



# Major Project Grant 2024-2026

## ***GUIDELINES FOR STAGE 1 EXPRESSION OF INTEREST***

***Expressions of Interest open 5 June and close 14 July 2023***

The Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation (the Foundation) has opened its call for Expressions of Interest (Eoi) for funding under the Major Project grant category for 2024. Following consideration of the Eoi, selected applicants will be asked to submit a full application for the one Major Project grant being offered by the Foundation in 2024. The Major Project grant will be available for an amount up to \$450,000 (ex GST) over three years, to be allocated at \$150,000 per annum (+/- 20% each year).

The Foundation abides by the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and pursues a rigorous assessment process on all funding applications. Funds are allocated on the basis of merit using a nationally accepted approach predicated on competitive review by the Foundation's Scientific Research Advisory Committee (SRAC). This multidisciplinary panel draws upon diverse membership endorsed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

### **Aim**

The aim of the Major Project grant is to provide support to, and enable capacity building for, an early to mid-career researcher and their team to deliver research that improves the health outcomes of Tasmanians. The grant will provide funding for salary, consumables and additional research staff. With support from a senior mentor and broader research team, the Major Project grant will facilitate the development of collaborative teams and research leadership. Therefore, while Major Projects will be led by a Chief Investigator A (CIA), they should also include a team of researchers (including a senior mentor) who will collectively enable delivery against strategic objectives. This team will be encouraged to engage with established research groups and other mentors where appropriate.

### **Applications measured against Guiding Principles and Strategic Priorities**

All applications must meet the Foundation's Guiding Principles and address one or more of the Strategic Priorities in order to be assessed.

### **The Foundation's Guiding Principles**

*Principle One:* Research applications should demonstrate the potential for benefit to the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians.

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

*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. translation into 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.

### **The Foundation's strategic priorities**

Research should focus on diseases and conditions relevant to the Tasmanian community or improve health service delivery in the community. This includes:

- Aged care (including diseases of the elderly)
- A healthy start to life (including maternal and child health)
- Chronic disease (including cancer)
- Health service delivery and outcomes (including acute care)
- Social determinants of health including income, housing, education and access to affordable healthcare.

### **General funding rules for Foundation grants**

All submissions must be made using the relevant grant application form, available on the Foundation's website, and should consider the general funding rules outlined below:

- All submissions will be assessed upon the merit of the proposed project, particularly the extent to which the proposal meets the Foundation's guiding principles; project scientific quality; significance and innovation; and team quality and capability relative to opportunity;
- The research project and intended outcomes must demonstrate alignment with one or more of the Foundation's strategic 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 through additional sources of funding/in-kind support;
- It is not the intention of the Foundation's grants program 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 3 of the application form (Budget). 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 3;
- The proposal must demonstrate how the research findings may result in a health service delivery outcome, either directly or as a consequence of subsequent policy development/adjustment;
- At least 80 per cent of research (including investment of grant funds) must occur within Tasmania involving local health professionals, unless a satisfactory rationale for this is provided, and the CIA must be resident in Tasmania during carriage of the Grant;
- The research team must include at least one paid member of staff/formal appointment to the Royal Hobart Hospital and this person must be actively engaged in clinical and/or health service delivery; and
- No more than 25 per cent of grant funding should be applied to purchase of equipment unless a satisfactory rationale for this is provided;

## Specific rules for the Major Project grant

Expressions of Interest (Eoi) will be received in the first instance and the call for these will close at 5.00pm on Friday 14 July 2023.

Selected Eois will then be invited to submit a full application for one grant not exceeding \$450,000 (ex GST) over three years, to be allocated at \$150,000 per annum (+/- 20% each year). This amount may include salary of a Chief Investigator and other research assistants, as well as a PhD stipend (living allowance), as per the budget to be submitted with the Eoi and potential subsequent full application.

The researcher identified as CIA must be at early to mid-career level, defined as:

- Post-doctoral or equivalent (including Fellowship from a recognised specialty College), but no more than eight (8) years from the date the most recent qualification was passed, at the time of submission; and
- Employed as Academic Level A-C, but no higher.

The CIA must only appear on one Major Project grant Eoi in the current grant round.

The CIA must lead the project, and it would be considered detrimental to their own project if they were to be named on another Major Project grant submission over the same period. The CIA is therefore precluded from simultaneously undertaking the following roles:

- CIA on any other Major Project Eoi in the current grant round
- CIB, CIC etc. on any other Major Project Eoi in the current grant round
- CIA on a Major Project that was awarded within a previous grant round and is ongoing, including approved extensions.

For more information refer to the Foundation's Capping Rules Table [here](#).

Whilst team members may be swapped between EOI and the full submission (if selected), changes to the CIA are not permitted.

A CIA may submit an Eoi that seeks to use the Major Project grant funds to support more than one Chief Investigator's salary. However, the Foundation will assess whether the CIA's salary is appropriately resourced, given their leadership role in the project.

A PhD student may apply for a Major Project Grant subject to the Foundation receiving confirmation that their Doctorate of Philosophy has been passed (i.e. the date of acceptance of the thesis) at the time of submission.

