Australian Government
National Health and Medical Research Council

Medical Research Future Fund

Medical Research Future Fund – Clinical Trials Activity Initiative

2025 Clinical Trials Activity Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Opening date:	**24 September 2025**
Closing date for minimum data:	**5pm ACT local time** on **4 March 2026**
Application closing date and time:	**5pm ACT local time** on **1 April 2026**
Commonwealth policy entity:	**Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing**
Administering entity	**National Health and Medical Research Council**
Enquiries:	Applicants requiring further assistance should direct enquiries to their MRFF Eligible Organisation's Research Administration Officer. Research Administration Officers can contact NHMRC's Research Help Centre for further advice: Email: help@nhmrc.gov.au Questions should be submitted no later than 1:00pm ACT Local Time on **Wednesday 25 March 2026**.
Date guidelines released:	**24 September 2025**
Type of grant opportunity:	**Targeted Competitive**

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Medical Research Future Fund

1. Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Clinical Trials Activity Initiative: 2025 Clinical Trials Activity Grant Opportunity processes

The Medical Research Future Fund is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program, which contributes to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's Outcome 1. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles.*

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The lead organisation registers to become an MRFF Eligible Organisation

If the organisation through which you are applying (the lead organisation) is not already an MRFF Eligible Organisation (i.e. approved to submit MRFF grant applications and receive MRFF funding through NHMRC), the organisation should check its eligibility and then submit an MRFF Eligible Organisation certification form. The form is available on the NHMRC website, as well as a list of already approved MRFF Eligible Organisations. The lead organisation will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth if your application is successful.

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The grant opportunity opens

We publish the grant guidelines on GrantConnect.

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You complete and submit a grant application

You complete the application form for the grant opportunity in the NHMRC's Granting System (Sapphire). Your application must address all of the eligibility and relevant assessment criteria to be considered for a grant. Your organisation's Research Administration Officer (RAO) then certifies and submits the application form.

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We assess all grant applications

We review all applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. Then a grant assessment committee assesses eligible applications against the relevant technical assessment criteria (weighted) and the relevant non-technical assessment criterion (non-weighted).

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We make grant recommendations

We provide advice to the decision maker on the recommendations of the grant assessment committee.

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Grant decisions are made

The decision maker decides which applications are successful.

We notify you of the outcome

We advise you of the outcome of your application via Sapphire.

We enter into a grant agreement

We will enter into a grant agreement with the MRFF Eligible Organisation through which you applied, if your application is successful. The grant agreement may have specific conditions based on the nature of the grant and will be proportional to the risks involved.

Delivery of grant

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant through the relevant MRFF Eligible Organisation, monitor your progress and make payments.

Evaluation of the grant opportunity

We evaluate your specific grant activity, the Initiative as a whole, and the MRFF. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

1.1 Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the 2025 Clinical Trials Activity Grant Opportunity.

You must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how applications are considered and assessed
- how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
- how grantees will be monitored and evaluated
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the grant opportunity.

This grant opportunity and process will be administered by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) on behalf of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

We administer the MRFF according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024* (CGRPs).

2. About the grant program

2.1 Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF)

The MRFF, established under the *Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015* (MRFF Act), provides grants of financial assistance to support health and medical research and innovation to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians. It operates as an endowment fund with the capital preserved in perpetuity. The

MRFF reached $22 billion in December 2023. The MRFF provides a long-term sustainable source of funding for endeavours that aim to improve health outcomes, quality of life and health system sustainability.

This MRFF investment is guided by the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy 2021-2026* (the Strategy) and related set of *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2024-2026* (the Priorities), developed by the independent and expert Australian Medical Research Advisory Board following national consultation.

Consumer Involvement in MRFF-Funded Research

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing works closely with stakeholders, including having worked closely with the MRFF Consumer Reference Panel (the Panel), to strengthen consumer involvement in MRFF-funded research and engage appropriately with diverse populations (including Priority Populations). The Principles for Consumer Involvement in Research Funded by the Medical Research Future Fund (the Principles) were developed by the Panel and published in March 2023 as a first step towards promoting stronger consumer involvement in MRFF implementation, with a view to strengthening consumer engagement throughout the grant life cycle from priority setting to designing grant opportunities, selecting projects for funding and monitoring project progress and outcomes.

As part of implementation of the Principles, applicants to MRFF grant opportunities are required to submit a Consumer Involvement Statement that describes the involvement of consumers at all stages of the proposed research, including its prioritisation, design, conduct, dissemination, translation and evaluation. For further guidance on consumer involvement see section 6 and for more information about the Consumer Involvement Statement see section 7.4.

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines, including ‘consumer’, in the Glossary at section 14.

2.2 About the Clinical Trials Activity Initiative

The Clinical Trials Activity Initiative (the Initiative) aims to:

- improve the evidence base supporting clinical care
- help patients access trials relevant to their health circumstances
- enable researchers to bring international trials to Australian patients.

Further information on the rationale of the Initiative is available on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing website.

The MRFF Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Strategy (the Evaluation Strategy) provides an overarching framework for assessing the performance of the MRFF and is publicly available on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing website.

Applicants to this grant opportunity are expected to describe how their proposed project aligns with the objectives and outcomes of the Clinical Trials Activity Initiative and the Measures of Success as described in the Evaluation Strategy. These will be key assessment criteria for funding. Projects funded from this grant opportunity will be monitored and evaluated against the Evaluation Strategy.

For further details see sections 6 and 7.

There will be other grant opportunities as part of this Initiative and we will publish the opening and closing dates and any other relevant information on the NHMRC website and GrantConnect.

2.3 About the 2025 Clinical Trials Activity Grant Opportunity

The grant opportunity aims to fund research in two priority areas identified in the Medical Research Future Fund 3rd 10-year Investment Plan:

- Rare cancers, rare diseases and unmet need
- Effective health interventions

Priority 1: Rare cancers, rare diseases and unmet need

Rare cancers are a broad and diverse group of cancers with a range of incidence and survival outcomes. In Australia, it is estimated that more than 42,000 Australians are diagnosed with a rare or less common form of cancer every year[1]. While one in three cancer diagnoses in Australia are rare or less common, they contribute to over half of all cancer deaths[2]. There is a lack of evidence-based information to inform treatment options for many patients diagnosed with a rare cancer.

Rare diseases are life-threatening or chronically debilitating disorders or conditions uncommon in the general population. To date, more than 10,000 rare diseases have been identified, and approximately 8 per cent of Australians live with a rare disease[3]. Rare diseases typically exhibit a high level of symptom complexity leading to diagnostic delays and require frequent, ongoing multidisciplinary care and treatment[4].

Unmet medical need arises where individuals are living with a serious health condition, where there are limited satisfactory options for prevention, diagnosis or treatment to support improved health outcomes.

Priority 2: Effective health interventions

The purpose of this research is to assist consumers, clinicians, purchasers, and policy makers to make informed decisions that will improve health care at both the individual and population levels.

The objectives and intended outcomes of this grant opportunity are aligned with the following *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2024-2026*:

- Effective and High Value Care
- Preventive and Public Health Research
- Health and Medical Researcher Capacity and Capability
- Priority Populations.

Consistent with the MRFF Act, the objective of this grant opportunity is to provide grants of financial assistance to support medical research and medical innovation projects that:

- **Stream 1** (Incubator): conduct a pilot study to assess the feasibility of a new clinical trial for one or more treatments and/or management strategies for a rare cancer, rare disease and/or unmet need.
- **Stream 2** (Targeted Call for Research): conduct a clinical trial of one or more treatments and/or management-based interventions for a rare cancer, rare disease and/or unmet need.

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[1] www.canceraustralia.gov.au/about-us/news/rare-and-less-common-cancers

[2] Rare Cancers Australia - What is a rare cancer?

[3] Elliott EJ and Zurynski YA. Rare diseases are a 'common' problem for clinicians. AFP. 2015;44:9

[4] Anderson M, Elliott EJ, Zurynski YA. Australian families living with rare disease: Experiences of diagnosis, health services use and needs for psychosocial support. Orphanet J Rare Dis. 2013;8:22

- **Stream 3** (Targeted Call for Research): conduct a clinical trial that supports the delivery of effective and high value care by targeting evidence gaps of value to health technology assessment processes in Australia.
- **Stream 4** (Targeted Call for Research): conduct a prevention clinical trial aimed at reducing the risk, onset or progression of disease through early intervention strategies.

Stream 1 is intended to support early stage, small scale research projects that seek to assess the potential and feasibility of novel strategies to address critical or intractable health issues.

Streams 2-4 are intended to support projects that progress research that addresses a specific health need.

For the purposes of this grant opportunity, a clinical trial can include methodologies based on master protocols (including basket trials, umbrella trials, and platform trials). Applications that utilise novel and innovative clinical trial methodologies, including 'n of 1' trials and/or utilise the capabilities of established clinical quality registries are encouraged.

Furthermore, 'rare disease' is defined as a life-threatening or chronically debilitating health condition that affects fewer than 1 in 2,000 people in the population[5]. 'Rare cancer' is defined as a type of cancer that has fewer than 6 incidences per year per 100,000 population[6].

Additional information for Stream 1

Applications to Stream 1 are required to address a rare cancer, rare disease and/or an unmet need. Applications should clearly demonstrate that the condition being studied is rare cancer, rare disease and/or unmet need through one or multiple aspects including disease burden, patient population size, and /or limited satisfactory options for prevention, detection, diagnosis, or treatment to support improved health outcomes. Applicants should propose research that tests the feasibility of an intervention and generates pilot data that could be leveraged to support larger/more definitive trials. Applications that propose to assess interventions for which a commercial return may be unlikely (e.g. re-purposing or extending the use of medicines) are particularly encouraged.

Phase 1 trials are considered out of scope for this Stream.

Applicants should consider parameters for evaluation of the intervention such as:

- standard deviation of the outcome measure
- willingness of participants to be randomised
- willingness/capacity of clinicians to recruit participants
- number of eligible patients
- design or refinement of a suitable outcome measure
- rate at which participants are lost to follow-up
- response rates to questionnaires
- adherence/compliance rates[7].

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[5] https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-strategic-action-plan-for-rare-diseases

[6] https://www.australiancancerplan.gov.au/

[7] Arain, M, Campbell, MJ, Cooper, CL et al. What is a pilot or feasibility study? A review of current practice and editorial policy. BMC Med Res Methodol 10, 67 (2010). https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-10-67

Additional information for Stream 2

Applications to Stream 2 are required to address a rare cancer, rare disease and/or an unmet need. Applications should clearly demonstrate that the condition being studied is rare cancer, rare disease and/or unmet need through one or multiple aspects including disease burden, patient population size, and/or limited satisfactory options for prevention, detection, diagnosis, or treatment to support improved health outcomes. Applications that propose to assess interventions for which a commercial return may be unlikely (e.g. re-purposing or extending the use of medicines) are particularly encouraged.

Additional information for Stream 3

Applications to Stream 3 are required to address the Effective health interventions priority.

For the purposes of Stream 3 of this grant opportunity, clinical trials that support the delivery of effective and high value care address critical evidence gaps relevant to health technology assessment and consider the clinical effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and comparative effectiveness (e.g. a specific standard of care as comparator) of the intervention/s.

Expected trial outcomes should be reflective of real-world practice to support their implementation and uptake into routine clinical practice. Applications to Stream 3 are not required to address a rare cancer, rare disease or an unmet need.

Additional information for Stream 4

Applications to Stream 4 are required to address the Effective health interventions priority.

For the purposes of Stream 4 of this grant opportunity, prevention clinical trials involve the study of interventions that prevent primary or secondary disease (i.e. the risk or progression of disease, respectively). Applications that investigate treatments for a disease are out of scope.

Applications must clearly define the need for the disease prevention in Australia (e.g. disease burden and/or impact on an MRFF Priority Population such as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people or people in regional, rural and remote communities). Applications are not required to address a rare cancer, rare disease or an unmet need.

