

# Research Capability Funding Case Study

Written by [Dr Matt Mulvey](#).

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*Dr Matt Mulvey shares his experience of Research Capability Funding below. The next funding round will take place in 2018. We will announce the launch of next year's RCF competition via this website. To find out more about Research Capability Funding [please visit the NIHR website](#).*

Over the past five years the RCF award scheme has provided me with the opportunities to develop and nurture my career within the [Academic Unit of Palliative Care](#), led by Professor Mike Bennett at the Institute of Health Science, University of Leeds. Since 2012 I have been the recipient of approximately £90k in RCF awards: one project proposal award and two bridging awards. This RCF support has led to over £700k in research grant income, 14 peer review articles in internationally leading research journals, as well as establishing cancer pain assessment as a strong field of research within Leeds.

The RCF awards have provided me with the continuity of a research post at the University of Leeds. This employment stability has been crucial to my career success as it enabled me to develop a strong research portfolio. Ultimately this has led to me securing a five year Senior Research Fellowship at the University of Leeds funded by Yorkshire Cancer Research.

During my first RCF funded post in 2012-2013 I led a successful project grant application for £400k to the NIHR Health Technology Assessment (HTA) programme for a clinical feasibility trial. Following this, a further three month RCF award enabled me to develop and submit an application for an NIHR post-doctoral award in January 2014. This post-doctoral application was unsuccessful, however, these first two RCF awards supported me to develop my own area research in cancer pain assessment by undertaking the development work necessary to support research grant proposals.

After completing the HTA funded feasibility trial in 2016, with support from Professor Bennett I applied for a seven months RCF award to develop research proposals for a Senior Research Fellowship award. This third RCF award enabled me to consolidate my research and develop a funding application for a University of Leeds Academic Fellowship (UAF) funded by Yorkshire Cancer Research (YCR).

In November 2016 I was shortlisted from a pool of internationally competitive applicants. In December 2016 I was offered the position of Yorkshire Cancer Research University Academic Fellowship which I will take up in September 2017 (total funds secured £380k). The UAF is an ambitious five year structured training and development programme which will lead on to tenured appointment as an Associate Professor. My application focused on evaluating the benefits of improved cancer pain assessment and rationalising treatment strategies for cancer patients with pain living in the community.

The support provided to me by the RCF award scheme has been a major determinant in my success as an Applied Health Scientist. At key milestones in my early research career, the RCF awards have provided crucial support by bridging funding gaps and allowing me to develop my own career as an independent researcher in cancer pain assessment.