

2024 Research Innovation and Impact Grant Program Guidelines and Conditions

1. Introduction

The 2024 Research Innovation and Impact Grant Program (the program) is a Program of the Western Australian (WA) Future Health Research and Innovation Fund (FHRI Fund)¹ and the RPH Research Foundation².

The FHRI Fund provides a secure source of funding to drive health and medical research, innovation and commercialisation and through these activities, improve the health and prosperity of all Western Australians. It also provides an opportunity to diversify the economy, create jobs, improve the sustainability of the health system and position WA as a leader in research and innovation.

RPH Research Foundation is driven by a vision of research for better health. For more than 40 years, the RPH Research Foundation has been funding some of the greatest minds in Western Australia to unlock discoveries and improve the quality of healthcare available to all Western Australians. The Foundation links universities, research institutes and collaborators with the East Metropolitan Health Service (EMHS), to investigate the cause, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of all areas of healthcare. The RPH Research Foundation funds research that will increase medical knowledge, overcome challenges in healthcare and ultimately improve WA patient outcomes.

The program contributes to the following FHRI Fund Priority Goals:

- Target high-performing researchers in WA to maintain and/or advance the State's position as a leader in health and medical research.
- Establish co-funding partnerships that will secure genuinely new non-government funding for research and innovation aligned with Priorities for the FHRI Fund.

The program is administered by the RPH Research Foundation.

2. The Research Innovation and Impact Grant Program

Research Innovation and Impact grants aim to fund new research projects³ that challenge existing paradigms. The grants allow researchers to follow leading observations and investigate novel ideas to improve clinical practice.

The grant program supports Mid-Career and Senior researchers who are translating their research and ideas into healthcare innovations that could lead to a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our community. The research activity must be undertaken in WA and be of direct benefit to the WA community.

Applications from multidisciplinary collaborations across different sectors and disciplines are encouraged as are applications that demonstrate alignment with the FHRI Fund Focus Areas which include Aboriginal health and/or regional WA health issues, Burden of Disease, COVID-19 and Long COVID and Mental Health.

¹ <https://fhrifund.health.wa.gov.au/>

² <https://www.rphresearchfoundation.org.au/>

³ The word project in this document is the activity that has been funded for this grant

3. Funding

3.1. Level of funding

The total funding available for this program is \$3,600,000. Applicants can submit applications of up to \$1,200,000 for a period of up to three (3) years. Grant amounts offered to each recipient are at the discretion of the RPH Research Foundation. Grant funding is offered subject to the availability of funds, which could be varied in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

3.2. Duration of funding

Funding will not be released until all ethics and governance approvals (where required) have been obtained. The initial funding allocation must be released within one year of award (2025/2026 Financial Year). Any variation to this condition would require approval based on exceptional circumstances, with requests to be assessed by the RPH Research Foundation.

3.3. Funding Details

Requested funding, activity costs and duration of the project must reasonably reflect the proposed Activity.

All budget items should be adequately described and justified as consideration is given to budgets during the assessment process.

The intention is that funding will be spent within WA unless goods and services expenditure items are not available in WA.

Grant funding may not be carried forward beyond the three years from the initial funding allocation date. Grant funding that is used for purposes other than that for which it was awarded or is unspent at the completion of the project, must be returned to the RPH Research Foundation.

Grant funding is exclusive of GST and Administering Institutions are responsible for all financial and taxation implications associated with receiving funds.

4. Biostatistical Support

Successful applicants will have access to the RPH Research Foundation's team of biostatisticians, where required, to provide statistical support.

The RPH Research Foundation provides this service free of charge to grant recipients.

An estimate of biostatistical service utilisation (in hours, costed at \$100/hour) must be included in the application budget under 'in-kind support'.

5. Eligible Costs

The direct costs of the research activities include, but are not limited to:

- Staff salaries

Where justified the Chief Investigator can budget staff costs if:

- They do not already have a salary for the grant period, and
- They are essential to the research proposal.

We do not provide a salary for the Chief Investigator of this project.

