



Ideas Grants 2021 Guidelines

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| Opening date: | 10 March 2021 |
| Closing date and time: | 17.00 AEST on 5 May 2021 |
| Commonwealth policy entity: | National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) |
| Enquiries: | <p>Applicants requiring further assistance should direct enquiries to their Administering Institution's Research Administration Officer. Research Administration Officers can contact NHMRC's Research Help Centre for further advice:</p> <p>Phone: 1800 500 983 (+61 2 6217 9451 for international callers)</p> <p>Email: help@nhmrc.gov.au</p> <p>NHMRC will not respond to any enquiries submitted after 13:00 AEST on 5 May 2021.</p> <p>Note: NHMRC's Research Help Centre aims to provide a reply to all requests for general assistance within two working days. This timeframe may be longer during peak periods or for more detailed requests for assistance.</p> |
| Date guidelines released: | 10 March 2021 |
| Type of grant opportunity: | Targeted competitive |

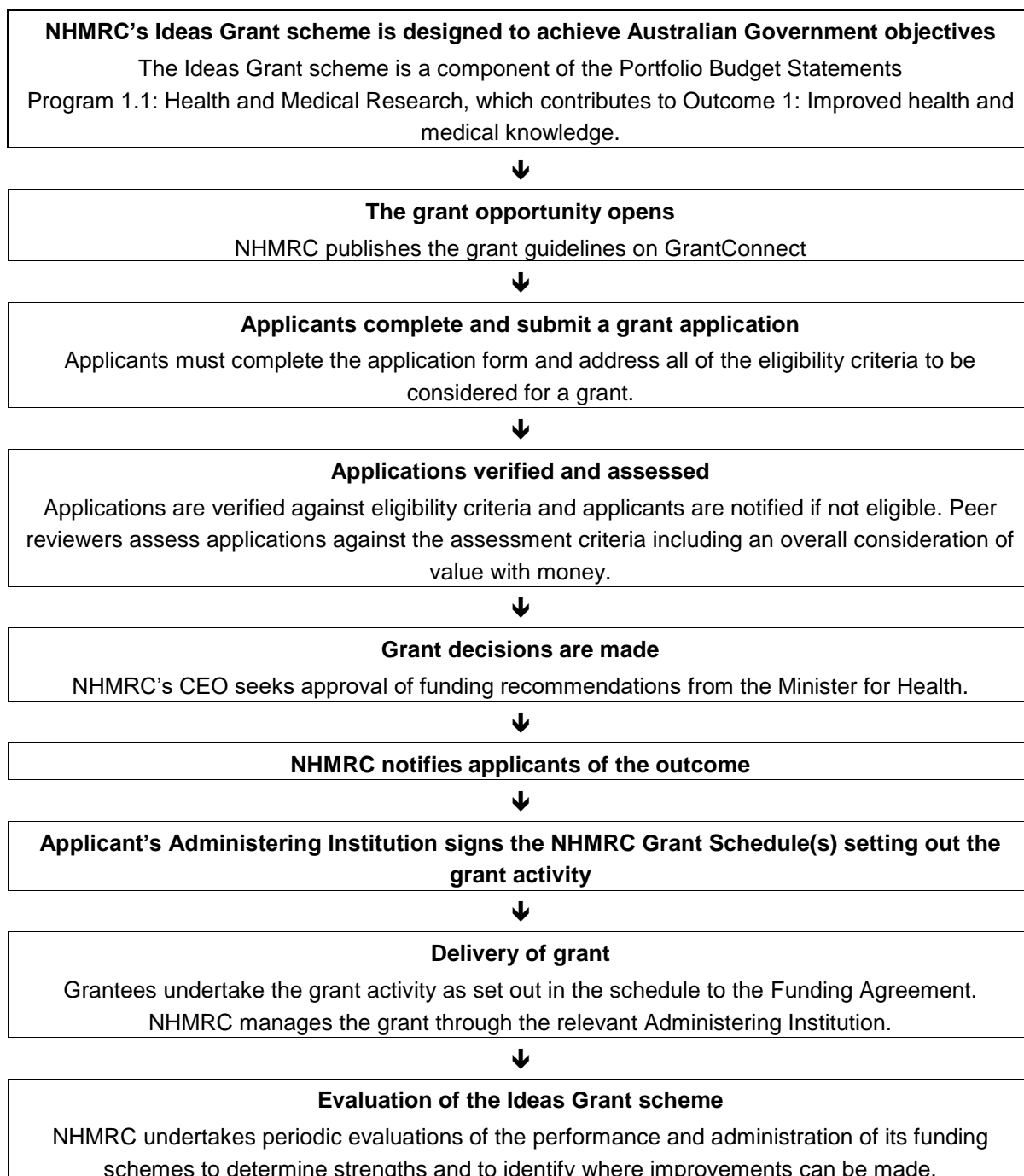
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1. Ideas Grants 2021 processes



1.1. Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the Ideas Grants 2021 grant opportunity.

Applicants must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant scheme/grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how grant applications are considered and selected
- how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
- how grantees will be monitored and evaluated
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

GrantConnect (www.grants.gov.au) is the authoritative source of information on this grant opportunity. Any alterations or addenda to these Guidelines will be published on GrantConnect.

The Ideas Grants 2021 grant opportunity will be undertaken in accordance with the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017* (CGRGs), available from the [Department of Finance website](#).

NHMRC recognises the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Australia's health and medical research community. In response, NHMRC has provided additional guidance to applicants to clarify that circumstances associated with the pandemic and other calamities will be considered, where applicable, as part of their application. For Ideas Grant applications, NHMRC recognises that, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many applicants who would have otherwise obtained pilot data to support their grant proposal have not been able to do so. While pilot data are not (and have never been) a requirement for Ideas Grant applications, wording has been included to clarify that, particularly in the context of COVID-19, the presentation of pilot data is not a requirement for Ideas Grant applications.

1.1.1. About NHMRC

NHMRC is the Australian Government's key entity for managing investment in, and integrity of, health and medical research. NHMRC works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the *National Health and Medical Research Council Act 1992* (NHMRC Act) and the CGRGs.

NHMRC awards grants through several research funding schemes to advance health and medical knowledge and to improve the health status of all Australians. NHMRC invests in the highest quality research and researchers, as determined through peer review, across the four pillars of health and medical research: basic science, clinical medicine and science, public health and health services research.

2. About the grant program

Funding for the program will be provided from the NHMRC Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA), which is underpinned by section 51 of the *NHMRC Act*.

The objective of the Ideas Grant scheme is to support innovative research projects addressing a specific question(s).

The intended outcomes of the Ideas Grant scheme are:

- innovative and creative research,

- funding of researchers at all career stages, and
- funding any area of health and medical research from discovery to implementation.

As part of a commitment to funding researchers at all stages of their career, the Ideas Grant scheme provides particular opportunities for early and mid-career researchers. It is expected that the CIA will have the capability to lead the team in achieving the project aims.

Only applications that address the intended objective and outcomes will be competitive for funding. The Ideas Grant scheme is not intended to support research where a clinical trial or cohort study is the primary objective. Applicants seeking funding to conduct a clinical trial or a cohort study should apply to NHMRC's Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies Grant scheme (refer to the objectives of the [Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies scheme](#)).

Applicants conducting a project which incorporates elements of a clinical trial and/or cohort study must consider whether the goals of the project are more applicable to the Ideas Grant or Clinical Trials and Cohort Grant schemes.

Where projects have elements consistent with both the Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies Grant scheme and the Ideas Grant scheme, applicants should decide where the project is predominantly suited, based on the objectives and outcomes of the respective schemes and where the application would receive the most appropriate peer review. Applicants must not submit the same research project to both schemes, otherwise both applications will be deemed ineligible.

Applicants should also anticipate a high level of interest in this grant opportunity and it is expected to be highly competitive. Applications should be carefully scrutinised within the Administering Institution prior to submission to NHMRC to ensure that the application will have the best chance to be considered favourably during NHMRC peer review.

The grant scheme reflects the Australian Government's objectives for health and medical research, including priority research areas identified in the Government's *Science and Research Priorities*, *Australia's Long Term National Health Plan* and the *National Innovation Science Agenda*.

2.1. Key changes

Applicants should note the following changes for the Ideas Grants 2021 guidelines:

- Appendix D (Guide to Applicants, section 4.7): Clarification provided to emphasise that pilot data are not required for Ideas Grant applications.
- *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria* are to be addressed in Sapphire, and no longer to be included in the Grant Proposal.

2.2. NHMRC structural priorities, Ideas Grants 2021 priorities and funding with other organisations

NHMRC's [Corporate Plan](#) outlines strategic priorities and major health issues for the period covered by the Plan, including how NHMRC will address these issues, and a national strategy for medical research and public health research. Each year, NHMRC identifies structural priorities for funding to deliver against certain strategic priorities. Information on NHMRC's structural priorities, Ideas Grant priorities and Ideas Grant funding with other organisations is outlined in [Appendix A](#).

3. Grant amount and grant period

3.1. Grants available

The provisional funding allocation for the Ideas Grants 2021 is \$240 million. NHMRC's Research Committee annually reviews and recommends indicative budget amounts to be awarded across individual funding schemes.

The amount of funding for an Ideas Grant will be based on assessment of the requested budget. Applications must clearly justify the requested duration and budget and how they will support the proposed outcomes of the research. Peer reviewers will consider this information and may reduce the duration and/or budget to ensure the research aims and objectives can be achieved while ensuring value with money. A reduced budget does not reduce the scope of the proposed grant activity.

3.2. Grant period

An Ideas Grant can be requested for between one and five years depending on the proposal.

4. Eligibility criteria

Applications will only be accepted from NHMRC Administering Institutions. A list of NHMRC Administering Institutions is available on [NHMRC's website](#).

The Chief Investigator A (CIA) and Administering Institution must ensure applications meet all eligibility requirements, as set out in these guidelines, at the time of submission and for the duration of peer review. Applications that do not meet these eligibility requirements may be ineligible and may be excluded from further consideration.

An eligibility ruling may be made by NHMRC at any stage following the close of applications, including during peer review. Where an eligibility ruling is being considered, NHMRC may request further information in order to assess whether the eligibility requirement has been met.

Decisions are made based on current policies and considerations specific to this grant opportunity. Decisions made in relation to previous grant opportunities or other NHMRC funding schemes will not be regarded as precedents and will not be considered when assessing compliance with the requirements of this grant opportunity.

Administering Institutions will be notified in writing of ineligible applications and are responsible for advising applicants.

Grant offers may be withdrawn if eligibility criteria are not met. Action may also be taken over the life of a grant if eligibility criteria to continue holding a grant are not met.

NHMRC staff will not make eligibility rulings before an application is submitted.

4.1. Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

4.1.1. Chief Investigators and Associate Investigators

The maximum number of CIs allowed on a Ideas Grants 2021 application is 10.

Chief Investigator 'A'

At the time of acceptance and for the duration of a grant the CIA must be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, or a permanent resident of Australia or have an appropriate work visa in place. The CIA must also be based in Australia for at least 80% of the funding period.

Chief Investigators

The role and contribution of each CI must be described in the grant application. PhD students may only be named as CIs where the PhD student is critical for the successful completion of the proposed research. CIs are expected to remain on the grant activity for the duration of the grant, unless a variation is approved by NHMRC in accordance with the [NHMRC Grantee Variations Policy](#).

