NHMRC Ideas Grant Information Session - Overview

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Research Innovation & Commercialisation

NHMRC Ideas Grant Scheme

- What is the NHMRC Ideas Grants Scheme?

- Assessment criteria
    - Research Quality (35%)
    - Innovation and Creativity (25%)
    - Significance (20%)
    - Capability (20%)

- Completing your Application
    - Profile & CV
    - Grant Proposal
    - Budget

- Research Innovation and Commercialisation Processes and Resources
    - Critical Dates
    - Application Process
    - What does RIC offer in Application Review?

- Questions at the end, so put them in the chat!

RIC Support for Ideas Grants - Overview

- **Today**

  Ideas Grants scheme overview info session: general outline of Ideas Grants and what to expect

- **10am Fri 24/03 (tomorrow)**

  Ideas Grants budget info session: deeper dive into the budget part of the application – what can be funded and how to complete the budget section

- **11:30am-12:00pm Mondays and Fridays until Fri 28th April****

  One-on-one drop-in info sessions: an opportunity to come in (via Zoom waiting room) and ask questions specific to your application. This is in addition to staff from Health & Medical Grants team available to respond to phone and email queries throughout the application round
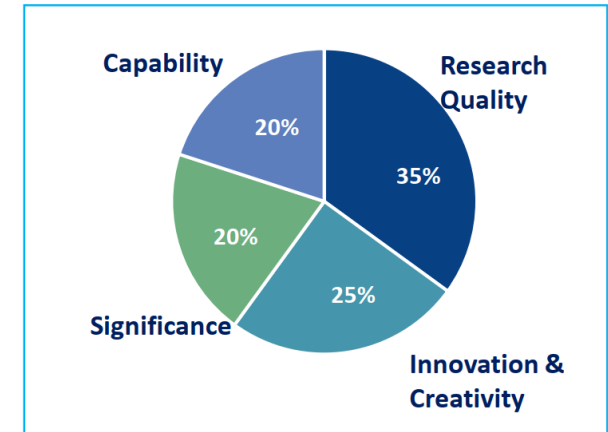
- **RIC Grant Application Review**

  Staff members from RIC will review your application and provide feedback on compliance with the funding rules and alignment with the assessment criteria and Grant Guidelines (more on this process later in the presentation)

** New this year

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NHMRC Ideas Grant Scheme

- Objective: Support innovative research projects addressing a specific question

- Submitted through Sapphire – if you don't have an account, **get one created now** if you are a CI (CIA – CIJ) or an AI

- Intended Outcomes:
  - innovative and creative research
  - funding of researchers at all career stages
  - funding any area of health and medical research from discovery to implementation

- 1-5 years duration

Ideas Grants Eligibility

- Up to 10 Chief Investigators per application

- **CIA** must be based in Australia for at least 80% of the funding period

- At time of acceptance, CIA must be Australian or NZ citizen, permanent resident, or have an appropriate work place visa in place

- Up to 10 Associate Investigators per application

  - No restriction on the number of applications an AI can be named on

- Applicants must not submit the same application to both the Ideas and the CTCS scheme – otherwise, both applications will be ruled ineligible. The Ideas Grants Scheme will not fund research where a clinical trial or cohort study is the primary objective. Ensure you are clear on whether your project is better suited for the Ideas Grant or the CTCS Grant scheme.

- **Investigator Grant applicants (round closed yesterday 22 March):** if <u>a CI (CIA-CIJ)</u> concurrently applies for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be offered. As a consequence, <u>**the Ideas Grant will not be eligible for funding**</u>

- Investigator Grant **holders** cannot apply for an Ideas Grant unless in <u>**their final year**</u> of the Investigator Grant at the time of application

Ideas Grants Eligibility

Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies (CTCS)

NHMRC considers the following to be more suited for the CTCS scheme:

- High-quality clinical trials that provide reliable evidence of the effects of health-related interventions on health outcomes* (or appropriate surrogates). This means that:
  - the project must involve human participants
  - the participants are prospectively assigned to one or more interventions
  - the effects of the intervention(s) on the participants will be examined, and
  - the anticipated effects of the intervention will be a behavioural and/or health-related outcome.

- High-quality cohort studies that provide reliable evidence on the relation of important risk factors and other exposures to health-related outcomes. This means that:
  - the project must involve human participants
  - the participants are prospectively followed over a defined period of time, and
  - the project aims to evaluate associations between one or more factors in the cohort with a behavioural and/or health-related outcome.

