



Lowenthal-Muller Grant for Translational Research

GUIDELINES

Applications open 23 June and close 25 August 2022

The RHH Research Foundation will open its call for applications for the Lowenthal-Muller Grant for Translational Research on 23 June. This single, one-off grant offered in 2023, marking the Foundation's 25th year, acknowledges the service of founding Board members Professor Ray Lowenthal and the late Professor Konrad Muller, both of whom made such a valuable contribution to the RHH Research Foundation in its early years.

In their esteemed medical careers, both Ray and Kon were passionate and influential researchers with a special interest in translational research.

Ray Lowenthal moved from Sydney (via Hammersmith Hospital UK) to a position at the University of Tasmania and the RHH in 1975, where he continued working until his retirement in 2013. He was Director of the Department of Clinical Haematology and Medical Oncology at the RHH for 25 years. In 2006, Ray was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for service to medicine in the fields of oncology and palliative care and as a clinician, educator, researcher and contributor to professional organisations at state and national levels. His research interests include leukaemia, lymphoma, bone marrow transplantation and clinical trials of new cancer treatments, and he is very widely published. Much of his research involved translational research; developing new treatments, testing efficacy and implementing the findings to change practice, sometimes on the world-wide stage. During his long association with the RHHRF Ray mentored many emerging, mid and senior career scientists and medical professionals, and inspired all.

Kon Muller originally trained in medicine and moved to Tasmania after completing his PhD at USyd with a thesis on Inflammation. He was Professor and Head of Pathology at UTAS 1983–2002 and Emeritus Professor until his death in 2017. He was a past President of the RCPA and of the Australasian Division of the International Academy of Pathology. His main research interest was in the field of immunopathology and cancer, with particular focus on the biology of Langerhans cells/dendritic cells and their modulation of immune reactions. He is remembered as an outstanding researcher, teacher and educator who supported, mentored and inspired a generation of medical students, pathologists and scientists, many of whom went on to translate his basic research in their chosen fields.

The Lowenthal-Muller Grant is focused on supporting translational research. Translation is a critical phase connecting health research to patient outcomes. As the NHMRC states *'the creation of knowledge does not, of itself, lead to widespread implementation and positive impacts on health. The knowledge must be translated into changes in practice and policy for the benefits and impacts to flow to Australians'*. Translational research occurs across the spectrum of research from discovery to implementation - 'bench to bedside'. It is the process of applying observations and discoveries made during research in the laboratory, clinic or community into interventions that improve the health of individuals and the public. This may be in diagnostics, therapeutic treatment, medical procedures or behavioural change, including supporting the adoption of best practices in the community. The Lowenthal-Muller Grant targets translational research that supports the implementation of research findings to improve health outcomes for Tasmanians and their communities.

The Lowenthal-Muller Grant will be available for an amount not exceeding \$200,000 (ex GST) over two years, to be allocated as \$100,000 pa (+/- 20% each year). This grant funding is in addition to the RHH Research Foundation's annual funding for Incubator, Project and Major Project Grants in 2023.

The RHH Research Foundation and its Scientific Research Advisory Committee (SRAC) 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 (eg. 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.

Each year the RHH Research Foundation selects broad research priorities to guide the focus for consideration of its grant investments. Applications for 2023 Incubator Grants will be reviewed to determine their alignment with and 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); or
- Social determinants of health (including mental health).

NOTE: Applications that do not meet the Guiding Principles and/or address one or more of the Strategic Priorities will not be assessed.

Aim

The aim of the Lowenthal-Muller Grant is to support a researcher or research team to undertake high quality health care translational research in one of the five strategic priorities above. The RHHRF is committed to ensuring that the Grant is awarded to a project that fulfils the intent of this funding. As such, all submissions must demonstrate the unmet need to be addressed and the methodology by which this will be achieved. Applications are open to all suitably qualified scientific and medical researchers at any career stage.

