

NHMRC New Grant Program

August 2018



NHMRC's New Grant Program

INVESTIGATOR GRANTS

To support the research program of outstanding investigators at all career stages

SYNERGY GRANTS

To support outstanding multidisciplinary teams of investigators to work together to answer major questions that cannot be answered by a single investigator

IDEAS GRANTS

To support focussed innovative research projects addressing a specific question

STRATEGIC AND LEVERAGING GRANTS

To support research that addresses identified national needs

Changes of Note

- **Career Disruption change**

A career disruption is a prolonged (**90 calendar days or more**) interruption to an applicants capacity to work due to Pregnancy, Major Illness/Injury and Carers Responsibility.

- **PhD Census Date for Emerging Leaders**

As at 1 March in the year of application, an applicant must have held their PhD for no more than 10 years from the date that their PhD thesis was passed (not conferral), unless they have had a career disruption

- **50% of MRFF funding will occur via the NHMRC**

- **Provisional funding per round and per scheme are detailed in each of the funding guidelines**



NHMRC's Strategic Priorities 2019

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research and researchers
- Health Services Research
- Gender Equality



Investigator Grants

GRANT TYPE	INVESTIGATOR GRANTS	SYNERGY GRANTS	IDEAS GRANTS	STRATEGIC & LEVERAGING
Duration	5 years	5 years	Up to 5 years	Varies with scheme
Number of Chief Investigators	1	4 – 10	1 – 10	Varies with scheme
Funding	Salary (optional) + Research Support Package	Grant of a fixed budget	Based on the requested budget for research support	Varies with scheme

Investigator Grants: streamlining of fellowships

Current NHMRC Fellowship	Corresponding Investigator Grant
Senior Principal Research Fellowship Australia Fellowship	Leadership Level 3
Principal Research Fellowship Practitioner Fellowship Level 2	Leadership Level 2
Practitioner Fellowship Level 1 Senior Research Fellowship Levels A and B Career Development Fellowship Level 2	Leadership Level 1
Career Development Fellowship Levels 1 and 2 Translation of Research into Practice (TRIP) Fellowship	Emerging Leadership Level 2
Early Career Fellowship Translation of Research into Practice (TRIP) Fellowship	Emerging Leadership Level 1

Investigator Grants: Salaries and RSPs

	Salary		Research Support Package	
Category	Levels	Salary	Tiers	RSP per annum
Leadership	L3	\$175,201	LT4	\$600,000
	L2	\$164,911	LT3	\$500,000
	L1	\$141,474	LT2	\$400,000
Emerging Leadership	L1	\$141,474	LT1	\$300,000
	EL2	\$107,750	ELT2	\$200,000
	EL1	\$75,738	ELT1	\$50,000

RSPs for EL1 and EL2 are awarded based on seniority.

RSPs for L1–L3 are awarded based on score in like-for-like assessment, rather than seniority.

Choosing a Level to Apply for

Appendix C: Statement of Expectations

The *Statement of Expectations* outlines the baseline expectations of applicants within each level of Investigator Grant. Applicants who have never received an NHMRC Fellowship or Investigator Grant should refer to these expectations and apply at a level commensurate with their experience and profile.

The descriptors provide a broad benchmark and it is not essential that all elements be met.

Emerging Leadership Level 1 (EL1)

EL1 Investigator Grant recipients will be ≤ 10 years post-PhD and will be beginning to gain recognition in their research area with demonstrated:

- original contribution(s) in their field of expertise
- ability to contribute to the conception of research projects
- scientific contributions within their region, state or territory (e.g. community leadership, state level contribution to a professional society)
- limited but developing supervision of research staff and students, and
- contributions within their department, centre, institution or organisation e.g. organising journal clubs, seminar series etc.

Investigator Grants:

Part-time and non-salary grants

Part-time Investigator Grants

- Aim to cater for personal (e.g. carers) and professional (e.g. clinical) commitments
- Applicant selects salary in the range 0-90% in 10% increments
- Applicant selects full or <100% Research Support Package (RSP)
- Salary and RSP components provided for 5 years and finish on same date

Investigator Grants without salary

- Aim to support research of outstanding investigators who do not need a salary
 - applications expected from tenured university academics and directors of independent medical institutes
 - not designed to subsidise appointments with substantial administrative responsibilities
- Successful applicants would receive RSP only

Investigator Grants: research overseas

Under the streamlined Investigator Grants scheme, specific grants for overseas research will not be offered.

