

Olive Ayoub Intermediate/ Late-Stage Fellowship – Guidance Document

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About Scleroderma & Raynaud's UK

Scleroderma & Raynaud's UK was formed in 2016 following the merger of the Raynaud's and Scleroderma Association and the Scleroderma Society. It is the only UK charity dedicated to improving the lives of people with scleroderma and Raynaud's.

Our vision is **a world where no-one has their life limited by scleroderma and Raynaud's.**

Our mission is to improve the lives of everyone affected by scleroderma and Raynaud's. We achieve this by investing in research, improving awareness and understanding of the conditions and providing information and support to all those affected.

Our Research

Prior to the foundation of SRUK, the RSA and Scleroderma Society, our two founding charities funded over 100 research grants. More than £10 million was invested on cutting edge science over a 30-year period.

Our founding charities funded science at all levels, from building our knowledge about the very basic mechanisms underlying the conditions through to pioneering new methods of earlier detection and diagnosis.

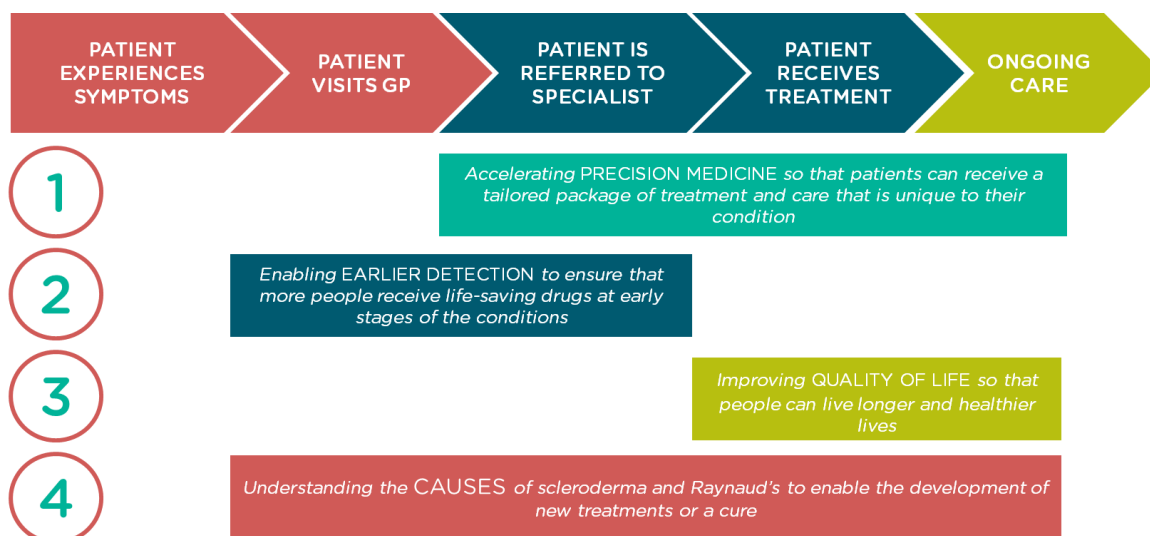
This work, carried out through our communities working together, has helped transform the outlook for people living with these conditions. Survival outcomes and quality of life have significantly improved and there are more treatments available.

Following the creation of SRUK, we set out to develop our own research strategy to ensure that the research we fund will continue to lead to patient benefit.

Our Research Strategy

SRUK is a patient centred organisation. In keeping with our collaborative values, our research strategy was co-produced with members of our patient community and our clinical and research communities.

It focuses on four themes, identified and prioritised by patients and validated by clinical and research experts. These themes are shown mapped onto the typical patient journey below. Research leading to progress within these themes will greatly improve the lives of those living with scleroderma and Raynaud's.



The Olive Ayoub Fellowship

The Olive Ayoub Fellowship was established through a generous legacy bequeathed to SRUK in the will of Mrs. Olive Ayoub.

