should be highly novel and/or innovative – potentially risky ideas are welcome.

Summary of the Innovation Seed Fund

- **Deadline:** Thursday 6th November 2025 (17:00 GMT)
- **Value:** up to £10,000
- **Duration:** usually up to 1 year
- **Eligibility:** Researchers can be based at a university, research institute or SME anywhere in the world.

We will not consider applications:

RNID is the trading name of the Royal National Institute for Deaf People. Registered charity in England, Wales (207720) and Scotland (SC038926). Registered company in England and Wales (454169). Registered address: Brightfield Business Hub, Bakewell Road, Orton Southgate, Peterborough. PE2 6XU

- for conference attendance
- solely for equipment costs
- to support the costs towards a degree, e.g. tuition fees or maintenance
- for social research projects

Contact us for advice (research@rnid.org.uk) if you are unsure whether your project is eligible.

Application and selection procedure

Applications must be submitted through our [online grants management system](#) before the deadline.

You may only submit one application as primary applicant, though you can be listed as a collaborator on other applications in the funding round.

Please note that your application will have to be approved by an authorised representative from your institution before you can submit it – ensure you allow enough time for this before the deadline.

Projects will be assessed by our Innovation Seed Fund Review Panel (see website for panel membership). Each application will be assessed by three members of the panel, and their recommendations will guide RNID in selecting projects to fund.

We expect to inform applicants of funding decisions within 3 months of the submission deadline.

For further details:

E-mail: research@rnid.org.uk