General Funding Rules for RHHRF Grants

All submissions must be made using the relevant RHH Research Foundation Grant form 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, innovation; benefit to the Tasmanian community and team quality and capability relative to opportunity
- The project and intended outcomes must demonstrate alignment with the RHHRF's strategic research principles and priorities;
- The project must demonstrate a scientific approach to investigation in terms of its feasibility, rationale, translational 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 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 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 the manner by which the research findings may result in translation to a health service delivery outcome, either directly or as a consequence of subsequent policy development/adjustment;
- 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, 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 RHH and this person must be actively engaged in clinical and/or health service delivery; and
- No more than 25% of grant funding should be applied to purchase of equipment unless a satisfactory rationale for this is provided.

Specific Rules for the RHHRF Lowenthal-Muller Grant

Whilst the Chief Investigator A is leading the Lowenthal -Muller project it would be considered detrimental to their own project if they were to be named in a Major Project Grant submission for the same period. The CIA is therefore precluded from simultaneously undertaking the following roles:

- CIA on a Major Project EoI in the current grant round
- CIB, CIC etc. on a 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

The CIA can however undertake the role of CIA (or CIB, CIC etc.) for an Incubator and/or Project Grant submission in the current grant round. Refer to the RHHRF Capping Rules Table [here](#).

Travel expenses may be included in the budget request where travel is essential to the project (eg. 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 submit their application using the 2023 RHHRF Lowenthal-Muller Grant application form. This is available online at www.rhhresearchfoundation.org/research/grants or by emailing the RHHRF's office on research@rhhresearchfoundation.org

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. The grants officer/BM can 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. Your grants officer/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 a representative of the CIA's nominated institution with appropriate delegated authority (eg. Head of Department, Head of School, Head of Institute or Hospital Chief Executive); 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. In addition, this certification verifies a statement which confirms the project will be accommodated in accordance with the proposal.

The application must be submitted via email to research@rhhresearchfoundation.org by **5.00pm on the closing date, Thursday 25 August 2022.**

Competitive Review

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

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

- Research Quality including Translation and Significance (30%);
- Demonstration of translation outcomes and how these will benefit the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians (30%);
- 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 in October 2022 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. The Committee will then make its recommendation to the Board to select for this Grant, allowing consideration at the Foundation's Board meeting on 27 October 2022.

Outcome

The decision of the Board is final. It is intended that outcomes will be communicated to applicants by early November. A formal Grant Agreement will be drawn up between the RHH Research Foundation and the successful applicant's nominated institution (i.e. either UTas or the THS/DOH) and it is anticipated that this will be ready for execution in December with funds to flow and for research to commence in January 2023. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing and may seek feedback on their application upon request.

The RHH Research Foundation wishes to highlight that its grants program receives a considerable volume of submissions, well in excess of its financial capacity. Given the highly competitive nature of the research grant 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 must apply for any necessary ethics approval immediately upon advice of their application's successful status. Evidence of commencement of the ethics submission process must be provided to the RHHRF by 31 January 2023. The value of involving a grants officer/Business Manager in facilitating these activities in a timely manner again cannot be overstated.

Carriage of the Grant Project

The funded project should be completed over the two year period following execution of the contractual agreement, ideally over the period from January 2023 to December 2024 once Grant Agreements are signed, ethics approval is gained and funds have flowed from the RHH Research Foundation to the researcher's nominated institution.

As part of the formal Grant Agreement researchers will be asked at a minimum to submit progress reports every six months and a final report at the conclusion of the grant period, to be provided to the Scientific Research Advisory Committee.

Should any aspects of the intended project change at any time, the RHH Research Foundation must be formally advised at the earliest opportunity. While extensions to the funded grant projects are generally not available, contact should be made to the RHH Research Foundation via the RAO or Business Manager 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 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.

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 our fundraising events, participating in a media interview, contributing to our Quest newsletter, presenting to benefactors and/or featuring on our social media channels.

Assistance

Documentation for the Lowenthal-Muller Grant is available online or from the RHH Research Foundation's office. While grants officers or Business Managers are an invaluable source of assistance, contact with the Foundation can be made at any time Monday to Friday before 4.30pm.

CLOSING DATE

Applications close at 5.00pm on Thursday 25 August 2022.

FOR APPLICATION FORMS & ASSISTANCE PLEASE CONTACT:

Online: www.rhhresearchfoundation.org

Email: research@rhhresearchfoundation.org

Phone: (03) 6166 1320