Instead:

Emerging Leaders

- may spend 50% of grant time overseas
- must spend final two years of grant in Australia

Leaders

- may spend 20% grant time overseas
- if receive <100% salary, may spend non-NHMRC time overseas (e.g. joint appointments)

Investigator Grants: Criteria

- **Track Record 70% and Knowledge Gain 30%**
 - new Track Record assessment framework: publications, impact, leadership
 - Knowledge Gain: research significance and quality
- Shift focus away from inputs (eg grants received) towards outcomes
- Future trial of bibliometric indicators

Framework for track record assessment

1. Publications (35%)

10 year list (taking Career Disruption into account)

Five best publications

2. Research Impact (20%)

Knowledge

Health

Economic

Social

3. Leadership (15%)

Research programs and
team leadership

Institutional leadership

Research policy and
professional leadership

Research mentoring

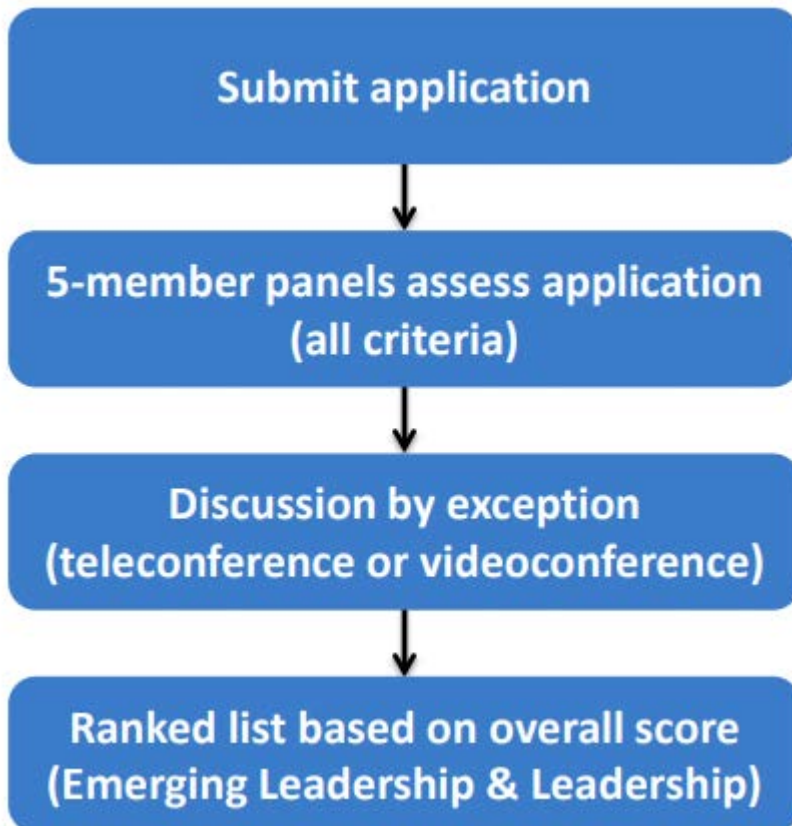
Framework for track record assessment

2. Research Impact indicators

Knowledge	Health	Economic	Social
Evidence of scientific reach and influence	Engagement Participation in clinical research Policy leadership Clinical guidelines Standards Development of product/intervention	Healthcare cost savings IP development Industry collaboration Start-up company Product to market Employment	End-user/public engagement Community health benefit Wellbeing of end-user and community Reducing inequalities



Peer Review for Investigator Grants



- Streamline process to reduce peer review burden
 - panel only, no interviews, discussion by exception
 - shorter process allows separation of open/close dates from Ideas Grants
- Improve confidence in the review process
 - five assessors per application

