

Northern Ireland Biobank: Guidance for Applicants

Thank you for considering an application to the Northern Ireland Biobank (NIB). We have put together some guidance to assist you with the application process, this should be read in conjunction with the NIB Access Policy which is available on our website: <https://www.nibiobank.org.uk/for-researchers>

1. Before Starting

- Applications for samples are via <https://www.nibiobank.qub.ac.uk/nibresearcher>
- All applications must be made in the name of the Chief Investigator and under their own account.
- It is recommended that all communications with NIB happen via the online application portal. This way, both you and NIB have a record of any communications associated with a particular application.

2. Creating an Account

- If you do not already have an account, you will be asked to create one. The email address you register with will be your account username/login.
- Passwords must have at least three of the following: upper case, lower case, special characters, and numbers. The password must have at least 8 characters.
- When 'create an account' has been selected, this will trigger an email to the NIB Administrator for review.
- If the account is approved, you will receive a confirmation email to confirm you can login to the application portal. If the account is rejected, you will receive an email to explain the reason for this (eg duplicate account, account made by a student rather than Chief Investigator).
- From your account, you will be able to make applications, view existing applications, and view and respond to any queries relating to your applications.
- To start a new application, select 'Create New Application' from the home page (**Figure 1**)

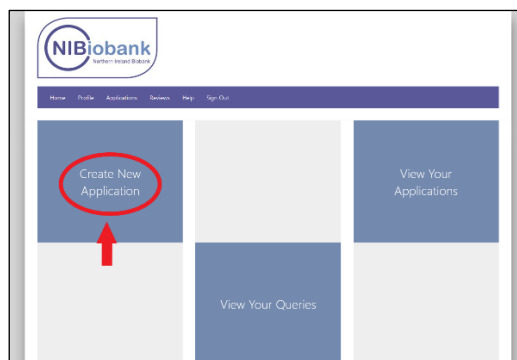
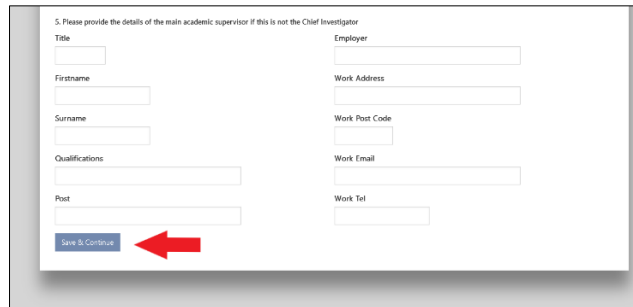


Figure 1

3. Preliminary Application

- A preliminary application is required in advance of the full application. This is to allow NIB to determine the feasibility of the resource requested.
- Requests for samples must be hypothesis-driven and have specific aims and objectives.
- In the preliminary application, please provide as much detail as possible regarding the sample cohort you require eg numbers of cases, number of tissue sections per case.
- You can save progress and return to an application at a later stage by hitting the 'Save and Continue' button (**Figure 2**)



5. Please provide the details of the main academic supervisor if this is not the Chief Investigator

Title	Employer
Firstname	Work Address
Surname	Work Post Code
Qualifications	Work Email
Post	Work Tel

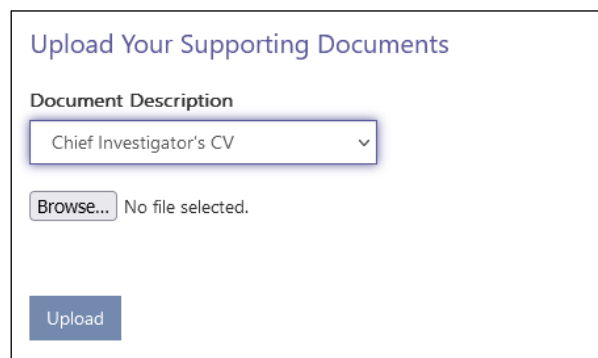
Save & Continue

Figure 2

- You must ensure that all named co-investigators are fully aware of the study and that their specific role in the study is clearly stated.
- The NIB Senior Management Team (SMT) meet weekly to review applications for samples. If your application is feasible and the resources available, you will be invited to complete a full application form.

4. Full Application

- The full application form captures further details of the study protocol for the peer review process. Please ensure all fields are completed fully to expedite the review process.
- Information already provided in the preliminary application is retained.
- If you have received peer-reviewed funding, you can submit the protocol approved by the funder rather than populate the online form. Please also provide a copy of the letter of approval. These documents can be uploaded into the portal using the Document Upload function (**Figure 3**)



Upload Your Supporting Documents

Document Description

Chief Investigator's CV

Browse... No file selected.

Upload

Figure 3

5. Peer Review Process

- A review process is undertaken whereby reviewers from the NIB Scientific Review Committee will be asked for their expert opinion on the proposal. Questions are posed around novelty, significance, study design, research team, facilities, and value for money.
- Once the review process is complete, you will receive an email informing you of the decision and if appropriate, a report which summarises reviewers' comments. If the proposal has not been approved, clear reasons will be given.
- If revisions are required, you will be invited to respond to the reviewers' comments and the online application is reopened to allow you to make appropriate changes and resubmit.
- Using the Document Upload function (**Figure 3**), please submit a document outlining your response to the review process and any changes made to the research proposal, if appropriate.
- Following your response to peer review, if your application is approved, you will receive a formal approval document, a material transfer agreement and an invoicing request form for completion and signature. These will be available in the portal under 'Document Uploaded'. They must be completed and signed by the Chief Investigator and returned to NIB via the portal before any samples are released.
- Where there is evidence of peer review from a recognised research funder, NIB SMT may approve the project without the need for further peer review.

6. Amendments

- Researchers wishing to make amendments to their original application should contact the NIB Administrator in the first instance (nibiobank@qub.ac.uk).