Associate Investigators

An Associate Investigator (AI) is defined as an investigator who provides some intellectual and/or practical input into the research and whose participation may warrant inclusion of their name on any outputs (e.g. publications).

There is no restriction on who may be named as an AI on an application. However, a maximum number of 10 applies.

4.2. Multiple applications/grants

Limits apply to the number of NHMRC grants that a CI may concurrently apply for and/or hold.

4.2.1. Information for Investigator, Ideas and Synergy Grant schemes

Eligibility to apply for, and hold, an Ideas Grant is linked to numbers of grants applied for or held from the Investigator and Synergy Grant schemes, as well as other NHMRC grants held.

CIs may submit a total of two applications across the Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Grant schemes in any given funding round¹. See specific rules relating to Investigator and Synergy Grant schemes.

CIs may hold a maximum of two grants concurrently from the Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Grant schemes, with the following exceptions:

- CIs who hold two Ideas Grants can hold a Synergy Grant, and
- CIs who hold two Ideas Grants can apply for and hold an Investigator Grant.

Investigator Grant holders cannot apply for an Ideas or new Investigator Grant, unless they are in the final year of the Investigator Grant at the time of application.

¹ For example, in the 2019 funding round for funding commencing in 2020 (subject to other scheme-specific eligibility requirements), CIs may submit 1x Investigator Grant application + 1x Synergy Grant application = 2 applications in total.

Detailed information on how eligibility for an Ideas Grant is affected by a CI's grant applications and/or currently held grants is available at [Appendix D](#) (eligibility for 2021 funding round) and the eligibility tool on [NHMRC's website](#).

4.2.2. Limits on the number of Ideas Grant applications

CIs may submit a maximum of two Ideas Grant applications in a grant opportunity, subject to other NHMRC grants concurrently held or applied for.²

If any CI (CIA-CIJ) submits an Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grant application(s) in excess of the maximum they are eligible to apply for or hold, all Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grant applications on which that CI is named may be ineligible and excluded from consideration, irrespective of:

- the scheme to which they have applied, and
- that CI's position or role on the application.

Note: Applications only seeking funding from Cancer Council and/or Cancer Australia are not affected by NHMRC capping rules.

4.2.3. Limits on the number of Ideas Grants that may be held

CIs may hold no more than two Ideas Grants concurrently, subject to other NHMRC grants held or concurrently applied for.

The number of Ideas Grants that may be held by a given CI may be fewer than two, for example if the CI holds two or more NHMRC Project Grants (refer to the [eligibility tool on the NHMRC website](#)).

4.3. Exclusion of applications

An application may be excluded from further consideration if:

- it contravenes an eligibility rule or other requirement as set out in the Grant Guidelines
- it, or any CI named on the application, contravenes an applicable law or code
- it is inconsistent with the objectives of the NHMRC Act and/or the purposes of the MREA, and
- any CI named on the application is the subject of a decision by NHMRC's CEO or Delegate that any application they make to NHMRC, for specified funding schemes, will be excluded from consideration for a period of time, whether or not they otherwise meet the eligibility requirements. Such decisions will generally reflect consequential action taken by NHMRC in response to findings of a serious breach of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (the Code) (including a finding of research misconduct, where this term is used) or a Probity Event. See the Code for a definition of 'research misconduct' and the *NHMRC Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy* available from [NHMRC's website](#).

Such exclusion may take place at any time following CIA and Administering Institution certification of the application.

² For example, if a researcher holds two Project Grants on 1 January of the year the Ideas Grant is to commence, then an applicant can only apply for one Ideas Grant.

If a decision is made to exclude an application from further consideration, NHMRC will provide its decision and the reason(s) for the decision to the Administering Institution's Research Administration Officer (RAO) in writing. The Administering Institution's RAO is responsible for advising applicants of the decision in writing. Decisions to exclude an application may be reviewable by NHMRC's Commissioner of Complaints.

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1. Eligible grant activities and expenditure

Funding provided by NHMRC for a grant activity must be spent on costs directly incurred in that grant activity that satisfy the principles and requirements outlined in the *Direct Research Costs Guidelines* on the [NHMRC website](#).

Salary support Ideas Grants are not normally intended to provide salary support for CIs. However, if applicants are seeking CI salaries, justification on how the proposed budget is directly associated with achieving the outcomes of the research must be provided and will be considered during peer review.

CIs, including the CIA, may draw a salary if they are based in Australia for at least 80% of the funding period. CIs based overseas are not able to draw a salary, but salary support is available for research support staff based overseas (see section 5.2). Requested salaries must be based on Personnel Support Packages (PSPs) outlined on the [NHMRC website](#).

Applicants can receive up to 100% salary across NHMRC grants. Multiple partial salaries can be drawn up to 100%, if allowed in the grant guidelines for the respective grant opportunity.

Associate Investigators cannot draw a salary from any Ideas Grant.

5.2. Funding to support overseas grant activities and researchers

The CIA may request funding to support specific grant activities to be undertaken overseas. In doing so, the CIA must clearly demonstrate that the overseas grant activity is critical to the successful completion of the project, and the equipment/resources required for the grant activity are not available in Australia.

In some instances, the CIA may seek to conduct the majority of the work overseas. However, it is important that the CIA ensures such research is well justified and conforms with the scheme eligibility requirements. For example, the CIA is required to be based in Australia for at least 80% of the requested grant duration. Funding (including salaries) for research support staff based overseas can be considered where this is important to achieving the aims of the research.

See *Direct Research Costs Guidelines* on the [NHMRC website](#) for further guidance on the expenditure of funding for a grant activity.

5.3. Duplicate funding

NHMRC may compare the research proposed in grant applications with grants previously funded, currently funded, and funded by other agencies (e.g. Australian Research Council or Department of Health) and published research. NHMRC will not fund research that it considers duplicates research previously or currently being funded.

Where NHMRC believes that an applicant has submitted similar research proposals to NHMRC and has been successful with more than one application, the applicant may be required to provide

NHMRC with a written report clearly identifying the difference between the research aims of the research activities. If NHMRC subsequently does not consider the research activities to be sufficiently different, the applicant will be required to decline or relinquish one of the grants.

6. The assessment criteria

Applications for Ideas Grants 2021 are assessed by peers against the assessment criteria listed below, and the category descriptors at [Appendix B](#).

- Research Quality (35%)
- Innovation and Creativity (25%)
- Significance (20%), and
- Capability (20%).

6.1. Health research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

As part of NHMRC's stated commitment to advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research, NHMRC has established certain requirements and processes designed to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research is of the highest scientific merit and is beneficial and acceptable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

Applicants proposing to undertake research which specifically relates to the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, or which includes distinct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, biological samples or data, should be aware of, and must refer to, the following documents in formulating their proposal:

- [Roadmap 3: A strategic framework for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through research](#)
- [Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders](#), and
- [Keeping Research on Track II](#), which is a companion document on how the values and principles outlined in the [Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders](#) can be put into practice in research.

To qualify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research, at least 20% of the research effort and/or capacity-building must relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

Qualifying applications must address NHMRC's *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria* as follows:

- Community engagement - the proposal demonstrates how the research and potential outcomes are a priority for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with relevant community engagement by individuals, communities and/or organisations in conceptualisation, development and approval, data collection and management, analysis, report writing and dissemination of results.
- Benefit - the potential health benefit of the project is demonstrated by addressing an important health issue for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This benefit can have a single focus or affect several areas, such as knowledge, finance and policy or

quality of life. The benefit may be direct and immediate, or it can be indirect, gradual and considered.

- Sustainability and transferability - the proposal demonstrates how the results of the project have the potential to lead to achievable and effective contributions to health gain for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, beyond the life of the project. This may be through sustainability in the project setting and/or transferability to other settings such as evidence-based practice and/or policy. In considering this issue the proposal should address the relationship between costs and benefits.
- Building capability - the proposal demonstrates how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and researchers will develop relevant capabilities through partnerships and participation in the project.

Peer reviewer(s) with specific expertise in Indigenous health research will consider how well the application addresses the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria*. This evaluation will be taken into consideration in the overall assessment of the application, using the assessment criteria outlined in section 6.

7. How to apply

7.1. Overview and timing of grant opportunity processes

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 10 March 2021 | Applications open in Sapphire |
| 17:00 AEST | |
| 7 April 2021 | Minimum data due in Sapphire |
| 17:00 AEST | |
| 5 May 2021 | Applications close in Sapphire |
| August – October 2021 | Anticipated peer review period |
| December 2021* | Anticipated notification of outcomes |

*Date is indicative and subject to change.

Applications must be submitted electronically using Sapphire (unless otherwise advised by NHMRC).

Electronic submission requires Administering Institutions and all CIs on an application to register for an account in Sapphire. Applicants who are not registered can submit a new user request via the login page of Sapphire.

Applicants should refer to the [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#) for detailed user instructions, or contact their RAO or NHMRC's Research Help Centre for further assistance.

Late applications will not be accepted.

7.2. Application Extensions

Requests for application extensions will be considered on a case by case basis and must be submitted by email to help@nhmrc.gov.au on or before the scheme close date and time. Requests will only be considered for:

- unforeseen circumstances, e.g. natural calamities such as bushfires, floods or cyclones, or
- exceptional circumstances that affect multiple researchers, e.g. power and/or internet network outages, or
- where an applicant, or a member of their immediate family³, is incapacitated due to an unforeseen medical emergency, such as life-threatening injury, accident or death.

Extensions, if granted, will be for a maximum of seven calendar days. This is to ensure that subsequent peer review processes and approval of funding recommendations are not delayed, especially as eligibility decisions for some NHMRC schemes depend on an applicant's success with other schemes.

Requests for extensions submitted after the scheme close date and time will not be considered.

7.3. Minimum data requirements

Minimum data must be entered in Sapphire by the specified due date to allow NHMRC to start identifying suitable peer reviewers. Applications that fail to satisfy this requirement will not be accepted. Applicants must complete the required fields with correct information. Using placeholder text such as “text”, “synopsis” or “xx” etc. is not acceptable as minimum data.

Minimum data fields for Ideas Grants 2021 are outlined in [Appendix E: Guide to Applicants](#) (see section 2.1, ‘Minimum Data Requirements’) and within Sapphire.

Failure to meet this deadline will result in the application not proceeding.

RAOs are not required to certify applications for the purpose of minimum data. Applications should only be certified once complete and ready for submission.

7.4. Application requirements

The application should contain all information necessary for assessment without the need for further written or oral explanation or reference to additional documentation. Further information on what can and cannot be included in the application is provided in the Guide to Applicants at [Appendix E](#).

All details included must be current at the time of submission, as this information is relied on during assessment.

Applications must comply with all content and formatting requirements. Incomplete or non-compliant applications may be assessed as ineligible.

Additional requirements and guidance in relation to each component of the application are outlined at [Appendix D](#).

³ Immediate family comprises a spouse, child, parent or sibling. It includes de facto, step and adoptive relations (e.g. de facto, step or adopted children).