To be competitive for funding, applicants must propose to conduct research that delivers against the above objectives and those of the Clinical Trials Activity Initiative. Applicants are encouraged to propose novel and/or innovative research and describe how the outcomes of the research will be translated into health benefits for Australians.

Applications to this grant opportunity must propose research that addresses one of the four Streams of research. An application may only be submitted to one of the above four Streams. Applicants must specify the Stream to which they are applying in their application.

The intended outcome of the research funded by this grant opportunity is to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians by investing in new clinical trials that support increased access to high-quality, evidence-based and effective health care.

If applicants propose research that is not relevant to the desired outcome they will be considered against the relevant assessment criteria and found to be uncompetitive. MRFF Eligible Organisations are requested to ensure they only submit applications that address the desired outcome.

2.4 Encouraging Partnerships

Applicants are encouraged to seek strategic partnerships involving organisations whose decisions and actions affect Australians' health, health policy and health care delivery in ways that improve the health of Australians. Organisations that are capable of implementing policy and service delivery and would normally not be able to access funding through the MRFF are highly valued as partners.

Partnerships and co-investment are encouraged in order to maximise impact of investment, provide opportunities for more mature sites/agencies to build the capacity of emerging sites/agencies, reduce duplication of activities, and reduce potential respondent administrative burden on participating communities. Partnerships are also encouraged to ensure the proposed research is of relevance to consumers and delivery of services, and to support translation of research outcomes into practice.

Partner organisations may include:

- medical research institutes, i.e. organisations that conduct medical research as a primary purpose, and are also registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission
- universities
- corporate Commonwealth entities, i.e. Commonwealth entities that are bodies corporate
- corporations, i.e. Australian public companies, Australian private companies and other incorporated entities
- those working in federal, state, territory or local government in the health portfolio or in other areas affecting health, such as economic policy, urban planning, education or transport
- those working in the private sector such as employers, private health insurance providers or private hospitals
- those commercial entities with an interest in this area, for example pharmaceutical companies and biotechnology companies
- non-government organisations and charities
- education institutions
- state education departments
- community organisations such as consumer groups
- health care providers
- professional groups.

In some instances, a body of a type listed above may be eligible to apply for MRFF funding in its own right, for example in the case of commercial entities or non-government organisations that are corporations. The above list recognises the desirability of entering into partnerships as a means of advancing the outcomes of the MRFF and is not intended to imply that the types of bodies listed are ineligible to seek MRFF funding.

The above list is also not intended to indicate whether an organisation's contribution should be confirmed in a Letter of Support. For information on contributions and Letters of Support, see below and section 7.4.

Partnerships with an overseas partner organisation are acceptable, provided the objectives of the grant opportunity are fully met and all overseas expenditure is eligible (see section 5). However, you cannot use the grant to support research projects undertaken outside of Australia (although funding can be sought to support the Australian-based components of multinational clinical trials).

While partnerships are encouraged, they may not necessarily be relevant for all projects. Where an organisation is contributing cash or in-kind support, this information should be provided as part of your application and will contribute to the assessment of Capacity, Capability and Resources to Deliver the Project and Overall Value and Risk of the Project (see sections 6 and 7.4).

3. Grant amount and grant period

3.1 Grants available

The Australian Government has announced a total of $750 million for the Clinical Trials Activity Initiative. For this grant opportunity, up to $61 million of funding is available over 3 years from 2026-27 for the four Streams listed in section 2.3.

Funds will be provided to the MRFF Eligible Organisation according to the available funding indicated in Table 1; however, funds can be expended across the life of the grant (grant period). See below and section 3.2.

Each will be a separate funding Stream.

For each Stream, applications will be funded based on rank until the total funding available for that Stream has been reached. The remaining applications across all Streams will then be pooled into a combined ranked merit list, with funding allocated until the total funding available for the grant opportunity is reached.

For this grant opportunity, an application may be submitted to one of the above four Streams only. Applicants must specify the Stream to which they are applying in their application.

The types of grants that are available under this grant opportunity are:

- Incubator grants
- Targeted Call for Research grants

We will award the most meritorious eligible applications to Stream 1 with an Incubator grant and to Streams 2-4 with a Targeted Call for Research grant.

Applicants are encouraged to design a research project that best addresses the objectives and intended outcomes of the grant opportunity and propose an appropriate budget.

The amounts available for a single grant in each Stream are as follows:

- **Stream 1**: There is no minimum grant amount and the maximum amount available for a single grant is $0.8 million.
- **Stream 2**: There is no minimum grant amount and the maximum amount available for a single grant is $5.0 million.
- **Stream 3**: There is no minimum grant amount and the maximum amount available for a single grant is $5.0 million.
- **Stream 4**: There is no minimum grant amount and the maximum amount available for a single grant is $5.0 million.

Table 1. Available funding over the grant period ($ million - GST exclusive)

	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33
Stream 1	2.0	3.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stream 2	5.0	10.0	10.0	No funding available	No funding available	No funding available	No funding available
Stream 3	4.0	4.0	8.0	No funding available	No funding available	No funding available	No funding available
Stream 4	3.0	4.0	8.0	No funding available	No funding available	No funding available	No funding available

3.2 Grant period

The maximum grant period that can be applied for in each Stream is as follows:

- **Stream 1**: 2 years
- **Stream 2**: 7 years
- **Stream 3**: 7 years
- **Stream 4**: 7 years.

4. Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all eligibility criteria.

We cannot provide a grant if you receive funding from another source for the same purpose (see section 10).

4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible your organisation must be an MRFF Eligible Organisation approved by NHMRC.

Information on becoming an MRFF Eligible Organisation can be found on the NHMRC website.

Joint applications are encouraged, provided you have a lead organisation who is the main driver of the project and is eligible to apply.

This eligibility criterion derives from provisions set out in section 24 of the MRFF Act and cannot be waived.

4.2 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

Your application will be ruled ineligible if:

- the MRFF Eligible Organisation through which you are applying, or a Participating Institution on your application, is included on the National Redress Scheme's website on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme'

- persons named on the application are the subject of a decision by the NHMRC Chief Executive Officer or Delegate that any application they make to NHMRC, for specified funding opportunities, will be excluded from consideration for a period of time, whether or not they meet other eligibility requirements. Such decisions will generally reflect action taken by NHMRC in response to research misconduct allegations or findings, or a Probity Event. See the NHMRC Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy.

4.3 Chief Investigators

Applicants must nominate a Chief Investigator A (CIA) who will take the lead role in completing the application, conducting the research, and reporting as required under the grant agreement.

A person must not be named as a Chief Investigator (CI) on more than one application submitted to a Stream of this grant opportunity (i.e. a person may be named as a CI on a maximum of one application per Stream). If a CI is named on more than one application submitted to a Stream of this grant opportunity, both applications will be considered ineligible.

To facilitate collaborative research teams with the required capacity and capability to undertake the proposed research, up to 15 CIs may be included as members of the research team. Note that there is no requirement for Chief Investigators to hold a post-graduate qualification (e.g. a PhD).

It is generally required that, at the time of application submission, the CIA is an Australian citizen or is a permanent resident in Australia. Where the CIA is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident, they must have the requisite work visa in place at the time of accepting the grant (see section 7.4). The CIA must be based in Australia for the duration of the grant, excluding reasonable overseas travel consistent with section 5.

Researchers who do not meet the above requirements are eligible to apply as a CI, but not as CIA (see also section 7).

4.4 Additional eligibility requirements

Your application may also be deemed ineligible and excluded from further consideration if it contravenes other requirements as set out in these grant guidelines. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- its aims are inconsistent with the object of the MRFF Act to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians
- the amount of funding requested is not within the minimum and maximum amounts available for the relevant Stream as specified in section 3.1
- the proposed budget is inconsistent with the requirements for eligible expenditure specified in section 5 of these guidelines and delivery of the project would be unfeasible if ineligible expenditure items were excised
- minimum data describing your application is not entered in Sapphire by the specified date
- the application is not certified and submitted in Sapphire by the RAO of an approved MRFF Eligible Organisation by the advertised closing date and time
- the Grant Proposal does not comply with formatting requirements and page limits
- the proposed research duplicates research previously or currently being undertaken. We may compare the research proposed in applications with grants previously or currently funded by the MRFF, NHMRC or other agencies (e.g. Australian Research Council) and published research (see sections 5.9, 8.2 and 8.3)

- the application fails to accurately declare the source, duration and level of funding already held by the research team for research in the particular area of the application
- the application includes any incomplete, false or misleading information.

If a decision to exclude an application from further consideration is made, we will provide the decision and the reason(s) for the decision to the MRFF Eligible Organisation's RAO in writing. The MRFF Eligible Organisation's RAO is responsible for advising applicants of the decision in writing.

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1 Eligible grant activities

To be eligible, activities in your Grant Proposal must clearly demonstrate their criticality in meeting the objectives of the 2025 Clinical Trials Activity Grant Opportunity under Section 2.3, and must also meet all other requirements specified in section 5 of these guidelines.

Eligible activities can include consumer involvement activities where they directly support the achievement of project outcomes. The form and level of consumer involvement should be appropriate to the project and to the cohort of consumers, noting that this may differ from project to project.

You may request funding for the reasonable costs of supporting consumer involvement in their research. See below and section 6.

5.2 Eligible locations

Grant funding can be sought to fund activities based in any geographical location in Australia.

You may request funding for a component of your research to be undertaken overseas if the equipment/resources required for that component are not available in Australia and the component is critical to the successful completion of the grant. However, the majority of the research activities and funding expenditure must occur in Australia (see sections 5.3, 5.8 and 5.9).

Funding can be sought to support the Australian-based components of multinational clinical trials (including recruitment of patients based in Australia) or to fund Australian-based international co-ordinating centres; however, we will not consider applications for overseas trial sites, or applications that seek funding for recruitment of patient cohorts for other types of research based overseas.

For further guidance on eligible overseas expenditure see section 5.3.1 and for guidance on overseas travel see section 5.8.

5.3 Eligible expenditure

You can only spend grant funds to pursue eligible activities as described in section 5.1. You can use the grant to pay costs that arise directly from these activities, including the reasonable costs of supporting consumer involvement (see section 6). The following categories must be used in your proposed budget:

- Equipment
- Personnel (Personnel Support Packages)
- Other Direct Research Costs (DRCs).

Rules apply to each category of expenditure. Applicants are required to justify the budget requested for each year of the proposed research. Your budget, including your justification of the proposed expenditure, will be part of the overall value and risk assessment (see sections 6 and 7.4).

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Delegate (who is an Australian Government official who has been authorised to make decisions) makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

5.3.1 Eligible overseas expenditure

Eligible overseas expenditure (including for overseas travel) is generally limited to 10 per cent of total grant funding. All overseas expenditure must be formally documented and justified within your grant application and will be part of the overall value and risk assessment (see sections 6 and 7.4). Applications with overseas expenditure greater than 10 per cent of total grant funding may be referred to the Delegate for additional guidance (see above). Once you have executed a grant agreement with the Commonwealth, any additional overseas expenditure, or changes to previously approved overseas expenditure, must be requested and documented by you and agreed by the Delegate prior to the expenditure being incurred, as described in the MRFF Grant Variation Policy and Appendix A. See section 12.4.

When considering a request for overseas expenditure, the Delegate will undertake a value with relevant money assessment to determine whether the cost of overseas expenditure is eligible. This may depend on:

- the proportion of total grant funding that you will spend on overseas expenditure
- the proportion of the service providers' total fee that will be spent on overseas expenditure
- how the overseas expenditure is likely to aid the project in meeting the program objectives
- other requirements specified in section 5 of these guidelines.

For guidance on overseas travel see section 5.8.

