European Craniopharyngioma Research Grant 2027

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Promoted and funded by Grandir Association

Publication: 15 November 2026

Background

Craniopharyngioma is a rare central nervous system tumour associated with considerable long-term morbidity, including visual impairment, endocrine dysfunction, hypothalamic injury, metabolic complications, neurocognitive difficulties, and reduced quality of life. Despite significant advances in surgery, radiotherapy, molecular biology, imaging, rehabilitation, and supportive care, important questions remain regarding tumour biology, treatment selection, prevention of treatment-related morbidity, long-term follow-up, and survivorship.

1. Purpose of the Grant

The European Craniopharyngioma Research Grant aims to support a high-quality scientific research project that may improve the understanding, diagnosis, treatment, follow-up, rehabilitation, or quality of life of patients affected by craniopharyngioma.

Participation is open exclusively to institutions that are part of the European Community / European Union. The lead institution must demonstrate a well-established and recognized clinical and/or scientific activity in the craniopharyngioma field.

2. Available Funding

A total amount of €45,000 is available, funded by the French Grandir Association (https://www.grandir.asso.fr/).

The funding is intended to support one selected research project. However, the Scientific Review Board reserves the right to divide the available funds between more than one proposal if projects of comparable scientific merit are identified and if a shared allocation is considered scientifically appropriate.

Eligible costs include:

- personnel costs directly related to the project
- laboratory analyses and research consumables
- imaging, molecular, biological, or statistical analyses
- data collection and database development allowing to predict patient outcome and increasing patient's quality-of-life
- project-related travel expenses between collaborating institutions
- publication and dissemination costs
- other duly justified expenses directly related to the proposed research

The grant should not be used for routine clinical care, major equipment purchases, or costs incurred before the official start of the award. Any institutional overhead costs must be clearly précised and limited to a minimum.

The allocated funds will be directly transferred to the Institutional account by the Grandir Association, as specified in the grant agreement.

3. Research Areas

Applications should address any scientifically relevant aspect of craniopharyngioma, including but not limited to:

- Tumour biology and molecular characterization
- Mechanisms of tumour development, progression, or recurrence
- Biomarkers and precision medicine
- Surgical decision-making and reduction of surgical-related morbidity
- Radiotherapy strategies and long-term treatment effects
- Radiological diagnosis, response assessment, and imaging biomarkers
- Hypothalamic dysfunction and hypothalamic obesity
- Endocrine and metabolic complications
- Visual outcomes and visual rehabilitation
- Neurocognitive, psychological, and behavioural outcomes
- Quality of life and patient-reported outcomes
- Rehabilitation and survivorship
- Paediatric-to-adult transition of care
- Clinical registries and multicentre datasets
- Translational and preclinical research
- Innovative therapeutic or supportive-care approaches

Projects may concern fundamental, clinical, translational, preclinical, epidemiological, or multidisciplinary research. Collaborative and multicentre proposals are encouraged, provided that the lead institution is based in the European Union.

4. Eligibility

The Principal Applicant must:

- Be under 40 years of age at the application deadline (15 February 2027)– a mandatory criterion
- Be a clinician, a research scientist, or an allied health professional involved in craniopharyngioma research or care
- Hold an appointment or a formal affiliation with an eligible host institution located within the European Union in which the proposed project will be conducted
- Demonstrate that the host institution has an established clinical and/or scientific activity with a recognized expertise in the craniopharyngioma research field
- Be able to complete the proposed project within the planned grant period
- Having obtained all required ethical, regulatory, institutional, and data-protection approvals before the initiation of the project

Applications from early-career researchers are particularly encouraged, but should identify an experienced scientific mentor or senior supervisor. The same Principal Applicant can only submit one application (one project).

5. Host Institution Requirements

The host institution must provide:

- A formal letter confirming its willingness to host the scientist and support the project
- An appropriate research infrastructure and administrative support
- A confirmation that the applicant will have access to the required resources allowing to carry out the project
- Evidence of previous or ongoing clinical or scientific activity related to craniopharyngioma (publications, patents, cohorts, registries, collaborative networks, or recognized specialist expertise)

6. Project Duration

The proposed project must be capable of being completed within a period of 12 to 24 months from the date the grant agreement is signed. Any change to this duration must be requested and duly justified.

7. Application Requirements

Applications must be submitted in English as a single PDF document and must include:

A. Applicant and project information

- Project title
- Name and contact details of the Principal Applicant (including date of birth to verify age <40)
- Host institution and department
- Name, function and affiliation of experienced scientific mentor or senior supervisor
- Names and affiliations of co-investigators and collaborators
- Amount of the requested funding
- Proposed project duration

B. Scientific proposal (max 5 pages excl. references)

- Background and rationale
- Unmet clinical or scientific needs
- Aims and hypotheses
- Study design and methodology
- Targeted population, available biological material, datasets, or experimental models
- Statistical analysis strategies
- Feasibility and access to biological and clinical resources
- Expected results
- Potential clinical and scientific impact
- Project timeline and milestones
- Dissemination strategies and future perspectives

C. Budget and justification – detailed provisional budget motivating the necessity of each expense, any additional co-funding must be declared