Olive was born and raised in Plymouth in 1922, before moving to London where she trained to become a teacher in Art and English and met her husband Abdu who was completing a PhD. Olive spent much of her working life in Egypt alongside her husband, where she continued to teach, eventually becoming a headmistress and enjoying the opportunities for international travel which came through Abdu's academic work. Upon retirement, Abdu and Olive returned to the UK. When Abdu sadly passed away Olive forged a close friendship with her neighbour Helen who lives with scleroderma. Witnessing at close quarters Helen's daily battle with the debilitating effects of scleroderma inspired Olive to bequeath a gift to SRUK in her will.

Olive's friends tell us that she was an exceptional individual with a passion for knowledge, learning and teaching. SRUK believes that it is fitting that Olive's legacy will likewise enable two exceptional individuals (a fellow and PhD student) to generate new knowledge and advance our understanding of scleroderma whilst facilitating the next steps in their career.

The Intermediate to Late-Stage Fellowship

The Olive Ayoub Intermediate to Late-Stage Fellowship will provide up to £600,000 of funding with the aim of enabling ***one exceptional non-tenured postdoctoral researcher*** working in scleroderma or a related field to transition from postdoc to research leader.

Overview

- Four years' salary for the fellow at 100% cost
- Up to £30,000 per year in consumables
- Stipend for a three-year PhD studentship to assist and carry out a research project relevant to the research programme.

Eligibility

- Applicants must have a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 6 years' experience post-PhD; allowances will be made for time away from research for example due to parental leave or serious illness.
- Applicants must currently be working on research either within the field of scleroderma or a closely related/ or translatable field.
- Applicants must not currently hold a tenured position at a university/ research institution either within the UK or overseas.
- Applicants based outside of the UK may apply for the fellowship provided the research will be conducted at a UK based institution, which will sponsor their fellowship application. PhD candidates must be UK based.
- Applicants must provide evidence of support from their host organization (UK based)
- Proposals must be relevant to one or more themes of the SRUK Research Strategy.

The Application Process

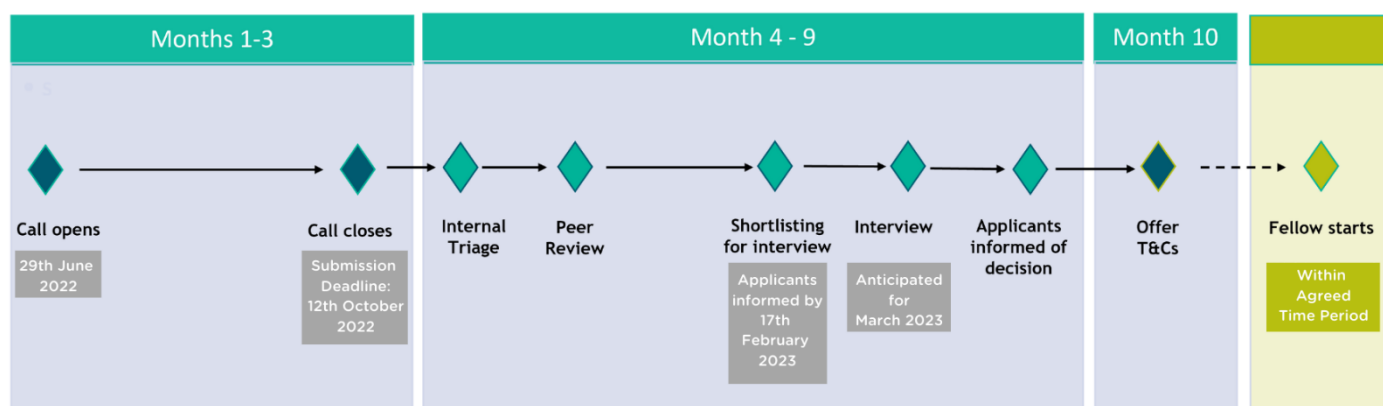
Applications should be submitted through the application form which can be downloaded from the [SRUK website](#). Applicants should ensure that they read the guidance contained in this document prior to completing the form.

