



Macular Society

Beating Macular Disease

Director of Research

March 2026

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of Research at the Macular Society.

Every day, around 300 people in the UK are diagnosed with macular disease. It is the leading cause of sight loss, and its impact can be devastating, affecting independence, confidence and quality of life. At the Macular Society, we are determined to change that. Our ambition is clear: to Beat Macular Disease for the next generation.

Determined to end the fear and isolation of macular disease with world-class research, we currently invest £1.5m each year and have ambitious plans to grow this significantly. Since 2019, we have transformed our culture and ways of working to enable increased income and greater impact.

We are now entering an exciting new phase as a research funder, which will see us sharpen our strategic focus, strengthen partnerships and invest boldly to accelerate progress towards new treatments, improved care and ultimately, cures.

As Director of Research, you will play a pivotal role in this journey. You will lead and develop our research team, deliver our research strategy and investment priorities, build influential advisory structures, and collaborate closely with colleagues across fundraising and operations to ensure our ambitions are matched by sustainable income and engagement.

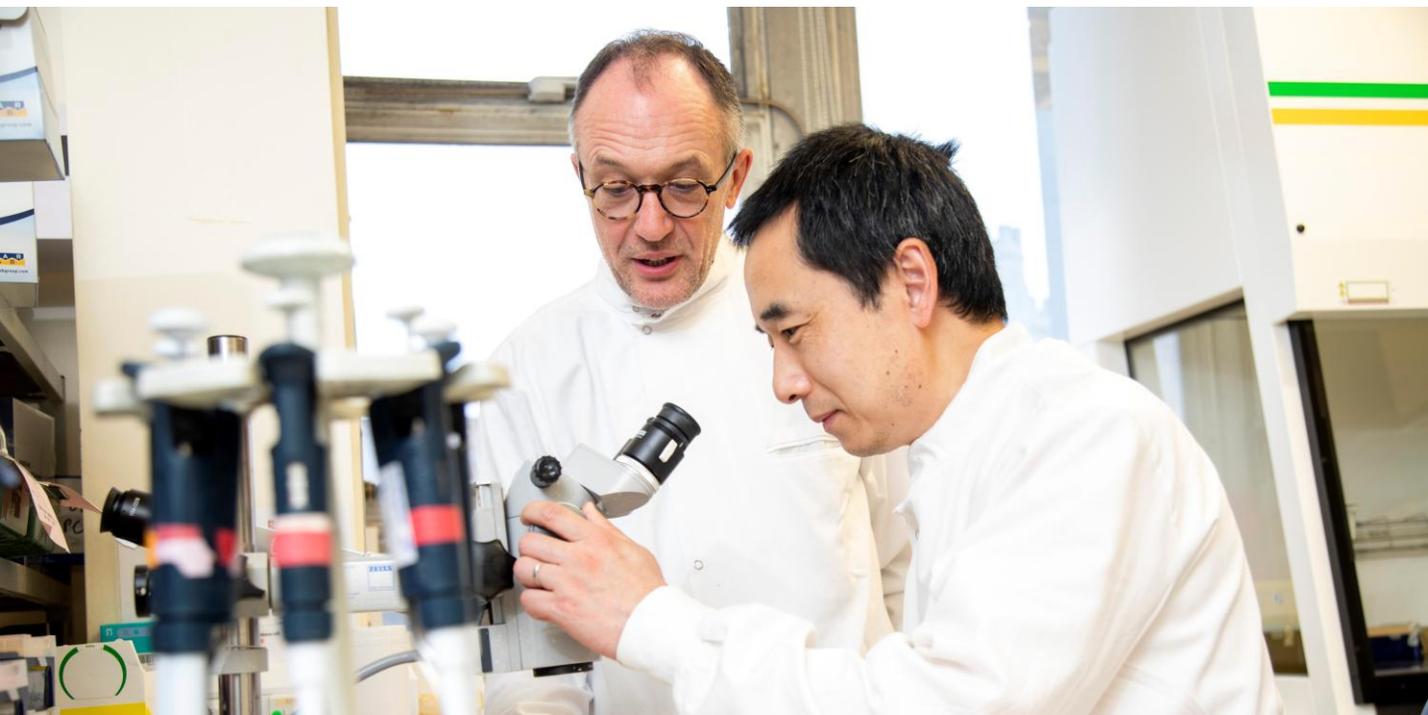
This is a high-profile role requiring deep expertise, strategic judgement, and the ability to translate complex science into clear direction and impact. You will work closely with people affected by macular disease, researchers, clinicians, funders, and partners to create research roadmaps that are ambitious, relevant, and grounded in lived experience.

