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British Journal of Anaesthesia: a leading publication and a registered charity

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Summary

The *British Journal of Anaesthesia* organisation is a registered charity comprised of two interlinked missions: provision of impactful publications and funding the generation and dissemination of research to the wider anaesthetic community. This centenary editorial highlights our charitable activity that covers funding of research infrastructure, meeting support and funding of a diverse portfolio of international research grants.

Keywords: academic publishing; biomedical research; medical education; medical publishing; research funding

The outward face of the *British Journal of Anaesthesia* (BJA) is clear to all and this will be celebrated throughout 2023, our centenary year.^{1,2} We are a family of three titles: BJA, BJA Education, and BJA Open published by Elsevier. All three titles have different niches, but the ethos of strong science and education is common to all. BJA is consistently in the leading pack in impact and impact factor, being first or second for several years (current journal impact factor, 11.719), with an average time to first decision of 1.5 weeks. BJA Education recorded ~1.2 million downloads in 2021, is indexed on PubMed Central and is in the process of applying for European Union of Medical Specialties–European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (UEMS–EACCME) accreditation. BJA Open, our newest open access title, is in the process of applying to be indexed on PubMed Central. The journal family has an active Twitter account (@BJAJournals) with more than 29 000 followers.

What is less well known relates to our charitable activity and how that drives our overall business model. The BJA is registered with the UK Charity Commission (1121817) and the Scottish Charity Regulator (SC039825). Our Articles of Association (governing document) list our primary objects as '(a) to

advance and improve theoretical and practical knowledge and skills in all branches of anaesthesia, critical care and pain medicine, and related topics; and (b) to promote the health, safety and welfare of all persons by improving and disseminating knowledge and skills of anaesthesia, critical care and pain medicine and thereby reducing the suffering and dangers of anaesthesia and surgery'.

The BJA is essentially two operations: journal production and charitable activities supporting research and training in anaesthesia. Our finances are similarly split. The costs of journal production are funded by income from our publisher (Elsevier) and subscription organisations (Royal College of Anaesthetists [RCoA], College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland [CAI], and Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists [HKCA]). Our publishing activities are managed on a not-for-profit basis. Our publishing activities also encompass contributions to meetings (both local and international), webinars (partnering with the RCoA), and other areas where high-quality and impactful submissions might be elicited. Funding of our charitable activity is kept largely separate from our publishing operations and is funded from investment income. In addition to direct support for research in the form of grants, funding includes support for research infrastructure in anaesthesia

and direct support for education in anaesthesia and perioperative medicine. We have made contributions to the early phase of the RCoA clinical trials network and continue to support the National Institute for Academic Anaesthesia (NIAA) as a founding partner. Also of note is an arrangement we have with the South African Society of Anaesthesiologists to provide 500 electronic subscriptions at member rates with a further 500 complimentary online-only subscriptions to *BJA Education* for use by non-specialist anaesthetists in public sector practice. In essence there is a small amount of overlap between production and charitable activity.

Our main charitable activity is funding of research grants, which comes from a carefully managed portfolio of investments, £22.7 million at the time of writing. We credit past *BJA* directors who have managed the *BJA* in such an efficient way as to provide the funds for our ongoing charitable activity. Our investment portfolio is low-risk, ethically driven with no holdings in tobacco, alcohol, or armaments companies. Our investment managers are tasked to provide at least £0.5 million per year for grants. Recent instructions to try to increase this to £0.75 million per annum were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic but this remains a longer strategic aim. During the pandemic we were happy to provide additional support to researchers and PhD students during difficult times. In years where there is a surplus in journal running costs (e.g. during the COVID-19 pandemic), that funding can be directed into grants.

Our grants and other awards are structured to support the career development of academics in anaesthesia and related specialities. *BJA* supports a wide portfolio of grants across the entire career spectrum and mostly use the NIAA process. Our grants are jointly badged with RCoA as their official journal. We start with John Snow awards of £2000 as support for undergraduate medical student intercalation. We support PhD projects for non-clinicians and also via a joint funding arrangement for clinicians with the Medical Research Council (Clinical Research Training Fellowship scheme). We have supported career development grants for both non-clinical and clinical academics on the trajectory to Chair appointments. In our centenary year (2023), we will fund two more also open to international applicants with announcements to follow on this. Our standard awards are project grants, currently for up to £100 000 each. These are open at all stages and we have had some excellent applications from anaesthetic trainees. In the project grant category, we have co-funded with a range of partner specialist societies including vascular, cardiothoracic, paediatric and neuroanaesthesia societies. Significantly, our grants are eligible for portfolio status in the UK, adding further value.

Recent collaborative–partnership work has led to significant internationalisation of our grant awards. We co-fund

awards with CAI, the Australia and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA), and the European Society of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care (ESAIC), and as noted above our Centenary career development awards will be open internationally. With respect to a highly productive relationship with ESAIC, the 2023 awards will be made to early career researchers further widening our support of the entire academic research career. Our funding covers wet laboratory, *in vivo* animal, equipment, informatics, modelling, and clinical research.

The *BJA* charity has been involved in the charitable disbursement of ~£7 million amounting to ~£0.5 million per year (our current target spend) in grant funding since establishment of the NIAA for the benefit of all ‘branches of anaesthesia, critical care and pain medicine, and related topics’. This has produced tangible benefits for colleagues (~150 recipients) across the career spectrum and international borders; many of our grantees are now substantive independent researchers. We will continue to invest in our interlinked missions to develop the evidence base used in clinical practise, to provide funds to allow researchers to generate it, and to disseminate the knowledge critical to providing high quality clinical care in anaesthesia, critical care, and pain medicine.

Declaration of Interest

DGL is a scientific adviser to Cellomatics, a SME-CRO, and chairs the Board of *British Journal of Anaesthesia*. SH is past finance director of *British Journal of Anaesthesia* and over the past 3 yr has received consultancy fees from Edwards Lifesciences. MMRFS is a director of *British Journal of Anaesthesia* with responsibility for Grants and Business Development. His research group/department at the University Medical Centre Groningen received (over the past 3 yr) research grants and consultancy fees from Masimo (Irvine, CA, USA), Becton Dickinson (Eysins, Switzerland), Fresenius (Bad Homburg, Germany), Dräger (Lübeck, Germany), Paion (Aachen, Germany), Medcaptain Europe (Andelst, The Netherlands). He receives royalties on intellectual property from Demed Medical (Temse, Belgium) and the Ghent University (Gent, Belgium).

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