



THE HEALING FOUNDATION

Rebuilding the bodies, minds and lives of people with disfigurements

THE HEALING FOUNDATION UK CENTRE FOR CLEFT RESEARCH SUPPORTED BY VTCT

Following a substantial contribution from the Vocational Training Charitable Trust, the Healing Foundation will shortly begin the formal selection process to establish **The Healing Foundation UK Centre for Cleft Research supported by VTCT**. We envisage a 10 year research investment worth up to £5,000,000 to address genetic, clinical and broader therapeutic issues of cleft lip and palate, in order to improve understanding of the condition and offer better treatments and support for patients and their families.

The Healing Foundation is a national fundraising charity championing the cause of people living with disfigurement and visible loss of function by funding pioneering research into clinical and psychological healing techniques. Other major research initiatives include;

- **The Healing Foundation Centre (for Tissue Regeneration) at the University of Manchester** – a £10,000,000, 25 year programme of research aimed at developing new scar-free and regenerative capabilities for the clinic.
- **The Healing Foundation UK Centre for Burns Research** – a multidisciplinary, £10,000,000, 25 year investment at Cardiff University, Morriston Hospital Swansea and Swansea University.
- **The Healing Foundation Major Psychological Research Programme** – hosted by the University of the West of England, worth more than £500,000 over three years and due to conclude in 2009.

The VTCT is a large specialist awarding body offering a wide range of vocational qualifications in beauty therapy, hairdressing, health and fitness and more.

We envisage two parts to this research programme. First, the establishment of a **Gene Bank** will help to explore the genetic and environmental factors contributing to cleft (and possibly other craniofacial anomalies). It will provide a valuable tool for researchers and epidemiologists in pursuit of better understanding of the causes of and appropriate responses to cleft lip and palate. Secondly, a major **Clinical Research Programme** will coordinate research projects across the United Kingdom to provide evidence based advances in the surgical and therapeutic treatments of cleft as well as improve the support and information available to the families of children affected.

The Healing Foundation's total commitment, subject to fundraising progress, will be up to £5,000,000 with an initial commitment of £2,000,000 to establish the gene bank and early research projects.

Interest is invited from institutions able to host **one or both** of these elements. It is expected that the **Gene Bank** will be established in close partnership with an NHS Clinical Cleft Unit but a view on co-location of the two elements will be taken by the expert selection panel after applications have been received and reviewed. Full details of the research objectives and the criteria for a successful bid will be published in the formal application pack and made available in January 2009.

As with previous major awards, the Healing Foundation places great value on evidence of cooperation between respected Universities and clinical units, the potential for early and safe translation of research findings to the clinic, and innovative and realisable 'match funding' proposals to support the charity's investment.

For further information or to discuss the submission process further, please contact Brendan Eley, Chief Executive, on 020 7869 6920.