We are looking for a values-driven leader who combines scientific credibility with collaborative leadership, who can build partnerships and consortia, and is motivated by the chance to make a tangible difference in an underfunded area of research.

If you are excited by the opportunity to shape the future of macular disease research, to lead with ambition and integrity, and to help us make it happen in a big way, I hope you will read on to find out more about this role and about the impact we are striving to achieve.

Ed Holloway

Chief Executive, Macular Society



Every day, around 300 people are diagnosed with macular disease. It's the biggest cause of sight loss in the UK. Macular disease is cruel and isolating. It steals your sight, your independence, and your ability to do the things you love.

The Macular Society is working to deliver our ultimate ambition – to Beat Macular Disease. We are determined to end the fear and isolation of macular disease with world-class research and the best advice and support.

Finding a cure

We will continue to invest in research until we Beat Macular Disease. We will maximise our impact by working collaboratively with other research funders to make a bigger difference. We will involve a diverse range of patients in our research decisions. We will maintain the high quality of the work we fund, spending the gifts of our donors in the best possible ways.

Providing the best advice and support

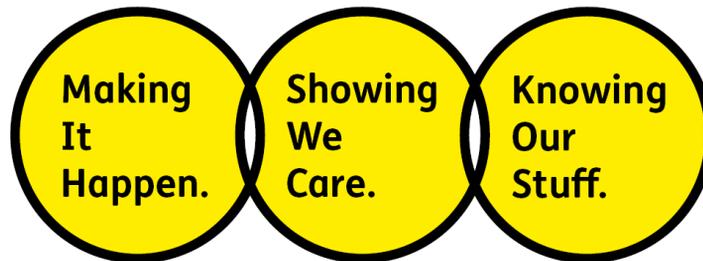
We will provide the best quality advice, information and support for people with macular disease. We will understand more about the people affected by macular disease; how they feel, what support they need, where and when. We will ensure our services meet those needs. In this way we will double the number of people we help within the next six years. Everyone who comes to the Macular Society will find something of benefit.

Making sure vision matters

Macular disease should be a UK health priority. We will campaign to increase understanding of the impact of macular disease so that it is given the priority it deserves. We will encourage the public to have regular eye health checks. We will engage with health and care professionals who work with people affected by macular disease and encourage referral to our specialist services. We will raise awareness of the need for better emotional and practical support for people affected by macular disease.

Our values

We will beat macular disease by...



Knowing Our Stuff - we have Integrity and we act Honestly

Showing We Care - we are Supportive and Caring

Making It Happen - we are Ambitious

Our vision

We will end macular disease.

Our mission

Beating the fear and isolation of macular disease with world-class research, and the best advice and support.

We are Ambitious.

We will Beat Macular Disease.

We are committed to be brave in our actions to make the progress that people need.

We will fundraise to find a cure, empower our team, be progressive yet supportive and dedicated in our belief...

...to Beat Macular Disease.

We are Supportive and Caring.

We provide a caring, approachable, and supportive environment for each member, supporter, volunteer, and all members of our team.

We act with empathy in all that we do. We listen to each other and we all work together...

...to Beat Macular Disease.

We have Integrity and we act Honestly.

We are trusted for our supportive, open and collaborative approach, our professional expertise and our dedication to be the best we can be to do more...

...to Beat Macular Disease.

Find out more about our Research Strategy 2020 - 2030 [here](#)

Find out more about our impact [here](#)

To read our annual report please [click here](#)

