



Biomedical Vacation Scholarships – 2017 Report

Aims of the Scheme

The Biomedical Vacation Scholarship scheme aims to provide promising undergraduates with ‘hands-on’ experience of research during the academic summer vacation. We hope that this experience will encourage students to consider a career in research.

Applicants are registered students from Universities of the UK and the Republic of Ireland, enrolled on relevant degree courses such as basic sciences, medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, engineering, mathematics and psychology.

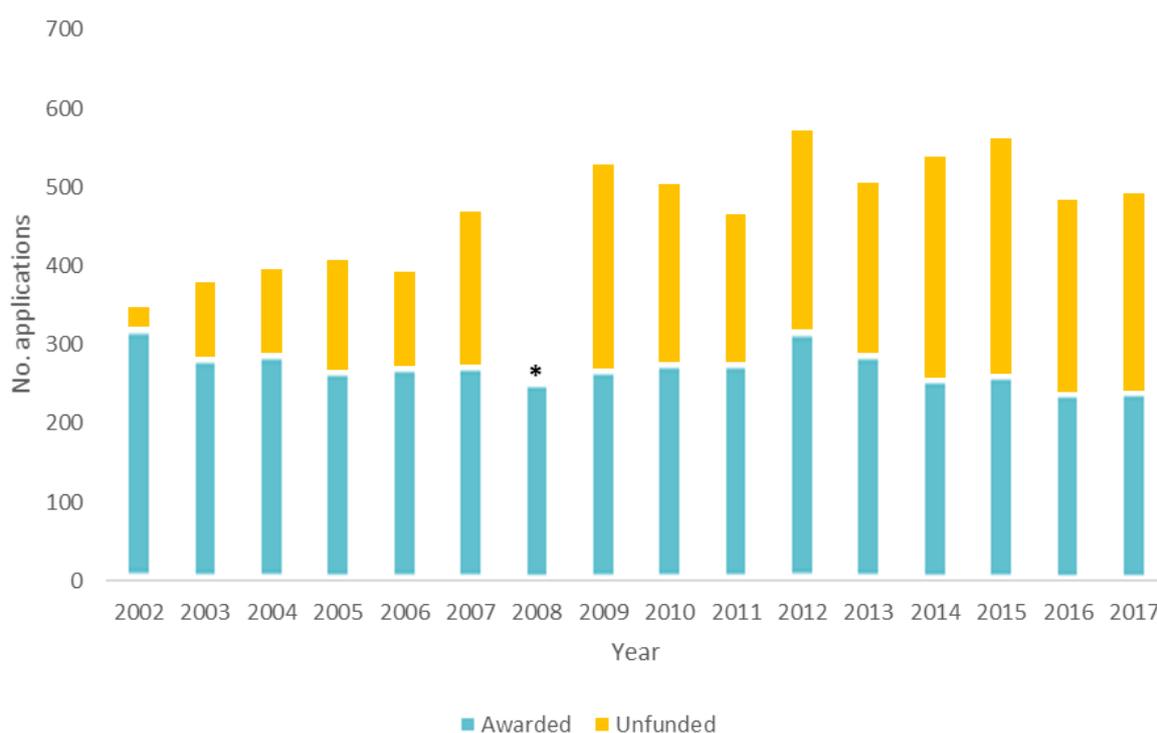
Successful students are awarded a stipend to cover living expenses over the course of their 6 to 8-week project.

The History of the Vacation Scholarship

Wellcome has supported undergraduates through the Vacation Scholarship scheme for almost 60 years.

The first Vacation Scholarships were awarded in 1959 when the scheme was originally intended to help train medical students in Biochemistry. The scheme was broadened in 1968 to allow applications in other subjects, and since 2017 we’ve extended our reach to fund not only lab-based projects, but research within the clinic, the field and theoretical approaches. The scheme has grown in popularity over time, and now reaches approximately 500-600 applications each year.

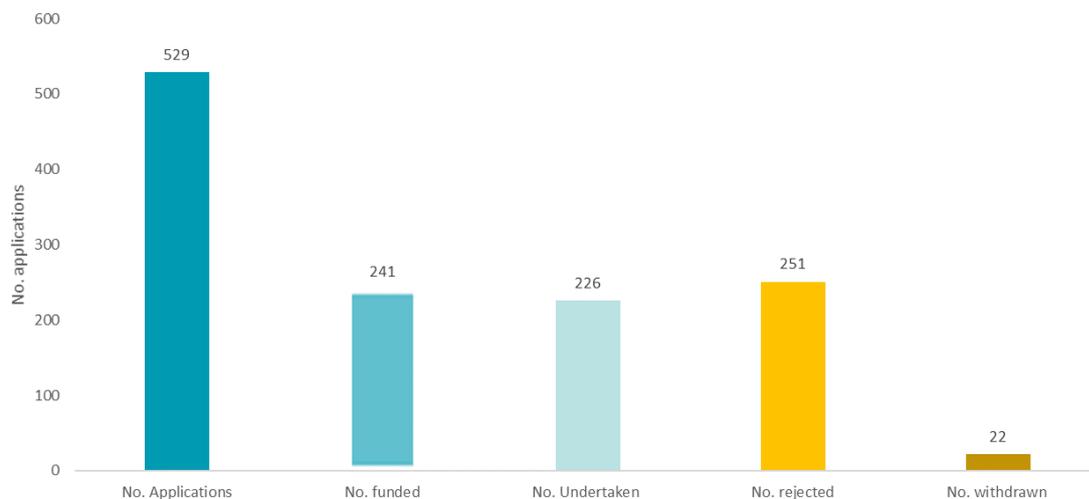
A breakdown of the number of applications received and awarded since 2002 can be seen below.



*The 2008 competition was run using a different mechanism. Institutions in receipt of substantial Trust funding (i.e. were on the list of the top 30 institutions receiving Trust support), were provided with an allocation of Vacation Scholarships and held internal competitions to make their awards.

The 2017 Competition

In 2017 we received 529 applications and funded 241.



Scholarships projects included the following science areas:

- **Genetics and molecular science.** Understanding genetic variation in individuals and across populations, and the structural, biophysical and biochemical properties of genes, chromosomes and proteins.
- **Cellular and developmental science.** Understanding how cells function and interact with their environment, how organisms develop, how cells can be used in regenerative medicine, and what happens when cellular behaviour goes awry, for example in cancer.
- **Neuroscience and mental health.** Understanding how the brain functions at the molecular, cellular and cognitive level, and finding improved approaches for treating brain and mental health disorders.
- **Infection and immuno-biology.** Understanding the immune system and the emergence, transmission, pathogenesis and control of acute and chronic infectious diseases.
- **Physiology.** Understanding the physiology and pathology of tissues and systems relevant to health and disease, physiological processes at the cellular level, and the effects of clinical, pharmacological and environmental interventions on individuals.
- **Population and health.** Population-based research, focusing on the UK and low- and middle-income countries.

