



---

## **The Royal College of Occupational Therapists is seeking two Public Contributors to join its Research Foundation Advisory Group**

The Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) is a registered charity which acts on behalf of all members of the British Association of Occupational Therapists. The College sets the professional and educational standards for the occupational therapy profession in the United Kingdom and represents the profession nationally and internationally. RCOT wants people to be at the heart of the work it does and to help it make informed decisions about that work.

### **What is an occupational therapist?**

Occupational therapists are health and social care professionals who help people of all ages – babies, children, and adults – to carry out activities they need or want to do, but are prevented from doing as a result of individual health needs and/or disability, their environment, or the effects of ageing. For more information:

<https://www.rcot.co.uk/occupation-matters>

### **What is the RCOT Research Foundation?**

The RCOT Research Foundation gives money or grants to RCOT members to do research that benefits occupational therapy and the people it helps. Once a year, it has three types of research grants available:

- *Research Priority Grant*: One £100,000 grant for mid-career occupational therapy researchers
- *Research Career Development Grants*: Two £10,000 grants for early-career occupational therapy researchers
- *Systematic Review Grants*: Two £10,000 grants for an occupational therapy researcher to review all the evidence on a certain topic, known as a 'systematic review'

### **What does the Advisory Group do?**

The Advisory Group helps to decide which researchers should receive grants. Up to 12 people attend meetings, including RCOT staff, occupational therapists, and other health professionals. Two public contributors are also part of the group. Each person is normally part of the Advisory Group for three years.

### **What is a Public Contributor's role on the Advisory Group?**

Public Contributors make sure that the views of people with lived experience of physical and mental health conditions, their families and carers, and their communities are considered when deciding which researchers should receive grants. They will give their views about each application and consider:



- 
- The research topic - is this a priority for people with lived experience, their families and carers, and the wider public?
  - The involvement of those affected by the condition / the public - does the application have a plan to include those affected by the condition / the public in the research? Is the plan reasonable?

### **When are meetings and what preparation is required?**

Public Contributors will need to attend one meeting per year. These meetings usually take place in mid-May. Meetings are normally held at RCOT on Borough High Street, London, but can be attended virtually via Zoom. Meetings usually start at 11am and finish by 3:30pm. If you attend in person, refreshments and lunch are provided.

Preparation work will need to be carried out before meetings. This will include reading specific sections of applications received. Public Contributors are not expected to read all of the application. They are also not expected to have an in-depth understanding of the research methods. The sections to be read and give views on are:

- Plain English summary (250 word limit for this section)
- Description of involvement of people who access services and their carers and families (350 word limit)
- Impact of research (750 word limit)
- Dissemination plans (350 word limit)
- Costs for public involvement (no word limit)

It is difficult to say how many applications will be received each year, but it usually ranges from 10 to 15. Applications are reviewed by two independent experts and then are sent to Advisory Group members one month before the meeting. They can be sent electronically via Dropbox (an electronic storage platform) or in paper copy via the post. If Dropbox is preferred, RCOT can provide support to use it.

The next meeting of the Advisory Group is on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021, 11:00 – 15:30.

### **Supporting you to be involved**

All public contributors will be asked what support they need to be involved in the Research Foundation advisory group. Wherever possible, RCOT will consider whether we can support these needs within our resources.

RCOT encourages people from diverse backgrounds to apply for this role. If English is not your first language and you might need assistance with understanding or commenting on professional documents please get in touch with Angie Thompson at RCOT to discuss: 0203 141 4615.



---

### **What is the compensation and expenses policy?**

Compensation for a Public Contributor's time is £150, including preparation and taking part in the meeting.

The College will cover reasonable expenses incurred to attend meetings. This can include:

1. Travel and subsistence costs.
2. Childcare costs.
3. Carer costs.

For more information, please see RCOT's Reward and Recognition Policy.

### **In summary, public contributors are expected to:**

- Attend one meeting a year for three years, virtually or at RCOT's office on Borough High Street, London
- Review specific sections of research applications before each meeting
- Input positively to meetings and value all contributions
- Work with other Advisory Group members to agree applications for grant funding
- Adhere to RCOT's [Privacy Policy](#) (RCOT 2019) in line with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act

### **What skills and experience does a public contributor need for this role?**

	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<b>Experience and knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An interest in occupational therapy research</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Current or previous experience of accessing occupational therapy services, either themselves or for someone they have cared for</li></ul>
<b>Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have good communication skills</li><li>• Access to the internet</li><li>• Access to and ability to use email</li><li>• Ability to maintain and respect confidentiality</li><li>• Ability to understand and comment on professional documents written in English</li></ul>	



---

### **How do I become a Public Contributor?**

If you'd like to be considered to be a Public Contributor on the RCOT Research Foundation Advisory Group, please complete the self-nomination form and return to [angie.thompson@rcot.co.uk](mailto:angie.thompson@rcot.co.uk) **by 31 March 2021**.

Alternatively, if you would prefer to submit your responses verbally, please contact Angie Thompson on 0203 141 4615.

RCOT will review all the self-nomination forms they receive and choose two public contributors to join the Advisory Group. RCOT will let you know the outcome by early April.

### **What if I have some questions?**

You can contact Angie Thompson, Research and Development Officer, at: [angie.thompson@rcot.co.uk](mailto:angie.thompson@rcot.co.uk) or telephone 0203 141 4615.

### **References:**

Royal College of Occupational Therapists (2019) *Privacy Policy*. London: RCOT. Available at: <https://www.rcot.co.uk/privacy-policy>