The fellowship competition is a one-stage application process. Applicants should submit their completed application form by the deadline, **1pm on Wednesday 12th October 2022**, late applications will not be accepted. Applications should be sent to SRUKOAFellowship@sruk.co.uk

The stages in the assessment process are outlined below. Completed applications will be subject for an *internal triage* for quality and relevance to the SRUK research strategy before *peer review* by UK and international experts. Following peer review the Fellowship Committee will *shortlist* applicants for *interview*. Interviews are expected to be held in December, applicants will be notified with their invitation to interview at least 4 weeks prior to their interview date.

A Fellowship offer is expected to be made 10 months after the call opens.

The application and assessment process:



Guidance on completing the Application Form

The application form is comprised of 12 sections. All sections **must** be complete before submission. Applicants should ensure that they complete all sections fully and provide any requested supplementary information.

Section 1: Administrative Details

This section asks for basic details about the applicant, the research project and where the research will be based.

Current Organisation and Department – This field should be completed with the name of the organisation and department where the applicant is currently based.

Host Organisation and Department - If you are planning to move to a different organisation for the purposes of the fellowship then you should answer **Y** (yes) to the question 'Will your fellowship be hosted at a different organisation to where you are currently based?' and complete the information requested in the fields below. The Host organisation must be based in the UK.

Proposed Start date – must not be earlier than 01 July 2023.

Do you wish to undertake this award on a part-time basis? – Please answer this question with either Y (Yes) or N (No). SRUK wishes to attract the best candidate to this fellowship role and recognises that in some cases flexible working is required. Please note that the minimum amount of time that can be spent on the fellowship is 0.5FTE for a maximum duration of 6 years.

Funding Requested – Please insert the total eligible funds sought for years, this is to include the costs associated with the PhD studentship. Applicants should be aware that only directly incurred costs may be applied for.

Multiple Applications – Please inform us if either the entire application or any part of it is being considered by another funding body (UK or overseas).

Section 2: Engaging with our Scleroderma and Raynaud's Patient Community

This section will be used by our lived experience Committee Members to assess your application. These individuals are either living with scleroderma and Raynaud's or have experience of the condition(s) through a loved one.

If you receive and accept an offer of funding, then this section will be used both to write communications to the SRUK patient community and by other teams within SRUK such as our fundraising and communications teams.

Lay Title - Please provide a descriptive title using simple, easy to understand vocabulary.

Lay Summary (300 words) – In this section a lay abstract of the proposed research should be provided which is accessible and interesting to the above groups.

Lay case for Support (2000 words) -

- **Background** – Provide further detail on any past work which supports this proposal.

- **Aims and Methodology** – Under this heading describe the aims of the project and the methods that will be used to investigate these aims.
- **Anticipated findings, how will these findings benefit those living with scleroderma and / or Raynaud's?** – Please describe the type of benefit that someone living with scleroderma/ Raynaud's might eventually derive because of this research. Be sure to describe the onward translational journey of this research in order to make this possible.
- **How will you engage and/or involve those living with scleroderma and Raynaud's in your research?** – Please outline how you will engage and share your research with people living with scleroderma. If appropriate, outline plans for a greater participatory involvement.

Section 3: Candidate Profile

In this section we are asking for more information about you as an applicant and your suitability for this fellowship.

Date PhD was awarded: - Please give the month and year your PhD was awarded in MM/YYYY format. This should be the date on your PhD award letter and is likely to be different to your graduation date.

Length of postdoctoral RESEARCH experience? - Please complete this answer in **MONTH** form. You should calculate your answer as if you were responding to this question on the **DAY OF CALL CLOSE (October 12th 2022)**. If you have any career breaks away from research due to long term illness, parental leave and/ or carer responsibilities or any other valid reason you may briefly describe these in this section (300 words).

Research Experience to date (500 words) – Please outline your current research experience to the present day. This should include experiences such as details of your research training, the technical skills you have acquired and includes positions of responsibility you may have held within your research environment such as managing key resources or staff.

