

Guidance for applications to the Breast Cancer Now Tissue Bank (BCNTB)

It is important that you read **all** this guidance before completing the application form. Not providing all the necessary information may result in your form being returned or a delay in review of your application. If you have any questions please get in touch with [us](#).

All information in your application will be treated confidentially. Our Access Committee has signed an agreement to keep any ideas/information in applications they review confidential.

We ask permission to share the title of your project on our website, which you can decline. We will also aim to write a lay summary of your project to explain to our supporters how samples from the BCNTB are being used. You will always see any drafts to approve and may decline to have this publicised.

Before you apply

Please ensure you consult colleagues with the necessary expertise so that the samples requested are appropriate for the work that you want to do.

Clinical insight

We collect samples from patients across England. If you want to select a patient cohort based on treatment type, we will only have samples from patients that have been treated as per standard clinical practice for their type of breast cancer.

Pathology support

If you are using fixed or frozen tissue samples it will be useful to consult a pathologist prior to sample selection.

Statisticians

Statistics experts can advise you on the number of samples you will need to get a reliable result/power analyses.

General advice

If you are new to using clinical material in breast cancer research or a particular technique it is worth consulting a colleague that can help you design a robust study. If you are a PhD student we recommend your supervisor is a Co-worker and that they check your application in full before submission.

How we can help

Before submitting your application we can put you in touch with an expert from our Access Committee or a Lead Scientists in the Tissue Bank to answer your practical questions regarding clinical groups, pathology or statistics. Please contact [us](#) via email for help pre-application.

In addition we offer post-application support for your study. You can say on your application if you need this support in section 1.2.

Applying for primary cells

Our service includes a pre-application Skype call with our primary cell expert team at Barts Cancer Institute. The team will ask you about your experiment and advise you on cell types, methodologies and culturing cells. If you haven't done so already contact the cell team via the [initial enquiry form](#) and set a time to speak with them about how they can help you.

What you need to include in your application

Section 1.1 Co-workers

Pathologist

If you are working with a pathologist to support your work with tissue samples, please list their details.

Co-researchers

Please list the details of any other colleagues involved in your work. These can be:

- The principal investigator of the grant
- A collaborative researcher from the same department as applicant
- A clinician (to ensure you have support in selecting the treatment dependent cohorts)

Please make sure cited Co-workers have read and are comfortable with your application. They won't be asked to approve it post-submission but Breast Cancer Now expects them to have read the application.

1.2 Additional support

You can request additional support from statisticians and pathologists to help you with your project when you receive samples. We will try our best to meet requests but these may incur an extra charge. We will let you know if we can meet your request during the application process.

1.3 Project details

Key terms/keywords

These help Breast Cancer Now select reviewers if the material requires a Specialist Group review and also to categorise the research the samples are released to.

Scientific précis

Please make sure this is thorough and includes:

- background
- hypothesis
- techniques
- specification of any biomarkers (if applicable)
- rationale for the material required
- how the use of material integrates with your current research programme
- how use of this material will enhance your research
- if you have several stages to your proposal and wish to phase your request, please add details.

Did you have a pre-application call with the cell team at Barts? Please make sure you add any information about advice they gave you into your application form, so the access committees know you have considered this.

Lay précis of project

Explain briefly in layman terms why and what you plan to do with the clinical material, how this fits into your overall project and how your work aims to benefit patients with breast cancer in the long term. We will use this information as a basis for an external lay summary for charity communications. You will get the chance to approve any information used externally.

Justification for numbers of samples

If you are requesting a material that is rare in our Bank and/or depleting a significant amount of our stocks then the numbers you request will be scrutinised by our Access Committee. If applicable please include a power analysis.

Please indicate if you will be doing germ line analysis as some of pump prime collection (samples collected before the BCNTB was set up) consents do not cover this work.

1.4 Upload supporting documentation

Please upload any documentation to support your request including a full project proposal or any pilot data. If you are requesting a large amount of material or a rare cohort of patients our Access Committee is likely to need more detail to make an informed decision.

1.5 Sample requirements

Please specify the quantity and type of samples that you need in the Sample line. You may enter more than one. Then please enter cohort details, which can also be one or more. The request is taken to be for each Sample Line applied to each Cohort Line. If you need help with this please get in touch with [us](#).

1.6 Funding

We need to know you have the appropriate funding in place to do the work that you propose. If you are not funded by Breast Cancer Now then you will have to provide the details of the funder of your work. If this is not a public funding body or an AMRC-registered organisation we will need details of the peer review process undertaken. Please provide as uploaded documents:

- Letter confirming funding
- Full research proposal
- A description of the peer review process undertaken
- The comments from the peer review.

1.7 Other information

Please add any additional requirement for sample preparation or anything else we need to know about your request here. Please also declare any conflicts of interest you are aware of in relation to your application being reviewed by the BCNTB Access Committee.