

2022

HEALTH+MEDICAL RESEARCH

—
NSW Schizophrenia
Research Grants
Program

Guidelines



NSW Health

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www.health.nsw.gov.au

www.medicalresearch.nsw.gov.au

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SHPN (OHMR) 211156

Call for Applications

NSW Health invites eligible individuals to apply for funding under the NSW Schizophrenia Research Grants Program. Funding for these grants will be distributed over four years from 2022-23 to 2025-26.

Grants funded under the Program will:

- focus on basic science and pre-clinical research. Grants in the areas of clinical medicine and science, health services and public health research are not eligible for funding.

Clinician researchers, researchers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers and primary carers who have experienced career disruptions are encouraged to apply.

Objectives

The NSW Schizophrenia Research Grants Program aims to:

- focus on Basic Science
- improve the understanding and treatment of schizophrenia
- translate schizophrenia research into improved outcomes for patients
- improve the quality of life for individuals with schizophrenia in NSW
- drive discoveries into health and economic impacts across metropolitan and regional NSW
- grow the capacity and reputation of schizophrenia research in NSW in a way that is equitable and sustainable.

Indicative Grant Timeline

Stage	Date
Call for Applications Opens	17 January 2022
Applications Close	11 March 2022
Announcement of successful applicants and commencement of funding	June 2022

Eligible areas of research

Funding will support researchers working in schizophrenia research across basic science and pre-clinical research with a likelihood of translation pathway.

Funding amounts

Under the NSW Schizophrenia Research Grants Program, a total of \$4 million (up to \$1 million per annum) may be awarded over the next four years.

Grants funded are four-year grants. Applicants may apply for up to \$250,000 per year (up to \$1 million over four years).

Consideration will be given to funding of up to \$2 million over four years for collaborative projects led by Chief Investigators from more than two institutions.

Funding conditions and exclusions

1. Research funded through a schizophrenia research grant must be conducted in the New South Wales health system or an affiliated organisation (university, medical research institute, industry partner) based in NSW.
2. Schizophrenia research grants must not be spent on capital works, general maintenance costs, organisational infrastructure or overheads, telephone/communication systems, basic office equipment such as desks and chairs, rent and the cost of utilities.
3. Applicants are required to declare the source, duration and level of funding already held for research in the subject area of the application. Applications must clearly describe the purpose of the additional funding and justify that the additional research will be complementary but not duplicative.
4. Funding is conditional for the schizophrenia researcher and the Chief Executive of the host organisation signing the declaration on the application form, which outlines the host organisation's obligations to the schizophrenia researcher.
5. One application will be accepted per applicant. However, a chief investigator on one application may be an associate investigator on other applications.
6. Grants provided under the NSW Schizophrenia Research Grants Program are one-line grants not fellowships. The funding may be spent on a range of agreed areas including research salaries, equipment, travel, and consumables.
7. Grants may be applied for regardless of other funding currently held or applied for, including NHMRC fellowships.

8. Where two or more applicants submit similar proposals, and there may be benefits of working together, NSW Health may recommend a meeting for relevant applicants.
9. NSW Health clinicians may use up to 50% of the grant to backfill their clinical role, with appropriate justification. If the grant is to be used for this purpose, the application must be signed by the appropriate department head in the local health district. Salary limits are available on request.

Submission of applications

Applicants must use the NSW Schizophrenia Research Grants Program Application Form and attach any supporting evidence. The form is available at www.medicalresearch.nsw.gov.au/

All applications should be submitted by email to: MOH-OHMRGrants@health.nsw.gov.au. All applications will receive an email acknowledging receipt within 48 hours. It is the applicant's responsibility to follow-up if no acknowledgement is received. Please note, that the maximum file size is 20MB. Larger files will be rejected by the NSW Health server.

Answers to frequently asked questions and updates on the grants program are available on the NSW Schizophrenia Research Grants Program webpage.

Any queries regarding the NSW Schizophrenia Research Grants Program may be directed by email to: MOH-OHMRGrants@health.nsw.gov.au

Program Logic and research impact

Applicants are required to submit a [Program Logic](#) (Developing a Program logic page 12) diagram with their application, including project aims, inputs, activities, outputs, and expected outcomes and impacts.

Research Impact Assessment

The Program Logic will be used to optimise the probability of research impact at application stage. If the research is funded, the Program Logic will guide the measurement of impact throughout the project and at its conclusion. Note that outcomes and impacts may not be realised during the funded period, they may be projected to occur in future.

Research impact will be considered across the five domains:

Domain 1: Knowledge Generation

- New interventions, treatments, diagnostics, or drug targets.
- New clinical or medical prototypes.
- Peer-reviewed publications and presentations at conferences.
- Media coverage and other non-peer-reviewed publications.