NHMRC Fellows – transitional eligibility

Highest NHMRC Fellowship held	EL1	EL2	L1	L2	L3
None previously held	eligible if ≤10 years post-PhD or equivalent	eligible if ≤10 years post-PhD or equivalent	eligible	eligible	eligible
Early Career Fellowship	ineligible	eligible if ≤10 years post-PhD or equivalent	eligible	eligible	eligible
Translating Research into Practice (TRIP) Fellowship	ineligible	eligible if ≤10 years post-PhD or equivalent	eligible	eligible	eligible
Career Development Fellowship Level 1	ineligible	eligible if ≤10 years post-PhD or equivalent	eligible	eligible	eligible
Career Development Fellowship Level 2	ineligible	ineligible	eligible	eligible	eligible
Practitioner Fellowship Level 1	ineligible	ineligible	eligible	eligible	eligible
Senior Research Fellowship Levels A and B	ineligible	ineligible	eligible	eligible	eligible
Practitioner Fellowship Level 2	ineligible	ineligible	ineligible	eligible	eligible
Principal Research Fellowship	ineligible	ineligible	ineligible	eligible	eligible
Senior Principal Research Fellowship	ineligible	ineligible	ineligible	ineligible	eligible
Australia Fellowship	ineligible	ineligible	ineligible	ineligible	eligible

ineligible
 eligible if ≤10 years post-PhD or equivalent
 eligible

NHMRC Fellows – transitional eligibility

Existing NHMRC Fellows:

- May not hold a concurrent Investigator Grant
- May apply for Ideas Grants and/or a Synergy Grant (subject to caps)
- May apply for an Investigator Grant in the penultimate or ultimate year
- May apply for an Investigator Grant and one Ideas Grants in the final year of their Fellowship
 - if both are successful, only the Investigator Grant will be awarded



Synergy Grants

GRANT TYPE	INVESTIGATOR GRANTS	SYNERGY GRANTS	IDEAS GRANTS	STRATEGIC & LEVERAGING
Duration	5 years	5 years	Up to 5 years	Varies with scheme
Number of Chief Investigators	1	4 – 10	1 – 10	Varies with scheme
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Synergy Grants

- Fixed budget of \$5 million per grant
- Up to 10 awarded per year
- Budget can be used for PSPs and DRCs
- Chief Investigator salaries can be paid from budget up to PSP5
- Each Chief Investigator (CIA-CIJ) may apply for and hold one Synergy Grant
- Synergy Grants will encourage diverse teams, e.g. by discipline, career stage and gender