- High quality retrospective cohort studies that provide reliable evidence on the relation of important risk factors and other exposures to health-related outcomes. This means that:
  - the project must involve human participants
  - the project will collect and examine retrospective data and may involve some elements of data linkage work, and
  - the project aims to evaluate associations between one or more factors in the cohort with a behavioural and/or health-related outcome.

Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Application Limits

- Applicants are allowed to apply for only 2 grants across the Synergy, Ideas and Investigator grant schemes in any funding round.

- Limit of 2 Ideas Grants per CI (CIA-CIJ, regardless of role) subject to other NHMRC grants concurrently held or applied for

  - **See Section 4.2 and Appendix D of guidelines (pp.42-63) for full details of the number of applications you can submit across the Investigator, Ideas, and Synergy schemes**

  - This round includes the Investigator round that just closed, the ongoing Synergy round and this Ideas round, but not the 2023 Investigator Grants (open ~Sep 2022)

- If you apply for an Ideas grant (or 2) and if awarded, you will be able to apply for an Investigator grant in the following year, however there are important considerations:

  - The RSP of the Investigator grant will be cut by 50% for each Ideas Grant held (25% each Project Grant held)

  - Ensure you budget adequately in your Ideas grant application(s).

  - If you are a CIB-CIJ ensure you are getting adequate budget allocation if the grant is awarded

- RIC has limited visibility over grants held and applied for, **ensure all CIs on your team understand their application limits and do not exceed them** particularly CIs less familiar with NHMRC (i.e. overseas CIs or CIs never named on an NHMRC Grant)

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Ideas Grants Submitting an Application

- To be submitted via Sapphire: **Register your/CI/AI Sapphire accounts ASAP!**

- No CV information appears in the Assessor's snapshot

- Budget: salaries, DRCs, Equipment

  - Each requested item must be fully justified

  - Budget requests for equipment require a quote

- If you intend to apply for an Investigator Grant in future, please note that RSP of the Investigator Grant will be cut by 50% for each Ideas grant you hold (over period of overlap), so budget accordingly

- Pilot data/results are not required, but recommended

- Applicants are able to describe the impacts of COVID19 on their research, and if appropriate, can address expected future impacts as part of their risk management strategy within their grant proposal.

Ideas Grants Assessment process

- 5 'best fit' independent reviewers
  - Based on COI and suitability declarations
  - *"The minimum number of assessments for an application is regarded as 50 percent plus one of the peer reviewers assigned to score an application. If there is an uneven number of peer reviewers assigned to an application, the minimum number of assessments is the next full number after 50 percent (e.g. three assessments in the case of five peer reviewers)."*
- Reviewers will provide scores and written feedback against each assessment criterion
- The final overall scores from assessments will be used to produce a rank-ordered list of applications, on which funding recommendations will be based.
- There are no panel meetings as part of the assessment process.

Key changes to this round

- **NHMRC's Open Access Policy** has been updated to require all peer-reviewed publications arising from NHMRC-funded research to be:
  - made available immediately upon publication, removing the 12-month embargo period
  - published with the use of an open licence, which means publications can be used and shared widely.
  - More information available here: https://library.unimelb.edu.au/open-scholarship/funder-open-access-policies

- **New priority area (Dementia):** additional $7 million to this round to support innovative dementia research projects led by early to mid-career researchers
  - Submitted by early to mid-career researcher as CIA (< 10 years post-PhD) – ensure your PhD pass date and Career Disruptions are detailed in your Sapphire Profile prior to submission.
  - Select relevant tick box within Sapphire application to be considered for dementia-specific funding

Assessment Criteria

Research Quality (35%)
- quality of the project aims and the proposed research plan

Innovation and Creativity (25%)
- research that seeks to challenge and shift current paradigms and/or have a major impact on a health research area through one or more studies that creatively:
  - develop or use novel research concepts, approaches, methodologies, technologies or interventions
  - propose a reinterpretation, refinement, improvement or new application of existing theoretical concepts, approaches, methodologies, technologies or interventions, or
  - integrate and adapt concepts, approaches, methodologies, technologies or interventions from other research fields or disciplines for a new purpose or in a new way – **Guidelines Appendix C**

Significance (20%)
- the extent to which the outcomes and outputs will result in advancements to and/or impact on the research or health area

Capability (20%)
- the appropriateness of the applicant team and their expertise, the resources and access to additional personnel necessary for the project

Score 7 Category Descriptors

Research Quality (35%)

The project aims and proposed research plan:

- are supported by an extremely well justified hypothesis/rationale
- are focused, well-defined, extremely coherent and have a flawless study design and approach
- would be extremely competitive with the best, similar research proposals internationally
- have extremely well identified and managed scientific and technical risks.