7.5. Consumer and community involvement

The *Statement on Consumer and Community Involvement in Health and Medical Research* (the Statement) has been developed because of the important contribution consumers make to health and medical research. The Statement's purpose is to guide research institutions, researchers, consumers and community members in the active involvement of consumers and community members in all aspects of health and medical research. The Consumers Health Forum of Australia Ltd and NHMRC worked in partnership with consumers and researchers to develop the Statement.

To complement the Statement, NHMRC has released a Toolkit with resources on consumer and community involvement in, and expectations of, health and medical research. Researchers are encouraged to consider the benefits of actively engaging consumers and use this Toolkit throughout all stages of research, including the planning and preparation of grant applications, conduct of research and the evaluation of outcomes.

Further information on the Consumers Health Forum, the Statement and the Toolkit is available on [NHMRC's website](#). Consumer and community involvement in the proposed research will be considered, as relevant, as part of the applicable assessment criteria (see section 6).

7.6. Certification and submission

Once complete, applications must be electronically certified and then submitted to NHMRC through the RAO of an NHMRC Administering Institution using Sapphire.

Certification is required firstly by the CIA and then by the Administering Institution RAO by the specified due date or the application will be ineligible and excluded from further consideration.

Once submitted to NHMRC, the application is considered final and no changes can be made.

7.6.1. CIA certification

The following assurances, acknowledgements and undertakings are required of the CIA prior to submitting an application:

- All required information has been provided and is complete, current and correct.
- All eligibility and other application requirements have been met.
- All personnel contributing to the grant activity have familiarised themselves with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#), the [Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes](#) and other relevant NHMRC policies concerning the conduct of research, and agree to conduct themselves in accordance with those policies.
- The application may be excluded from consideration if found to be in breach of any requirements, in accordance with the grant guidelines.

And if funded,

- The research will be carried out in strict accordance with the conditions governing NHMRC grants at the time.
- The Head of Department of the Administering Institution (and Participating Institution/s, if applicable) will ensure the appropriate facilities will be available.
- The research may be used for internal NHMRC quality evaluations/reviews.

7.6.2. Certification from other Chief Investigators (CIB-CIJ) and Associate Investigators

By accepting an invitation to participate on an application, Chief and Associate Investigators certify that at the time of application submission, they:

- Agree to be named on the application
- Endorse application certification by the Chief Investigator A and submission for endorsement by the Administering Institution's RAO
- Have familiarised themselves with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#), the [Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes](#) and other relevant NHMRC policies concerning the conduct of research, and agree to conduct themselves in accordance with those policies
- Agree to participate in the manner described in the application and to handling of personal information contained within the application as described in the *NHMRC Privacy Policy*.

7.6.3. Administering Institution certification

The following assurances, acknowledgements and undertakings are required of the Administering Institution prior to submitting an application:

- Reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the application is complete and correct and complies with all eligibility and other application requirements.
- Where the CIA is not an Australian or New Zealand citizen or permanent resident, they will have the requisite work visa in place at the time of accepting the successful grant and will be based in Australia for at least 80% of the funding period.
- CIA will be based in Australia for at least 80% of the funding period.
- The appropriate facilities and salary support will be available for the funding period.
- Approval of the grant activity by relevant institutional committees and approval bodies, particularly for ethics and biosafety, will be sought and obtained prior to the commencement of the research, or the parts of the research that require their approval.
- Arrangements for the management of the grant have been agreed between all institutions associated with the application.
- The application is being submitted with the full authority of, and on behalf of, the Administering Institution, noting that under section 136.1 of the *Commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995*, it is an offence to provide false or misleading information to a Commonwealth body in an application for a benefit. This includes submission of an application by those not authorised by the Institution to submit applications for funding to NHMRC.

Administering Institutions must ensure that the RAO is authorised to certify and submit applications.

7.7. Retracted publications

If a publication relevant to an application is retracted after the application has been submitted, the applicant must promptly notify their RAO. The RAO must advise NHMRC at the earliest opportunity of the retraction by email (help@nhmrc.gov.au) with an explanation of the reasons for the retraction.

In addition, where the publication forms part of the applicant's track record, the applicant must immediately record that information in their Profile & CV in Sapphire.

If an application is largely dependent on the results of a retracted publication, the applicant should also consider withdrawing the application. If, under these circumstances, an applicant chooses not to withdraw the application, the RAO must advise NHMRC in writing (to help@nhmrc.gov.au), clearly outlining the reasons for not withdrawing the application.

7.8. Withdrawal of applications

Applications may be withdrawn at any time by written notice from the Administering Institution's RAO to NHMRC.

An application may be 'marked for deletion' by the applicant in Sapphire before the close of the round. This authorises NHMRC to delete the application once the round has closed. The application will not be deleted while the funding round remains open for application submission.

7.9. Questions during the application process

Applicants requiring further assistance should direct enquiries to their Administering Institution's RAO. RAOs can contact NHMRC's Research Help Centre for further advice.

NHMRC's Research Help Centre

P: 1800 500 983 (+61 2 6217 9451 for international callers)

E: help@nhmrc.gov.au.

Refer to the [Research Help Centre webpage](#) for opening hours.

8. The grant selection process

8.1. Assessment of grant applications

NHMRC considers applications through a targeted competitive grant process. Applications are required to meet eligibility requirements as set out in these guidelines and are assessed against the assessment criteria (see Section 6) by independent peer reviewers.

The extent to which applications represent value with relevant money is considered as part of the broader category descriptors at [Appendix B](#), which includes assessment of applications against the scheme's objectives and intended outcomes (Section 2), the quality of the proposed research and the capability of the applicant(s).

8.1.1. Who will assess applications?

NHMRC's peer review process is designed to provide a rigorous, fair, transparent and consistent assessment of the merits of each application to ensure that only the highest quality, value with money research is recommended for funding.

Applicants must not seek to identify or make contact about their application with anyone who is directly engaged with its assessment, in keeping with NHMRC's principles of impartial and

independent peer review. Seeking to influence the process or outcomes of peer review may constitute a breach of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) and may result in the application being excluded from consideration.

8.1.2. Ideas Grant assessment process

NHMRC will conduct peer review for this funding round in accordance with the following principles:

- Fairness. Peer review processes are fair and seen to be fair by all involved.
- Transparency. All stages of peer review are transparent.
- Independence. Peer reviewers provide independent advice. There is also independent oversight of peer review processes by independent Chairs and Observers.
- Appropriateness and balance. The experience, expertise and operation of peer reviewers are appropriate to the goals and scale of the funding vehicle.
- Research community participation. Persons holding taxpayer-funded grants should willingly make themselves available to participate in peer review processes, including mentoring of junior researchers, whenever possible.
- Confidentiality. Participants respect that confidentiality is important to the fairness and robustness of peer review.
- Impartiality. Peer review is objective and impartial, with appropriate processes in place to manage real and perceived conflicts of interest (CoI).
- Quality and excellence. NHMRC will continue to introduce evidence-based improvements into its processes to achieve the highest quality decision-making through peer review.

Peer reviewers will independently undertake an assessment of applications against the assessment criteria (see Section 6). The overall scores from assessments will be used to produce a rank ordered list of applications, on which funding recommendations will be based.

Further information on the assessment process is on the [NHMRC's website](#).

8.2. Who will approve grants?

In accordance with paragraph 7(1)(c) of the NHMRC Act, NHMRC's CEO makes recommendations on expenditure from the MREA to the Minister with portfolio responsibility for NHMRC.

9. Notification of application outcomes

NHMRC will advise applicants and their nominated Administering Institution's RAO of the outcome of the application as early as possible, following the approval of grants. Advice of outcomes may occur before the approval of grants if an application has been assessed as uncompetitive or excluded for other reasons.

NHMRC may advise applicants and their Administering Institution's RAO of the outcome under embargo. An embargo is the prohibition of publicising information or news provided by NHMRC until a certain date or until certain conditions have been met. [NHMRC's website](#) provides further information on what can and cannot happen where information on a grant is released under embargo.

10. Successful grant applications

CIA's whose applications are approved for funding will have access to a letter of offer through NHMRC's grant management system. Administering Institutions responsible for administering approved applications will also have access to the letter of offer and to the Schedule to the Funding Agreement. The Administering Institution is responsible for accepting the Schedule through the online signing/acceptance process within NHMRC's grant management system.

NHMRC's CEO or delegate may withdraw or vary an offer of a grant if they consider that it is reasonably necessary to protect Commonwealth revenue.

10.1. Information required from grantees

Grantees may be required to supply additional information about their grant activity before payments commence. This will be stated in the letter of offer.

10.2. Approvals and licences

Where relevant, particularly in relation to ethics and biosafety, NHMRC-funded grant activities must be referred for approval to the relevant institutional committees and approval bodies. For further information see [NHMRC's website](#).

10.3. NHMRC Funding Agreement

All grants are offered in accordance with the Funding Agreement (with any conditions specified in Schedules and these Grant Guidelines), which is a legal agreement between NHMRC and the Administering Institution. In accepting the Schedules, the Administering Institution is agreeing to the conditions contained in the Funding Agreement and the Schedule.

Details of the Funding Agreement can be found on [NHMRC's website](#) under Funding Agreement and Deeds of Agreement. A grant will not commence, nor grant funds be paid, until:

- the Funding Agreement between NHMRC and the Administering Institution is in place, and
- the appropriate Schedule to the Funding Agreement is accepted by the Responsible Officer or their delegate and is accepted and executed by NHMRC.

10.3.1. Responsible and ethical conduct of research

NHMRC expects the highest levels of research conduct and integrity to be observed in the research that it funds. Administering Institutions and CIAs are bound by the conditions of the Funding Agreement. NHMRC funded research must be conducted in accordance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*. Further information about the Code can be found on [NHMRC's website](#).

10.4. NHMRC policies

Administering Institutions and CIAs are bound by the conditions of the Funding Agreement. It is the responsibility of Administering Institutions and CIs to be aware of, and comply with, all relevant legislation and policies relating to the conduct of the grant activity.

For further information on the expectations of Administering Institutions and CIs, see [NHMRC's website](#).

10.5. Payments

Payments will commence once all outstanding obligations (e.g. conditions, eligibility rules or data requirements specified in the Schedule to the Funding Agreement, relevant grant guidelines or letter of offer) have been met by the CIA and the Administering Institution.

10.6. Suspension of grants

NHMRC funding may be suspended for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, requests made by the CIA. Variations will generally only be granted if allowed in the grant guidelines and the *NHMRC Grantee Variation Policy* available on the [NHMRC website](#).

Funding may also be suspended by NHMRC, as set out in the Funding Agreement, including when there has been a failure to comply with a Policy or Guideline, or on the basis of a Probiity Event or an investigation of an alleged breach of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (including research misconduct, where this term is used).

10.7. Tax implications

All amounts referred to in these Grant Guidelines are exclusive of GST, unless stated otherwise.

Administering Institutions are responsible for all financial and taxation matters associated with the grant.

11. Announcement of grants

Grant outcomes are publicly listed on the [GrantConnect website](#) within 21 calendar days after the date of effect as required by the CGRGs.

12. How NHMRC monitors grant activity

12.1. Variations

A variation is a change (including a delay) to a grant. There are specific circumstances under which grantees should report and seek approval of a variation to an NHMRC grant (including the grant activity) relative to the peer reviewed application. Requests must comply with the grant guidelines and the *NHMRC Grantee Variations Policy*. Requests to vary the terms of a grant should be made to NHMRC via the Grantee Variation portal in NHMRC's grant management system. For information on grant variations see the *NHMRC Grantee Variations Policy* available on the [NHMRC website](#).

