



Major Project Grant Funding

GUIDELINES FOR STAGE 1 EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Expressions of Interest open 23 June and close 21 July 2022

The RHH Research Foundation will open its call for Expressions of Interest in a Major Project Grant on 23 June. Following consideration of the Expressions of Interest, selected Eols will be asked to submit a full application for the one Major Project Grant currently available for funding via the RHH Research Foundation. The Major Project Grant will be available for an amount up to \$450,000(ex GST) over three years, to be allocated on the basis of \$150,000 pa (+/- 20% each year). This is in addition to the RHH Research Foundation's annual funding of approximately \$150,000 for Incubator and Project Grants.

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 (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.

Each year the RHH Research Foundation selects broad research priorities to guide the focus for consideration of its grant investments. Expressions of Interest for the 2023 Major Project Grant will be reviewed to determine alignment with and capacity to address one or more of 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 do not address one of more of the Strategic Priorities will not be assessed.

Aim

The aim of the Major Project Grant is to provide support and enable capacity building for an early to mid-career researcher and their team by providing 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, 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.

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, 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 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;
- 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 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 Thursday 21 July 2022.

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 on the basis of \$150,000 pa (+/- 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 Chief Investigator A 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 Chief Investigator A must only appear on one Major Project Grant Eoi in the current grant period. Chief Investigator A has to lead the project and it would be considered detrimental to their own project if they were to be named in any other 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 RHHRF Capping Rules Table [here](#).

A Chief Investigator A 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 (ie. 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 will 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 taken into account. For determination of eligibility, a Career Disruption is defined as prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work, due to pregnancy; major illness/injury; and carer responsibilities including parental leave. 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 (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 use the RHHRF Major Project Grant Stage 1 Expression of Interest (EoI) form in order to submit their application in the first instance.

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 and/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 (e.g. 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 EoI must be submitted via email to research@rhhresearchfoundation.org by **5.00pm on the closing date, Thursday 21 July 2022.**

Competitive Review

Stage 1 EoI submissions will be subject to independent review and assessment by the Foundation's NHMRC-approved Scientific Research Advisory Committee.

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 RHHRF 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%).

Review Summary

Stage 1 (EoI) > Review > Stage 2 (full application by invite) > Review > Decision (December)

Following the Committee's meeting on 20 September, those who have been identified as moving to the next stage will be invited to submit a Stage 2 full application by 20 October for further consideration by the Committee. An external assessor may also be invited to review the second stage submission. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing and may seek feedback on their application upon request. Following their assessment of all Stage 2 full applications, the SRAC will make its recommendation to the Board of the proposal to select for this Major Project Grant, allowing consideration at the Foundation's Board meeting on 15 December 2022.

Outcomes

The decision of the Board is final. It is intended that outcomes will be communicated to applicants in late December. A formal Grant Agreement will be drawn up between the RHH Research Foundation and the applicant's nominated institution (i.e. either UTas or the RHH/THS) and it is anticipated that these will be ready for execution 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 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.

It should be noted that funds can only be released by the RHH Research Foundation upon provision of evidence of ethics approval and execution of the formal Grant Agreement. 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 cannot be overstated.

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 2023 to December 2025 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. As part of the formal Grant Agreement researchers will be asked to provide regular progress reports and may also be asked to respond to requests for additional information for promotional purposes. A final report will be required in accordance with the Grant Agreement and it is currently estimated that this will be due by the end of February 2026. This will be received by the Scientific Research Advisory Committee, which will provide both a copy of the report and the Committee's response to the Board.

While extensions to timeframe for funded grants as outlined under the Grant Agreement are generally not available, contact should be made to the RHH Research Foundation via the grants officer/BM at the earliest opportunity should such a need 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 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 RHH Research Foundation's involvement in funding the research project.

Assistance

Documentation for the RHH Research Foundation's Grants Program is available online or from the Foundation's office. While grants officers/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

Initial Expressions of Interest in this Major Project Grant close at 5.00pm on Thursday 21 July 2022.

FOR APPLICATION FORMS & ASSISTANCE PLEASE CONTACT:

Online: www.rhhresearchfoundation.org

Email: research@rhhresearchfoundation.org

Phone: (03) 6166 1320