Candidate Statement (500 words) - Please outline why you would like to apply for a Fellowship, your intended next steps in your career and how this Fellowship will allow you to further your research in the scleroderma/ Raynaud's research arena.

Justification of the requested support (500 words) - Please explain the relevance of your project proposal to SRUK's purpose and strategic aims. This should include how this research will impact and contribute to achieving SRUK's mission. Please provide a brief justification for the costs requested for the Fellowship.

Significant Research Outputs (50 words per output) - Please list up to 5 of your most significant and recent research outputs. Provide a short summary, your contribution to the study, and for any publications please provide the DOI or PMID. (50 words per output)

Any other outputs (200 words) - Where relevant please outline any other research outputs such as changes in policy, practice or technology

Section 4: Scientific Proposal

In this section you are asked to provide information on the proposed research by responding to the point below, please ensure you remain within the word limits.

Scientific Abstract (300 words) – Please provide a scientific summary of the proposed research.

Background (1000 words) - Outline the basis for your research including what is already known, any relevant pilot data, and how the proposed research will add to this area.

Aims and Objectives (250 words) – State the primary aims of the proposed research and their importance.

Programme of Work (3000 words) - Please outline the key work packages, milestones, and the methodologies, how data will be captured and analysed including, where relevant, any statistical analysis to be undertaken. You may provide a Gantt chart and break this section up into subheadings if helpful.

Predicted Outcomes (500 words) - Please outline your predicted results and the wider impact this work will have within this research field. Include the impact and potential benefit the results of this project may have for those living with scleroderma and/or Raynaud's.

Risk analysis (500 words) - Please outline any key risks which could jeopardise the delivery of this work and your planned strategies to mitigate those risks. These may include risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 5: Mentorship and Support

In this section we wish to establish the personal and organisational support you will be receiving to help deliver the research within your fellowship.

Internal Mentor – Please complete the details requested including the *in-kind time contribution* that this individual will dedicate towards you and your PhD student. This person should be a senior tenured researcher (reader or above) within the host organisation. This individual will be expected to provide a level of academic support and advice during your fellowship and must also be willing to act as co-supervisor to any PhD student engaged within this project.

External Mentor – You may also wish to include a senior researcher from outside of the host organisation as a mentor. This could include a former principal investigator, a close collaborator, or if you are using this fellowship to relocate, someone from within your former organisation. Your justification of suitability should explain how this person will input into your research along with expected frequency of discussions.

Host Organisation Support (500 words) - Please outline the support which is to be offered by your host department and organisation during the fellowship and beyond. This should include details of key facilities and resources required to deliver this work, and the support that will be offered to you to continue your work in this area once this fellowship ends (i.e. through a tenured post). A letter of support will be required from the Host Organisation to confirm these latter points.

Section 6: PhD Studentship

The Olive Ayoub Intermediate/ Late-Stage Fellowship will include funding for a 3-year PhD studentship. This is to assist with the delivery of research relevant to the aims of the fellowship and allow the fellow to begin to develop a research programme.

Costings for the PhD Studentship are to be included within the £600,000 maximum funds which can be accessed through the award. The PhD student would usually be expected to start within the 1st year of the fellowship in order to allow the PhD to complete before the fellowship ends.

As mentioned in the section above your Internal Mentor must be willing to assist in the co-supervision of the student.

Title of the proposed PhD research project – Please complete this field

Background and Context (1000 words) - Please provide details of the research question(s) to be investigated, and how the proposed question(s) will integrate with the main fellowship research project.

Project plan and methodologies (2000 words) – Please outline the main workstreams and their objectives, the methods and techniques to be employed and the plans for data capture and analysis.

Recruitment and mentorship plan (500 words) – Please outline how you will recruit the best candidate for this project. You may outline compatible schemes available in your host organisation such as MRes schemes. How will you share mentorship and supervision of this student and what time will you be allocating to this?