- Materials and Consumables
 - Laboratory chemicals and materials (i.e. reagents, enzymes, cell/tissues/bacterial culture, plasticware and glassware, proteins, antibodies, peptides).
 - Associated charges for shipping, delivery and freight.
- Animals
 - The cost of purchasing animals for this project.
 - Running costs (i.e. animal agistment, experimental procedures, licences and staff training).
 - Staff costs (i.e. contributions towards the salaries of animal house technicians).
- Equipment
 - We will provide support to purchase project-related equipment deemed indispensable for the project, up to the value of \$25,000 in total. Equipment purchased with this grant funding will be the property of the administering institution.
- Dissemination and engagement
 - Costs of activities and outputs to facilitate the impact pathway, including publications. Please ensure acknowledgement of the grant funding is included and aligns with the requirements set out in the Grant Agreement.
 - Costs to promote uptake and benefits of the research for the research field and the wider community.
 - Costs of consumer and community involvement activities.

6. Ineligible Costs

The grant funding provided to applicants is to be solely used for research and not administrative costs related to the research activities.

The following costs are ineligible:

- Infrastructure costs such as building and premises costs, basic services and utilities (i.e. including disbursements such as postage, photocopying and stationery unless justified as essential to this project).
- Organisational overheads and indirect costs (i.e. building and premises, technical and administrative staff whose time is shared across several projects).
- Travel and overseas allowances.
- Costs for large equipment over \$25,000.
- Non-research related activities (i.e. catering, venue hire, team-building events).
- Office furniture, such as chairs, desks, filing cabinets.
- Clothing such as lab coats, shoes, Personal protective equipment and laundry services.

Funding recipients must retain all receipts, invoices, accounts and other relevant documents relating to expenditure of the grant funding and must submit annual financial reports, as outlined in the research grant contract.

All expenditure is subject to the [Financial Management Act 2006](#), and may be subject to audit by the Office of the Auditor General or their representative and/or the WA Department of Health.

7. Suitability Criteria

Applicants are expected to be Mid-Career Researchers (\geq six (6) years since the completion of the highest relevant degree) or Senior Researchers ($>$ 10 years since the completion of the highest degree), taking into consideration any career disruptions as defined in the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) [Relative to Opportunity Policy](#).

Researchers who have not previously been granted significant funding by the RPH Research Foundation and who have innovative and impactful projects are encouraged to apply.

8. Eligibility Criteria

This program is open to individuals or teams working in any scientific and clinical discipline within health and life sciences. Multidisciplinary collaborators, including at least one researcher from a discipline outside life sciences, such as (but not limited to) engineering, physical science, technologies (i.e. therapeutics, devices, diagnostics, digital technologies), are encouraged to apply.

To be eligible for consideration, the Applicant must meet the following criteria:

- At the time of application are an Australian or New Zealand citizen, a permanent resident of Australia, or have an appropriate work visa in place and will reside in WA for the duration of the grant.
- Be the Chief Principal Investigator (CPI) or Principal Investigator (PI) on the research project and have an established and ongoing appointment, no less than 0.5 FTE, within the EMHS throughout the proposed funding period.
- Include cross-institutional representatives in their research innovation team, with not more than half of the members being from the EMHS.
- Ensure they have adequate time to complete the research innovation activities and meet the major milestones as per their grant contract.
- Be undertaking the majority of the research work within the EMHS network (i.e. Royal Perth Hospital, Bentley Hospital, Armadale Health Service, Kalamunda Hospital, St John of God Midland Public Hospital, Population and Community Health Programs).
- The applicant's project must be novel and have the potential to enable scientific concepts to be clinically translated. The applicant should provide proof-of-concept, quality of evidence and data to support the value and novelty of the research proposal.

Applicants:

- May only submit one application for funding in the 2024 Research Innovation and Impact Grant Program.
- Must not already be a recipient of an RPH Research Foundation Innovation and Impact Grant.
- Must not already be a recipient of a FHRI Fund grant for the same research activity.
- Must have no overdue reports for any WA Department of Health, FHRI Fund or RPH Research Foundation grant funding programs from any year (excluding authorised extensions).

9. Consumer Involvement

In line with the NHMRC definition, consumers are people who have lived experience of a health issue. They include patients and potential patients, carers, and people who use health care services. Consumers can also be people who represent the views and interests of a consumer organisation, a community or a wider constituency.

Guidance on consumer involvement can be found at the [Consumer and Community Involvement Program website](#) and the NHMRC Statement on Consumer and Community Involvement in Health and Medical Research 2016.

Applicants are encouraged to complete the free online 30 minute [Consumer and Community Involvement in Health Research](#) course.

Applicants are encouraged to describe how consumers can and will be involved in the research and to detail the plan for ongoing engagement.

