

## RESEARCH STRATEGY

The Trust's strategy in regard to medical research should be seen in the context of its constitution and history.

The Trust was created by Sir Jules Thorn, whose endowment continues to generate investment income which is the Trust's sole source of income for funding grants. The Trust was not formed specifically to support medical research. Its Trust Deed gives the Trustees absolute discretion in distributing the Trust's resources. Thus, it is a general grant-maker.

The Trust is a niche player, by virtue of its limited funds and the other calls on its resources. It seeks therefore to use the resources which it can commit to medical research to offer something different to the research community. The Trustees pay close regard to the wishes of the Founder, who hoped *inter alia* that the Trust he created would use its resources to bring benefit to patients and to aid the diagnosis of distressing conditions. It is against that background that the Trust focuses its grant-making for medical research on clinical work. The Trustees' strategy is to support the highest quality translational research (selected only after rigorous peer review) which is judged likely to produce clinical benefits within a short – medium timescale.

This strategy is reviewed regularly in the light of the reported outcomes and impact of completed research.

The Trust has two ongoing grant programmes to support medical research. The annual Sir Jules Thorn Award for Biomedical Research offers outstanding scientists at an early stage of an established career the opportunity to compete for a prize of up to £1.7 million over 5 years or more, in order to conduct a programme of internationally competitive translational research. This may be in any field of research. The competition is open to all UK medical schools and NHS organisations.

The Sir Jules Thorn PhD Scholarship Scheme provides funding to enable a small number of high quality graduates each year to undertake a 4-year PhD study, embedded within the Doctoral Training Programmes offered by leading UK universities who are invited to apply.

The Trust developed an additional programme for 2021, in response to the disruption that the Covid-19 pandemic has caused to research across universities and the NHS, and the impact that the pandemic has had on other sources of research funding. The Trustees therefore agreed to make up to £1 million available to support an additional, one-off research award in 2021. The award will support a single, outstanding research project, in any discipline or disease area, which is at an advanced stage of translation and is able to demonstrate a clear pathway to translate research findings into benefit for patients.