The Foundation is committed to ensuring that every applicant is treated fairly and recognises that some candidates may have had career disruptions that should be considered when evaluating their eligibility to apply for a Major Project grant. Applicants may be eligible to apply for a Major Project grant if they can demonstrate that their 'effective' number of years from the date of their most recent qualification falls within the eligibility range once Career Disruption is considered. For determination of eligibility, a Career Disruption is defined as prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work, for example, due to pregnancy, parental leave, major illness or and carer responsibilities. It does not include employment outside the research sector including time spent working in industry; clinical, administrative or teaching workload; relocation of laboratory or clinical practice setting or similar circumstances that impact upon research productivity. A Career Disruption is defined as: a continuous absence from work for 90 calendar days or more and/or continuous, long-term, part-time employment (with defined % FTE) due to circumstances classified as Career Disruption, with the absence amounting to a total of 90 calendar days or more.

Travel expenses may be included in the budget request where travel is essential to the project (e.g. fieldwork for patient visits where the project would not be feasible without this) and where these

costs are directly related to the project's methodology. No more than 2.5% of grant funding should be applied toward attendance at conferences unless a satisfactory rationale for this is provided.

## Submission

Applicants must use the Foundation's Major Project Grant Stage 1 Expression of Interest form to submit their application in the first instance. This is available online at [www.rhhresearchfoundation.org/research/grants](http://www.rhhresearchfoundation.org/research/grants).

In preparing their submission, applicants are urged to closely consult with research colleagues, including UTAS grants officers or relevant Department Business Managers (BMs) from within the THS/DOH. The aim of involving a grants officer/BM is to ensure that your application fully considers all aspects associated with ethics approval, budget items, current and future capacity, associated resource needs, other sources of support etc. A grants officer/BM can then also support successful grant recipients in undertaking the various administrative elements associated with implementation and reporting against the project. Your grants officer/BM is welcome to contact the Foundation for further information and advice about our grants program prior to submission.

Once completed and signed by each member of the intended research team, the application must then also have certified support from a representative of the CIA's nominated institution with appropriate delegated authority (e.g. Head of Department, Head of School, Head of Institute or Hospital Chief Executive).

The EoI must be submitted as a single pdf document via email to [research@rhhresearchfoundation.org](mailto:research@rhhresearchfoundation.org) by **5.00pm on the closing date, Friday 14 July 2023**.

## Competitive review

The Major Project grant follows a two stage application and review process. Stage 1 EoI submissions will be subject to independent review and assessment by the Foundation's SRAC.

The Committee will consider all Stage 1 EoI submissions. Each will be reviewed against the rules stated above and then assessed on a scale of 1-7 against the following criteria (based on NHMRC Guidelines for Ideas Grants):

- Extent to which the proposal meets Foundation's guiding principles (25%);
- Project Scientific Quality (35%);
- Significance and/or innovation and/or impact (as defined above) (20%); and
- Team quality and capability relative to opportunity (20%).

Following this initial assessment, selected EoIs will be invited to submit a Stage 2 full application for further consideration by the SRAC. An external assessor may also be invited to review at this stage. Submissions will be assessed on the same scale and criteria as described above. The SRAC will then make a recommendation to the Foundation's Board to select one recipient for this Major Project grant.

## Review summary

- Call for expressions of interest – 5 June 2023
- Stage 1 EoIs close - 14 July 2023
- EoIs reviewed by the SRAC – Aug/Sep 2023
- Selected EoIs invited to the second stage – 26 Sep 2023
- Stage 2 applications close – 20 Oct 2023
- Applications reviewed by the SRAC – Nov 2023
- SRAC's recommendation received by the Board – Dec 2023
- Major Project grant notified – 22 Dec 2023

## Outcome

The decision of the Board is final. It is intended that outcomes will be communicated to applicants by 22 December 2023. A formal grant agreement (the Agreement) will be drawn up between the Foundation and the applicant's nominated institution (i.e. either UTAS or the THS/DOH). Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing and may seek feedback on their application upon request.

## Carriage of the Grant Project

The funded project should be completed over the three-year period following execution of the contractual agreement, ideally over the period from January 2024 to December 2026 once the Agreement is signed, Ethics approval is gained and funds have flowed from the Foundation to the researcher's nominated institution.

Should any aspect of the intended project change at any time, the Foundation must be formally advised and approval sought from the SRAC. Extensions of time can only be given at the discretion of the SRAC. Any application for extension should be made at the earliest opportunity and no later than six weeks prior to intended project completion, as outlined under the Agreement.

In accordance with the Agreement, the CIA will be asked to provide regular progress reports and a final report will be required at conclusion of the grant period. This will be received by the SRAC, which will provide both a copy of the report and the Committee's response to the Board. The CIA may also be asked to respond to requests for additional information for the Foundation's promotional purposes.

It should also 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 Foundation's involvement in funding the research project.

## Promotional opportunities

The Foundation may ask the CIA and/or other members of the project team to assist in its promotional activities by participating in media, publicity, stakeholder and fundraising events from time to time. This may include being a guest speaker at one of the Foundation's fundraising events, participating in a media interview or featuring in marketing collateral.

## Assistance

Applicants requiring assistance to complete their EoI/application should consult their UTAS grants officer or THS Business Manager in the first instance. Should you require any clarification of these guidelines or need further assistance, contact with the Foundation can be made at any time Monday to Friday before 4.30pm.

## Closing date

Expressions of Interest close at 5.00pm on Friday 14 July 2023.

## More information

Online: [www.rhhresearchfoundation.org/grants](http://www.rhhresearchfoundation.org/grants)

Email: [research@rhhresearchfoundation.org](mailto:research@rhhresearchfoundation.org)

Phone: (03) 6166 1320