Type 1 Research Today

A healthy landscape for supporting type 1 diabetes research
UK funding organisations are investing close to £100 million in type 1 research

This is testament to the quality of the UK type 1 research community. Funding organisations report that the success rate for type 1 diabetes applications is broadly in line with that for other conditions, although some report that they receive fewer type 1 applications than might be expected. To ensure that type 1 research continues to play a strong role in making the UK a leader in medical research, every effort should be made to ensure that this healthy ecosystem of funding opportunities remains strong and protected.

Next step: Protect and strengthen the UK type 1 diabetes research funding ecosystem

* Different organisations use different metrics and time periods in their reporting. The snapshot presented here represents data shared with JDRF for awards covering the organisations’ 2014/2015 or their last full year’s funding (if their reporting year differs).
UK research funders cover the whole research pipeline

Different research funding organisations cover different aspects of the research pipeline. From basic science and underpinning infrastructure through to clinical trials, there is an organisation willing and able to fund this work.

Next step: The healthy mixture of basic, translational and clinical research we see can only remain strong if barriers to smooth movement of ideas along the pipeline are minimised. Organisations can work together more closely to address gaps and work in partnership ever more effectively.

Type 1 diabetes research is being funded throughout the UK

Institutions in each of the home nations appear in the top 10 for both number of projects and value of investment. The ‘golden triangle’ is important in type 1 research, but London, Cambridge and Oxford do not dominate the type 1 research space in the same way as in other conditions. This not only provides a more diverse talent pool to work on type 1, but should also mean that people with type 1 will have opportunities to engage in research wherever they live in the UK.

Next step: Type 1 research expertise can be found right across the UK. This diversity of institutions should be supported and preserved, while further collaboration between centres of excellence should be encouraged.
There are gaps in the types of research awards available in the UK

The numbers of awards in certain areas show that there are very few designated awards for PhD studentships in type 1 diabetes and there are also few grants specifically for equipment. While many project grants may include funding for equipment and studentships, the lack of award schemes in these areas warrants further investigation. We need to ensure that type 1 research in the UK remains cutting edge and that we are training the next generation of researchers to tackle type 1 diabetes.

Next step: Funders and researchers must talk openly to ensure that the research community can access the sorts of funding schemes needed to support type 1 diabetes science effectively.
Type 1 Research Today presents a picture of the UK funding environment for type 1 diabetes research. Since we began working with families affected by type 1 diabetes to advocate for investment in type 1 research, the investment in research to tackle type 1 has grown.

At the time of our first Type 1 Parliament, Government told us about £6.6 million of research investment that was relevant to type 1 diabetes. This was a significant underestimate: figures now available to us suggest that in 2012, Government funding agencies were supporting approximately £30 million of type 1 research.

Today, our analysis shows investment of almost £42 million.

The Type 1 Research Today report was made possible by a generous individual gift from JDRF Patrons James and Margaret Cripps.
Join us to catalyse faster progress towards a world without type 1 diabetes

Type 1 Research Today presents a positive picture of type 1 diabetes research in the UK. Many funders are engaged in supporting type 1 diabetes research, and UK researchers are making significant contributions to global progress in treating, preventing and ultimately curing type 1 diabetes.

But our vision of a world free of type 1 diabetes is not yet reality. There is still a great deal more work to do in laboratories, hospitals, board rooms and debating chambers to make that dream come true. And whoever we are, we can each take steps to bring the day we consign type 1 to the history books closer.

If you are a researcher: talk to research funders and apply. Have conversations with funding organisations to check that you are making the most of the opportunities available to you. Type 1 research has as good a success rate as any other type, across all the organisations we spoke to, so go for it!

If you are a funder: listen to researchers. Guide them towards the most appropriate funding schemes for them. Talk to us at JDRF, and to other funders, about combining resources to drive forward type 1 research together. Think innovatively about how best to empower researchers to change the face of type 1 and ensure that funding schemes fit the needs of the research community and the type of research they wish to conduct. Consider designing new funding vehicles to support vital underpinning research or exciting new ways to tackle type 1 diabetes.

If you are an MP: Government funding for type 1 diabetes research accounts for approaching half of the UK type 1 research portfolio. Its loss would be catastrophic. Support initiatives to maintain the UK’s position as a leader in biomedical research. Recognise the vital role government funding bodies have in supporting the fundamental infrastructure required to drive innovation and attract investment, and campaign to ensure these are maintained and developed.

If you are affected by type 1 diabetes: keep doing what you are doing. You are the reason that the picture of type 1 research today looks so positive. By participating in, fundraising for and spreading the word about type 1 diabetes research you have shaped the type 1 diabetes research landscape that we see today. Thank you for all you have done.

Join us to catalyse faster progress towards a world without type 1 diabetes

Type 1 Research Today presents a positive picture of type 1 diabetes research in the UK. Many funders are engaged in supporting type 1 diabetes research, and UK researchers are making significant contributions to global progress in treating, preventing and ultimately curing type 1 diabetes.

But our vision of a world free of type 1 diabetes is not yet reality. There is still a great deal more work to do in laboratories, hospitals, board rooms and debating chambers to make that dream come true. And whoever we are, we can each take steps to bring the day we consign type 1 to the history books closer.

If you are a researcher: talk to research funders and apply. Have conversations with funding organisations to check that you are making the most of the opportunities available to you. Type 1 research has as good a success rate as any other type, across all the organisations we spoke to, so go for it!

If you are a funder: listen to researchers. Guide them towards the most appropriate funding schemes for them. Talk to us at JDRF, and to other funders, about combining resources to drive forward type 1 research together. Think innovatively about how best to empower researchers to change the face of type 1 and ensure that funding schemes fit the needs of the research community and the type of research they wish to conduct. Consider designing new funding vehicles to support vital underpinning research or exciting new ways to tackle type 1 diabetes.

If you are an MP: Government funding for type 1 diabetes research accounts for approaching half of the UK type 1 research portfolio. Its loss would be catastrophic. Support initiatives to maintain the UK’s position as a leader in biomedical research. Recognise the vital role government funding bodies have in supporting the fundamental infrastructure required to drive innovation and attract investment, and campaign to ensure these are maintained and developed.

If you are affected by type 1 diabetes: keep doing what you are doing. You are the reason that the picture of type 1 research today looks so positive. By participating in, fundraising for and spreading the word about type 1 diabetes research you have shaped the type 1 diabetes research landscape that we see today. Thank you for all you have done.

Follow us on social media

JDRF, 17/18 Angel Gate, City Road, London EC1V 2PT. T: 020 7713 2030, F: 020 7713 2031, E: publicaffairs@jdrf.org.uk
Registered charity numbers 295716 (England and Wales) and SC040123 (Scotland). Company Limited No. 2071638.