Domain 2: Capability Building

- New partnerships leveraged.
- Training and professional development.
- Research students supported.

Domain 3: Policy and Practice

- Instances where research findings are considered in policy development.
- Instances of change in clinical practice, instances of new health technology or new treatments used in clinical care. i.e., Virtual Care initiatives.

Domain 4: Patient health and population outcomes

- Improved health outcomes, including:
 - Change in the time to develop an outcome.
 - Change in the likelihood of an outcome occurring.

Domain 5: Economic outcomes

- Research jobs created and sustained.
- Patents and commercialisation.
- Value of leveraged research funding (external grants awarded due to NSW Health funding).
- Reduction in cost of delivering care.
- Potential for return on investment.

Further information around Program Logic is available through [Developing and Using Program Logic: A Guide](#) and the short animation '[Exploring Program Logic.](#)'

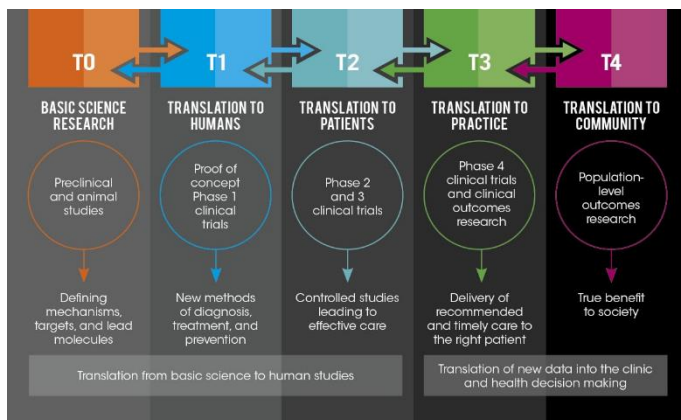
Research Translation

All research projects should have potential to lead to changes in clinical practice or policy in the short and/or long term, even if not during the funded period.

Applications must clearly describe:

- The long-term goal and clinical significance of the research.
- The expected pathway for this to occur (note this may not be linear).
- How the researchers will engage with 'next users', i.e., research partners and other stakeholders who will take the research to the next step on the translation pathway.

An example translation pathway is below. Applicants may use their preferred framework.



Source: University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Translational Research Institute
<https://tri.uams.edu/about-tri/what-is-translational-research>

Intellectual Property

Intellectual Property (IP) arrangements should be agreed between all research partners and organisations, according to local policy. IP arrangements must cover both background IP and IP that is developed during the project. IP arrangements should consider the contributions of all parties. The arrangements should be detailed in the application.

Priority populations

It is important that all research projects consider and respond to the distribution of the burden of disease within the population and the needs of higher risk and priority populations where appropriate. These may include women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, individuals from a non-English speaking background, socio-economically disadvantaged groups and people living in regional and remote areas.

Relevant partners should be engaged early to ensure that the research design and conduct will be effective and appropriate for these population groups.

Research projects with a primary focus on Aboriginal health or involving Aboriginal people as participants, should attach a completed [Aboriginal Health Impact Statement](#) to their application.

Declaration of career disruption

Applicants may present a declaration and/or evidence of career disruption for consideration by the review panel. Please refer to the NHMRC policy on career disruption:

https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/relative_to_opportunity_policy0720.pdf.

Career Disruption is defined as a continuous absence from work of 90 days or more and/or continuous long term, part-time employment. This may be due to:

- pregnancy
- major illness/injury
- carer responsibilities.

Career disruptions may be declared in the application form, if relevant.

Eligibility criteria

Applications must meet all eligibility criteria.

Schizophrenia researcher

Based in NSW

The schizophrenia researcher must reside in or plan to move to NSW for the duration of the grant and must be employed by an NSW-based medical research institute, university, or non-government organisation.

Submit a complete application

The schizophrenia researcher must fully complete the application form, attach all relevant and required documentation, sign the declaration on the form and include certification from the host organisation.

Australian citizen, permanent residency status or appropriate visa

The researcher must be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident of Australia or have an appropriate working visa for the full term of the Grant. Researchers who are neither Australian citizens nor permanent residents, must provide evidence of residency status and the right to remain in Australia for the duration of the funding period, certified by a Justice of the Peace (JP) or equivalent. Note that the electronic documents, and an official VEVO statement is sufficient. JP certification is not required. Australian Citizens and permanent residents are not required to provide evidence.

Host organisation requirements

The host organisation is where most of the research is conducted.

The host organisation must conduct health and medical research and be one of the following:

- a university
- an independent medical research institute
- a not-for-profit organisation
- a local health district or other public health organisation.