5.4 Equipment

You can request funding to pay for equipment costing over $10,000 that is essential to the research. The total equipment requested cannot exceed $80,000. Individual items of equipment costing less than $10,000 must be requested within DRCs (see below).

Applicants must clearly outline the total value of all items of equipment for each year, why the equipment is required for the proposed research and why the equipment cannot be provided by the organisation.

For each item of equipment requested, a written quotation must be received and held with the MRFF Eligible Organisation submitting the application, to be available to the Australian Government on request.

The MRFF Eligible Organisation must be prepared to meet all service and repair costs in relation to equipment funded.

Funds will not be provided for the purchase of computers except where these are an integral component of a piece of laboratory equipment or are of a nature essential for work in the research field, for example, a computer used for the manipulation of extensively large datasets (i.e. requiring special hardware).

5.5 Personnel

Salary contributions for research staff (CIs and Professional Research Persons) are provided as Personnel Support Packages (PSPs). The level of PSP requested in an application must match the roles and responsibilities of the position and the percentage of the PSP requested must reflect the required time commitment. Applicants must fully justify all requests for PSPs.

Table 2. Personnel Support Packages

Personnel Support Packages – for funding commencing in 2027		
Level	**Description**	**$ per annum**
PSP1	Technical support – non-graduate personnel	65,200
PSP2	Junior graduate research assistant; or junior graduate nurse, midwife or allied health professional; or junior data manager/data analyst	81,413
PSP3	Experienced graduate research assistant/junior postdoctoral research officer; or experienced graduate nurse, midwife or allied health professional; or experienced data manager/analyst **Note:** A PSP3 at 50% may be claimed for postgraduate students supported on MRFF research grants	89,523
PSP4	Experienced postdoctoral researcher (that is, a researcher who may be considered as a named investigator on the research application), or clinician without specialist qualifications	105,737
PSP5	Senior experienced postdoctoral researcher (that is, a researcher who would normally be considered as a named investigator on the research application and is more than 10 years post-doctoral	113,845

Chief Investigators

CIs, including the CIA, may draw a salary if they are based in Australia for at least 80% of the grant period. CIs based overseas are not able to draw a salary, but salary support is available for research support staff based overseas (see section 5.3). Requested salaries must be based on PSPs.

Applicants can receive up to 100% salary across MRFF and NHMRC grants. Multiple partial salaries can be drawn up to 100%, if allowed in the grant guidelines for the respective grant opportunity.

Associate Investigators

An Associate Investigator (AI) is an individual who provides intellectual input to the research and whose participation reasonably warrants recognition. AIs are ineligible to draw a salary from this grant opportunity. Up to 15 AIs may be named in an application.

5.6 Other Direct Research Costs

For the purposes of this grant opportunity, other Direct Research Costs (DRCs) are costs that are integral to achieving the approved research objectives of a grant where the recipient is selected on merit against a set of criteria. Such costs must directly address the research objectives of the grant, relate to the approved research plan and require the associated budget to have been properly justified. DRCs may include the following:

- personnel costs related to contract staff and limited external persons (not Chief Investigators or additional personnel). The basis for the costing must be included.
- clinical services that are over and above standard care
- Medicare costs (out of pocket medical expenses only)
- reimbursement of reasonable costs associated with randomised control trials (RCTs)
- reasonable imaging and diagnostic costs (MRI, PET, CT, ultrasound, genotyping, biochemical analysis)
- equipment costing less than $10,000 that is unique to the project and is essential for the project to proceed
- purchases of services directly required for the successful conduct of the project (including services from organisational facilities)
- specialised computing requirements that are essential to meeting project-specific needs.

Publication costs cannot be requested in your application but may be listed as a direct research cost in your financial acquittal.

The above list is not comprehensive. Where a research cost is not included in the above list you should refer to the definition in the first paragraph of this section. If you are still unsure, clarification should be sought from NHMRC. DRCs will be critically scrutinised during the assessment of applications and during on-site compliance monitoring visits.

5.7 Accessing existing research infrastructure

Applicants are encouraged to utilise existing research infrastructure to support their research wherever possible so as to reduce duplication and achieve the best return on grant funding. DRCs can be requested to support access to research facilities and infrastructure.

Applicants are encouraged to consider utilising research infrastructure projects such as those funded by the Australian Government through the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS). The NCRIS projects encompass a variety of infrastructure relevant to health research such as the Therapeutic Innovation Australia project and the Population Health Research Network (PHRN) project. Further information, including access and pricing, is available on the Department of Education website.

Applicants may request funding for services from research facilities required to undertake the Grant Proposal. These services may include, but are not limited to, biospecimens or data from biobanks, pathology services, clinical registries, the Australian Twin Registry, Cell Bank Australia, the Trans-Tasman Radio Oncology Group or clinical trial services. Applicants should consult with research facilities to ensure that the services they require can be provided and that the charges included in the research budget reflects their charges.

Your approach to accessing research facilities or infrastructure may impact the assessment of the suitability and value of the requested budget. For information on how to include information on research facilities within your application refer to section 7.4.

5.8 Travel

Applicants may request funding for travel, including for consumer involvement. Eligible travel may include:

- domestic travel limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required to conduct agreed project and collaboration activities in Australia
- domestic travel for third parties (i.e. certifiers, tradesperson), where the travel is essential to the successful completion of the grant activity
- overseas travel limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required to conduct agreed project and collaboration activities.

Eligible air transportation is limited to the economy class fare for each sector travelled. Where non-economy class air transport is used:

- only the equivalent of an economy fare for that sector is eligible expenditure
- the grantee may be required to provide evidence showing what an economy air fare cost was at the time of travel
- grant funding only up to the economy air fare cost at the time of travel amount can be used.

For further information on overseas travel (as a type of overseas expenditure) see section 5.3.1.

5.9 What the grant money cannot be used for

Indirect costs of research

You cannot use grant funds to pay the indirect costs of research.

Indirect costs of research are organisation overhead costs that benefit and support research. They can include the operations and maintenance of buildings, provision of facilities and libraries, hazardous waste disposal, regulatory and research compliance and administration of research services. Although they are necessary for the conduct of research, and may be incurred in the course of research, they are costs that do not directly address the approved research objectives of a grant.

Costs that cannot be paid with grant funds include, but are not limited to:

- airline club memberships
- computers, computer networks, peripherals and software for communicating, writing and undertaking simple analyses
- communications costs (mobiles, telephone calls)
- conference attendance and associated travel (except in pre-approved circumstances where the research outputs of the activity are to be presented, consistent with sections 5.3 and 5.8)
- entertainment and hospitality costs
- ethics approval costs
- furniture
- health insurance, travel insurance, foreign currency, airport and related travel taxes, passports and visas

- organisational overheads and administrative costs
- non-project related staff training and development
- overseas expenditure (including for overseas travel), except as provided for in sections 5.3 and 5.8
- patent costs
- personal membership of professional organisations and groups
- personal subscriptions (e.g. private journal subscriptions)
- physical space and all associated administrative, laboratory and office services
- purchase of reprints
- research infrastructure: facilities necessary for the research endeavour that a responsible organisation would be expected to supply as a prerequisite to its engagement in research.

Other ineligible expenditure

You cannot use grant funds to cover retrospective costs, or to support research activities undertaken outside of Australia (except as provided for in section 5 of these guidelines).

A grant for a particular research activity cannot be provided to you if you receive funding from another government source for the same research activity. You can apply for grants under any Commonwealth program but, if your applications are successful, you must choose either the grant from this Program or the other Commonwealth grant.

Where you have submitted the same application to MRFF and NHMRC grant opportunities and have received an offer of funding from one of these sources, NHMRC and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing reserve the right to withhold any further offer of funding for the application.

Where it appears that an applicant has submitted similar applications for research funding and has been successful with more than one application, the applicant is required to provide NHMRC with a written report clearly identifying the difference between the research aims of the two research activities. If we do not consider the two research activities to be sufficiently different, an offer of funding for one of the applications may be withheld or withdrawn at the discretion of the Delegate, or you will be required to decline or relinquish one of the grants (see section 10).

For grants funded under the Clinical Trials Activity Initiative, you cannot use the grant to fund extensions of funding for ongoing clinical trials, as the Initiative and associated grant opportunities aim to support new clinical trials where recruitment has not yet commenced within Australia.

6. The assessment criteria

Grants funded under Stream 1 are intended to support early stage, small scale research projects that seek to assess the potential and feasibility of novel strategies to address critical or intractable health issues.

Grants funded under Streams 2-4 are intended to support projects that progress research that addresses a specific health need.

Applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria described below. You must address all relevant assessment criteria in your application. We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each technical criterion and against the non-weighted (non-technical) assessment criterion.

The application form requests information that directly relates to the assessment criteria below. You should provide evidence to support your responses to each criterion and your requested budget. Size limits apply to all responses.

Funding will only be awarded to applications that score satisfactorily against all relevant criteria.

The assessment criteria for each Stream are described within these grant guidelines as follows:

- **Stream 1** (Incubator): see section 6.1
- **Stream 2** (Targeted Call for Research): see section 6.2
- **Stream 3** (Targeted Call for Research): see section 6.2
- **Stream 4** (Targeted Call for Research): see section 6.2.

6.1 The assessment criteria for Stream 1 (Incubator)

6.1.1 Assessment Criterion 1 – Project Impact (40% weighting)

Project Impact is the extent to which the project's research outputs will contribute to meaningful advances in health outcomes, practice and/or policy, consistent with the objectives and outcomes described in section 2.3. The assessment of Project Impact will also consider the project's contribution to the objective of the Initiative as described in section 2.2 and your statement against the MRFF Measures of Success.

In your response to this criterion, you should ensure that you:

- articulate the need for a novel solution to a critical and/or intractable health issue that is informed by the findings of a national and/or international landscape analysis and will be of value to the community, health service providers, and health system managers.
- demonstrate how the project will establish an evidence base for further research that focuses on implementing the proposed solution.
- demonstrate the involvement of consumers (including people with relevant lived experience and their carers), the community, health providers and/or other end users (e.g. health professionals, health services, and coordination mechanisms such as Primary Health Networks) in the project and how their needs, priorities, views and values have informed the research question and its conceptualisation, development and planned translation and implementation.
- demonstrate the involvement of academic, industry, state/territory, and/or other partners in the project and how their needs and views have informed its conceptualisation, development and planned translation and implementation.

In addition, applications that specifically focus on the health of Priority Populations (defined as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, older people experiencing diseases of ageing, people with rare or currently untreatable diseases/conditions, people in remote/rural communities, people with a disability, individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, LGBTIQ+ people, youth), should:

- describe how the project will address a health challenge that is a priority for the Priority Population
- demonstrate leadership by, and involvement of, the Priority Population in the project, and how their needs, views and values have informed its conceptualisation, development and planned implementation.

Further instructions are in section 7.4.

6.1.2 Assessment Criterion 2 – Project Methodology (30% weighting)

Project Methodology is a description of the design and conduct of the proposed research in the form of a project plan. The assessment of Project Methodology will consider the scientific quality and feasibility of the project plan and its ability to deliver on the project's intended outcomes. Projects are expected to be original and build on (rather than duplicate) research that has already been undertaken.

In your response to this criterion, you should ensure you clearly articulate:

- the research question and how you will utilise novel approaches, methodologies, instrumentation, and/or interventions to address it
- how the project will establish partnerships across the health and research sector that have the potential to transform the delivery of health solutions
- how consumers will be involved in the proposed research, including their contributions throughout the life of the project
- arrangements for project governance and oversight to support its successful delivery
- appropriate milestones, performance indicators and timeframes.

In addition, applications that specifically focus on the health of Priority Populations, should also articulate how the proposed methodology includes strong and meaningful leadership and involvement of the Priority Population, including its people, communities and organisations.

