



Incubator Grant Funding 2021

GUIDELINES FOR INCUBATOR GRANTS

Applications Open 10 June and Close 24 July 2020

The RHH Research Foundation has opened its call for applications for 2021 research funding under the annual categories of Incubator and Project Grants. These guidelines are specific to the category of Incubator Grants. A call for expressions of interest in larger Major Project Grants commences on 26 June 2020 and guidelines for this will be available in a separate document. In total, the Foundation is expecting to continue its practice of funding approximately \$600k in local health and medical research during 2021, including a pool of approx. **\$40,000** for “Incubator” research grants of up to \$10k each. The purpose of an Incubator Grant is to develop an idea, enable a research group to pursue a new idea, to provide seed funding and/or to assess viability of a research idea. An Incubator Grant is not designed to be part of a broader research program.

The RHH Research Foundation and its Scientific Research Advisory Committee abide by the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, and pursue a rigorous assessment process, with funds allocated on the basis of merit using a nationally-accepted approach predicated on competitive review by the Scientific Research Advisory Committee. This multidisciplinary panel draws upon diverse membership and is endorsed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). To support assessment, the Foundation has established the following **Guiding Principles**:

Principle One: Research applications should demonstrate the potential for benefit to the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians, with a focus on those diseases and conditions relevant to the Tasmanian community.

Principle Two: Research applications should demonstrate building of local clinical research capacity at the Royal Hobart Hospital (RHH).

Principle Three: Research applications should enable research collaboration across disciplines and amongst researchers at various stages of their career path, particularly through alignment/partnership with other research experts/groups/centres/commercial bodies.

Principle Four: Research applications should demonstrate the potential for tangible and measurable benefits arising from proposed work, including one or more of the following:

- a) publication(s) in peer reviewed journals;
- b) a competitive research grant application to an external funding body;
- c) a health service delivery outcome (e.g. a clinical practice improvement) or a demonstrated major impact on policy development;
- d) development of a collaboration/partnership with an external research group or industry; and/or
- e) a patent application.

Each year the RHH Research Foundation will select broad research priorities which will serve as the guiding areas of focus for consideration of its grant investments. Applications for 2021 Incubator Grants will be reviewed to determine their alignment with/capacity to address the following **Strategic Priorities**:

- Aged care (including diseases of the elderly);
- Chronic disease (including cancer);
- Health Service Delivery and Outcomes (including acute care);
- A healthy start to life (including maternal and child health); and
- Social determinants of health (including mental health).

Important information – Applications that do not meet the Guiding Principles and Strategic Priorities will not be assessed.

All submissions must be developed using the RHH Research Foundation's Grant Application form for Incubator Grants and should consider the **Selection Criteria** outlined below:

- A Chief Investigator A must only appear as a CIA on one grant application in each category of Incubator and Project Grants. Given that the CIA has to lead their own investigation, it would be considered detrimental to that investigation if they were to be involved simultaneously in leading more than one Incubator Grant and more than one Project Grant in the same year.
- All submissions will be assessed upon the merit of the proposed project, particularly its significance and degree of innovation;
- The project must demonstrate alignment with the RHHRF's strategic research principles and priorities (as noted above, applications that do not meet the Guiding Principles and Strategic Priorities will not be assessed);
- The proposal must demonstrate potential for future impact in addressing the Foundation's core Principles and Priorities;
- The project must demonstrate a scientific approach to investigation in terms of its feasibility, rationale, methodology, timeframes and innovation;
- The proposal must identify adequacy of resourcing, either solely through this grant program, or ideally through additional sources of funding/in-kind support;
- It is not the intention of the RHH Research Foundation's grants to duplicate funding received from other sources including the NHMRC but to support additional work or a new program of works. If the project is part of a larger program of work, applicants **must** describe additional funding received from any other funding body in section 4 of the RHH Research Foundation's Grant Application form regarding "Other sources of direct or in-kind support". Alternatively, if the project is under consideration for funding from any other funding body, applicants **must** provide details including the funding body, award type, name, category, date when outcome will become known and reference/application number if known in section 4;

- The proposal must demonstrate the manner by which clinical adoption of research findings is likely to occur as a key outcome;
- The research team must include membership of at least one paid member of staff/formal appointment to the RHH and this person must be actively engaged in clinical and/or health service delivery;
- The Foundation particularly draws your attention to the need to involve local health professionals in this investigation and strongly encourages demonstration of engagement with relevant clinicians involved in health service delivery in Tasmania;
- At least 80% of research (including investment of grant funds) must occur within Tasmania, involving local health professionals, unless a satisfactory rationale for this is provided;
- No more than 25% of grant funding should be applied to purchase of equipment unless a satisfactory rationale for this is provided;
- Grant funding **cannot** be used for attendance at conferences and/or travel expenses; and
- The University of Tasmania (UTas) will not apply infrastructure costs in relation to successful applications for funding in 2021 up to \$10,000 and up to \$25,000 projects.

Development and Submission by Friday 24 July 2020

Applicants must use the 2021 RHHRF Research Incubator Grant application form in order to submit their application electronically. This is available online at www.rhresearchfoundation.org or by emailing the RHHRF's office on research@rhresearchfoundation.org.