How will this PhD studentship support the successful delivery of your fellowship and the development of your research programme in this area? (500 words) – Please explain how the proposed studentship will facilitate the delivery of your fellowship, and the development of a research programme in this area of scleroderma research.

Section 7: Collaborators

Please complete this section to tell us about any UK or international collaborators involved in your proposed research. Collaborators may be commercial or industrial collaborators or may come from an academic setting. You must ensure that you provide a letter of support from each of the collaborators listed which clearly states their agreement to the contribution stated within your application.

Section 8: Research involving human volunteers, tissue samples and/or experimental animals

Section 8.1: Research involving human volunteers or tissue samples

Please complete this section to tell us about your research if it involves human volunteers or tissue samples. All applicants must answer either Y (yes) or N (no) to the first question. If answering, yes responses must be made to the following questions.

Status of Ethics/ Regulatory Approvals – Please outline whether this research is covered by an existing ethics approval or whether new or further approvals are required. Please inform us of the

bodies from whom these approvals will be sought and the timescales for obtaining approval. You should also indicate what work may occur whilst waiting for these approvals.

Section 8.2: Research involving experimental animals or organisms covered by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act

SRUK as a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) adheres to the AMRC's [position statement](#) on the use of animals in research.

You must use this section to tell us about aspects of your research proposal which involve the use of experimental animals or organisms covered by the animals' act. All applicants must answer either Y (yes) or N (no) to the first question. If answering yes, applicants must respond to the following questions in this section.

Justification for and expertise in the use of animals within the proposed studies (500 words) -

Please explain the necessity of animals in your proposed research, ensuring that you include the species to be used, the techniques to be used along with their severity, the numbers of animals to be used per experiment along with any calculations to support these numbers, whether a Home Office personal and project licence is required for this work. If licences are required, please state whether you are currently a licence holder and if not when these are likely to be obtained.

Section 9: Intellectual Property

You must use this section to tell us about any existing IP and any new or arising IP that could be generated because of this research. If any third-party IP is required for this work to be carried out you must let us know and inform us of any arrangements needed to secure this IP such as a licence, assignment etc and the terms of this agreement.

Section 10: Funding / Support Requested

As an AMRC member, SRUK is bound to the [AMRC position statement on supporting research in universities](#). Only directly incurred along with some directly allocated costs (such as usage of communal equipment and facilities) may be applied for within this fellowship award. Your host organisation may be eligible to recover some of the indirect costs associated with your research via the Charity Research Support Fund.

The costs for both the PhD studentship and fellowship must not exceed £600,000. YOU MUST engage with the research finance department within the host organisation to ensure that this section is completed properly since uplifts will not be possible once funding has been agreed.

Section 10.1: Fellowship funding

Please complete the requested details with regards to the fellowship salary, consumables, small equipment and projected travel costs.

Section 10.2 PhD studentship funding

Please complete this section outlining the details of the student's stipend, tuition fees.

Section 10.3 Full Economic Cost of Proposed Research

As an Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) member, SRUK monitors the full economic costs of the research we support. Your finance team are required to complete this section of the application.

Section 11: Peer Reviewers

In this section you may nominate the names of up to three experts who are suitable to review this application.

Section 12: Declaration and Supporting Documents

Conflict of Interest statement - Please declare any conflicts or potential conflicts of interest that either you, your mentors or any collaborators may have in undertaking this research, including any relevant personal, non-personal and commercial interest that could be perceived as a conflict of interest.

Personal declaration – by completing this declaration and submitting this form you are declaring that the information contained within this form is correct and accept that an offer of funding may be withdrawn should a serious inconsistency arise.

Please indicate on the **checklist** which of the supporting documents have been provided with your submission.

Submission instructions

You must submit your application by 1.00pm on Wednesday the 12th October to SRUKOAFellowship@sruk.co.uk. Any emails received after the deadline will not be accepted.

You may send multiple files if necessary, however please ensure they are all clearly identifiable, and that each filename includes the applicant surname and host institution.