



Synergy Grants 2019 Guidelines

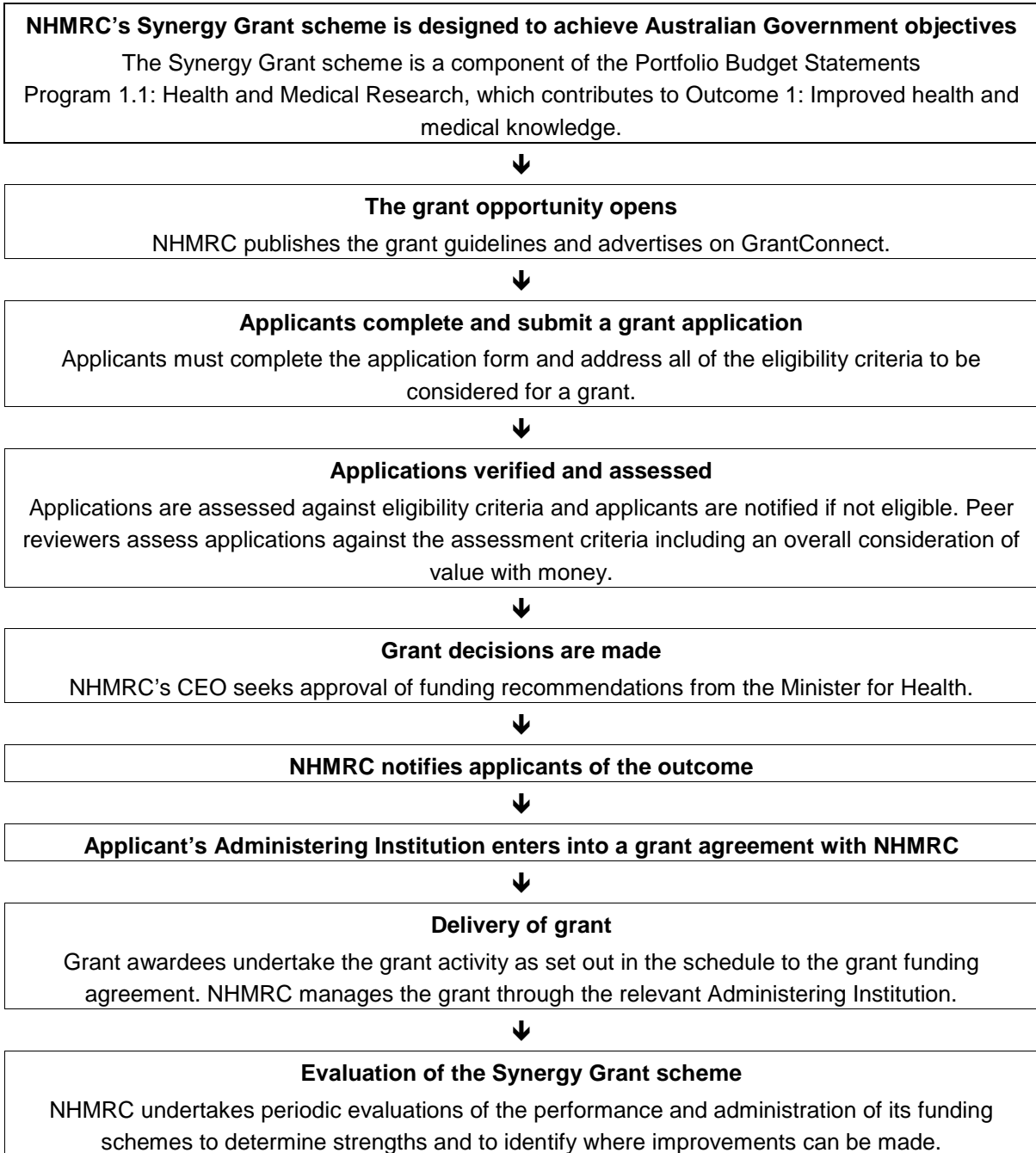
Opening date:	06 March 2019
Closing date and time:	17.00 AEST on 01 May 2019
Commonwealth policy entity:	National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)
Commonwealth Co-sponsoring entity	Department of Health
Enquiries:	<p>Applicants requiring further assistance should direct enquiries to their Administering Institution's Research Administration Officer (or equivalent). If further clarification is required, Research Administration Officers (RAOs) 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>Frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding scheme policy will be collated and then responded to via the scheme's FAQ document on GrantConnect. If applicable, the final FAQ will be released on 24 April 2019.</p> <p>All policy enquiries should be submitted by COB 23 April 2019.</p> <p>NHMRC's Research Help Centre will continue to provide technical assistance to both applicants and RAOs.</p> <p>Note: The Research Help Centre aims to provide a reply to all requests for general assistance within two working days. This timeframe may be delayed during peak periods or for more detailed requests for assistance.</p> <p>NHMRC will not respond to any technical enquiries submitted after 13.00 AEST on 01 May 2019.</p>
Date guidelines released:	26 February 2019
Type of grant opportunity:	Targeted competitive