In preparing submissions, applicants are urged to closely consult with research colleagues, including UTas' Grants Officers and/or relevant Department's Business Managers from within the THS/DOH. The aim of involving Grants Officers and/or BMs is to ensure that all applications fully consider aspects associated with ethics approval, budget items, current and future capacity, associated resource needs, other sources of support, etc. The Grants Officer and/or BM will then also support successful grant recipients in undertaking the various administrative elements associated with implementation and reporting against the project. The importance of this aspect of your submission's development and subsequent carriage cannot be overstated. You should note that your Grants Officer or BM is welcome to contact the RHHRF for further information and advice around our grants program prior to submission if this might be of assistance.

Once completed and signed by each member of the intended research team, the application must then also have certified support from the authorised delegate of the nominated institution. Certification of a grant application is only required from a representative of the CIA's nominated institution with appropriate delegated authority (eg Head of Department – RHH, Head of School – UTAS or Head of Institute – Menzies Institute of Medical Research); the rationale being that should the grant application be successful, it will be the CIA's nominated institution that will ultimately execute the relevant grant agreement with the RHHRF. It will also be noted that certification verifies a statement which confirms the project will be accommodated in accordance with the proposal.

Competitive Review – Friday 31 July to Thursday 24 September

Applications will be subject to independent review and assessment by the Foundation's NHMRC-approved Scientific Research Advisory Committee which will then make a subsequent recommendation to the RHH Research Foundation's Board.

Each application will be reviewed against the selection criteria above and then assessed against the following criteria:

- Research Quality (including Significance and Innovation) (40%);
- Potential for outcomes to benefit the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians (20%);
- Potential to build local research capacity at the Royal Hobart Hospital (RHH) (15%);
- Team composition including feasibility and capacity to enable research collaborations across disciplines and stages of career (15%); and
- Budget (10%).

The Scientific Research Advisory Committee will meet on 22 September in order to reach a collective view arising from individual assessment of the applications, undertaken using a formal protocol. Any further details requiring clarification will be sought following that time and then a proposal for funding of 2021 Incubator Grants will then be developed for submission to the meeting of the RHH Research Foundation's Board on 24 September 2020.

Review Outcomes – late September/early October 2020

The decision of the Board is final and it is intended that outcomes will be communicated to applicants in late September/early October 2020. While a brief response will be provided to unsuccessful applicants, further feedback may be available upon request. Formal Grant Agreements will be developed between the RHH Research Foundation and the applicant's nominated institution (ie either UTas or the THS/DOH) and it is anticipated that these will be ready for execution in December funds to flow and for research to commence in January 2021.

The RHH Research Foundation wishes to highlight that its annual grants program receives a considerable volume of submissions, well in excess of its financial capacity. Given the highly competitive nature of the Incubator Grants program, successful applicants are advised that failure to execute a Grant Agreement within ninety (90) days of its issue by the RHH Research Foundation will result in the offer of funds being rescinded, unless a request for extension is granted by the Scientific Research Advisory Committee.

Further, if the entity nominated by the researcher in the agreement does not invoice the RHH Research Foundation for the full amount of funds nominated in the Grant Agreement within ninety (90) days of its execution, the offer of funds will be rescinded, unless a request for extension is granted by the Scientific Research Advisory Committee. However it should be noted that funds can only be released by the RHH Research Foundation upon provision of evidence of ethics approval wherever this may be required. To achieve this in a timely manner, researchers are encouraged to submit for any necessary ethics approval immediately upon advice of their application's successful status. The value of involving a Grants Officer/BM in facilitating these activities in a timely manner again cannot be overstated.

Carriage of Grant Projects – January 2021 to December 2021

Grant projects should be completed over the twelve month period following execution of the contractual agreement, ideally over the twelve month period from January 2021 once Grant Agreements are signed, ethics approval is gained and funds have flowed from the RHH Research Foundation to the researcher's nominated institution.

Should any aspects of the intended project change at any time, the RHH Research Foundation must be formally advised at the earliest opportunity. Researchers may be asked to provide details of progress for promotional purposes and will be asked for a formal report soon after the conclusion of their grant project for receipt by the Scientific Research Advisory Committee. While extensions to the funded grant projects are generally not available, contact should be made to the RHH Research Foundation via the Grants Officers/BM at the earliest opportunity should such a situation arise. Extensions can only be made at the discretion of the Scientific Research Advisory Committee. The preferred timeframe for the receipt of extension requests is no later than six (6) weeks prior to intended project completion as outlined under the Grant Agreement.

It should be noted that evidence of any subsequent publications, presentations, and/or additional funding will be sought as part of the Grant Agreement, together with formal acknowledgement of the RHH Research Foundation's involvement in funding the research project.

Submission of Applications and Assistance

Documentation around the Annual Incubator Grants is available online or from the RHH Research Foundation's office. While Grants Officers/BMs are an invaluable source of assistance, contact with the Foundation can be made at any time Mon-Fri before 4.30pm.

CLOSING DATE: The closing time for applications is 5.00pm on Friday 24 July 2020.

FOR APPLICATION FORMS & ASSISTANCE PLEASE CONTACT:

www.rhhresearchfoundation.org

research@rhhresearchfoundation.org

(03) 6166 1319

RHHRF Research Support & Administration Coordinator (Claire Vicars) is also available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays via email at Claire.vicars@ths.tas.gov.au or telephone (03) 6166 1320.