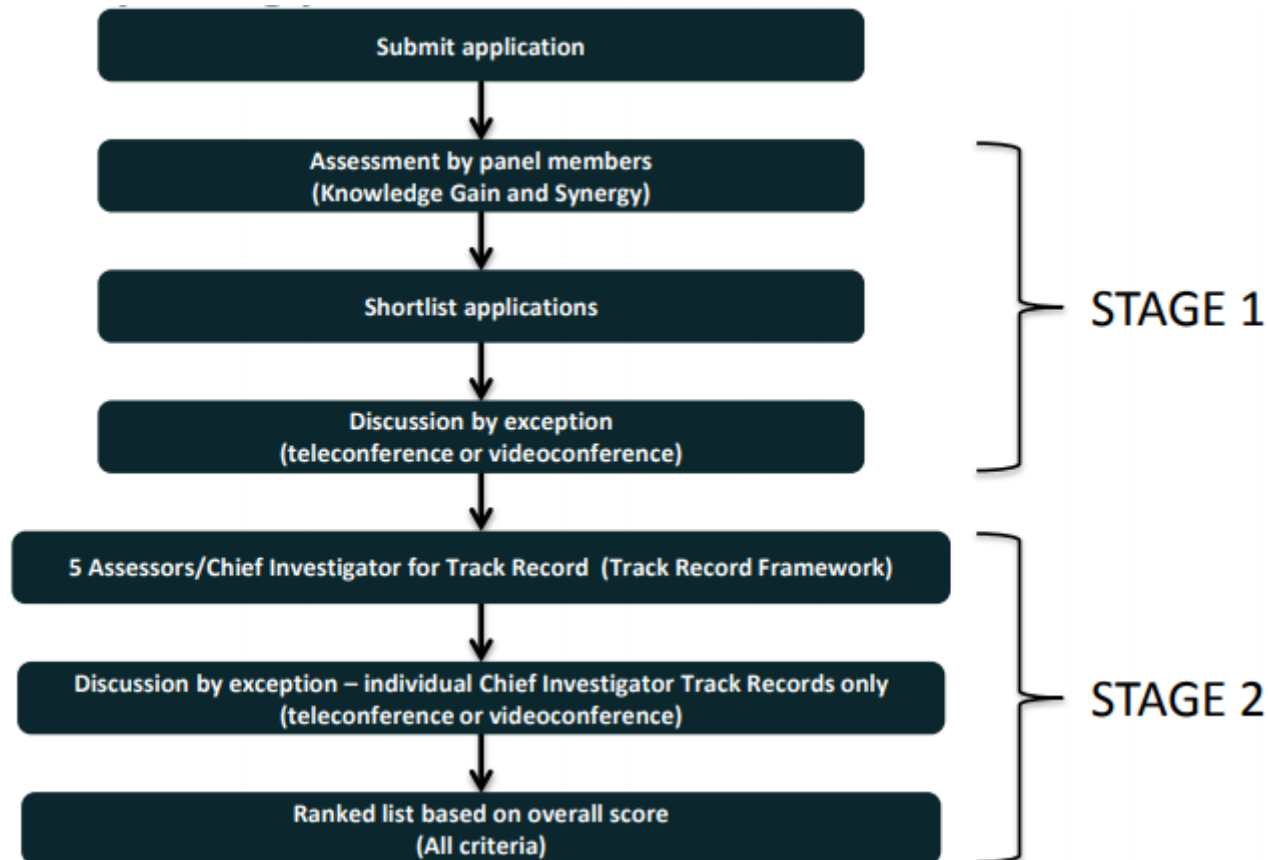
Synergy Grants Case Study Examples

- An example is the **development of genomics** formed from **genetics, molecular biology, analytical chemistry, mathematics** and **informatics**. Genomics is now being integrated with **public health research** for health improvement through guidelines for appropriate use of genetic tests and services, interventions such as newborn screening for conditions and multidisciplinary population sciences to assess value and impact of genetic information in health conditions.
- In research into the **assessment and management of cardiovascular risk**, research teams that include **public health researchers** with **qualitative and quantitative skills**, **clinicians** with a range of expertise across the lifecycle and continuum from hospital to **community care**, **geneticists**, **behavioural**, **biomedical engineering** and **informatics scientists**, **dietitians** and **exercise scientists** and **health consumers** (especially from vulnerable population groups) are required to develop new approaches to individualised absolute risk assessment and management.

Synergy Grants: Criteria

- **Track Record 40%, Synergy 30% and Knowledge Gain 30%**
- Synergy assessment intended to encourage:
 - multidisciplinary research to address a major problem
 - diverse research teams (eg gender, career stage, culture
 - engagement
 - * people with specialised knowledge (as CI, AI, consultant etc)
 - * direct beneficiaries of research

Peer Review for Synergy Grants



Peer Review for Synergy Grants

- Streamline process to reduce peer review burden
 - panel only, no interviews, discussion by exception
- Improve confidence in the review process
 - at least five assessors per application
 - broad expertise to assess Synergy and Knowledge Gain
 - discipline expertise to assess Track Record for each CI



Ideas Grants

GRANT TYPE	INVESTIGATOR GRANTS	SYNERGY GRANTS	IDEAS GRANTS	STRATEGIC & LEVERAGING
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Number of Chief Investigators	1	4 – 10	1 – 10	Varies with scheme
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Ideas Grants

- As for current Project Grants:
 - Grant size will be based on requested budget
 - budget request will be based on PSPs and DRCs
 - Chief Investigators may request their salary up to PSP5
- Chief Investigators (CIA-CIJ) may apply for and hold up to two Ideas Grants concurrently

Ideas Grants: Criteria

- **Research Quality 35%, Innovation and Creativity 25%, Significance 20% and Feasibility 20%**
- Innovation and Creativity assessment
 - a specific criterion for the Ideas Grant scheme
 - Intended to encourage fresh thinking
 - encompasses:
 - * concepts, approaches, methodologies, interventions in all Broad Research Areas
 - * incremental advances
 - * not only commercial innovation
 - * showing what doesn't work