Commitment to Diversity

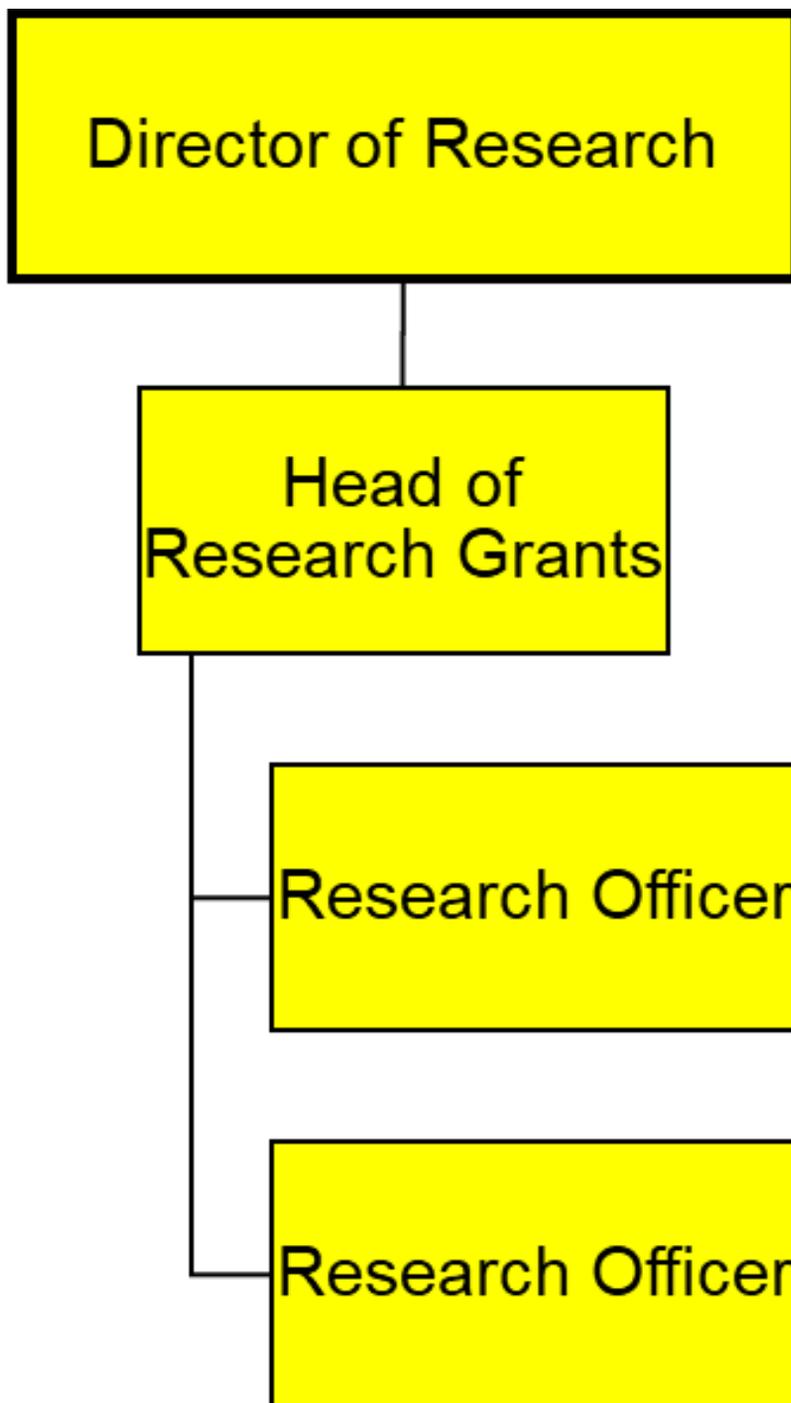
We are passionate about treating people fairly and as equals, doing so is instinctive to us. We know that to Beat Macular Disease for all we have work to do. We recognise this and we are committed that what we do and how we do it is inclusive, for everyone.

To read more about our commitment to diversity please [click here](#).

We are a Disability Confident employer.

The Macular Society is a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) and works to the standards and policies the AMRC sets for research funding.





Role title: Director of Research

Reports to: Chief Executive

Direct reports: Head of Research

Main responsibilities

- Lead, motivate and develop people at all levels with an ability to create a working environment in which people can thrive and are trusted to deliver to shared objectives.
- Build on our strategic plan for research investment. With colleagues, identify the research needs of our community and working closely with external stakeholders and the Society's scientific and research advisory structures (including the Board's Committees), identify the scientific, technological and commercial gaps and opportunities to improve the lives of people affected by macular disease. Translate these into clear and accessible implementation plans and research investment roadmaps.
- Lead our work to develop a Clinical Trials Delivery Accelerator. Work alongside our Expert Advisory Group to build a strong scientific, clinical, regulatory and funding coalition behind this project, and establish our first clinical trial hubs, leading to the first trial in this approach in 2029.
- Lead the ongoing development of the Society's research policy, shaping how we approach, fund, and conduct research. This includes horizon scanning, setting strategic priorities, defining best practice frameworks, and guiding decision-making to ensure our research is impactful, ethical, and aligned with the needs of people affected by macular disease.