10. How to Apply and Key Dates

The application form is available on the RPH Research Foundation website and must be submitted by 11:59pm (AWST), 6 May 2024.

Applications must be submitted using the RPH Research Foundation's electronic Grants and Award management system. Please use the following link to start a new application: [RPH Research Foundation Grant Applications Portal](#).

To continue with an application that is in progress please access the [RPH Research Foundation's Grantmaking portal](#).

If you require any assistance or if you have any queries about the electronic grants management system please email research@RPHresearchfoundation.org.au

Proposals that have not met eligibility and suitability criteria or have not completed the online Application Form in full by the closing date will not be considered. Feedback will not be provided.

11. Applicant Selection Process

Funding will be awarded on merit, based on a process of competitive assessment and selection. The application process will be administered by the RPH Research Foundation through a five-step process:

1. Preliminary eligibility screening conducted by the RPH Research Foundation Executive
 - Applicants will be notified at this time if there are any discrepancies or concerns
2. Assessment and shortlisting of applications conducted by the [RPH Research Foundation Scientific Advisory Committee](#)
 - Applicants will be informed whether their application has been shortlisted for the next review stage
3. Assessment and ranking of applications conducted by the [Research Innovation and Impact Advisory Panel](#)
 - Shortlisted applicants will receive feedback and an interview date
4. Interviews of shortlisted applicants by an [External Review Panel](#) established by the RPH Research Foundation Scientific Advisory Committee
5. Recommendation of the 2024 Research Innovation and Impact grant recipients by the External Review Panel
 - Recommendations will be based on the Assessment Criteria (Section 12) and the applicants' responses to interview questions
6. Consideration and endorsement of the External Interview Panel recommendations by the [RPH Research Foundation Scientific Advisory Committee](#).

The RPH Research Foundation’s Scientific Advisory Committee is made up of experts who bring medical, research and scientific expertise from across a range of sectors. They generously donate their time to shape our research programs and advance medical research within Royal Perth Hospital, the East Metropolitan Health Service (EMHS) and Western Australia more broadly.

The Scientific Advisory Committee, Research Innovation and Impact Advisory Panel and the External Review Panel reserve the right to seek further information from applicants before making any final decisions. The decisions of the Scientific Advisory Committee, Research Innovation and Impact Advisory Panel and the External Review Panel are final.

Applicants who feel that their interests have been adversely affected by an action taken by RPH Research Foundation in administering the Program may lodge a complaint. Complaints can only be considered when they refer to the administrative process and not to the funding decision. Complaints must be submitted via email (marked Confidential) to: Research@rphresearchfoundation.org.au

Where possible, the Scientific Advisory Committee, Research Innovation and Impact Advisory Panel and the External Review Panel will provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

Stages of Application	Key Dates
Call for applications	8 March 2024
Application submission deadline	11:59pm (AWST), 6 May 2024
Application Review Start	7 May 2024
Application Review Close	July 2024
Interviews	August 2024
Announcements	October 2024

12. Assessment Criteria

Applications for the 2024 Research Innovation and Impact Grant Program will be assessed by a panel of independent reviewers based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Score
Quality and feasibility. Scientific quality and feasibility of the project and rationale considering suitable budget, achievability of aims, proposed methodology and timeline	30
Novelty. The originality of the idea and innovative approach of the proposed project	25
Benefit. Potential for impact, translation and improved health and wellbeing for Western Australians	25
Consumer and Community Involvement. Involvement of consumers with lived experience and the community in the development of the proposal and throughout the project timeline	10
Capacity of the team. Applicant and research team track record and cross-institutional representation	10
TOTAL	100