Grant variations cannot be used as a means to meet NHMRC eligibility requirements.

12.2. Reporting

Administering Institutions are required to report to NHMRC on the progress of the grant and the use of grant funds. Where an institution fails to submit reports (financial or otherwise) as required, NHMRC may take action under the provisions of the Funding Agreement. Failure to report within timeframes may affect eligibility to receive future funding.

12.2.1. Financial reports

Annual financial reports are required in a form prescribed by NHMRC. At the completion of the grant or upon transfer to a new Administering Institution, a financial acquittal is also required. Refer to [NHMRC's website](#) for details of format and timing.

12.2.2. Non-financial reports

The Funding Agreement requires the CIA to prepare reports for each grant activity. Scientific reporting requirements can be found on [NHMRC's website](#). While having outstanding obligations from previous NHMRC grants does not disqualify applicants from applying for other NHMRC grants, it is a condition of funding that outstanding obligations from previous NHMRC grants, including submission of a Final Report, have been met prior to acceptance of a new grant.

Information included in the Final Report may be publicly released. Use of this information may include publication on [NHMRC's website](#), publicity (including release to the media) and the promotion of research achievements.

All information provided to NHMRC in reports may be used for internal reporting and reporting to government. This information may also be used by NHMRC when reviewing or evaluating funded research projects or funding schemes, or designing future schemes.

12.3. Evaluation of the Ideas Grant scheme

NHMRC undertakes periodic evaluations of the performance and administration of its grant opportunities to determine their effectiveness and to identify where improvements can be made.

12.4. Open Access Policy

NHMRC supports the sharing of outputs from NHMRC funded research including publications and data. The aims of NHMRC's *Open Access Policy* are to mandate the open access sharing of publications and encourage innovative open access to research data. This policy also requires that patents resulting from NHMRC funding be made findable through listing in SourceIP. NHMRC's *Open Access Policy* is available on [NHMRC's website](#).

Combined, these approaches will help to increase reuse of data, improve research integrity and contribute to a stronger knowledge economy. Open access will also assist with reporting and demonstration of research achievement, improve track record assessment processes (in relevant schemes) for the long term and contribute to better collaborations.

All recipients of NHMRC grants must comply with all elements of NHMRC's *Open Access Policy* as a condition of funding.

13. Probity

13.1. Complaints process

Applicants or grantees seeking to lodge a formal complaint about an NHMRC process related to funding should do so via the Administering Institution's RAO, in writing, within 28 days of the relevant NHMRC decision or action.

Each complaint is to be directed to the NHMRC Complaints Team at: complaints@nhmrc.gov.au. NHMRC will provide a written response to all complaints. NHMRC will not review the merits of a funding decision, but it will investigate complaints about the administrative process followed to reach a funding decision.

If you are dissatisfied with the response from the NHMRC Complaints Team, you may consider raising your concerns with the NHMRC Commissioner of Complaints (the Commissioner). The functions of the Commissioner are to investigate complaints concerning action taken by the Chief Executive Officer of NHMRC or the NHMRC's Research Committee in relation to an application for funding made on or after 24 June 1993. Any investigation by the Commissioner is conducted in

private in a manner they consider fit. Refer to NHMRC's Complaints Policy and the Commissioner of Complaints [webpage](#) for further information.

Applicants or grantees may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman if they do not agree with the way NHMRC has handled their complaint. The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with NHMRC and, where relevant, the Commissioner of Complaints.

13.2. Conflicts of Interest

NHMRC is committed to ensuring that interests of any kind are dealt with consistently, transparently and with rigour, in accordance with sections 16A and 16B of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (made under the subsection 29(2) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2013 (PGPA Act)).

Applicants are not required to declare actual or perceived interests.

To manage any conflicts of interest with applicants, NHMRC requires peer review participants to declare interests, actual or perceived, and sign deeds of confidentiality. Peer review participants declare any direct or indirect, pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest, which is reviewed by NHMRC, prior to being granted full access to an application. Any peer reviewer who is determined by NHMRC to have a 'high' conflict of interest will not be able to participate in the review of that application.

By managing any conflict, NHMRC maintains objectivity, impartiality and integrity in the assessment of applications. Further information relating to the conflict of interest process is available in the Ideas Grants 2021 Peer Review Guidelines.

13.3. Privacy: confidentiality and protection of personal information

NHMRC treats applicants' personal information in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles, and the *Privacy Act 1988*. The [NHMRC Privacy Policy](#) details the types of personal or sensitive information that may be collected by NHMRC and how it will be handled. Applicants should familiarise themselves with the NHMRC Privacy Policy before providing personal information to NHMRC.

Information which may properly be regarded as confidential information is to be specifically identified as such by applicants and grantees and will be received by NHMRC on the basis of a mutual understanding of confidentiality.

NHMRC may disclose personal and/or confidential information to:

- overseas entities, Australian, State/Territory or local government agencies, organisations or individuals where necessary to assess an application or to administer a grant
- the peer review committee and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help NHMRC manage the grant scheme effectively
- employees and contractors of NHMRC to research, assess, monitor and analyse schemes and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in reports and consultations

- NHMRC approved Administering Institutions' Research Administration Offices
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, and
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

In addition, NHMRC will be providing certain limited personal information of the Chief Investigator/s included in an application to Administering Institutions for the purpose of certification of eligibility requirements.

13.4. Freedom of information

NHMRC as a Commonwealth agency is subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and is committed to meeting the Australian Government's transparency and accountability requirements. Freedom of Information laws facilitate the general public's access to documents held by national government agencies, including application and funding documentation relating to NHMRC researchers. This right of access is limited where documents, or parts of documents, are exempt under the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Researchers should familiarise themselves with NHMRC's Freedom of Information procedures before submitting an application. Further information on the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, NHMRC's Freedom of Information application process and relevant contacts can be found on the [NHMRC website](#).

14. Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|--|---|
| assessment criteria | The specified principles or standards against which applications will be judged. These criteria are used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive granting opportunity, to determine applicant rankings. |
| date of effect | This will depend on the particular grant. It can be the date the schedule to a grant agreement is executed or the announcement of the grant, whichever is later. |
| eligibility criteria | The principles, standards or rules that a grant applicant must meet to qualify for consideration of a grant. |
| <i>Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017 (CGRGs)</i> | The CGRGs establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. |
| final year | The final 12 calendar months of a grant. |
| Funding Agreement | For NHMRC MREA grants, the grant agreement is the NHMRC Funding Agreement and the Schedule to the Funding Agreement. It is available on NHMRC's website . |
| funding round | Collectively refers to the Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Grant opportunities commencing funding in the same year. |
| grant | As defined in the NHMRC Funding Agreement. |
| grant activity | Defined as "Research Activity" in the NHMRC Funding Agreement. |
| GrantConnect | <p>GrantConnect is the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs. It is available at www.grants.gov.au.</p> <p>Non-corporate Commonwealth entities must publish grant opportunities on GrantConnect to meet the grant publishing requirements under the CGRGs.</p> <p>Where information is published in more than one location, and there are inconsistencies, GrantConnect is the authoritative, auditable information source.</p> |
| grant opportunity | A notice published on GrantConnect advertising the availability of Commonwealth grants. |
| grant program | A group of one or more grant opportunities under a single entity Portfolio Budget Statement Program. This is referred to as a scheme in this document. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|--|
| Grantee | An individual/organisation that has been awarded a grant. For NHMRC's purposes, grants are awarded to the Administering Institution for the benefit of the grant recipients (however described). |
| Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA) | The purpose of the MREA is to provide assistance to Federal and State Government Departments, institutions, universities and/or persons engaged in medical research. |
| Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) | The MRFF was established on 26 August 2015 by the <i>Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015</i> (MRFF Act). Refer to the Department of Health website: https://beta.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/medical-research-future-fund . |
| NHMRC's grant management system | NHMRC's electronic, secure system that allows research administrators, applicants, assessors, grant holders and NHMRC staff to manage all aspects of the granting lifecycle. This includes NHMRC's 'Research Grants Management System' (for grant administration) and 'Sapphire' (for grant application administration). |
| peer reviewers | Individuals (peers) with appropriate knowledge and expertise who review grant applications. |
| Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) Program | Described within the entity's PBS, PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be Grant Programs (schemes). A PBS Program may have more than one Grant Program (scheme) associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities. |
| Probity Event | As defined in the NHMRC Funding Agreement. |
| Sapphire | See definition for 'NHMRC's grant management system'. |
| Schedule | As defined in the NHMRC Funding Agreement. |

Appendix A. NHMRC structural priorities, Ideas Grants 2021 priorities and funding organisations

A1 NHMRC key structural priorities

Each year, NHMRC identifies key structural priorities for funding to help achieve its broader goals. NHMRC's current key structural priorities are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research and researchers
- health services research, and
- gender equality.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health research and researchers

NHMRC is committed to improving the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and encourages applications that address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. Accordingly, NHMRC is committed to allocating at least five per cent of the annual allocation from its Medical Research Endowment Account to research directed at improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Support for health and medical research and research translation is central to achieving improvements in this area. It is also important to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers and recognise the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, and how this diversity relates to health issues in these communities.

Health Services Research

NHMRC is seeking to strengthen Health Services Research by including it as a structural priority.

Gender Equality

Funding outcomes have highlighted the underrepresentation of female chief investigators across many of NHMRC's funding schemes. By providing structural priority funding for gender equality, NHMRC is seeking to give more outstanding female researchers the opportunity to receive funding and to encourage more to apply.

A2 Ideas Grants 2021 priority areas

In addition to these key priorities, NHMRC may award Ideas Grants that:

- address other defined structural priorities
- acknowledge prominent Australians' contributions to health and medical research (Special Awards), and
- are funded with partner organisations.

Ideas Grants funded by other organisations

Ideas Grants may be funded by or in conjunction with other organisations. These grants offer opportunities to researchers whose work is particularly relevant to the priorities and research interests of the partner organisations.

Some funding partners may require a separate application to be provided to them, or may have specific criteria and requirements, in addition to those of NHMRC. Applicants may contact the funding partner to identify any additional requirements.

For the purposes of the *Privacy Act 1988*, applicants and other persons whose details appear in grant applications (e.g. other investigators) should be aware that NHMRC may provide their

personal information, including all pertinent application documentation and peer review outcomes, to the funding organisation(s) nominated by the applicant. The purpose of providing this information is to enable potential funding partners to assess the application's eligibility for funding under the funding organisation's policies.

In the event that a funding partner is unable to fulfil their obligation to a co-funded grant, NHMRC will continue to support the Ideas Grant recipient under the conditions that would have been awarded by NHMRC.

Any additional benefits that may have been provided by the funding partner, including Ideas Grants that may have been fully funded by the funding partner, will not be supported by NHMRC.

Further information on Ideas Grants funded by other organisations is available on the [NHMRC website](#).

The following organisations are expected to partner with NHMRC in funding grants under this grant opportunity:

- Cancer Councils
- Cancer Australia & Funding Partners

Appendix B. Ideas Grants 2021 Category Descriptors

The objective of the Ideas Grant scheme is to support innovative research projects addressing a specific question(s). The expected outcomes are:

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

The scheme will provide particular opportunities for early and mid-career researchers. It is expected that the CIA will have the leadership and skills to achieve the proposed project aims.