6.1.3 Assessment Criterion 3 – Capacity, Capability and Resources to Deliver the Project (30% weighting)

Capacity, Capability and Resources is the relevant skills, knowledge, experience and resources the research team and any partners are contributing to the project. The assessment of Capacity, Capability and Resources will consider the overall composition of the research team, the contribution of individual researchers to the project, and the involvement of partners in the successful delivery of the project.

In your response to this criterion, you should ensure that you demonstrate:

- the research team has the capability, skills, leadership and expertise to successfully deliver the project
- the research team includes individuals that bring diverse experiences and expertise (e.g. across disciplines, genders, cultures, lived experience relevant to the research question, career stages and research sectors)
- the research team has the skills, experience and capacity to involve and support consumers (including those with lived experience) in the proposed research, and ensure that this is done appropriately and effectively
- the commitment of partners to the project and how any cash or in-kind contributions will support its successful delivery.

In addition, applications that specifically focus on the health of Priority Populations, should demonstrate that the research team includes leadership by the Priority Population, and that the research team has experience in delivering research that addresses the needs of the Priority Population.

Each Chief Investigator should provide an example from the assessable period of this grant opportunity (see Glossary) of how they have used their skills, knowledge and/or experience to contribute to meaningful advances in health outcomes, practice and/or policy relevant to the proposed research.

Applicants should note that Chief Investigators may choose, but are not required, to provide elements of academic track record (e.g. publications, grants held, conference invitations) as evidence of impact at their own discretion.

Further instructions are in section 7.4.

Career Disruption

A career disruption involves a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work, due to pregnancy, major illness/injury or carer responsibilities. Interruptions must involve either a continuous absence from work for periods of 90 calendar days or more and/or a long-term partial return to work that has been formalised with the applicant's employer.

The period of career disruption may be used to determine an applicant's eligibility for a grant opportunity or to allow additional information to be considered during assessment.

6.1.4 Assessment Criterion 4 – Overall Value and Risk of the Project (non-weighted)

Overall Value and Risk is the extent to which the project's research outputs will meaningfully contribute to the objectives and intended outcomes of the grant opportunity, the Initiative, and the MRFF more broadly. Your response to this criterion will consist of your Measures of Success statement, proposed budget, and risk management plan submitted with your application.

The assessment of Overall Value and Risk will consider:

- the relative contribution of the outcomes or results you have identified in your Measures of Success statement to the intended outcomes of the grant opportunity, the goal and aims of the Initiative, and the MRFF
- the appropriateness of the requested budget (including the value and type of any cash or in-kind contributions and the eligibility of the proposed expenditure) to support successful delivery of the project, including whether it is sufficiently detailed and justified and represents value with relevant money
- the appropriateness of the risk management plan, including strategies for identifying, documenting, monitoring and reporting on key risks to the completion of the project, including any declared conflicts of interest relevant to the proposed research (see section 13.2).

Refer to section 7.4 and the *Rating Scale for Overall Value and Risk* for further information.

6.2 The assessment criteria for Streams 2-4 (Targeted Call for Research)

6.2.1 Assessment Criterion 5 – Project Impact (40% weighting)

Project Impact is the extent to which the project's research outputs will contribute to meaningful advances in health outcomes, practice and/or policy, consistent with the objectives and outcomes described in section 2.3. The assessment of Project Impact will also consider the project's contribution to the objective of the Initiative as described in section 2.2 and your statement against the MRFF Measures of Success.

In your response to this criterion, you should ensure that you:

- describe how the project builds upon existing knowledge to progress the area of research and how the research outcomes will contribute to meaningful advances in health outcomes, practice and/or policy in Australia.
- demonstrate the involvement of consumers (including people with relevant lived experience and their carers), the community, health providers and/or other end users (e.g. health professionals, health services, and coordination mechanisms such as Primary Health Networks) in the project and how their needs, priorities, views and values have informed the research question and its conceptualisation, development and planned translation and implementation.
- demonstrate the involvement of academic, industry, state/territory, and/or other partners in the project and how their needs and views have informed its conceptualisation, development and planned translation and implementation.

In addition, applications that specifically focus on the health of Priority Populations (defined as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, older people experiencing diseases of ageing, people with rare or currently untreatable diseases/conditions, people in remote/rural communities, people with a disability, individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, LGBTIQ+ people, youth), should:

- describe how the anticipated outputs will contribute to meaningful advances in health outcomes, practice and/or policy for the Priority Population
- demonstrate how the proposed research focuses on interventions that will be acceptable (e.g. culturally appropriate) to the Priority Population
- demonstrate leadership by, and involvement of, the Priority Population in the project, and how their needs, views and values have informed its conceptualisation, development and planned implementation.

Further instructions are in section 7.4.

6.2.2 Assessment Criterion 6 – Project Methodology (30% weighting)

Project Methodology is a description of the design and conduct of the proposed research in the form of a project plan. The assessment of Project Methodology will consider the scientific quality and feasibility of the project plan and its ability to deliver on the project's intended outcomes. Projects are expected to be original and build on (rather than duplicate) research that has already been undertaken.

In your response to this criterion, you should ensure you clearly articulate:

- the research question and the proposed approach for addressing it, including (as appropriate) tools and techniques, participants (e.g. diversity of participants), interventions, controls, statistical approaches, and strategies for data collection and use
- how consumers will be involved in the proposed research, including their contributions throughout the life of the project
- arrangements for project governance and oversight to support its successful delivery.
- appropriate milestones, performance indicators and timeframes.

In addition, applications that specifically focus on the health of Priority Populations, should also articulate how the proposed methodology includes strong and meaningful leadership and involvement of the Priority Population, including its people, communities and organisations.

As your project plan includes the conduct of a clinical trial, your response should also:

- provide details of the trial design
- specify and justify recruitment targets (including targets for ensuring diversity, e.g. by gender) and sample sizes
- articulate how the clinical trial design will support advancement of robust clinical trial methodologies and/or protocols
- describe how consumers have been involved in the trial design (e.g. its conception, protocol and schedule, participant information, consent forms or videos).

6.2.3 Assessment Criterion 7 – Capacity, Capability and Resources to Deliver the Project (30% weighting)

Capacity, Capability and Resources is the relevant skills, knowledge, experience and resources the research team and any partners are contributing to the project. The assessment of Capacity, Capability and Resources will consider the overall composition of the research team, the contribution of individual researchers to the project, and the involvement of partners in the successful delivery of the project.

In your response to this criterion, you should ensure that you demonstrate:

- the research team has an appropriate mix of skills (scientific, project management, etc) to undertake the proposed research
- the research team includes individuals that bring diverse experiences and expertise (e.g. across disciplines, genders, cultures, lived experience relevant to the research question, career stages and research sectors)
- the research team has the skills, experience and capacity to involve and support consumers (including those with lived experience) in the proposed research, and ensure that this is done appropriately and effectively
- the commitment of partners to the project and how any cash or in-kind contributions will support its successful delivery.

In addition, applications that specifically focus on the health of Priority Populations, should demonstrate that the research team includes leadership by the Priority Population, and that the research team has experience in delivering research that has positively impacted health policies and programs of relevance to the Priority Population.

Each Chief Investigator should provide an example from the assessable period of this grant opportunity (see Glossary) of how they have used their skills, knowledge and/or experience to contribute to meaningful advances in health outcomes, practice and/or policy relevant to the proposed research. Applicants should note that Chief Investigators may choose, but are not required, to provide elements of academic track record (e.g. publications, grants held, conference invitations) as evidence of impact at their own discretion.

Further instructions are in section 7.4.

Career Disruption

A career disruption involves a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work, due to pregnancy, major illness/injury or carer responsibilities. Interruptions must involve either a continuous absence from

work for periods of 90 calendar days or more and/or a long-term partial return to work that has been formalised with the applicant's employer.

The period of career disruption may be used to determine an applicant's eligibility for a grant opportunity or to allow additional information to be considered during assessment.

6.2.4 Assessment Criterion 8 – Overall Value and Risk of the Project (non-weighted)

Overall Value and Risk is the extent to which the project's research outputs will meaningfully contribute to the objectives and intended outcomes of the grant opportunity, the Initiative, and the MRFF more broadly. Your response to this criterion will consist of your Measures of Success statement, proposed budget, and risk management plan submitted with your application.

The assessment of Overall Value and Risk will consider:

- the relative contribution of the outcomes or results you have identified in your Measures of Success statement to the intended outcomes of the grant opportunity, the goal and aims of the Initiative, and the MRFF
- the appropriateness of the requested budget (including the value and type of any cash or in-kind contributions and the eligibility of the proposed expenditure) to support successful delivery of the project, including whether it is sufficiently detailed and justified and represents value with relevant money
- the appropriateness of the risk management plan, including strategies for identifying, documenting, monitoring and reporting on key risks to the completion of the project, including any declared conflicts of interest relevant to the proposed research (see section 13.2).

Refer to section 7.4 and the *Rating Scale for Overall Value and Risk* for further information.

6.3 Consumer involvement

Effective consumer involvement is important for building the quality, outcomes, relevance, impact and international competitiveness of MRFF-funded research. The MRFF Consumer Reference Panel has developed the Principles for consumer involvement in research funded by the MRFF (the Principles) to encourage and support effective collaboration between consumers, researchers, research organisations and other health and medical research stakeholders. The Principles reflect that effective consumer involvement, and in particular safe, diverse, and effective consumer involvement, will promote and support the success of MRFF-funded research. They set out the MRFF Consumer Reference Panel's advice on best practice, as well as implementation guidance, for consumer involvement in research.

Consumer involvement in MRFF research is expected, and applicants are required to describe the involvement of consumers in their project in a Consumer Involvement Statement submitted with their application (see section 7.4). Researchers are actively encouraged to involve consumers at all stages of their proposed research, including its prioritisation, design, conduct, the dissemination of results (including to the community), and its translation and evaluation. The form and level of consumer involvement should be appropriate to the project and to the cohort of consumers. The assessment of applications to MRFF grant opportunities will include consideration of consumer involvement across the research life cycle and how it will meaningfully contribute to the objectives and intended outcomes of the grant opportunity, the Initiative, and the MRFF more broadly.

Consistent with the Principles, researchers may request funding for the reasonable costs of supporting consumers, supporting consumer involvement, consulting with consumers and appropriately remunerating consumers for their time and contribution.

For further guidance on eligible expenditure see section 5 and for definitions of 'consumer' and 'consumer involvement' (consistent with the Principles) see the Glossary.

6.4 Consideration of Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation

The Statement on Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation in Health and Medical Research (the Statement) has been developed to improve health outcomes for all people in Australia by ensuring the evidence base that informs our health care system considers sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics and sexual orientation.

The Statement provides a guide for researchers and their supporting stakeholders to consider these variables at all stages of their research project, where applicable. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, responsible for implementation of the MRFF, and the NHMRC, developed the Statement in partnership with stakeholders, including researchers, consumers, and advocacy groups with experience and expertise in consideration of sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics and sexual orientation in health and medical research.

All applicants for MRFF funding are strongly encouraged to:

- consider sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics and sexual orientation at all stages of every research project
- use consistent definitions and classifications according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation.

The Statement provides prompts by research life-cycle stage from question setting and design through to conduct, analysis, reporting and translation and implementation. Further information and supporting resources are available on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing webpage on the Statement on Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation in Health and Medical Research.

7. How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines.

These documents may be found at GrantConnect. Any alterations or addenda[8] will be published on GrantConnect and by registering on this website, you will be automatically notified of any changes. GrantConnect is the authoritative source of information on this grant opportunity.

Applications must be submitted electronically using Sapphire. Electronic submission requires the MRFF Eligible Organisation and CIs named in an application to register for an account. New user requests can be submitted via the system login page.

