

Lay Research Panel Member

How you will make a difference

The Lay Research Panel involves those with a personal or professional connection to muscle wasting conditions in the selection of the best research options to develop treatments and cures for these conditions.

Members of the panel contribute to the evaluation of research funding applications. You understand what is valued by our community, so your insights help us to deliver research that will have an impact on lives of those living with the conditions.

Location: Attend meetings at our London-based office or virtually via Teams or Zoom. *Please note that we only accept applications from people resident in the UK.*

Frequency:

The Lay Research Panel meets once a year to assess research applications. This is usually a one full day commitment. Panel members will be expected to read and review several applications ahead of this meeting.

Typically, the Lay Panel meets at one other time of year for a couple of hours to discuss grants that have been funded and areas of strategic importance to MDUK.

Period: Members are appointed for an initial three-year term which can be renewed for a further period of three years. Members who volunteer as Chair or Vice-Chair can serve for a maximum period of 9 years.

What you'll get out of the role:

- Input into decisions about the funding of research and to ensure that the views of those affected by muscle wasting conditions are heard.
- Learn more about current research developments.
- Meet new people and develop teamwork and communication skills.

What you'll be doing:

- Representing the views of people affected directly or indirectly by a muscle wasting condition when setting the priorities for funding research.
- Reading and assessing plain language applications prepared by researchers. There is no special training required for this, although we often ask people with associations to a particular condition to assess applications with which they might feel a connection.
- Attending meetings of the Lay Research Panel and discussing your views and those of others about the research applications. You will be asked to read some applications in a little more depth and to present those applications to your colleagues on the Lay Panel.
- Contributing towards a score and a recommendation about funding of applications. This will influence the final recommendations made by our scientific committee (the Medical Research Committee).
- Assisting in other activities relating to medical research that require representation of people with lived experience from time to time.

What you'll bring:

You will bring an interest in the science of muscle wasting conditions and an enthusiasm for reading about new scientific and medical advances in the treatment of muscle wasting conditions.

Members of our Lay Research Panel do not necessarily need a background in science or research; you bring your valuable lived experience! However, an understanding of some basic scientific terminology and concepts may be useful.

You will need the time to carefully read through and evaluate applications in the run up to the Panel meetings.

At MDUK, we're committed to supporting and empowering our volunteers.

You can expect from us:

- Training and support throughout your volunteering journey

- Our Volunteer Handbook and regular updates about the charity's work
- Opportunities to connect with other MDUK volunteers
- Reimbursement of agreed reasonable expenses
- Insurance cover while volunteering under our public liability policy
- Your personal data to be handled securely in line with GDPR and our Privacy Policy
- A clear and fair process for resolving concerns or complaints

What we ask of our volunteers:

- Support the work of MDUK and help uphold the charity's values and reputation
- Treat staff, volunteers and the wider community with courtesy and respect, and follow our Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of others
- Support the charity's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Share feedback about your volunteering experience and let us know if your circumstances change and you're no longer able to volunteer

Application process

- The application deadline is 18 November 2026.
- Shortlisting will take place at the end of November.
- Interviews will be in early December. Interviews will be held via Teams/Zoom. The panel will consist of existing members of the Lay Research Panel and MDUK staff.
- You will be notified of the outcome of your application by end of December 2026.



Please note: we can only accept applications from people based in the United Kingdom.

We'd like our Lay Research Panel to reflect the diversity of our community, so we welcome applicants from all backgrounds.