The Ideas Grant scheme is not intended to support research where a clinical trial or cohort study is the primary objective.

The following category descriptors are used as a guide to scoring an application against each of the four assessment criteria:

1) **Research Quality** - NHMRC defines 'Research Quality' for the Ideas Grant scheme as the quality of the project aims and the proposed research plan. Given the focus on innovation, it is expected that the research proposals for Ideas Grant applications will include some element of risk; applicants should demonstrate an appreciation of those risks and incorporate strategies to address any uncertainties as part of their proposed research plan. With the focus on innovation and creativity as a scheme objective, preliminary results and pilot studies are not expected for Ideas Grant applications.

2) **Innovation & Creativity** - NHMRC defines 'Innovation & Creativity' for the Ideas Grant scheme as health and medical 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.

Applicants should clearly explain their point of difference from current concepts, approaches, methodologies, technologies or interventions in order to sufficiently demonstrate innovation and creativity in their proposed research.

(Refer to [Appendix C](#) of the Ideas Grants 2020 Guidelines for more information on the concept of Innovation and Creativity.)

3) **Significance** - NHMRC defines 'Significance' for the Ideas Grant scheme as the extent to which the outcomes and outputs will result in advancements to and/or impact on the research or health area.

4) **Capability** - NHMRC defines 'Capability' for the Ideas Grant scheme as the appropriateness of the applicant team and their expertise, the resources and access to additional personnel necessary to achieve the project aims. Capability is not an assessment of traditional track record elements, such as number of publications, grants held, or conference invitations. The CIA must demonstrate their ability to lead the project, including managing the project's resources, personnel, budget and administrative requirements, in order to execute the project. Associate Investigators (AIs) can be included to strengthen the overall technical capability of the team (e.g. specialists such as statisticians), but they must not be essential for the leadership of the project. Consideration should

also be given to the gender balance and development of new researchers within the applicant team.

While the category descriptors provide peer reviewers with some benchmarks for appropriately scoring each application, **it is not essential that all descriptors relating to a given score are met.**

The descriptors are a guide to a “best fit” outcome. The process of consistently referring panel members to these descriptors is vital to ensuring equity, thoroughness and process consistency both within and across all Peer Review Panels.

| CATEGORY | Research Quality (35%) | Innovation & Creativity (25%) | Significance (20%) | Capability (20%) |
|------------------|--|--|---|---|
| 7 Exceptional | <p>The project aims and proposed research plan:</p> <p>are supported by an extremely well justified hypothesis/rationale</p> <p>are focused, well-defined, extremely coherent and have a flawless study design and approach</p> <p>would be extremely competitive with the best, similar research proposals internationally</p> <p>have extremely well identified and managed scientific and technical risks.</p> | <p>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.</p> | <p>The planned research, relative to the research field:</p> <p>will address an issue of critical importance to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the issue)</p> <p>will result in extremely significant outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues</p> <p>will lead to extremely significant research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.).</p> | <p>The CIA demonstrates a very strong capability to lead the team in achieving the project aims.</p> <p>The CI applicant team overall:</p> <p>has exceptional capability to execute the project and deliver outcomes.</p> <p>has access to exceptional technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities and if required, has access to additional support personnel (Associate Investigators) necessary for the project.</p> <p>has an extremely appropriate balance of integrated expertise, experience and training that specifically targets all aspects of the proposed research, in terms of both depth and breadth.</p> |

| CATEGORY | Research Quality (35%) | Innovation & Creativity (25%) | Significance (20%) | Capability (20%) |
|------------------|---|--|--|--|
| 6 Outstanding | <p>The project aims and proposed research plan:</p> <p>are supported by a very well justified hypothesis/rationale are focused, well-defined, very highly coherent and have an outstanding study design and approach with a minor weakness</p> <p>would be very highly competitive with the best, similar research proposals internationally</p> <p>have very well identified and managed scientific and technical risks with only a few minor weaknesses.</p> | <p>Relative to the research field, the planned research demonstrates very highly innovative project aims, which will result in a very substantial shift in the current paradigm, and/or lead to a very substantial breakthrough or impact in the research area.</p> | <p>The planned research, relative to the research field:</p> <p>will address an issue that is of very high importance to advance the research or health area (not the prevalence or magnitude of the issue)</p> <p>will result in very highly significant outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues</p> <p>will lead to very highly significant research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.).</p> | <p>The CIA demonstrates a strong capability to lead the team in achieving the project aims.</p> <p>The CI applicant team overall:</p> <p>has outstanding capability to execute the project and deliver outcomes.</p> <p>has access to outstanding technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities and if required, has access to additional support personnel (Associate Investigators) necessary for the project.</p> <p>has a very highly appropriate balance of integrated expertise, experience and training that is targeted towards all aspects of the proposed research, in terms of both depth and breadth.</p> |

| CATEGORY | Research Quality (35%) | Innovation & Creativity (25%) | Significance (20%) | Capability (20%) |
|-------------|--|---|---|---|
| 5 Excellent | <p>The project aims and proposed research plan:</p> <p>are supported by a well justified hypothesis/rationale</p> <p>are focused, well-defined, highly coherent and have an excellent study design and approach with a few minor weaknesses</p> <p>would be competitive with the best, similar research proposals internationally</p> <p>have well identified and managed scientific and technical risks with a few minor concerns.</p> | <p>Relative to the research field, the planned research demonstrates highly innovative project aims, which will result in a substantial shift in the current paradigm, and/or lead to a substantial breakthrough or impact in the research area.</p> | <p>The planned research, relative to the research field:</p> <p>will address an issue of considerable importance to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the issue)</p> <p>will result in highly significant outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues</p> <p>will lead to highly significant research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.).</p> | <p>The applicant team:</p> <p>The CIA demonstrates good capability to lead the team in achieving the project aims.</p> <p>The CI applicant team overall:</p> <p>has excellent capability to execute the project and deliver outcomes.</p> <p>has access to excellent technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities and if required, has access to additional support personnel (Associate Investigators) necessary for the project.</p> <p>has a highly appropriate balance of integrated expertise, experience and training necessary for all aspects of the proposed research, both in terms of both depth and breadth.</p> |

| CATEGORY | Research Quality (35%) | Innovation & Creativity (25%) | Significance (20%) | Capability (20%) |
|-------------|---|--|--|---|
| 4 Very good | <p>The project aims and proposed research plan:</p> <p>are supported by a well justified hypothesis/rationale</p> <p>are focused, well-developed, coherent and have a very good study design and approach with several minor concerns</p> <p>would be likely to be competitive with high quality, similar research proposals internationally</p> <p>have identified and managed scientific and technical risks, with several minor concerns.</p> | <p>Relative to the research field, the planned research demonstrates innovative project aims, which will result in a moderate shift in the current paradigm, and/or lead to a moderate breakthrough or impact in the research area.</p> | <p>The planned research, relative to the research field:</p> <p>will address an issue of importance to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the issue)</p> <p>will result in significant outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues</p> <p>will lead to significant research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.).</p> | <p>The CIA demonstrates capability to lead the team in achieving the project aims.</p> <p>The CI applicant team overall:</p> <p>has very good capability to execute the project and deliver outcomes.</p> <p>has access to very good technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities and if required, has access to additional support personnel (Associate Investigators) necessary for the project.</p> <p>has an appropriate balance of integrated expertise, experience and training necessary for all aspects of the proposed research, in terms of both depth and breadth.</p> |

| CATEGORY | Research Quality (35%) | Innovation & Creativity (25%) | Significance (20%) | Capability (20%) |
|----------|---|---|---|---|
| 3 Good | <p>The project aims and proposed research plan:</p> <p>are supported by a sound hypothesis/rationale</p> <p>are logical, generally clear in the study design and approach with more than a few minor concerns</p> <p>would be somewhat competitive with high quality, similar research proposals internationally</p> <p>have identified and managed scientific and technical risks, with some major concerns.</p> | <p>Relative to the research field, the planned research demonstrates some innovative project aims, which will likely result in some shift in the current paradigm, and/or lead to some breakthrough or impact in the health research area.</p> | <p>The planned research, relative to the research field:</p> <p>will address an issue of some importance to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the issue)</p> <p>will result in moderately significant outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues</p> <p>will lead to moderately significant research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.).</p> | <p>The CIA demonstrates some capability to lead the team in achieving the project aims.</p> <p>The CI applicant team overall:</p> <p>has good capability to execute the project and deliver outcomes.</p> <p>has access to good technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities and if required, has access to additional support personnel (Associate Investigators) necessary for the project.</p> <p>has expertise, experience and training that is essential, integrated and balanced for most aspects of the proposed research, in terms of both depth and breadth, with some major concerns.</p> |

| CATEGORY | Research Quality (35%) | Innovation & Creativity (25%) | Significance (20%) | Capability (20%) |
|-------------------|---|--|---|---|
| 2 Satisfactory | <p>The project aims and proposed research plan:</p> <p>are supported by a satisfactory hypothesis/rationale</p> <p>are satisfactory in the study design and approach, but may lack clarity in some aspects and may contain some major weaknesses</p> <p>would be marginally competitive with high quality, similar research proposals internationally</p> <p>have identified and managed scientific and technical risks, but there are several major concerns.</p> | <p>Relative to the research field, the planned research demonstrates somewhat innovative project aims, which will result in a minor shift in the current paradigm, and/or lead to a minor breakthrough or impact in the health research area.</p> | <p>The planned research, relative to the research field:</p> <p>will address an issue of marginal importance to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the issue)</p> <p>may result in outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues</p> <p>may lead to research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.).</p> | <p>The CIA demonstrates some capability to lead the team in achieving the project aims.</p> <p>The CI applicant team overall:</p> <p>has some capability to execute the project and deliver outcomes.</p> <p>has access to some of the necessary technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities and if required, may have access to additional support personnel (Associate Investigators) relevant to the project, and raises some notable concerns</p> <p>has some but not all of the expertise, experience and training essential to the proposed research in terms of depth and breadth, and raises several major concerns.</p> |

| CATEGORY | Research Quality (35%) | Innovation & Creativity (25%) | Significance (20%) | Capability (20%) |
|--------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 1 Marginal to Poor | <p>The project aims and proposed research plan:</p> <p>are underpinned by a weak hypothesis/rationale</p> <p>have significant flaws in the study design and approach and may contain several major weaknesses</p> <p>are unlikely to be competitive with similar research proposals internationally</p> <p>have not satisfactorily identified and managed scientific and technical risks.</p> | <p>Relative to the research field, the planned research does not demonstrate innovative project aims, and is unlikely to cause a shift in the current paradigm, or lead to a breakthrough or impact in the health research area.</p> | <p>The planned research, relative to the research field</p> <p>will address an issue of some concern to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the issue)</p> <p>unlikely to result in outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues</p> <p>unlikely to lead to research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.).</p> | <p>The CIA does not demonstrate capability to lead the team in achieving the project aims.</p> <p>The CI applicant team overall: does not demonstrate capability to execute the project and deliver outcomes.</p> <p>does not have access to the necessary technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities and if required, has access to additional support personnel (Associate Investigators) relevant to the project, and raises several major concerns</p> <p>does not have access to expertise, experience and training essential to the proposed research in terms of depth and breadth.</p> |

Appendix C. Concept of Innovation and Creativity

Preamble

The Structural Review of NHMRC's Grant Program identified that applicants may be more likely to propose, and peer reviewers more likely to favour, conservative research to the detriment of innovative and creative research.