[8] Alterations and addenda include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents

If an organisation wishing to apply is not yet an approved MRFF Eligible Organisation, the organisation must complete an MRFF Eligible Organisation certification form and receive approval before the organisation will receive a Sapphire account. It is important that the organisation submits their MRFF Eligible Organisation certification form as soon as possible, so there is enough time for the certification process to be completed in Sapphire before the minimum data due date (see section 4.1).

Your application will consist of:

- a Profile Report containing information drawn from each CI's Profile in Sapphire
- an Application Report containing information that you entered directly into the Application Form in Sapphire
- a Grant Proposal (including a Risk Management Plan, a Measures of Success Statement and a Consumer Involvement Statement). You will upload this PDF file into Sapphire (see section 7.4)
- a Declaration of Applicant Interests. You will upload this PDF file into Sapphire (see section 7.4 and 13.2)
- Letter/s of Support (where relevant). These PDF files will be uploaded into Sapphire (see section 7.4)
- letter/s from research facilities (where relevant). These PDF files will be uploaded into Sapphire (see section 7.4).

Detailed instructions on completing your application are in section 7.4. Your MRFF Eligible Organisation is required to certify your application as correct and complete prior to submitting it to NHMRC. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995* and we will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

Examples of false or misleading information in an application include, but are not limited to:

- providing a dishonest statement regarding time commitments to the research
- providing incomplete or inaccurate facts regarding other sources of funding
- providing a fictitious record of your achievements
- falsifying claims in publication records (such as describing a paper as accepted for publication when it has only been submitted).

If we believe that omission or inclusion of misleading information are intentional we may refer the matter for investigation and take action under the grant guidelines, the grant agreement or, for this grant opportunity, the NHMRC Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy.

You cannot change your application after the closing date and time. You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

7.1 Joint (consortia) applications

In some cases, the organisation that will administer your grant may differ from the organisation in which you will actually conduct the proposed research. For example, many universities administer research being conducted in an affiliated teaching hospital. You are required to list Participating Institutions in your application and specify the percentage of the research effort being undertaken within these organisations.

Prior to submission your MRFF Eligible Organisation's RAO is required to assure us that arrangements for the management of the grant have been agreed between all organisations associated with the application.

7.2 Timing of grant opportunity processes

Minimum data describing your application must be submitted by the due date shown below. Applications that fail to satisfy this requirement will not be accepted.

Applications must be submitted to NHMRC by the closing date below. Late applications will not be accepted.

Requests for application extensions will be considered on a case by case basis and must be submitted by email to help@nhmrc.gov.au on or before the close date and time. Requests will only be considered for:

- unforeseen circumstances, e.g. natural calamities such as bushfires, floods or cyclones, or
- exceptional circumstances that affect multiple applicants, e.g. power and/or internet network outages, or
- where an applicant, or a member of their immediate family[9], is incapacitated due to an unforeseen medical emergency, such as life-threatening injury, accident or death.

Extensions, if granted, will be for a maximum of 7 calendar days. This is to ensure that subsequent assessment processes and approval of funding recommendations are not delayed.

Requests for extensions submitted after the scheme close date and time will not be considered.

The expected completion date of your research must be nominated in your application and must not extend beyond the grant period specified in section 3.2.

Table 3. Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Applications open	24 September 2025
Minimum data due	5pm ACT local time on 4 March 2026
Applications close	5pm ACT local time on 1 April 2026
Assessment of applications	May - August 2026
Approval of outcomes of selection process	Quarter 4 2026
Notification to applicants	Quarter 1 2027
Acceptance of grant offer	To be specified within the grant schedule (generally within one month of formal offers)
Grant activity commences	To be specified within the grant schedule (within a reasonable timeframe following execution of the grant schedule)
End date of grant activity	For Incubator grants (Stream 1): within 2 years of execution of the grant schedule For Targeted Calls for Research grants (Streams 2-4): within 7 years of execution of the grant schedule

[9] Immediate family comprises a spouse, child, parent or sibling. It includes de facto, step and adoptive relations (e.g. de facto, step or adopted children).

7.3 Questions during the application process

Applicants requiring further assistance should direct enquiries to their MRFF Eligible Organisation's Research Administration Officer. Research Administration Officers can contact NHMRC's Research Help Centre for further advice by email to help@nhmrc.gov.au.

NHMRC will not respond to any enquiries submitted after the date and time indicated on the cover page of these grant guidelines.

Any alterations or addenda to the grant guidelines will be published on GrantConnect.

7.4 Completing the grant application

Using Sapphire

Applications must be submitted electronically using Sapphire. Electronic submission requires approved MRFF Eligible Organisations and CIs on an application to register for an account.

Sapphire Tutorials and FAQs can be found here:

Tutorials: https://healthandmedicalresearch.gov.au/tutorials.html#

FAQ: https://healthandmedicalresearch.gov.au/help.html

If you have any technical difficulties, please contact your RAO or NHMRC's Research Help Centre by email to help@nhmrc.gov.au.

Starting your application in Sapphire

Applicants must create a new application for this grant opportunity in Sapphire. The following advice is provided to assist you to complete specific sections of the application.

Minimum data

You must submit minimum data in Sapphire by the applicable due date and time.

Failure to meet this deadline will result in your application not proceeding.

Minimum data are indicated in Sapphire by a blue flag and are comprised of:

- Application Title (minimum of 10 characters)
- Application Details:
    - MRFF Eligible Organisation
    - Stream applied for (one per application)
    - Priority Population (yes/no)
    - Project Synopsis (see *Project Synopsis* below) (minimum of 100 characters)
    - Privacy Agreement
- Research Classification:
    - Broad Research Area
    - Fields of Research
    - Peer Review Areas (at least 3 subjects must be selected)
    - Research Keywords (5 keywords must be selected)

- Research Team:
    - Chief Investigator A (a complete CIA Role, Name and Email).

Using placeholder text such as “text”, “synopsis” or “xx” etc. is not acceptable as minimum data.

Please note you will also need to complete the Privacy Agreement in order to save your minimum data. Your RAO is not required to certify the minimum data. Applications should only be certified once complete and ready for submission.

Profile requirements

Instructions for entering Profile information in Sapphire are provided in the relevant Sapphire user guides. All mandatory sections of your CIs’ profiles must be completed.

It is important that CIs update their Profile in Sapphire prior to certification of the application by your RAO. Changes made to your CV after RAO certification will not appear in the submitted application.

The following components of your CIs’ Profile will be incorporated into your application:

My Grants (during the assessable period of this grant opportunity (see Glossary))

This section is auto-populated in Sapphire. If any NHMRC or MRFF grants are missing from this section, please contact NHMRC’s Research Help Centre.

Other Funding (during the assessable period of this grant opportunity (see Glossary))

Provide sufficient details about other funding you have received (excluding funding from NHMRC or the MRFF).

Career Disruptions (during the assessable period of this grant opportunity (see Glossary))

For guidance on what constitutes a career disruption see section 6. If applicable, you (or members of your CI Team) should use this opportunity to declare any career disruptions that may be relevant to your career history.

If you have had an extended career disruption within the assessable period of this grant opportunity (see Glossary), it is advised that you briefly explain this in your application and nominate additional achievements from the most recent year/s without a career disruption.

For example, if during a five (5) year period you have taken six (6) months of parental/carer’s leave and then returned to work at 0.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for three (3) years before resuming at a full-time level, you will have worked an equivalent of three (3) FTE over that five (5) year period.

You should therefore:

1. provide the details of your career disruption/s in your Profile in Sapphire
2. consider including examples of achievements that predate the assessable period of this grant opportunity by the claimed FTE (2 years in the above example) in section D2 – Chief Investigator capability and capacity of the Grant Proposal (see section 6). Please preface these items in D2 with the following sentence: *The following have been included in accordance with sections 6 and 7.4 of the grant guidelines (career disruption)*.

When providing the details for your career disruption/s in Sapphire, please select the nature of the career disruption from the drop-down menu.

- Impact

Provide a brief explanation on the impact the career disruption/s has had on your achievements and associated productivity. Applicants should not describe the nature of the career disruption in this field. Note that this information will be provided to expert assessors. Maximum of 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks.

- Additional research outputs

The Additional Research Outputs section of your Sapphire Profile does not need to be completed for this grant opportunity (refer to section D2 of the Grant Proposal).

- Dates

You are required to nominate the periods in the assessable period of this grant opportunity (see Glossary) where you have had a disruption (approximate dates). Entries will be listed in reverse chronological order.

Project Synopsis

A Synopsis of your application is required in the Sapphire form as part of the minimum data requirements. This information will inform the selection of assessors with suitable expertise to review your application, and for communication with various audiences regarding how the grants selected for funding will achieve the outcomes sought from this grant opportunity.

Applicants proposing clinical research, including clinical trials, should ensure that the Project Synopsis is written in plain English, incorporates Participant, Intervention, Comparator and Outcome, and concludes by stating why the research is important.

The Grant Proposal

You will upload your Grant Proposal into Sapphire as a PDF file. A pre-formatted Microsoft Word template for the Grant Proposal can be downloaded from the grant opportunity webpage on GrantConnect.

Applicants must use this template to complete their Grant Proposal. Mandatory naming, size and formatting requirements apply.

Table 4. Formatting Requirements for the Grant Proposal

Formatting Requirements for the Grant Proposal	
File format	The Grant Proposal must be saved and uploaded in Portable Document Format (PDF)
File size	The PDF file MUST NOT exceed 2MB in size
File name	The PDF file must be named as follows: *CIA Surname_ grant opportunity name_document type.pdf* e.g. Smith_2025 Clinical Trials Activity_Grant Proposal.pdf
Page size	A4
Page limits	Page limits are specified for each component of the Grant Proposal
Font	NHMRC recommends a minimum of 12 point Times New Roman. Applicants must ensure the font is readable.

Header	Application ID and CIA surname must be included in the header
Line spacing	Single
Language	English
Web links	Web links are not permitted except in citations of materials only available online. The full URL must be provided and the style must allow identification from a printed version of the application.

Applications that fail to comply with the formatting requirements or the specified page limits may be excluded from consideration. Applicants and MRFF Eligible Organisations are advised to retain a copy of the PDF file. If printing the PDF file for the purposes of checking formatting and page length, ensure that page scaling is set to 'None' in the print settings.

Your Grant Proposal must include the following components, and no other components:

Table 5. Grant Proposal Components

	Component	Page Limit
A	Project Impact	3 pages
B	Project Methodology	5 pages
C	Milestones and Performance Indicators	2 pages
D	Capacity, Capability and Resources to Deliver the Project	
	1. Team Capacity and Capability Relevant to this Application	1 page
	2. Chief Investigator Capacity and Capability	1 page per CI
E	Overall Value and Risk of the Project	
	1. Risk Management Plan	2 pages
	2. Contributions (Cash and In-Kind)	1 page
F	Consumer Involvement Statement	2 pages
G	Measures of Success Statement	1 page
H	References	1 page

A brief description of each component is provided below.

A. Project Impact (maximum three A4 pages)

This section should be used to address Assessment Criterion 1 or 5 – Project Impact. Applicants are requested to address all relevant aspects of the criterion listed in section 6.1.1 or 6.2.1, including those that relate to consumers and (where applicable) Priority Populations.

B. Project Methodology (maximum five A4 pages)

This section should be used to address Assessment Criterion 2 or 6 – Project Methodology. Please provide sufficient information to justify the design and conduct of the proposed research as specified in

section 6.1.2 or 6.2.2, including details that relate to consumers and (where applicable) Priority Populations.

C. Milestones and Performance Indicators (maximum two A4 pages)

This section should be used to address Assessment Criterion 2 or 6 – Project Methodology. Applicants are requested to provide a table of milestones and performance indicators and corresponding dates. The approach should be specific to the proposed research and allow for effective monitoring of progress at twelve month intervals. Applicants should note that relevant milestones for research involving the conduct of a clinical trial may include, but are not limited to, receipt of ethics approval for first trial site and all trial sites, enrolment of first participant, recruitment numbers per month, reporting to Human Research Ethics Committees (HREC) sites, budget targets, placement of data in a repository, close out and publication.