Peer Review for Ideas Grants

Submit application



**Discipline Panels:
Four Spokespersons score each application
(all criteria)**



NFFC and Rescue



**Panel Meeting: All members score applications
(all criteria)**



Ranked List based on overall score

- Streamline process to reduce peer review burden
 - panel only, no external assessment or rebuttals, discussion by exception
 - shorter process allows separation of open/close dates from Investigator Grants
- Improve confidence in the review process
 - four assessors per application



Strategic and Leveraging Grants

GRANT TYPE	INVESTIGATOR GRANTS	SYNERGY GRANTS	IDEAS GRANTS	STRATEGIC & LEVERAGING
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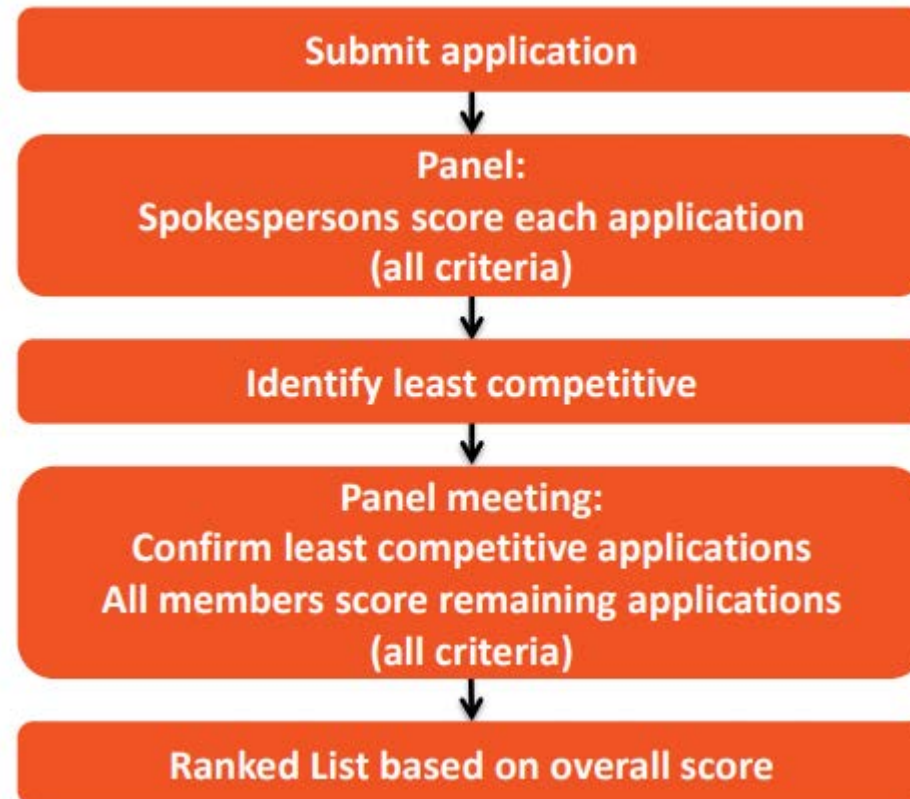
Strategic and Leveraging Grants

- Centres of Research Excellence
- Development Grants
- International Collaborative Grants
(e.g. GACD, EU, NIH, NIHR)
- Targeted Calls for Research
- Partnership Projects
- Partnerships Centres
- Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies (new scheme)
 - details to follow analysis of submissions to recent public consultation

Clinical Trials and Cohorts Studies scheme

- Not capped relative to other three schemes
- Criteria: Significance (40%), Research Quality (40%), Team Quality and Capability (20%)
- Category descriptors designed for clinical trials and cohorts studies
- Peer Review process based on recent MRFF clinical trials schemes

Peer Review for Clinical Trials Grants



Transition to New Grant Program – 2019 round

- All existing grants will complete their term
- A researcher's portfolio of NHMRC Fellowship, Project and Program Grants held on 1 January 2020 will affect:
 - Eligibility to apply for Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Grants
 - Percentage of RSP awarded for an Investigator Grant
 - Number of Ideas Grants for which they can apply
- These effects will cease as the [existing grants](#) expire.

Eligibility

- Check Eligibility of Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Grant Schemes (2019 funding round) *Attachment in the Guidelines*
- CIs may **submit a total of two applications** across the Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Grant schemes in any given funding round.
- 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

NHMRC's new grants management system



SAPPHIRE

SUPPORTING RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

Thank you

END