Advances in health and medical research, however, require a constant infusion of innovative ideas, technologies and points of view that may differ substantially from current thinking or practice and that may not necessarily be supported by substantial preliminary data.

The Ideas Grant scheme funds innovative and creative research projects proposed by researchers of any career stage and in any area of health and medical research, from discovery to implementation.

Definition

Innovation generally refers to changing or creating more effective processes, products and ideas. It is about making a change or doing something in a new way.

Innovation is a multi-faceted concept that encompasses a broad spectrum of activities and outcomes across the health and medical research sector. As noted in the Australian Government's Innovation System Report (2011), a microbiologist's perspective on innovation might be different to that of an entrepreneur. What a business that creates new technology thinks about innovation may be different to the attitudes expressed by a firm that adopts existing technology. Yet, each of these different perspectives can lead to equally important health innovation outcomes. Innovation can be radical and disruptive, but often it is incremental. Innovations need not always be immediately successful and can have downstream impacts.

Innovation in NHMRC's Ideas Grant scheme requires a creative approach that pursues new ideas, embraces intellectual risk and, if successful, may lead to a breakthrough or major impact in a particular health and medical research area. It could extend from the generation of entirely novel areas of research, to driving change in current practice.

Innovative health and medical research occurs in *all* areas of research funded by NHMRC. It 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.

Examples of areas of innovative research include, but are not limited to, those that:

- propose a new area of inquiry
- develop or use a completely unexplored approach to solving a longstanding important challenge or obstacle
- are substantially different from research already being pursued in the field
- introduce a new paradigm or challenge prevailing paradigms/assumptions
- look at existing problems or issues from a new perspective

- seek unconventional approaches that are outside the mainstream
- could change established practice, terminate a current practice/process or create new fields
- show what doesn't work
- reinterpret or readapt data for new purposes
- apply innovative methods, practices and processes to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and
- could yield new avenues of investigation.

Irrespective of the approach, innovative research should seek to have an impact. Although innovation can be considered in a commercialisation and technology frame, it equally encompasses changes to research concepts, approaches, methodologies and interventions that may improve policy, social aspects of care, quality of life or health processes and outcomes.

Appendix D. Eligibility for Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Grant schemes (2021 funding round)

No grants held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant, OR • 1x Investigator Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Investigator Grant + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant (50% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant (50% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant (100% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant, OR • 1x Investigator Grant + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants |

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| | <p><i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i></p> | <p>Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants</p> |
| | <p><i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant |
| | <p><i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i></p> | <p>Combination not allowed and/or possible</p> |

1 Project Grant held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| | | |
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant (25% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant (25% reduction to RSP) + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Investigator Grant (25% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant (75% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant (75% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant (100% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant (25% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant (25% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants |

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| | <p><i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i></p> | <p>Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants</p> |
| | <p><i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant |
| | <p><i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i></p> | <p>Combination not allowed and/or possible</p> |

2 or more Project Grants held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| | | |
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant (50% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant (50% reduction to RSP) + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Investigator Grant (50% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant (100% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant (50% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant (50% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant |

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| | <p><i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i></p> | <p>Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants</p> |
| | <p><i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i></p> | <p>Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants</p> |
| | <p><i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i></p> | <p>Combination not allowed and/or possible</p> |

1 Program Grant held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | No grants held under the new grant program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1x Investigator Grant (100% reduction to RSP) |
| | 1x Ideas Grant | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | 2x Ideas Grants | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | 1x Investigator Grant | Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants |
| | 1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | 1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | 1x Synergy Grant | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | 1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | 1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | 1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

1 Program Grant and 1 Project Grant held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1x Investigator Grant (100% reduction to RSP) |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

NHMRC Fellowship (not in penultimate or final year) held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

NHMRC Fellowship (in penultimate or final year) held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| | | |
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant*, OR • 1x Investigator Grant* + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Investigator Grant* + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant* (50% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant* (50% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant* (100% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

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| | <p><i>1x Synergy Grant</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant*, OR • 1x Investigator Grant* + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants |
| | <p><i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i></p> | <p>Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants</p> |
| | <p><i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant |
| | <p><i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i></p> | <p>Combination not allowed and/or possible</p> |

NHMRC Fellowship (not in penultimate or final year) and 1x Project Grant held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

NHMRC Fellowship (in penultimate or final year) and 1x Project Grant held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | |
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant* (25% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant* (25% reduction to RSP) + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Investigator Grant* (25% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant* (75% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant* (75% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant* (100% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Synergy |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant* (25% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant* (25% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants |

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| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i> | Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

NHMRC Fellowship (not in penultimate or final year) and 2x Project Grant held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

NHMRC Fellowship (in penultimate or final year) and 2x Project Grant held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant* (50% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant* (50% reduction to RSP) + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Investigator Grant* (50% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant* (100% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Synergy Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant* (50% reduction to RSP), OR • 1x Investigator Grant* (50% reduction to RSP) + 1x Ideas Grant (If you apply for an Investigator Grant and an Ideas Grant in the same round and both applications are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded), OR • 1x Ideas Grant |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i> | Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

NHMRC Fellowship (not in penultimate or final year) and 1x Program Grant held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

NHMRC Fellowship (in penultimate or final year) and 1x Program Grant held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1x Investigator Grant (100% reduction to RSP) |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

NHMRC Fellowship (not in penultimate or final year), 1x Project Grant and 1x Program Grant held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

NHMRC Fellowship (in penultimate or final year), 1x Project Grant and 1x Program Grant held under the old grant program

| | | Grants eligible to apply for in the 2021 funding round (for funding 2022) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Grants held on January 1, 2022 | <i>No grants held under the new grant program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1x Investigator Grant (100% reduction to RSP) |
| | <i>1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant</i> | Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Investigator Grant and 1x Synergy Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 1x Ideas Grant</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |
| | <i>1x Synergy Grant and 2x Ideas Grants</i> | Combination not allowed and/or possible |

* If the first year of the Investigator Grant overlaps with the final year of a NHMRC fellowship, the salary component of the Investigator Grant will not be paid during the overlap (i.e. the period that both grants are held). During this overlap, the Investigator Grant will run concurrently with the NHMRC fellowship and the salary component of the Investigator Grant will be reduced accordingly.

Appendix E. Ideas Grants 2021 Guide to Applicants

1. Preparing an application

The following sections provide additional advice about parts of the application that are specific to Ideas Grants.

- Applicants should refer to the [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#) for general instructions on how to apply for a grant in Sapphire.
- Ideas Grant scheme-specific policy and instructions for applying in Sapphire (grey boxes) are provided in this Appendix.
- For further assistance during the application process, see section 7 How to apply in the grant guidelines.

2. Application Requirements

A complete application is comprised of:

- Completion of mandatory sections of 'My Profile' (Section 3)
- Completed application form (Section 4)
- Grant Proposal as an attachment (section 4.7)

Applications must comply with all requirements as set out in the Guidelines. Failure to adhere to any of these requirements may result in non-acceptance or exclusion of your application (see section 4 Eligibility of the Guidelines).

2.1 Use of gender neutral language

The aim of [NHMRC's Gender Equality Strategy \(2018–2021\)](#) is to achieve a gender-equal health and medical research workforce by supporting an increase in the retention and progression of women. Using gender-neutral language is one strategy to support this goal, serving to de-emphasise gender in the assessment of grant applications and reduce the potential impact of unconscious bias.

NHMRC strongly encourages the use of gender-neutral language in applications. This means that, wherever possible and appropriate, applicants should avoid the use of words that reveal their gender or the gender of team members. These words include (but are not limited to) her, him, she, he, Mr, Ms, Mrs and Miss, as well as first names and terms such as 'maternity leave'.

It is recognised that there will be instances where reference to the gender of applicants or team members is unavoidable or desirable.

However, wherever possible and relevant, applicants should:

- use the first person, *i.e. I/me/my*, rather than referring to themselves in the third person, or if third person is preferred, then use CI last-name or CIA
- use CIB, CIC, etc. or plural pronouns, *i.e. their/they*, when referring to others, rather than he/she or her/his
- use the format 'CI last-name', *e.g. CI Jones*, rather than using first names when referring to individuals
- use gender-neutral nouns, *e.g. researcher, staff, etc.*, including when completing career disruption information, if relevant, *e.g. parental leave*, rather than maternity/paternity leave
- review the application for instances of 'masculine form by default' prior to submission and remove them, *e.g. 'every team member will manage his data according to this protocol'* can instead use the plural pronoun *their*.

Note the aim is to de-emphasise **applicant** gender. Where gender is important for the research being proposed, it should be included in the application.

2.2 Minimum Data Requirements

Minimum data must be entered in Sapphire by the specified due date to allow NHMRC to start identifying suitable peer reviewers. Minimum data are indicated in Sapphire by a blue flag (■), and are comprised of:

- Application title
- Administering institution
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Research Focus (yes/no)
- Project synopsis
- Privacy agreement
- Research Classification:
 - Broad research area
 - Field of research
 - Peer Review Areas
 - Research keywords
- Chief Investigator A (complete CIA Role and Name).

Minimum data must be entered into Sapphire by 5:00pm AEST 7 April. Applicants should refer to section 7.3 Minimum data of the Guidelines for further information.

Failure to meet this deadline will result in the application not proceeding.

Research Administration Officers (RAOs) are not required to certify applications for the purpose of minimum data. Applications require certification only once complete and ready for submission to NHMRC.

3. 'My Profile' Requirements

Within an applicant's profile in Sapphire, there is mandatory information that must be provided and/or updated prior to submitting an application (see section 7 How to Apply of the Guidelines). This information includes personal details, academic/research interests, and peer review information.

Mandatory Profile information is indicated by a red asterisk in Sapphire (*). This requirement applies to all Chief Investigators named on the application. It is advisable to check that each of the CIs has completed and/or updated their profiles before an application is certified. Existing NHMRC grant holders cannot commence or be named on an application until all mandatory 'My Profile' fields are complete.

3.1 About My Profile

Provide your primary Administering Institution name under Primary Institution to ensure the Research Administration Office has access to view your profile. You may also allow the RAO to edit your profile.

Note: to update your Primary Institution name in Sapphire, you will need to go to 'Account Settings', 'Personal details' and click on 'Primary Institution'.

3.2 Personal information

Provide your most current details in this section. It is important that your title, names, phone and email details are up to date as these are the details on which NHMRC relies to contact you.

3.3 Academic Information

Indicate whether you have a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), and if applicable, the pass date (year) of your thesis (not the date of conferral).

3.4 Peer Review Information

Select a Broad Research Area and 5-10 Research Keywords most applicable to your main area of research. You may also provide further detail about your research interests or areas of expertise. This could include, but is not limited to, your research methodologies, student supervision and areas in which you have published.