For examples of performance indicators relevant to the MRFF, refer to the Performance indicators towards the impact of the MRFF. This list is not exhaustive but can be used as a guide to develop indicators that are appropriate to the project.

D. Capacity, Capability and Resources to Deliver the Project

This section should be used to address Assessment Criterion 3 or 7 – Capacity, Capability and Resources to Deliver the Project. Provide details of any career disruption considerations, where relevant.

1. Team Capacity and Capability Relevant to this Application (maximum one A4 page)

Applicants are requested to provide a summary of the research team's overall capacity and capability as specified in section 6.1.3 or 6.2.3, including those that relate to consumers and (where applicable) Priority Populations.

Information about Associate Investigators must not be included as contributing to team capacity and capability.

2. Chief Investigator Capacity and Capability (maximum one A4 page per CI)

CIs should use this section to highlight their achievements relevant to the proposed research. Each CI should provide an example/s of impact from the assessable period of this grant opportunity (see Glossary), taking into account Career Disruptions.

Examples of impact may include:

- development of new knowledge within an internationally recognised field of research
- improvement to health in the Australian population and/or in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- improvement to health systems, services, policy, programs or clinical practice
- development of a service delivery or system change, prevention or intervention program, device, therapeutic or change in clinical practice
- change in policy that has impacted social well-being, equality or social inclusion or impacted the social well-being of the end-user, public and community.

E. Overall Value and Risk of the Project

This section should be used to address Assessment Criterion 4 or 8 – Overall Value and Risk of the Project. Your response to the criteria must consist of the following:

1. Risk Management Plan (maximum two A4 pages)

Please provide a Risk Management Plan that addresses key risks in relation to your project and how you propose to address, manage, mitigate, monitor and report those risks. Risk themes for consideration in developing your risk management plan are provided in the below table (the list is not exhaustive).

Risk Themes	Types of Risk
People	People capability Recruitment Project management Stakeholders Safety
Information	Intervention or procedures for gathering research data Data integrity / accuracy Data disclosure / unauthorised access
Governance	Accountability Assurance processes Litigation Reporting
Delivery	Scientific design / research integrity Budget / financial Innovation Resources Project failure Performance measures Poor practice / incorrect analysis
Regulatory	Legislation Ethics Policy

STEP 1: Provide a tabulated list of the key risks in the following format:

Risk theme	Risk	How risk is mitigated / managed

STEP 2: You must also explain how you propose to monitor and report risks (both those identified in your submitted risk management plan and those which may arise during your project):

- describe your proposed approach for monitoring risks (e.g. timing of review, what risk ratings you propose to use in monitoring, whose responsibility)
- describe how you plan to report on risks (e.g. what you will report, what process, to who and at what point).

The risk management plan (incorporating **STEPS 1 and 2**) must be no longer than two A4 pages in length.

2. Contributions (Cash and In-Kind) (maximum one A4 page)

Applicants should provide details of any cash or in-kind contributions that are critical to the successful delivery of the project in the table below, with the following exceptions:

- contributions (including salary contributions) provided by the MRFF Eligible Organisation or any Participating Institution/s as described in section 7.1
- contributions toward indirect costs of research (i.e. organisation overhead costs that benefit and support research) as described in section 5.9

Name of organisation providing the contribution	Type of contribution (cash or in-kind)	Value of contribution (in-kind contributions should be valued at cost)	Letter of Support provided?
			Enter 'Yes' when evidence is attached in Sapphire

Note that applicants are required to submit Letter/s of Support confirming the contributions listed in this table as part of their application. See *Letters of Support* below.

Please also note that, as part of their post-award reporting obligations, MRFF grantees must provide details of any contributions received during the grant period and indicate whether each contribution has been made as expected (see section 12).

F. Consumer Involvement Statement (maximum two A4 pages)

This section should be used to address all four Assessment Criteria. Your Consumer Involvement Statement should explain how you propose to involve consumers at all stages of the proposed research, including its prioritisation, design, conduct, dissemination, translation and evaluation, with reference to the Principles for Consumer Involvement in Research Funded by the MRFF. The form and level of consumer involvement in your Statement should be appropriate to the specific project and to that cohort of consumers, and may include:

- describing how the needs, priorities, views and values of consumers (including people with relevant lived experience and their carers) have informed the research question

- describing how, when and in what roles consumers will be involved in the conceptualisation, development, planned translation and implementation of the proposed research
- describing how consumer involvement in the project is inclusive and diverse, as appropriate to the project (e.g. by age, gender, geographic association, socio-economic status, cultural and linguistic diversity), and (where relevant) explaining why any particular groups are excluded
- providing details of how, when and in what roles consumers will be embedded in the ongoing conduct and dissemination of the research (e.g. project governance, project oversight, recruitment, consent, ethics, communications, publications)
- describing how you will provide a safe, sensitive and respectful environment for consumers involved in the project
- providing details of how you will provide sufficient peer support for consumers (e.g. by providing more than one consumer on each committee)
- describing how you will provide effective support, training and information for consumers to ensure they contribute to their full potential
- explaining how the project budget is adequate to support consumer involvement, participation and consultation (e.g. consumer engagement managers, translators, interpreters, travel costs, remuneration costs)
- explaining how project timelines are adequate to plan and support consumer involvement activities
- describing how the research team has the skills, experience and capacity to involve and support consumers (including those with lived experience) in the proposed research appropriately and effectively.

G. Measures of Success Statement (maximum one A4 page)

This section should be used to address Assessment Criterion 1 or 5 – Project Impact and Assessment Criterion 4 or 8 – Overall Value and Risk of the Project. Your response must provide a tabulated description of how the research activities will contribute to one or more of the Measures of Success described in the Evaluation Strategy and appropriate outcome/s or result/s against which your progress will be evaluated in the following format:

Measure of Success	How the project will contribute towards the Measure of Success	Description of outcome or result against which the contribution will be evaluated

The statement must be no longer than one A4 page in length. Grantees will be required to report against the outcome/s or result/s as specified in section 12.2.1.

H. References (maximum one A4 page)

Provide a list of all references cited in the application using a recognised citation style. Only include references to cited work.

Letters of Support

Letters of Support should be provided confirming the details (including description and value) of any cash or in-kind contributions listed in the *Contributions (Cash and In-Kind)* table in your application (noting the exceptions described in section 7.4.E2).

You may also provide Letters of Support for any other critical contributions that support the proposed project's feasibility that you feel are not adequately captured elsewhere in your application.

Information on any organisation(s) contributing cash or in-kind support to your grant must be entered into the 'Partner Organisation(s)' section within the application form in Sapphire. For each Letter of Support, provide the name and address of the organisation and the details of an authorised officer within the organisation. The authorised officer must be a person occupying a position with responsibility for the organisation's contribution to the research who has the authorisation to expend the organisation's money or resources. The letter must be on the organisation's letterhead and be signed by the authorised officer. Please note that applicants should not sign the Letter of Support unless they are a representative of the organisation and have the authorisation to expend the organisation's money or resources.

Each Letter of Support should be no more than two A4 pages in length and must include:

- application number and title
- a brief description of the organisation
- the authorised officer's role within the organisation
- where relevant, the organisation's lead researcher for the study (name, position held and a brief background)
- where relevant, a list of participating clinical trial site/s (including locations) that are the responsibility of the organisation
- information on the contribution (description and value, whether cash and/or in-kind) to the proposed research that is the responsibility of the organisation
- consent for the Australian Government to identify the organisation in media releases, on websites and in future grant opportunity documentation
- where available, a weblink to the organisation's most recent annual report – the full URL must be provided and the style must allow identification from a printed version of the grant application. If an annual report is not available, the Letter of Support should explain why this is the case.

Letters of Support should comply with the formatting requirements for the Grant Proposal (see section 7.4) with exceptions to provide for the use of organisational letterheads and a weblink to the annual report. It is important that the title of the file is in the following format: *CIA Surname_grant opportunity name_LoS_organisation name (or acronym).pdf*

Declaration of Applicant Interests

Your declaration of applicant interests will take the form of a single PDF file that complies with the formatting requirements for the Grant Proposal specified in section 7.4. It is important that the name of the file is in the following format: *CIA Surname_grant opportunity name_Declaration of Interests.pdf*

The declaration should be uploaded into Sapphire.

For further details see section 13.2.

Direct Research Costs

Enter details of the proposed research budget into Sapphire, keeping in mind the level and duration of funding available under this grant opportunity. Details on permitted uses of funds and setting of budgets can be found in section 5. All components of your budget requests are to be included in 'Direct Research Costs'. Note that the proposed value entered for each budget component should reflect the funding being sought from the MRFF for that component (i.e. the value of any contributions (cash or in-kind) as specified above should not be included).

Requests for Equipment, PSPs and DRCs must be included in your budget. For each item you must enter:

- the item type
- the name/description of the item
- the total value of the item requested for each year
- a justification for the particular item requested.

Applicants may request funding for services from research facilities required to undertake the Grant Proposal as described in section 5. Provide details of the costs of using the services of research facilities within 'Other Research Costs' in Sapphire and ensure they are fully justified. Applicants should consult with research facilities to ensure that the services they require can be provided and that the charges included in the research budget reflects their charges. Letters from research facilities confirming their collaboration must be uploaded into Sapphire in 'Third Party Research Facilities'. It is important that the name of the file is in the following format: *CIA Surname_grant opportunity name_Research Facilities.pdf*.

Submitting the application

Prior to submitting the application the CIA and RAO must ensure that:

- all CIs have provided written agreement to the CIA for the final application to be certified
- all personnel have provided written agreement to their being named in the application, to participate in the manner described in the application and to the use of their personal information as described in the *NHMRC Privacy Policy*.

Once all Profile details, application form details and PDF documents have been entered/uploaded into Sapphire, the application can be certified and submitted.

Certification is required by both the CIA and MRFF Eligible Organisation. Please review the application to ensure it is accurate and complete and meets all eligibility requirements.

The CIA must provide the RAO with evidence that the application is complete. This written evidence should be retained by the MRFF Eligible Organisation and must be provided to us on request. The following assurances, acknowledgements and undertakings are required of the CIA prior to submitting an application:

- all required information has been provided and is complete, current and correct
- all eligibility and other application requirements have been met
- all personnel contributing to the research activity have familiarised themselves with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, the *National Statement of the Ethical Conduct of Human Research*, the *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes* and other relevant NHMRC policies concerning the conduct of research, and agree to conduct themselves in accordance with those policies

- that the application may be excluded from consideration if found to be in breach of any requirements, in accordance with sections 4 and 5.

And if funded,

- the research will be carried out in strict accordance with the grant guidelines, grant agreement and schedule, and
- the research may be used to inform evaluations of the grant opportunity and the Program.

The following assurances, acknowledgements and undertakings are required of the MRFF Eligible Organisation prior to submitting an application:

- reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the application is complete and correct and complies with all eligibility and other application requirements detailed in the grant guidelines
- where the CIA is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident in Australia, they will have the requisite work visa in place at the time of accepting the grant and will be based in Australia for the duration of the grant, excluding reasonable overseas travel consistent with section 5
- the appropriate facilities and salary support will be available for the entirety of the grant period
- approval of the research activity by relevant organisational committees and approval bodies, particularly in relation to ethics and biosafety, will be sought and obtained prior to the commencement of the grant, or the research activities that require their approval
- arrangements for the management of the grant have been agreed between all organisations associated with the application
- the application is being submitted with the full authority of, and on behalf of, the MRFF Eligible Organisation, noting that under section 136.1 of *the Commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995*, it is an offence to provide false or misleading information to a Commonwealth body in an application for a benefit. This includes submission of an application by those not authorised by the MRFF Eligible Organisation to submit applications for funding to NHMRC.