13. Conditions of Grant

- The Grant Offer must be accepted in writing by the recipient.
- The applicant must occupy a lead role within the research project e.g., Chief Principal Investigator (CPI) or Principal Investigator (PI).
- Where required, evidence of ethics and research governance approvals must be submitted to the Foundation within 12 months of award. The RPH Research Foundation may terminate the grant if approval is not granted within this timeframe.
- The named applicant will be the contact person for all administrative matters in relation to the project and is responsible for financial administration and internal reporting requirements.
- The funded research project must be conducted in accordance with the [Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research](#), [The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2023\)](#), [The Australian Code For The Care And Use Of Animals for Scientific Purposes 8th edition \(2013\)](#) and requirements of the [Gene Technology Act and Regulations](#). No project may proceed unless the appropriate ethical or other required clearances have been obtained.
- The applicant must ensure compliance by the research team in relation to any instructions or conditions in the Grant Contract relating to approved items of expenditure.
- The applicant will be required to provide written reports on the progress and outcomes of the project (see: Section 14).
- The applicant will be expected to actively participate in the FHRI Fund and RPH Research Foundation’s promotional activities by providing content for its communication platforms and presenting at events upon request.
- Summaries of projects funded, and project final reports may be published.
- Recipients must return funds to the RPH Research Foundation in the following situations:
 - Grant funding is unspent within six (6) months of the project completion date.
 - Grant funding is used in breach of the Terms and Conditions, and/or due to unjustified interruption of the research project
- The recipient must inform the RPH Research Foundation immediately if there are significant factors that may adversely impact the research project activities, or prevent compliance with the Terms and Conditions.

14. Project Delivery, Approvals and Reporting

Applicants are not required to have [Human Research Ethics](#), [Animal Ethics](#) or [Biosafety Committee](#) approval (if required) before lodging an application. However, approvals must be submitted to the RPH Research Foundation within 12 months of the award. Evidence of approval/s must be provided in order for grant funding to be released.

Recipients will actively engage and communicate with the RPH Research Foundation Research Grants Manager on the progress of the funded project and address any requested changes to the approved project, in writing, to the RPH Research Foundation.

Funding will be committed on approval, but it will be delivered in tranches upon the achievement of project milestones. The RPH Research Foundation will not release funds until progress is evidenced through a project report, and financial report. Submission of six-monthly progress reports is a requirement for this program.

A formal Final Report on the outcomes of activities must be submitted within six (6) months of the project's completion. Summaries of projects funded, and final project reports may be published.

Recipients are required to submit a financial acquittal aligned to the application budget at six (6) monthly intervals and within six (6) months after the grant funding end date. All receipts, invoices, accounts, and other relevant documents relating to the research project must be retained as proof of expenditure and made available to the RPH Research Foundation upon request.

Guidelines, templates and due dates for reports will be provided to recipients by the RPH Research Foundation as required.

Recipients are responsible for delivering the Final Project Report and Financial Report. Failure to meet reporting requirements may result in a breach of the terms and conditions of the grant and may affect the Investigator's prospects of receiving future funding from the RPH Research Foundation, the FHRI Fund and the WA Department of Health.

15. Intellectual Property

Intellectual Property (IP) that arises out of the Activity will vest with the State.

The ownership of any background or pre-existing Intellectual Property and associated Moral Rights, used or incorporated in the Activity that is presently vested in a Party shall remain vested in that Party, unless otherwise agreed.

Each Party will be entirely and solely responsible for the use in the Activity of any Intellectual Property and associated Moral Rights it has provided to the undertake the Activity which belongs to, or is licensed from, any other party, and indemnifies the other Party against all claims by a third party arising out of use of that Intellectual Property and associated Moral Rights.

When a team includes a member(s) from the WA public health system as a participant in the Activity (i.e. the WA public health entity is not the Responsible Entity), the IP agreement must be authorised at an appropriate level by EMHS.

Grant recipients must inform the Chief Executive Officer of the RPH Research Foundation promptly in writing as soon as they become aware that the outcomes arising from the funded research may comprise intellectual property and/ or have potential commercial use.

16. Acknowledgement

Acknowledgment of FHRI Fund and RPH Research Foundation support must be made as opportunities arise in publications, conference presentations, public discussion, press statements etc, as appropriate. The required citation will be set out in the grant contract.

17. Announcement

The Minister for Medical Research and/or the Department of Health WA will publicly announce the recipients of the Research Innovation and Impact Grants Program. Applicants and all related parties are embargoed from making announcements, public statements, social media posts or issuing media releases until after the announcement by the funding partners.

18. Liability

The FHRI Fund, Department of Health and RPH Research Foundation do not accept any responsibility for financial or other liability incurred by the applicants, any organisation, or any participant in the project that may arise out of the grant activities.

19. Further Information

Prospective applicants can contact the RPH Research Foundation's research grants team with queries via email to research@rphresearchfoundation.org.au. Please use the subject header: "Research Innovation and Impact Grants 2024 enquiry".

To keep up to date with grant round openings sign up for RPH Research Foundation's [Cygnet Researcher Newsletter](#).

20. Feedback

All applicants are encouraged to provide feedback to the Research Grants Manager on how the grant application process can be improved.