You can add as many Fields of Research as required. Indicate when you started your research in that field, the classification of the research (e.g. primary), and whether the research is current or terminated. Individuals are encouraged to list all Fields of Research. Only current Fields of Research will be displayed.

Note: An opportunity is provided in the application to select research areas, fields of research and keywords that best describe your research proposal, as opposed to your personal research interests. The above information will not determine the peer reviewers selected for your application.

3.5 Unavailability Calendar

Peer Review is an integral part of NHMRC funding schemes. NHMRC grant recipients have obligations to contribute to the assessment of applications (as outlined in the *NHMRC Funding Agreement*). If you are not available to act as a peer reviewer, please provide a statement detailing your reasons, and the period for which you are unavailable. To maintain the list of available peer reviewers within Sapphire, NHMRC requests that all applicants update their availability routinely. This will avoid unnecessary contact if you are unavailable.

3.6 Contributions to NHMRC

Please indicate which, if any, schemes you have nominated or been invited to participate in as a potential peer reviewer.

Click '+' to start a new entry to specify the below:

- The number of times in each indicated year that you have participated in NHMRC peer review
- The number of times in each indicated year that you have participated in a NHMRC Grant Advisory Group, Assigners Academy and/or other listed activities
- The number of external assessments that you have provided to NHMRC in any of the last 5 years. Please also provide details of your role and the year of participation.

You will need to create a new page for each contribution.

4. Application Form Requirements

The following sections of the application form are specific to Ideas Grants 2021, and must be completed as part of your application. Step-by-step instructions for entering application details in Sapphire are provided in the [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#).

4.1 Creating an application

Click '+ New Application' to create an application.

Grant Opportunity

Select the grant round you wish to apply for, e.g., '2021 Ideas Grants commencing in 2022'. The application title will be used to identify the application at all times during the assessment process and should accurately describe the nature of the research proposal.

4.2 Application details

All fields on this page marked with a flag (🚩) must be completed to meet minimum data requirements.

Application Identification Number (APP ID)

Each application will have its own unique Application Identification Number (Application ID), which is generated by Sapphire. Please use this Application ID number (e.g. 2345678) to identify your application when referring to it in any correspondence.

Administering Institution

Select your Administering Institution by entering three characters to start searching. There can be only one Administering Institution for each application. You must ensure that the institution you choose as your Administering Institution is the correct institution for your application. If in doubt, contact the RAO at your proposed Administering Institution.

Grant Duration

Select the requested duration of your grant with reference to any limits specified in the Guidelines

Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander Health Research

This question enables you to identify research that specifically investigates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health issues. It is also designed to enable NHMRC to identify those research proposals that will require assessment of the proposed research against the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria*.

You should only select 'Yes' if you can demonstrate that at least 20% of your research effort and capacity building relates to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

If you have answered 'Yes' to this question, you will be required to provide details of how your application addresses the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria*. Your application may be assessed against the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria*.

Project Synopsis

The synopsis should accurately, and briefly, summarise the research proposal. This information may be used to assign applications to panels and peer reviewers. It may also be considered in the peer review process.

Plain English Summary

Describe the overall aims of the research and expected outcomes in simple terms that could be understood by the general public. Avoid the use of highly technical terms. This information may be used in grant announcements, media releases and other public documents, and by funding partners (where applicable) to determine whether the research proposal meets their priorities for funding.

Privacy Notice

NHMRC, as an agency under the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), is required to notify you about our collection, use and disclosure of your personal information. We do so by referring you to the NHMRC Privacy Policy ([NHMRC Privacy Policy](#)). Please ensure that you have carefully read and understood the Privacy Policy prior to completing the application. If you require further clarification, please contact the NHMRC Privacy Contact Officer via email (NHMRC.Privacy@nhmrc.gov.au) or letter (NHMRC, GPO Box 1421, Canberra ACT 2601).

Consent to provide information to International Assessors

In accordance with Australian Privacy Principle 8 in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), we seek your consent to send your personal information (consisting of an "Assessor Snapshot Report") overseas, for the purposes of peer-review of this application if required. NHMRC uses the expertise of some peer assessors who reside overseas. While we take every effort to protect your personal information, assessors outside Australia are bound by their own country's laws and consequently we cannot provide assurance that your information will be handled in accordance with the same standards as required by the Privacy Act 1988, or that you would have similar remedies should your personal information be released in breach of local privacy laws.

Consent to disclose personal information to other organisations

If you wish to be considered for funding by other organisations (a co-funder), please select yes for Funding Partner Consent. By selecting 'Yes' you are consenting to NHMRC providing your application information to potential funding partners should your application fit the funding partner's research funding objectives. For a list of funding partners, please refer to this grant opportunity's information on [GrantConnect](#).

4.3 Participating Institutions

In some cases, the institution that will administer your application may differ from the institution in which you will actually conduct the proposed research. For example, many universities administer research which will be conducted in an affiliated teaching hospital. This information is required by NHMRC to enable peer reviewers to identify potential institutional conflicts with your application.

Research Institution

In this section you will need to list the Participating Institution and department where the proposed research will be conducted.

Complete this page for each institution if there is more than one. If the participating institution does not appear in the list please email the institution name to the RHC (help@nhmrc.gov.au).

Research Effort (%)

If the research will be conducted at more than one institution, enter the Research Effort percentage (%) allocated to each participating institution and department. The percentages (%) entered must total 100%.

If some or all of the proposed research will be carried out at your Administering Institution, create an entry with the Administering Institution and choose a percentage up to 100%. At least one institution must be listed.

4.4 Research Classification

The details entered in this section will be used in the peer review process to assist with the selection of appropriate peer reviewers for your application. It may also be used for analyses of NHMRC's Funding Profile.

All fields on this page marked with a flag (🚩) must be completed to meet minimum data requirements. You must make the selections that best describe your research proposal against each of the following fields:

- Broad Research Area
- Field of Research
- Peer Review Areas
- Research Keywords
- Burden of Disease

Select a Burden of Disease that best describes the area of research of the application. You can select up to three Burden of Disease types and you must allocate a percentage (%) of time against each. The percentage (%) total must not exceed 100%.

4.5 Research Team

You may include a maximum of 10 Chief Investigators (CIs) and 10 Associate Investigators (AIs) in your research team. For further information of the eligibility requirements for CIs and AIs, please refer to section 4 Eligibility of the Grant Guidelines.

All fields on this page marked with a flag (🚩) must be completed to meet minimum data requirements. List all members of research team, including CIs and AIs. Complete a separate entry for each member of the team by clicking '+' to Add Rows.

All CIs/AIs must have a Sapphire account in order to be listed as part of the Research Team. CIs/AIs that cannot be located using the search function will need to complete registration, and have an active account prior to the application being submitted to the RAO for certification.

Note: Click 'Invite to Register' to invite a colleague to complete Sapphire Registration and/or share your application with view/edit access. Enter the email address, followed by the tab key, select the corresponding option from the dropdown menu and click 'Submit'.

Additional Chief Investigators (CIB-CIJ)

Click '+' to Add Rows for additional CIs. Click the 'Role' dropdown to select a role.

Click 'Name' and begin typing to search for registered users. Click their name to select from the search results.

If you add a CI to your research team, an email will automatically be generated to the team member for their agreement to be named on the application. The invitation response status next to their name will indicate progress. Invitations must be accepted by CIs in order for applications to be submitted.

Note: Emails to added CIs will be sent after a short delay. Invitation status will not update to *Sent* until you have logged out of the application for 15 minutes.

Associate Investigators (AIs)

Click '+' to Add Rows for AIs. Click 'Associate Investigator name' and begin typing to search for registered users. Click their name to select from the search results.

'Position' and 'Relevant background and expertise' are optional.

If you add an AI to your research team, an email will automatically be generated to the team member for their agreement to be named on the application. The invitation response status next to their name will indicate progress. Invitations must be accepted by AIs in order for applications to be submitted.

Note: Emails to added AIs will be sent after a short delay.

For further information regarding the management of research team members' access to an application, see [Sapphire Help](#).

4.6 Ethics

If you answer "Yes" to any of the questions, you will need to obtain ethics approvals and supply evidence of these to your research office in the event your application is funded. For further information, see *Ethics and Integrity* on the [NHMRC website](#).

4.7 Grant Proposal

Applicants must not include in any part of their application:

- links to external websites, apart from references to journal articles, guidelines, government reports, datasets and other outputs that are only available online; where links are included, provide the URL in full (e.g. the NHMRC website <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au>)
- publication metrics such as Journal Impact Factors, consistent with the recommendations in the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment.

The grant proposal must be written in English and submitted in a Portable Document Format (PDF) file, using NHMRC's Grant Proposal template, which will be available on GrantConnect. Applicants must use this template. The grant proposal must be uploaded into Sapphire.

Grant Proposal (Upload)

To upload your Grant Proposal PDF, select the 'Upload New' button followed by the 'Upload File' button. Select the PDF file you wish to upload and then click 'Start upload' to upload your Grant Proposal. Click 'Save' or 'Save and return' to upload the document.

To ensure that the document is displaying properly, applicants should open a copy of the uploaded document by selecting the open icon to the right of the document name after the document has been saved in Sapphire.

Naming and formatting requirements for the grant proposal, to ensure fairness and consistency across applicants, are listed in Table 1. Applications that fail to comply with these requirements may be excluded from consideration.

Details to be addressed in the grant proposal and associated page limits are set out in Table 2. Applicants should note that peer reviewers will, as part of their assessment, consider

the reproducibility and applicability of the proposed research and research design. Within the experimental design of the proposal, applicants should include sufficient information to demonstrate that robust and unbiased results will be produced.

Table 1: Formatting Requirements

| Component | Component Requirements |
|------------------|---|
| File format | The grant proposal must be saved and uploaded as a PDF file |
| File size | The PDF file MUST NOT exceed 2MB in size |
| File name | The PDF file must be named using the following: APP ID_Applicant's Surname_Document Type/Name.pdf E.g.: APP1234567_Smith_Grant Proposal.pdf |
| Page size | A4 |
| Header | Application ID and Applicant surname must be included in the header |
| Footer | Page number must be included in the footer |
| Font | NHMRC recommends a minimum of 12 point Times New Roman font. Applicants must ensure the font is readable. |
| Margins | Pages must have 2 cm top, bottom, left and right margins. |
| Line spacing | Single |
| Language | English |

Table 2: Grant Proposal Components

| Component | Page Limit |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Research Proposal | 7 pages |
| References | 2 pages |
| Innovation & Creativity Statement | 1 page |
| Significance Statement | 1 page |
| Capability Statement | 1 page |
| Cancer Australia PdCCRS | 1 page |

A brief description of each component is provided below.