D. Curriculum vitae – max 3 pages, up to 10 most relevant publications + brief CVs of key co-investigators and scientific mentor/senior supervisor

E. Host institution letter – signed by Head of Department / Research Director

F. Evidence of clinical/scientific expertise in craniopharyngioma

G. Ethics and regulatory statement – status of required approvals

H. Declaration of potential conflict of interest involving members of the Scientific Review Board

8. Scientific Review Board

Applications will be evaluated by a Scientific Review Board composed of internationally recognized experts in paediatric neuro-oncology:

- Prof. Todd Hankinson – Neurosurgeon, University of Colorado School of Medicine, Denver, U.S.A.
- Dr. Andrea Carai – Neurosurgeon, IRCCS Bambino Gesù Children's Hospital, Rome, Italy
- Prof. Hanneke H. van Santen – Endoscrinologist, Princess Máxima Center for Pediatric Oncology; Wilhelmina Children's Hospital, University Medical Center, Utrecht, The Netherlands
- Prof. Angela Mastronuzzi – Neuro-Oncologist Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore; IRCCS Bambino Gesù Children's Hospital, Rome, Italy
- Dr Sabina Vennarini – Radiation Oncologist, Pediatric Radiotherapy Unit, Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori, Milan, Italy.
- Prof. Shivaram Avula – Neuro-Radiologist, Honorary Clinical Professor, University of Liverpool; Consultant Paediatric Neuroradiologist, Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust, Liverpool, United Kingdom.
- Prof. Prof. Kevin Beccaria – Neurosurgeon, Hôpital Necker-Enfants Malades, Paris, France.

All Scientific Board members will be required to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest, in which case the concerned Board member will not participate in the review, discussion, and final scoring of an application. If an additional expertise is considered to be required, the Board may request an external independent review.

9. Evaluation Criteria

- Scientific quality and methodological rigor
- Relevance to craniopharyngioma
- Originality and innovation
- Feasibility within the proposed timeframe and budget
- Experience and suitability of the applicant (<40 criterion) and host institution (EU)

- Potential impact on an improved patient care, increased scientific knowledge, or significant contribution to future research
- Quality of collaborative and multidisciplinary approach
- Appropriateness of the requested budget description
- Potential to generate promising preliminary data, opening the way for more in-depth research through future funding, efficiency and pertinence of a sustainable multicenter collaboration

A particular importance will be given to projects with the potential to generate a significantly improved benefit for the patients and their families. The final decision of the Scientific Review Board will be irrevocable.

10. Submission Procedure

Applications must be submitted electronically as a single PDF document to: angela.mastronuzzi@opbg.net

Email subject: Application – European Craniopharyngioma Research Grant 2027 – [Applicant surname]

New deadline: 5 February 2027 at 23:59 CET **Central European Time**

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Receipt will be confirmed by email.

11. Selection and Award Ceremony

Milestone	Date
Publication of grant	15 November 2026
Application deadline	15 February 2027, 23:59 CET
Evaluation by Scientific Board	by 31 March 2027
Communication of results	7 April 2027
Award ceremony & project presentation	22 April 2027 – during the Postgraduate Craniopharyngioma Course, Rome

The grant will be formally awarded during a public ceremony at the 9th Postgraduate Craniopharyngioma Course, Rome, Italy – 22-23 April 2027. The successful applicant, or a designated representative, will be invited to attend the ceremony and briefly present the aims and expected impact of the selected project on 22 April 2027.

12. Award Conditions

- Sign a grant agreement with the Grandir Association (the grant will be sent directly to the selected institution by the Association)
- Use the funds exclusively for the approved project

- Notify the funding organization of any substantial change to the project, team composition, host institution, use of the funds, or timeline
- Upon request, submit an interim report on the project's progress.
- At the end of the project funding, submit a final detailed scientific and financial report
- Present the results at a future edition of the Postgraduate Craniopharyngioma Course or another designated scientific meeting
- Inform the organizers of any publications, presentations, future funding requests, or outputs arising from the funded research in which the Grandir Association should be clearly acknowledged

Any unspent funds must be returned unless an extension or budget reallocation has been formally approved.

13. Payment

The funds will be transferred directly by the Grandir Association to the host institution's account localized within the European Union. The payment schedule and administrative conditions will be specified in the grant agreement.

14. Publications and Intellectual Property

Researchers and host institution retain responsibility for scientific and ethical conduct and publication. Intellectual property will be managed according to host institution policies and grant agreement terms. The funding organization will not seek to influence interpretation or publication of results. Both positive and negative findings should be disseminated whenever scientifically appropriate.

15. Enquiries

Questions regarding eligibility, scientific scope, or application procedure may be addressed to:

Angela Mastronuzzi
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore
IRCCS Bambino Gesù Children's Hospital, Rome – Italy
angela.mastronuzzi@opbg.net

Commitment to Patients and Families

This grant has been made possible through fundraising by the Grandir Association, dedicated to improving research and care for people affected by craniopharyngioma. Applicants are encouraged to consider relevance to patients and families and, where appropriate, to include patient perspectives, quality-of-life outcomes, or patient and general public involvement.