



## Starting a new MRI study at CUBIC

To start a new study at CUBIC the following steps need to be taken:

1) Check that the study can feasibly be carried out using CUBIC facilities. This needs to be done before submitting a grant application to support the study. This step includes:

- confirming with CUBIC MRI Operations Officer (Ari) that the necessary scanning sequences are in place, that any external equipment (e.g., for stimulation, response recording, or biophysical monitoring) is available for use and compatible with the chosen scanning procedure, and that provisions have been made for data storage and management.
- if the investigator is unsure of which method is most appropriate, they should discuss this with CUBIC staff, the CUBIC Director, and colleagues with suitable experience before seeking formal approval.
- if the necessary equipment needs to be purchased through a grant, or will be provided by the investigator, that the equipment is confirmed to be MR-safe and compatible with CUBIC facilities (consult Ari the CUBIC Safety Officer).
- that the number and length of scans can be accommodated within the time frame of the proposed study (this needs to be agreed with the CUBIC Director).

To accomplish this, users need to submit a completed CUBIC project proposal form detailing the methods used, number of scanning hours and duration of the study, and any specific technical requirements of the study.

Note that the purpose of CUBIC project approval is solely to ensure the study can be accommodated within the constraints of existing facilities, resources, and scanner availability. It is not intended to scrutinise the methodology, statistical design, scientific merit, or ethics of the study, nor replicate existing processes for internal/external grant review or ethics approval. (RHUL users only: prior approval is required from the CUBIC Director for any grant applications involving MRI).

2) Obtain ethics approval for the study and submit a copy of the approved ethics application to the MRI Operations Officer.

3) **RHUL users only:** Present your project to the local MRI user community to get feedback on the design and approach. This is mandatory for unfunded projects (i.e., those supported by scanning credits), projects run by investigators (including faculty) who have no prior experience using the methods in the proposed study, and projects run by PGR/PGT students. Experienced investigators

(faculty or PDRAs) with funding, who are already familiar with the methods used in the study, are not required to present their project prior to starting scanning, but are strongly encouraged to do so. All investigators are encouraged to present results from ongoing studies at CUBIC work-in-progress (WIP) meetings.

4) First Aid training and operator training for people directly involved in scanning participants. To find out how to become a trained operator, please consult the “How to become a trained operator” section on the CUBIC Wiki. .

Once the above steps have been completed, the investigator will be given authorisation to start the study by a member of the management committee (subject to the CUBIC operating procedures and regulations). Authorised studies will be given a unique booking code by the CUBIC staff, which must be used when booking scanning slots for the study.