Innovation and Creativity (25%)

Relative to the research field, the planned research demonstrates extremely innovative project aims, which will result in an extremely substantial shift in the current paradigm, and/or lead to an extremely substantial breakthrough or impact in the research area.

Significance (20%)

The planned research, relative to the research field will:

- address an issue of critical importance to advance the research or health area (not prevalence/magnitude)
- result in extremely significant outcomes in science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning health issues
- lead to extremely significant research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.).

Capability (20%)

The CIA demonstrates a very strong capability to lead the team in achieving the project aims.
The CI applicant team overall:

- has exceptional capability to execute the project and deliver outcomes
- has access to exceptional technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities and, if required, additional support personnel (Associate Investigators) necessary for the project.
- has an extremely appropriate balance of integrated expertise, experience and training that specifically targets all aspects of the proposed research, in both depth and breadth.

Research Quality (35%)

Characteristics of previous Ideas grants that scored high:

- Well-defined research project with logical and cohesive arguments and a rationale supporting the hypotheses

- Clear and well-considered research aims, questions and hypotheses which are solid, justifiable, testable, and ambitious while still remaining realistic. Research aims were linked to specific outcomes and matched the research methodology, predicted outcomes and project budget.

- A well-presented, clear, precise, thorough and coherent Research Plan which provides sufficient detail to allow peer reviewers to assess Research Quality while describing the research project in a way that is understandable to someone outside the relevant discipline(s).

- Research Plan anticipated particular questions or issues that peer reviewers might raise and addressed these.

- Applied robust, appropriate and feasible experimental approaches, research designs and statistical/measurement methods which were well-explained and clearly linked to the hypotheses.

- Scientific and technical risks clearly identified and explained, with sufficient consideration given to risk management and mitigation.

- Well-defined timeline.

- Clear explanation of the roles of the team members to carry out the project aims.

Innovation and Creativity statement (25%)

Read Guidelines: Appendix C for guidance – some examples of innovation:

- proposing a new area of inquiry
- introduce a new paradigm or challenge prevailing paradigms/assumptions
- show what doesn't work
- reinterpret or readapt data for new purposes

Characteristics of previous Ideas grants that scored high:

- Presented innovative and creative ideas, novel and important research questions, new approaches to problems and utilised new technologies and innovative methods.

- The innovations were outside traditional practice and had potential to lead to ground-breaking discoveries and change paradigms/practices to improve health outcomes.

- The innovations were described clearly within the application, including through the **use of category descriptors** to separate out and distinguish the Innovation and Creativity statement from the Significance statement.

- Points of difference from current concepts, approaches, methodologies, technologies or interventions were clearly articulated and demonstrated innovation and creativity in the proposed research.

- Innovation and Creativity statements that felt tangible and rested on strong rationales.

Significance (20%)

Characteristics of previous Ideas grants that scored high:

- The potential outcomes and impact are possibly transformative, with the potential to change or advance the field or result in a clear impact for the relevant community.

- The significance and impact of the research project were clearly described and explained but not overstated, including explicitly linking the proposed project to a bigger picture goal or body of work that could have implications well beyond the field of the initial project.

- There was a compelling case made for the fundamental or translational significance of the work with emphasis on why the proposed project was needed.

- Connections were made between the research project's rationale, research question/hypothesis, methodology and the significance of the planned research.

- Significance statement clearly distinguished from the Innovation and Creativity statement.

- The significance of the project is explicitly explained and highlighted.

Capability (20%)

Characteristics of previous Ideas grants that scored high:

- Strong, collaborative and balanced applicant team with appropriate and complementary expertise, skills and/or connections to undertake the research project.

- There were clearly described roles for all team members, and all bases of the research project were covered by the team as a whole. Where particular Chief Investigators had less scientific leadership experience or lacked particular skills, sufficient support was provided by other members, including Assistant Investigators.

- Applications clearly outlined and demonstrated – not just stated - why the team had the leadership, skills, experience and expertise to perform the required work, and linked methodology and risk mitigation to team members where relevant.

- Applicant team had access to internationally competitive or world-leading resources.

- The project displays evidence of excellent capability to execute ambitious projects.