The MRFF Eligible Organisation's RAO must certify and submit grant applications. Once an application has been submitted and the application period has closed, the application is considered final and no changes may be made.

8. The grant selection process

8.1 Assessment of grant applications

NHMRC will assess the eligibility of your application at any stage following the close of applications. NHMRC may request further information in order to assess whether the eligibility requirements have been met. MRFF Eligible Organisations will be notified in writing of ineligible applications and are responsible for advising applicants.

If eligible, we will then assess your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the assessment criteria

- whether it provides value with relevant money.[10]

Scoring of the technical assessment criteria will be done in accordance with the relevant Assessment Criteria Scoring Matrices provided with these grant guidelines. Rating of the non-technical (Overall Value and Risk of the Project) assessment criterion will be done in accordance with the Rating Scale for Assessment Criteria 4 and 8: Overall Value and Risk of the Project provided with these grant guidelines.

To be awarded MRFF funding for an Incubator grant or Targeted Call for Research grant, applications must receive a score of 4 or higher against each of the weighted technical assessment criteria (criteria 1, 2 and 3 for Stream 1; criteria 5, 6, and 7 for Streams 2-4), and a rating of 'Good' or 'Excellent' for the non-weighted assessment criterion (criterion 4 for Stream 1; criterion 8 for Streams 2-4).

8.2 Who will assess applications?

Applications will undergo rigorous assessment, whereby they are subject to scrutiny and evaluation by individuals with relevant experience and expertise appropriate to the grant opportunity such as scientific experts, consumers, industry experts and health service providers. Assessors will be selected from across the Australian and international health, research, industry and community sectors on the basis that they will bring experience and expertise in a range of areas including:

- trans-disciplinary
- academia
- clinical
- health services delivery
- translation research
- consumer and patients
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health
- Industry and commercialisation expertise.

Gender balance will also be considered, along with geographic representation. We strive to include at least one international representative to ensure MRFF funded research is internationally competitive.

When developing your application, you should take into account the nature of expert assessment: independent assessors will be selected taking into account the experience and expertise appropriate to the grant opportunity and may draw, as appropriate, from their breadth of knowledge relevant to the grant opportunity when assessing applications. Issues not relevant to the assessment criteria will not be considered.

Australian and/or international expert assessors will be selected and applicants should therefore construct applications with the knowledge that the full application may be provided to Australian and international expert assessors.

Any assessor, who is not a Commonwealth Official, will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRPs. Assessors are also required to declare material personal interests (financial or non-financial) and material personal associations in accordance with NHMRC policy on the declaration and management of conflicts of interest.

[10] See glossary for an explanation of 'value with relevant money'.

Expert assessors will score your application against the technical assessment criteria (criteria 1, 2 and 3 for Stream 1; criteria 5, 6, and 7 for Streams 2-4) and the non-technical assessment criterion (criterion 4 for Stream 1; criterion 8 for Streams 2-4). NHMRC may collate the scores against the technical assessment criteria provided by expert assessors to identify applications to be considered for funding and less meritorious applications, which may then be removed from further consideration. A grant assessment committee may meet to discuss the application and finalise assessment scores.

NHMRC may seek additional advice on any application.

NHMRC will forward the outcomes of the assessment process to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. NHMRC may also provide copies of all application information to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

Applicants must not make contact about their application with anyone who is directly engaged with its assessment such as a member of the grant assessment committee. Doing so may constitute a breach of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018* and result in the application being excluded from consideration.

8.3 Who will approve grants?

NHMRC will provide the outcomes of the assessment process to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. This information will consist of a combined score against each of the individual technical assessment criteria, a weighted combined score against the technical assessment criteria and a separate rating against the non-technical assessment criterion.

The Delegate will approve grants drawing on the outcomes of NHMRC's assessment process. The Delegate may take into consideration applicant interests declared pursuant to section 13.1.

The Delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the approval of grants
- the grant funding amount to be awarded
- the terms and conditions of the grant.

The Delegate must not approve funding if it reasonably considers that the funding available across financial years will not accommodate the funding offer, and/or the application does not represent value with relevant money (see section 8.1).

9. Notification of application outcomes

You will be advised of the outcome of your application by NHMRC via Sapphire. If you are successful, you will also be advised about any specific conditions attached to the grant, including the timing of any public communications you make regarding being awarded a grant. Further information is available on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing website.

9.1 Feedback on your application

All applicants will be provided with feedback on the outcome of the application, which may consist of individual scores and an overall score against the technical assessment criteria, and a rating against the non-technical assessment criterion.

10. Successful grant applications

Successful applicants are expected to contribute to assessment processes for future MRFF grant opportunities which require expert assessment.

A grant cannot be provided to you if you receive funding from another source for the same purpose. You can apply for grants under any program but, if your applications are successful, you must choose either the grant from this Program or the other grant.

Where you have submitted the same application to other grant opportunities and have received an offer of funding from one of these sources, NHMRC and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing reserve the right to withhold any further offer of funding for the application.

Where it appears that an applicant has submitted similar applications for research/project funding and has been successful with more than one application, the applicant is required to provide a written report clearly identifying how the proposed research objectives/outcomes and expenditure in the applications are different. If the applications are not sufficiently different, NHMRC and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing reserve the right to withhold or withdraw an offer of funding at the discretion of the Delegate, or you will be required to decline or relinquish one of the grants.

10.1 The grant agreement

Your MRFF Eligible Organisation must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The grant agreement will consist of a grant schedule underneath the Funding Agreement between the Commonwealth and the MRFF Eligible Organisation through which you applied. A sample Funding Agreement and grant schedule are available on NHMRC's website.

We must execute a grant agreement with the MRFF Eligible Organisation before we can make any payments. Execute means both the MRFF Eligible Organisation and the Program Delegate have signed the grant agreement. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. You must not start any research activities until a grant agreement is executed.

The approval of your grant may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the Delegate. We will identify these in the offer of grant funding.

If the MRFF Eligible Organisation enters an agreement under this grant opportunity, you cannot receive other grants for the same research activity from other Commonwealth, State or Territory granting programs.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within a specified time period. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information

you provide in your application. We will review any required changes to these details to ensure they do not impact the project as approved by the Delegate.

Where a grantee fails to meet the obligations of the grant agreement, the Commonwealth may suspend grant payments and take action to recover grant funds.

Your MRFF Eligible Organisation should not commence the grant activity or make financial commitments until a Funding Agreement and grant schedule have been executed by the Commonwealth and your MRFF Eligible Organisation to meet its undertakings, including:

- where the CIA is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident in Australia, having the requisite work visa in place at the time of accepting the successful grant and being based in Australia for the duration of the grant, excluding reasonable overseas travel consistent with section 5
- the appropriate facilities and salary support being available for the entirety of the grant period
- approval of the research activity by relevant organisational committees and approval bodies, particularly in relation to ethics and biosafety, being sought and obtained prior to the commencement of the research, or the parts of the research that require their approval, and
- arrangements for the management of the grant having been agreed between all organisations associated with the research.

If the above undertakings are not being met your MRFF Eligible Organisation must notify NHMRC. Payment of the grant may be suspended until NHMRC and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has considered a request from your MRFF Eligible Organisation to vary the grant conditions.

Commonwealth Commercialisation Clauses

The Grant Agreement relating to projects funded under this grant opportunity may include the Commonwealth Commercialisation Clauses.

These Commercialisation Clauses seek to ensure that the Commonwealth has an early opportunity to enter into arrangements with the MRFF Eligible Organisation (or other relevant party) to purchase or acquire Commercialised Products resulting from the funded research activities. Any offer made to the Commonwealth must be on commercial terms which are not more onerous or less favourable than terms offered to any other party.

Where a grant awarded under this grant opportunity is subject to the Commercialisation Clauses, a Commercialisation Plan will also be required for review by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, as specified within the Grant Agreement at award.

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing will identify which projects will be subject to the Commercialisation Clauses based on information provided in the application.

10.2 Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws and regulations in undertaking your project. You must also comply with any specific legislation/policies/industry standards within the grant agreement, such as:

- The MRFF Act [1]
- Working with Vulnerable People registration
- State/Territory legislation in relation to working with children
- Ethics and research practices.

10.3 How we pay the grant

The grant schedule to the Funding Agreement will state the:

- grant amount approved by the Commonwealth
- proportion of the approved grant amount that will be paid in each financial year during the term of the grant.

Your MRFF Eligible Organisation is responsible for paying any extra eligible expenses that are incurred.

All amounts referred to in these grant guidelines are exclusive of GST, unless stated otherwise. MRFF Eligible Organisations are responsible for all financial and taxation implications associated with receiving funds.

Payments may depend on receipt of complete and timely information and/or satisfactory progress being made against grant conditions, milestones and performance indicators. The Commonwealth will review your progress reports to confirm that the grant conditions, milestones and performance indicators have been achieved. Where grant conditions, milestones and/or performance indicators have not been achieved grant payments may be suspended or removed.

Progress and expenditure against approved activities will be monitored over the duration of the grant period. Grant funding will be dependent on meeting any conditions and agreed milestones by their specified due dates.

11. Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 21 days after the date of effect[11] as required by Section 5.4 of the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles*. The following information may also be published in a manner that allows it to be searched and viewed in a variety of ways:

- Application identity number
- MRFF Initiative and Grant Opportunity from which the grant was funded
- Funded Organisation
- Organisation Type (as per Section 24 of the MRFF Act)
- State/Territory
- Project Title
- Media Summary
- Chief Investigator name/s

[1] https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2015A00116

[11] See glossary

- Partner organisations (if relevant)
- Selection Process
- Approved grant amount
- Broad Research Area
- Research Keywords
- Field(s) of Research.

12. How we monitor your grant activity

12.1 Keeping us informed

Your MRFF Eligible Organisation's RAO should let us know if anything is likely to affect your organisation or impact successful delivery of your project.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your grant, carry on business and pay debts due.

Your RAO must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement you must contact us immediately.

Your MRFF Eligible Organisation must notify us of events relating to your grant and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

12.2 Reporting

Your MRFF Eligible Organisation is required to report to NHMRC on the progress of the grant and the use of grant funds. Where an organisation fails to submit reports (financial or otherwise) as required, the Commonwealth may take action under the provisions of the grant agreement. Failure to report within timeframes may affect eligibility to receive future funding.

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. The reporting requirements of your grant will be outlined in your grant schedule. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed milestones and MRFF Measures of Success
- risks arising and how these are being managed
- project expenditure, including expenditure of grant funds, and
- information about your research that supports evaluation of the MRFF.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

12.2.1 Progress reports

Progress reports must:

- include details of your progress towards completion of agreed activities, including any risks arising and how these are being managed to ensure outcomes
- include evidence to demonstrate progress against the outcome/s and result/s identified in your Measures of Success statement (see section 7.4)
- indicate the estimated expenditure anticipated to be incurred during the next reporting period
- include details of research outputs (see section 12.7)
- be submitted by the report due date (you can submit reports ahead of time if you have completed relevant activities), and
- include information about your grant that supports evaluation of the MRFF.

Grantees will be required to report on project progress at twelve month intervals. We may withhold grant payments pending receipt of a satisfactory progress report. You must discuss any activity, milestone or reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

More information on progress reports is available on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and NHMRC websites.

12.2.2 Annual financial reports

Annual financial reports are required in a form prescribed by the Commonwealth. At the completion of the grant, a financial statement is also required to verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement.

More information on financial reports is available on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and NHMRC websites.

12.2.3 Final report

When you complete the grant activity, you must submit an end of project report.

Final reports must:

- include evidence of completion of agreed activities (including, but not limited to, evidence of project impact)
- include evidence to support achievement of the outcome/s and result/s identified in your Measures of Success statement (see section 7.4)
- identify the total expenditure incurred and any underspend
- include details of research outputs (see section 12.7)
- be submitted by the report due date, and
- include information about your grant that supports evaluation of the MRFF.

