

CCSG RESEARCH AWARD FAQ

TOP 5 TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SUBMISSION

- **Read the guidance!** It includes everything you need to know from abstract structure to the level of academic writing required.
- **Stick to one page**
- **Keep focussed.** Ensure your conclusions are in line with your aims and objectives.
- **Accurate statistics.** Check that the reporting of your results is appropriate.
- **Use references wisely.** These must be specific and appropriate in number.

1. What types of projects would be suitable for submission?

Any audits, service evaluations, quality improvement projects or research are welcome. We welcome prospective as well as retrospective work. This can be a project you have completed as an individual, or as part of a group. We also encourage submissions from students who have been working in critical care.

2. What would be a suitable topic?

Anything relevant to critical care nutrition. This does not necessarily need to be a large, novel research study. Most critical care dietitians complete audits, service evaluations and/or quality improvement projects as part of their day-to-day jobs.

Some examples: Nutrition prescriptions vs delivery; implementation of volume-based feeding protocols / catch-up rates; use of indirect calorimetry; success of post-pyloric feeding tubes; management of NGTs; parenteral nutrition; techniques for anthropometric / body composition measurements; nutritional interventions in critical care rehabilitation / follow-up.

3. Is there an ideal sample size?

There is no set number of patients required for this award, but since it comes with a substantial prize a larger patient group can help make your findings more impactful. The right number depends on your project type and previous research in your area. While formal calculations aren't always necessary for audits and service evaluations, you might find an online power calculation tool useful for estimating a good sample size.

Example link: [Comparing Two Proportions - Sample Size - Select Statistical Consultants \(select-statistics.co.uk\)](http://select-statistics.co.uk)

4. What if the results are not the ones I expected?

This is the beauty of research! You do not have to make a huge new discovery for your project to be worth sharing. Small projects often lead to bigger, more impactful pieces of research. It is important to report results accurately, discuss expected/unexpected results critically as well as potential contributing factors / limitations of your project.

5. How should data be reported?

Accurate statistical reporting is imperative and incorrect terminology should be avoided (e.g. reporting that your results are 'significantly different' if no statistical test has been performed).

Continuous data must be recorded as mean (SD) or median (IQR) depending on normality. Discrete data must be recorded using a number (n) and percentage (%). Ensure that a p value or equivalent is provided if reporting a statistically significant difference.

Simple descriptive statistics can be performed using Excel. For more complex statistics, there are several statistical analysis packages that can be used which you may be able to access via your institution (e.g. 'SPSS' or 'R').

6. How is the winning abstract determined?

Abstract submission and presentation contribute to the score. Presentations will be 5mins with 2mins for questions as part of the BDA CCSG study day. Up to 6 submissions (including winner and runner up) will be automatically submitted to the BDA research symposium critical care stream. The winner and runner up of the CCSG award will not be eligible to win the BDA critical care research stream award, however they will have the opportunity to present their work to a wider audience.

7. Do all BDA research symposium abstracts get published?

All submissions to the BDA research symposium of sufficient quality (as judged by the abstract reviewers) will have their abstracts published in the Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics.

8. What should I do if I can't attend?

If you're unable to attend, one of the other authors can present on your behalf. Just let us know in advance so we can update the details. If funding is the issue, you might be eligible for support through the BDA GET Award Conference Grant, which helps cover attendance costs. You can find more details and apply here: [BDA GET Award Conference Grant](#).

If you need any support or guidance with your project or the submission process, please do not hesitate to contact the BDA CCSG research officer via the CCSG email address (criticalcare@bda.uk.com) or directly (carys.davies@nhs.net).