Completing your Application – Profile & CV

See section 4 of Appendix E for full details

If anyone in your research team doesn't have a Sapphire account, register your/CI/AI Sapphire accounts ASAP!
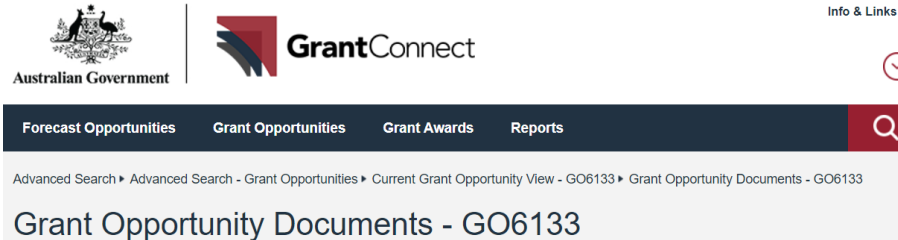
Mandatory Sections of 'My Profile' indicated by red asterisk in Sapphire (*) – CIs cannot be added to the research team unless they have completed all mandatory sections:

- About My Profile
- Personal information
- Academic Information
- Peer Review Information
- Unavailability Calendar
- Contributions to NHMRC
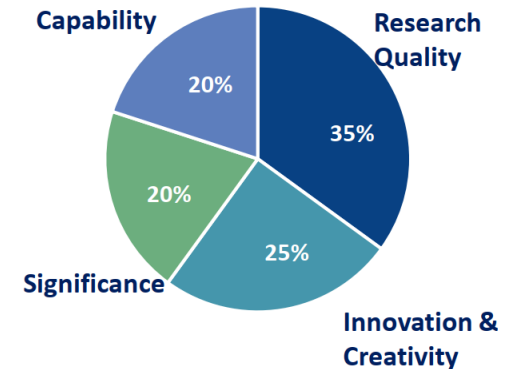
Completing your Application – Grant Proposal

- Use the template!

GRANT PROPOSAL – IDEAS GRANTS FUNDING COMMENCING 2024

Application ID: Insert text here
CIA Surname: Insert text here

A. **Research Proposal** *(7 pages)*

B. **References** *(2 pages)*

C. **Innovation and Creativity statement** *(1 page)*

D. **Significance statement** *(1 page)*

E. **Capability statement** *(1 page)*

F. **Cancer Australia PdCCRS (if applicable)** *(1 page)*

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Completing your Application - Budget

- Join us **tomorrow at 10am** for our Dos and Don'ts of NHMRC Budgets Info Session!

- For detailed information on what can and cannot be requested as part of your budget, as well as how to complete your budget, read:
    - **What the grant money can be used for** (pp.10-11 of the guidelines)
    - **NHMRC Direct research cost guidelines** (download from NHMRC site)
    - **Personnel and Salary Support packages** (available from NHMRC site)
    - **Appendix C: 6.9 Budget Proposal – Third Party Research Facilities** and **6.10 Direct Research Costs** (pp. 51-53 of the guidelines)

- Funds must be spent on costs directly incurred in the grant activity described in the proposal:
    - Salaries
    - Other Research Costs (ORCs)
    - Equipment
    - Third Party Facilities

- Fully justify every element of your budget!
    - Describe the purpose and link each item (salary or ORCs) to aims & experiments
    - Salaries: justify role requirements, skills/experience, time fraction, how role will interact with team
    - ORCs: provide detailed breakdowns of costs. Justify the amounts – how did you reach these totals?

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Research, Innovation and Commercialisation Processes and Resources

2023 Ideas Grants (for 2024 funding)

- **Open:** Wednesday 8 March 2023
- **RIC Hosted Scheme Information Session:** 2pm Thursday 23 March 2022
  - We are here!
- **RIC Hosted Budget Information Session:** 10am Friday 24 March 2022 (tomorrow!)
- **Scheme One-on-One Drop-In Sessions:** 11:30am - 12pm Mondays and Fridays until 28 April 2023
- **Minimum Data:** 5pm Wednesday 5 April 2023
- **Easter:** Friday 7 April to Tuesday 11 April
- **RIC Review of Draft applications date:** 10am Thursday 13 April 2023
- **RIC Final applications due date:** 10am Monday 1 May 2023
- **NHMRC Close Date:** Wednesday 3 May 2022
- **NHMRC Peer Review:** June - August 2022