More information on final reports is available on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and NHMRC websites.

12.2.4 Ad-hoc reports

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your grant. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the grant activity, or to support evaluation of the MRFF.

More information on additional reports is available on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and NHMRC websites.

12.3 Audited financial acquittal report

At the completion of the grant, we may ask you to provide an independently audited financial acquittal report. A financial acquittal report will verify that you spent the grant funding in accordance with the grant agreement. The report requires you to prepare a statement of grant income and expenditure.

12.4 Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect your progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant schedule, including (but not limited to):

- changing grant activities
- changing milestones
- deferring the grant for a period of time due to delayed or suspended activity
- changing expenditure, including overseas expenditure.

The Program does not allow for:

- an increase of grant funds.

For further details refer to the MRFF Grant Variation Policy and Appendix A.

If a delay in the grant causes milestone achievement and payment dates to move to a different financial year, you will need a variation to the grant schedule. We can only move funds between financial years if there is enough Program funding in the relevant year to allow for the revised payment schedule. If we cannot move the funds, you may lose some grant funding.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the project outcome
- consistency with the Program policy objective, grant guidelines and any other relevant policies
- changes to the timing of grant payments
- availability of Program funds.

12.5 Registration of clinical trials

Clinical trials that are initiated in Australia or New Zealand must be registered with the Australian New Zealand Clinical Trials Registry (ANZCTR) prior to recruitment of patients into the trial. Other MRFF-funded trials that are part of an existing study must be registered on ANZCTR or an equivalent

clinical trials registry such as the US National Institutes of Health ClinicalTrials.gov or a primary registry on the World Health Organization's International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (ICTRP) prior to the recruitment of patients into the trial. Your Trial ID must be provided along with other details of your grant in your progress and final reports (see section 12.2).

12.6 Compliance visits

We may visit you during or at the completion of your grant activity to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

12.7 Dissemination of research outcomes

MRFF Eligible Organisations and CIs must ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to protect patient privacy, intellectual property and commercially confidential information.

Authors should endeavour to retain all necessary rights to enable the authors to publish and share their publications in any format at any time, and use the Creative Commons Attribution licence, CC-BY, where possible, when publishing their article.

Except where publication may compromise the MRFF Eligible Organisation's obligations with respect to patient privacy, intellectual property and/or commercially confidential information, grantees are required to comply with the following:

- if a clinical trial, register the trial (including the protocol) with ANZCTR (or equivalent) within 3 months of HREC approval and prior to recruitment of the first participant (see section 12.5). You must include the MRFF grant number and an acknowledgement of MRFF funding in the trial registration details (see section 12.9)
- within 12 months of the date of publication, ensure that all peer-reviewed research outputs arising from MRFF supported research:
    - are openly accessible in an institutional repository or other acceptable location (e.g. publisher website, subject-specific repository)
    - are linked to author ORCID iD(s), and
    - acknowledge MRFF grant support (in whole or in part) and the MRFF grant number in all relevant publications (see section 12.9).

Grantees are expected to include details of research outputs (including clinical trial registration information, patents, and publications) in their grant reports (see section 12.2). Grantees are also strongly encouraged to publish de-identified research data and associated metadata in an open access repository or a public database and in accordance with best practice.

12.8 Evaluation

We will evaluate the grant to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. Your grant agreement requires you to provide information to help with this evaluation. We may use information from your application and reports for this purpose, and for the purpose of evaluation of the Initiative and the MRFF more broadly. We may also interview you, or ask you for more information to help us

understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the Program was in achieving its outcomes.

We may contact you up to two years after you finish your grant for more information to assist with this evaluation. We may also invite you to participate in evaluation activities beyond this time to capture longer-term impact.

12.9 Acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a grant funded under the Program, including in a brochure or publication, and/or disseminate the outcomes of your research as described in section 12.7, you must acknowledge the grant by using the following, where *MRFXXXXXXX* is the unique grant ID:

'Research reported in this publication was supported by the Medical Research Future Fund under grant number *MRFXXXXXXX*'

If you erect signage in relation to the grant, the signage must contain an acknowledgement of the grant.

13. Probity

We will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published grant guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRPs.

You should be aware of your obligations under the *National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022*, noting that under the Act grantees will generally be considered 'contracted service providers' (see www.nacc.gov.au/resource-centre/nacc-fact-sheets).

13.1 Enquiries and feedback

All applicants will be provided with feedback on the outcome of their application (see section 9).

Applicants or grantees seeking to lodge a formal complaint should do so via the MRFF Eligible Organisation's RAO, in writing, within 28 days of the relevant decision or action.

Each complaint should be directed to the Complaints Team at: complaints@nhmrc.gov.au. NHMRC will provide a written response to all complaints.

If you do not agree with the way NHMRC has handled your complaint, you may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with NHMRC.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

13.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or Program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if our staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or member of an external panel
- has a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently, or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the Program/grant opportunity.

As part of your application, we will ask you to declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or confirm that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

See section 7.4 for instructions on uploading a Declaration of Applicant Interests with your application in Sapphire.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform NHMRC in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff are handled as set out in the *Australian Public Service Code of Conduct (Section 13(7))* of the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

13.3 Privacy, confidentiality and protection of personal information

NHMRC is the Administering Entity for this grant opportunity. NHMRC will receive applications and manage the assessment process. NHMRC will forward all application material and assessment scores to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

The Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act) requires entities bound by *the Australian Privacy Principles to have a privacy policy*. NHMRC's *Privacy Policy* is available on the NHMRC website. The privacy policy outlines the personal information handling practices at the NHMRC.

NHMRC may disclose your personal information to assessors from overseas countries, where there is a need, and in accordance with *the Privacy Act* and the NHMRC's *Privacy Policy*.

Grantees are required by the grant agreement to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988*, including *the Australian Privacy Principles*, and impose the same privacy obligations on any subcontractors engaged by the grantee to assist with the grant.

NHMRC may share information provided to it by applicants with other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes including government administration, research or service delivery and according to Australian laws, including the *Public Service Act 1999*, *Public Service Regulations 1999*, *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, *Crimes Act 1914*, and the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

13.4 When we may disclose confidential information

We may disclose confidential information:

- to the committee and our Commonwealth employees and contractors, to help us manage the Program effectively
- to the Auditor-General, Ombudsman, Privacy Commissioner or National Anti-Corruption Commissioner, or staff of their agencies
- to the responsible Minister or Assistant Minister
- to a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may also disclose confidential information if:

- we are required or authorised by law to disclose it
- you agree to the information being disclosed,
- someone other than us has made the confidential information public.

13.5 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the Program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

If someone requests a document under the FOI Act, we will release it (though we may need to consult with you and/or other parties first) unless it meets one of the exemptions set out in the FOI Act.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail: Freedom of Information Coordinator

National Health and Medical Research Council

GPO Box 1421

CANBERRA ACT 2601

By email: foi@nhmrc.gov.au

14. Glossary

Term	Definition
Administering entity	When an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes. NHMRC is the Administrating entity for this grant opportunity.
Application form	The document or computerised submission system that applicants use to apply for funding under the Program/grant opportunity.
Assessable period of this grant opportunity	The assessable period of this grant opportunity is 1 January 2020 to application submission date.
Assessment criteria	The specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application rankings.
Assessment Criteria 4 and 8 – Overall Value and Risk Rating Scale	A document accompanying the grant guidelines that provides example benchmarks against Assessment Criteria 4 and 8 – *Overall Value and Risk of the Project* to assist assessors when scoring applications.
Clinician researcher	An individual who holds a current professional registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, or with the National Alliance of Self-Regulating Health Professions, or is a registered art therapist or registered sonographer.
Commencement date	The expected start date for the grant activity.
Commonwealth entity	A Department of State, or a Parliamentary Department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act.
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles (CGRPs)	Establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.
Completion date	The expected date by which the grant activity must be completed and the grant funding spent.

Term	Definition
Consumer	A person with lived experience as a patient, client, potential patient, user of health services, and/or provider of support as a carer, family or community member. See the MRFF Consumer Reference Panel's Principles for Consumer Involvement in Research Funded by the Medical Research Future Fund.
Consumer involvement	Can refer to a range of approaches to involving consumers in the prioritisation, design, conduct, dissemination, translation and evaluation of research funded by the MRFF (see the MRFF Consumer Reference Panel's Principles for Consumer Involvement in Research Funded by the Medical Research Future Fund).
Contracted service provider	A contracted service provider is a person who is a party to a Commonwealth contract or is a party to a subcontract with a contracted service provider and is responsible for the provision of goods or services under contract, either directly or indirectly.
Date of effect	Can be the date on which a grant agreement/schedule is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.
Decision maker	The person who makes a decision to award a grant.
Delegate	An Australian Government official in the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing with responsibility for the grant opportunity (either the Chief Executive Officer, Health and Medical Research Office; First Assistant Secretary, Health Economics and Research Division; or Deputy Secretary, Strategy and First Nations Group).
Early career researcher	An individual within 5 years of their PhD award date, excluding career disruptions.
Early to mid-career researcher	An individual within 10 years of their PhD award date, excluding career disruptions.
Eligibility criteria	Refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Eligibility criteria should be developed to enable objective validation and are either 'met' or 'not met'. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
Eligible activities	The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a grant that are eligible for funding support as set out in section 5.1.

Term	Definition
Eligible application	An application or proposal for services or grant funding under the program that the Delegate has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with these grant guidelines.
Eligible expenditure	The expenditure incurred by a grantee on a project and which is eligible for funding support as set out in section 5.3.
Grant activity/activities	Refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake.
Grant agreement	Sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement and specifies the details of the grant. For MRFF grants administered by NHMRC, this will comprise a grant schedule underneath the Funding Agreement between the Commonwealth and the MRFF Eligible Organisation.
Grant funding or grant funds	The funding made available by the Australian Government to grantees under the Program.
Grant opportunity	Refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. A grant opportunity is aimed at achieving government policy outcomes under a Portfolio Budget Statement Program.
GrantConnect	The Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRPs.
Grantee	The individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.
Mid-career researcher	An individual within 5-10 years of their PhD award date, excluding career disruptions.
Minister	The Australian Government Minister for Health and Ageing.
MRFF Eligible Organisation	An organisation that meets the eligibility requirements for receiving and administering MRFF funding and has been approved as an MRFF Eligible Organisation by NHMRC.
National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC)	The National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) is an independent Commonwealth agency. It detects, investigates and reports on serious or systemic corruption in the Commonwealth public sector. The Commission operates under the *National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022*.

Term	Definition
Participating Institution	Means, in respect of a research activity, an organisation that contributes to the research activity in accordance with its Formal Agreement with, and under the leadership of, the MRFF Eligible Organisation and, where the context permits, includes its employees, advisers, officers, agents and contractor staff.
Personal information	Has the same meaning as in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) which is: Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable: a. whether the information or opinion is true or not; and b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.
PhD award date	The date an individual's Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) thesis is passed (not the date of conferral).
Priority population	Means Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, older people experiencing diseases of ageing, people with rare or currently untreatable diseases/conditions, people in remote/rural communities, people with a disability, individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, LGBTIQ+ people, youth.
Project	A project described in an application for grant funding under this grant opportunity.
Research Administration Officer	The officer nominated by a MRFF Eligible Organisation as its contact person for the purpose of grant applications and grant agreements.
Selection process	The method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria.
Sapphire	NHMRC's online grant and application management system.

Term	Definition
Value with relevant money	Value with relevant money in this document is a judgement based on the application representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations. When administering a grant opportunity, the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal are considered including, but not limited to: - the quality of the application and activities - fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives - that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government's outcomes being achieved - the potential grantee's relevant experience and performance history.