- Develop an impact framework to demonstrate the effect our research has in improving the lives of people affected by macular disease.
- Connect colleagues across the organisation to the work and impact of the research team, and foster collaboration and shared understanding of research outcomes.
- Build on the Society's position as the leading source of insight and knowledge on macular disease.
- Work alongside colleagues in our services directorate to provide insights from research to inform the development of high-quality, relevant and evidence-based services to transform the lives of people with macular disease.
- Develop and build on external partnerships and consortia to deliver the Macular Society's ambition to Beat Macular Disease through partnership and leverage of additional funding. Including by influencing and engaging with other charities in the sight loss sector. trusts, government and corporate funders, and major donors.
- Develop and maintain a strong and effective network across the scientific, clinical, regulatory and funding community to ensure effective delivery of our work.
- Build specialist Advisory Boards/Research Committees to enable us to make robust decisions on where and how to invest.
- Collaborate effectively with the Director of Income and Transformation and the wider fundraising team to support the growth, diversification and delivery of our fundraising plans across all income streams.

- As an active member of our Senior Leadership Team, contribute to wider organisation-wide decision making and performance, and model our culture and values in everything you do.
- Work constructively with the Board of Trustees to enable effective scrutiny and oversight of our work, and strategic decision making by Trustees.
- Oversight of all research, grant making and scientific programmes and partnerships, ensuring compliance with AMRC standards, ethical and regulatory requirements, and internal policies.



Knowledge and experience

Essential

- A detailed knowledge of the field of science and research, encompassing biomedical, social, or service delivery research.
- Experience of engaging with a wide range of stakeholders at all levels, from diverse backgrounds to develop clear strategies and roadmaps for research.
- Demonstratable understanding of Public Patient Involvement and Engagement.
- Knowledge of the clinical trials landscape, including funding pathways, academic–industry collaboration and translation from early-stage research to patient benefit, ideally able to evidence this in practice.
- Experience of leading, motivating and developing people at all levels with an ability to create a working environment in which people can thrive and are trusted to deliver to shared objectives.
- Demonstrable knowledge and understanding of the changing scientific and health research landscape.

Desirable

- Experience of running clinical trials or clinical research.
- Experience of leading multi partner programmes or consortia, ideally including industry or NHS partners.
- Demonstrable understanding of the range of conditions that make up macular disease, their symptoms and effects, treatment, and services.
- Well-networked in the ophthalmic research community and/or industry.
- Experience of community driven research delivery.
- Experience of working with regulators and the clinical system across research and care delivery (MHRA, NICE, HRA, NHSE/DHSC).
- Experiencing of partnership development to leverage significant funding into an environment.

Skills and abilities

- Proven ability to operate at a strategic level with the organisational leadership, influence and communication skills to add value across the organisation.
- Ability to communicate our organisational purpose and direction of travel to those they work with clearly and confidently.
- Demonstrable ability to turn strategic plans into delivered programmes.
- Ability to inspire, motivate, support, challenge and develop our people.
- Ability to influence other funders and an ability to build high-level, cross-sectoral partnerships and research consortia.
- Strong listening and questioning skills with ability to effectively take account of and respond to information from a range of sources when developing plans.
- Able to communicate complex concepts and new ideas clearly and persuasively to key internal and external stakeholders at all levels.
- Ability to spot and act on opportunities to innovate to improve the effectiveness and impact of what we do and the way we work.

Styles and behaviours

- A commitment to maintaining a visible presence internally and modelling our values and culture.
- Demonstrably open to different ways of doing things, proactively seeking out diverse views to inform thinking and decision making.



Salary

c.£80,000 on a permanent, full-time basis.

Location

Andover, Hampshire

This is a hybrid role with an office presence of one or two days per week.

Full pension and benefits information can be found [here](#)



To make an application, please visit [our website](#) with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A covering letter that sets out your motivation for the role and describes the specific experience you can bring to the appointment.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Recruitment timetable

Closing date: 10th April 2026

Preliminary interviews: Late w/c 20th April and w/c 27th April 2026

Final Panel interviews: w/c 11th May 2026