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Critical dates

- Minimum Data (🏳 on Sapphire) due – **5pm Wed 5 April 2023**. Failure to meet this deadline will result in the application not proceeding.
    - Administering Institution
    - Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Research (yes/no)
    - Project Synopsis
    - Privacy agreement
    - Research Classification (all fields)
    - Chief Investigator A (complete CIA Name and Role) – **you must have a registered Sapphire account. Do this at least 1 week in advance!**
- Internal review by RIC due date – **10am Thu 13 April 2023**
    - Submit by email to nhmrc-project@unimelb.edu.au :
        - 2 Sapphire reports (Application Report and Application Summary)
        - Draft Grant Proposal PDF
- Final submission due to RIC – **10am Mon 1 May 2023**
    No later than this!
    Include Authority to Submit form
    Earlier submission is recommended

Please note that we have observed delays within Sapphire where the approvals tab to submit applications is taking ~15 minutes to load, as such there is a risk to the timely submission of your application if it is received after the RIC Final Submission Deadline. To minimise any delays or issues with the submission of your application we advise adhering to the RIC final submission deadline for this scheme.

How to apply – step by step

1. Submit an NOI to RIC - **ASAP**
2. Complete/update Sapphire Profile and CV
   – **Register your account in Sapphire ASAP if necessary**
3. Review key documents
4. Complete draft application in Sapphire and prepare your grant proposal document.
5. **Email application to RIC for review**
6. Finalise the application
7. **Certify the application in Sapphire**
8. **Email UOM Authority to Submit form to RIC**
9. RIC to submit the application to NHMRC

   https://sites.research.unimelb.edu.au/research-funding/nhmrc/ideas-grants

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What does RIC offer in Application Review?

What we do as part of our review process

- Review all sections in Sapphire and Grant Proposal PDF

- Check eligibility
  - Can you apply for this grant? If not, what do you need to do to be eligible?

- Check compliance
  - Have all the fields been completed? Have any sections been missed?
  - Have the application rules and requirements been adhered to?
  - Does evidence meet NHMRC requirements?

- Identify how the application can be improved to best address the Assessment Criteria
  - How can the responses be better structured?
  - How can the responses and relevance to Assessment Criteria be made clearer?
  - What elements of the Assessment Criteria have not been strongly or clearly addressed?
  - What other aspects could use refinement?

What we don't do

- Review scientific content: talk to colleagues in your lab, your department and your faculty!

- Proofreading: we will highlight major typos that affect understanding, but full spelling & grammar checking and restructuring of sentences or sections will be left to applicants

Funding Partners

Cancer Australia – PdCCRS (Details TBC once guidelines released)

- 2 additional documents required:
    - **1-page modified research proposal included in Section G** of the Grant Proposal
    - **PdCCRS Questions form** (available from GrantConnect)

Cancer Council New South Wales (CCNSW) – Project Grants

- 2 additional documents required (both available from [CCNSW site](#)):
    - **Supplementary Questions** online grant submission form
    - **Consumer review form**

Cancer Council Victoria (CCV): No longer via NHMRC (EOIs due to CCV 23 June)

Funding Partners

Submitting CA/CCNSW supplementary documents

- Must meet Minimum Data for Ideas - **5pm Wed 5 April 2023**
- For full review, provide with Ideas application - **10am Thu 13 April 2023**
- Fully completed NHMRC Ideas application must be submitted by NHMRC close date – due to RIC by **10am Mon 1 May 2023**
  - This applies even if not requesting NHMRC funding
- Final documents must be provided to RIC via nhmrc-project@unimelb.edu.au by:
  - CA: finalised **CA PdCCRS questions document** due to RIC by **10am Mon 8 May 2023 (TBC once CA guidelines released)**
  - CCNSW: finalised **CCNSW Supplementary Questions document and Consumer Review Form** due to RIC by **10am Mon 15 May 2023**

Resources

- RIC Ideas Grants Webpage

https://sites.research.unimelb.edu.au/research-funding/nhmrc/ideas-grants

- NHMRC Ideas Grants Webpage

https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/funding/find-funding/ideas-grants

- NHMRC web eligibility tool

https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/investigator-ideas-and-synergy-eligibility-tool

- Grant Connect Webpage for NHMRC Document download – GO6133 (Requires Login)

https://www.grants.gov.au/Go/Show?GoUuid=F2EF7C9E-F7EA-4CDB-AEA4-D2D2779A2B14

- UoM Grants Library

https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/research/grants/successful-applications-library

Contact us:

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Grants Officer

Nicola Franklin
Grants Officer

Question Time