Research Proposal – 7 pages

The research proposal must address the essential components of your research and may include the following properties depending on the type of research

| Component | Properties |
|---|--|
| Aims | Describe the specific aims of the project, including a clear statement of hypotheses to be tested. |
| Background | Provide a rationale for the project. |
| Research Plan – methods and techniques to be used | <p>Outline the research plan in detail, including the following where appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - detailed description of the experiment design - techniques to be used - details and justification of controls - details for appropriate blinding - strategies for randomisation and/or stratification - justification of sample-size, including power calculation - justification of statistical methods - strategies to ensure that the experimental results will be robust, unbiased and reproducible - details to achieve balance of male and female clinical participants, and male and female cell and animal models, including justification where it is not warranted - any ethical considerations - community involvement and/or plans to transfer knowledge to stakeholders or into practice - strengths and weaknesses of the study design and approach. <p>Applicants should note that while pilot or preliminary datasets may be included, they are not expected for Ideas Grant applications.</p> |
| Timeline | Provide a detailed timeline for the expected outcomes of the Research Proposal along with justification for the duration requested. |
| Identified Risks | Describe the scientific and/or technical risks associated with the research plan and how these will be managed. This could include risks and mitigations relating to the impact of COVID-19 on the research plan. |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| | Include details of how Associate Investigators (AIs) may help to mitigate or control any risk. |
| Outcomes and Significance | Describe the importance of the problem to be researched, the planned outcome of the research plan, and the potential significance of the research. |

References cited in this document are to be listed in the separate References section.

References – 2 pages

References for the Research Proposal must:

- not exceed 2 pages
- provide a list of all references cited in the application in an appropriate standard journal format (NHMRC prefers the Author-date (also known as the Harvard System), Documentary-note and the Vancouver Systems)
- list authors in the order in which they appear in PubMed
- only include references to cited work
- must be written in English.

Innovation & Creativity statement – 1 page

NHMRC defines 'Innovation and Creativity' for the Ideas Grant scheme as health and medical 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.

Applicants should address the Innovation and Creativity assessment criterion in this statement (see [Appendix B](#) and [Appendix C](#) of the Ideas Grants 2021 Guidelines), noting that assessment of this criterion may require supporting or background information provided in other sections of the grant proposal. Applicants should avoid duplicating information provided in other sections of the grant proposal.

Significance statement – 1 page

NHMRC defines 'Significance' for the Ideas Grant scheme as the extent to which the outcomes and outputs will result in advancements to the research or health area. Significance in this context does not refer to the prevalence of disease or magnitude of the issue.

Applicants should address the Significance assessment criterion in this statement (see [Appendix B](#) of the Ideas Grants 2021 Guidelines), noting that assessment of this criterion may require supporting or background information provided in other sections of the grant proposal. Applicants should avoid duplicating information provided in other sections of the grant proposal.

Capability statement – 1 page

NHMRC defines 'Capability' for the Ideas Grant scheme as the appropriateness of the applicant team and their expertise, the resources and access to additional personnel necessary to achieve the aim(s) of the project. There is no assessment of an individual CI's or AI's track record in the Ideas Grant scheme.

Applicants should address the Capability assessment criterion in this statement (see [Appendix B](#) of the Ideas Grants 2021 Guidelines), noting that assessment of this criterion may require supporting or background information provided in other sections of the grant proposal. Applicants should avoid duplicating information provided in other sections of the grant proposal.

PdCCRS Cancer Australia – 1 page, where applicable

Grants awarded through the PdCCRS are designed principally to support applied cancer research projects that relate to the research priority area/s of Cancer Australia and/or its funding partners and which have the potential to directly improve cancer outcomes by influencing clinical practice and/or policy.

Applicants who are applying for NHMRC funding and also seeking Cancer Australia's PdCCRS funding for the same project must provide a one page modified research proposal with reduced aims and timeframes as part of their Grant Proposal PDF upload if the amount of funding or the duration of funding exceeds the limitations imposed by Cancer Australia's relevant PdCCRS grant category (A, B, C or D).

The following should be included in the modified proposal:

| |
|---|
| <p>This proposal is to be considered for funding from NHMRC and PdCCRS.</p> <p>Funding from NHMRC is sought for a project addressing the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aim 1• Aim 2• Aim 3 etc. <p>Funding from the PdCCRS is alternatively sought for the same project modified to one/two year/s. In the one/two year/s timeframe the project will only address the following aim/s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aim 1• Aim 2 etc. |
|---|

Applications that do not comply with the above guidelines may be deemed ineligible and excluded from further consideration.

4.8 Strategic Priorities and Funding Partners

Applicants may be able to seek funding from funding partners, either exclusively or in addition to NHMRC funding.

Applicants will need to indicate to NHMRC whether they are applying to receive funding from NHMRC only, other organisations only, or from NHMRC in conjunction with other organisations. Applications will only be considered for funding for organisations that have been selected.

Applicants seeking funding from a funding partner should be aware of any additional application and eligibility requirements by the funding partner. Applicants must meet NHMRC submission deadlines in addition to any funding partner deadlines.

4.9 Budget Proposal – Third Party Research Facilities

Applicants often need to receive services from research facilities to undertake their research.

Such facilities include but are not limited to: biospecimens and associated data from biobanks or pathology services, non-human primate colonies, the Australian Twin Registry, Cell Bank Australia, and the Trans-Tasman Radio Oncology Group and other organisations that provide clinical trials services.

Applicants will need to consult with research facilities to ensure that the services they require can be provided and that the charges included in the budget are accurately reflected (see

Direct Research Costs section). Letters from research facilities confirming their collaboration must be submitted with the application.

Indicate whether you will be using services provided by a research facility to complete your research. If you select 'yes', then upload your letter from the research facility confirming their collaboration.

To ensure that the document is displaying properly, applicants should open a copy of the uploaded document by selecting the open icon to the right of the document's name after the document has been saved in Sapphire.

4.10 Direct Research Costs

Details on permitted uses of NHMRC funds and setting of budgets can be found in the *Direct Research Costs Guidelines* on the [NHMRC website](#).

Salary

Salary contributions for research staff, including members of the research team, are provided as Personnel Support Packages (PSPs). The level of PSP requested in an application must match the roles and responsibilities of the position in the proposed research and the percentage of the PSP requested must reflect the required time commitment. Applicants must fully justify all requests for PSPs.

Applicants can only draw one salary from one NHMRC grant/award. Further information about PSPs, including the levels, is available on the [NHMRC website](#).

This section only needs to be completed if you are seeking salary for a research role.

Salary

Position function - Describe the function of the research position, for which a salary is requested.

Note: A PSP is awarded based on a justified research function and it is not fixed to an individual.

Salary package - Indicate the PSP level for the research position based on the level of the work to be undertaken and the % of a full PSP package to be paid for each year of funding (in whole numbers only). Applicants must apply for the exact proportion of a PSP that is required for the research being proposed.

Reason

Provide detailed justification for the salary that is being requested for the research position. The PSP level and the percentage of salary should both be well justified.

Note: When awarding a budget, peer reviewers will consider whether the PSPs requested are fully justified and reasonable given the time commitment indicated for this application.

Other Research Costs

Provide details on:

- the name/description of the item
- the total value of the item requested for each year
- the justification for the particular item requested.

This information must be aligned with the proposed aims of the study, be detailed on a yearly basis and be fully justified (including, in the case of equipment costing less than \$10,000, why the equipment cannot be provided by the Institution).

Equipment

Provide details on:

- the name/description of the item
- the total value of the item requested for each year
- the justification for the particular item requested.

Applicants can request funding to pay for equipment costing over \$10,000 that is essential to the research. The total equipment requested cannot exceed \$80,000. Individual items of equipment costing less than \$10,000 must be requested within the 'Other Research Costs' category.

Applicants must clearly outline the total value of all items of equipment for each year, why the equipment is required for the proposed research and why the equipment cannot be provided by the institution.

For each item of equipment requested, a written quotation must be received and held with the RAO of the Administering Institution, and be made available to NHMRC on request. The Administering Institution must be prepared to meet all service and repair costs in relation to equipment funded.

Funds will not be provided for the purchase of computers except where these are an integral component of a piece of laboratory equipment or are of a nature essential for work in the research field, for example, a computer which is dedicated to data collection from a mass spectrometer, or used for the manipulation of extensively large datasets (i.e. requiring special hardware).

Note: NHMRC funds the direct costs of research based on advice from peer review. Applicants should provide detailed justification of budgets requested. Poorly justified budgets run the risk of being adjusted.

Funding cannot be used for infrastructure, particularly land, buildings and fixtures.

Entering Other Research Costs and Equipment Costs

You will need to create a separate entry for each cost. Click the plus (+) button to enter a cost.

For 'Item name', enter a brief name/description of the item.

Outline the cost of the item required for each year of the grant proposal. Only the relevant years should be completed.

Justification

Provide a comprehensive justification for the cost.

5. Certifying your application

Once all 'My Profile' details, application form details and supporting documents have been entered/uploaded, the application can be certified and submitted in Sapphire. Certification is required of both the CIA and Administering Institution. Refer to section 7.6 Certification and Submission of the Guidelines for further details.

Before completing these steps:

- Review the application to ensure it is accurate and complete and meets all eligibility/application requirements. The following tools are available to assist applicants in checking their applications:
 - Applicants retain responsibility for confirming that their application satisfies the stated eligibility requirements.
 - For funding schemes where the applicant has nominated a research budget, the summary tab automatically generates a summary of the requested budget from the relevant sections.
 - A checklist for applicants applying for NHMRC funding is provided at section 6 of this Appendix of this document.
 - Ensure you have read and understood the assurances, acknowledgements and undertakings required of CIAs and Administering Institutions as part of this step. These are outlined in section 7.6 Certification and Submission of the Ideas Grants 2021 Grant Guidelines.
 - Note that certification will lock down the application and prevent further editing. The final snapshot produced at this time will include relevant information from your 'My Profile' any subsequent changes to these areas of Sapphire will not appear in the application. If changes are needed after CIA certification but before submission to NHMRC, your RAO will need to reject the application in order for you to make the changes.
 - Note that your personal information may be provided to another Administering Institution for the purpose of certifying the application where a researcher is either currently receiving NHMRC funding or is on a different and separate application for NHMRC funding.

Instructions for certifying and submitting an application in Sapphire are provided in the [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#).

Once submitted to NHMRC, your application will be considered final and no changes can be made unless the application is withdrawn for amendment prior to the closing date.

6. Checklist for applicants

Before creating an application:

- Ensure Sapphire Accounts for all CIs are active and mandatory 'My Profile' fields are complete (indicated by an asterisk *).
- Familiarise yourself with the Guidelines and [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#).
- Check application lodgement close date and time.
- Update your Sapphire 'My Profile' in accordance with requirements set out in this document.
- Read the relevant ethical guidelines/associated documentation if ethics approval is required for the proposed application.

- Inform your RAO of your intention to submit an application.
- Be aware of any Administering Institution internal deadlines and requirements for submission.

During the creation of an application:

- Check any minimum data requirements.
- Check eligibility requirements.
- Complete all parts of the application.
- Create and upload your Grant Proposal.
- Consider any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander requirements your application may have, including addressing any additional selection criteria.
- Make sure all required attachments are uploaded.

Before submitting an application:

- Read and understand the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018](#). Submission of an application indicates that the Administering Institution and research team understand and will comply with the principles and responsibilities set out in the Code.
- Check your compliance with formatting and page requirements.
- Ensure any Approvals or licences are acquired or applied for.
- Check all information is correct and complete.
- Familiarise yourself with your obligations should you be successful.
- Certify the application and ensure RAO certification and submission occurs before the close date and time.

Remember, your RAO is your primary contact for advice and assistance. RAOs will contact the Research Help Centre for further advice if required.