The host organisation must be in NSW. Clinical Scientists may undertake clinical work separately from where research is undertaken. If the grant is to be used to quarantine research time and backfill a clinical position, the application must also be endorsed by the Chief Executive/Executive Director of the organisation where clinical duties are undertaken.

The host organisation will provide the appropriate infrastructure support for the research project, including wet/dry lab space, computer equipment, and desk space.

Administering organisation

An administering organisation is only required where the funds are held by a separate organisation to the host organisation.

In such cases, the administering organisation will enter into the funding agreement with NSW Health, manage the funds, submit financial reports, and coordinate other reporting requirements, as outlined in the funding agreement.

Grant funds must be paid to an administering organisation that can manage funds across financial years, as the full grant amount will be paid upfront.

The administering organisation must be a university, medical research institute, or non-government organisation in NSW.

Selection criteria

All applications for funding that meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed against the following selection criteria. In addressing the selection criteria, applicants should specifically highlight the relevance to Schizophrenia.

The schizophrenia researcher must satisfy the requirement that their research is in the field of schizophrenia research (see Scope of Schizophrenia Research on page 3).

Applications should be written in plain English, as applications may be reviewed by a panel member with expertise in a different area of schizophrenia science to that of the application.

Applicant – 40% weighting

Applicants will be assessed on:

- academic and relevant clinical qualifications
- research, clinical and industry experience, including demonstrated capacity to work in multidisciplinary teams
- skills and experience directly related to the topic area(s) and methodology of the research project
- track record in research, relative to opportunity
- track record in research impact - responsibilities that could reasonably be considered to have had a negative impact on research track record over the previous 10 years.

Research project – 40% weighting

A clear and detailed description and justification for the project is required, including aims, methodology, and expected outputs and outcomes. The research project will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- evidence of a gap in knowledge, provided by prior systematic reviews and/or gap analyses, and a clearly articulated need for the research
- how the proposed project will advance existing knowledge and why is this important
- the extent to which the proposed research is innovative and novel
- strength, rigour, and appropriateness of the research methodology
- potential outputs and outcomes of the research and how the research will improve clinical practice and/or patient outcomes in the short or long term
- the plan for research translation and impact
- ability to deliver the research outputs, outcomes and/or objectives within the grant period, scalability and generalisability of results
- the skills of the proposed research team that are relevant to the project, and each team member's ability to contribute meaningfully to the research
- relationship to existing research undertaken by the host organisation and the research team

- consideration of priority population groups if appropriate.

The proposed research project does not have to address every criterion but must demonstrate strengths in relevant criteria.

Skill development and capacity building – 20% weighting

All Schizophrenia Research applicants will be assessed on skill development activities undertaken to date, and proposed skill development during the period of the grant. Activities undertaken should align with the researcher's vision for their career.

Examples of skill development activities that may be undertaken include:

- leading or participation in clinical quality assurance activities
- receiving regular formal mentoring
- attending training, for example in research skills or research leadership
- taking on leadership roles
- mentoring junior researchers is encouraged
- involvement in collaborations, for example with other research groups or policy agencies
- active roles in relevant networks, advisory committees, or governance groups
- collaboration with clinicians and others involved in translation of research findings.
- The extent of collaboration with national and international science and researchers.

Budget

Full details of the budget should be clear in the application. Applicants must consider:

- the appropriateness of the funding amount and purpose
- any existing funding for the research, and how this relates to the additional funding requested
- other contributions and support for the project.

Selection process

Step 1: Eligibility check

Following the closing date for applications, NSW Health will determine if each application has satisfied the eligibility criteria.

Step 2: Review by independent expert panel

An independent selection panel of expert reviewers recruited from across Australia will assess each application against the selection criteria.

Step 3: Funding recommendation

The independent selection panel will agree on the final ranking of all eligible applications and will make a recommendation for funding to NSW Health.

Step 4: Decision and notification

NSW Health will make a determination on grant recipients and amounts. Applicants will be notified as to whether they have been awarded funding. This decision is final and may not be appealed.

Step 5: Grant Agreements

NSW Health will contact successful schizophrenia researchers to develop and enter into funding agreements with the administering organisation.

Post award requirements

The Administering Organisation will enter into a funding agreement with NSW Health that sets out obligations.

A schedule for reporting will be outlined in the funding agreement and will include a requirement to provide:

- annual progress reports
- annual financial reports
- A final report following the conclusion of the term of the grant, including a final Audited Acquittal Statement of expended funds.

Program evaluation

The grants program will periodically be assessed to ensure it is meeting its objectives. This will be done in collaboration with the host organisations and funding recipients.

Recipients and host organisations may be required to supply information and meet with NSW Health staff to support the evaluation of the program.