Contents

1. Synergy Grants 2019 processes	4
1.1 Introduction	5
1.1.1 About NHMRC	5
1.1.2 Policy clarifications	5
2. About the grant program	5
2.1 NHMRC structural priorities, Synergy Grants 2019 priorities and funding with other organisations	6
3. Grant amount and grant period	6
3.1 Grants available	6
3.2 Grant period	6
4. Eligibility criteria	6
4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?	7
4.1.1 Chief Investigators and Associate Investigators	7
4.2 Multiple applications/grants	7
4.2.1 Limits on the number of Synergy Grant applications	8
4.2.2 Limits on the number of Synergy Grants that may be held	8
4.3 Exclusion of applications	8
5. What the grant money can be used for	9
5.1 Eligible grant activities and expenditure	9
5.1.1 Salary support	9
5.2 Funding to support overseas grant activities and researchers	9
5.3 Duplicate funding	9
6. The assessment criteria	9
6.1 Health research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People	10
7. How to apply	11
7.1 Overview of application process and timing	11
7.2 Minimum data requirements	11
7.3 Application requirements	12
7.4 Consumer and community participation	12
7.5 Certification and submission	12
7.5.1 CIA certification	12
7.5.2 Administering Institution certification	13
7.6 Retracted publications	14
7.7 Withdrawal of applications	14
7.8 Questions during the application process	14
8. The grant selection process	15
8.1 Assessment of grant applications	15
8.2 Who will assess applications?	15

8.2.1	Synergy Grants assessment process	15
8.3	Who will approve grants?	15
9.	Notification of application outcomes.....	15
10.	Successful grant applications.....	15
10.1	Information required from awardees.....	16
10.2	Approvals and licences	16
10.3	NHMRC Funding Agreement.....	16
10.3.1	Responsible conduct of research.....	16
10.4	NHMRC Policies	16
10.5	Payments	16
10.6	Suspension of grants	17
10.7	Tax implications	17
11.	Announcement of grants	17
12.	How NHMRC monitors grant activity	17
12.1	Variations	17
12.2	Reporting	17
12.2.1	Financial reports.....	17
12.2.2	Non-financial reports	17
12.2.3	NHMRC National Institute for Dementia Research.....	18
12.3	Evaluation of the Synergy Grant scheme	18
12.4	Open Access Policy	18
13.	Probity.....	18
13.1	Complaints process	18
13.2	Privacy: confidentiality and protection of personal information	19
13.3	Freedom of Information.....	20
14.	Glossary.....	21
Appendix A - NHMRC structural priorities, Synergy Grants 2019 priorities and funding organisations		24
	Synergy Grants funded by other organisations	25
Appendix B - Eligibility for Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Grant schemes (2019 funding round).....		26
Appendix C - Concept of Synergy		29
Appendix D - Synergy Grants 2019 Category Descriptors		32
Appendix E – NHMRC Relative to Opportunity policy.....		50
Appendix F - Guide to Applicants.....		53

1. Synergy Grants 2019 processes



1.1 Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the Synergy Grants 2019 grant opportunity.

Applicants must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the 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 Synergy Grants 2019 grant opportunity will be undertaken according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017* (CGRGs), available from the [Department of Finance website](#).

1.1.1 About NHMRC

NHMRC is the Australian Government's key entity for managing investment in, and integrity of, health and medical research. The Synergy Grant scheme is a component of the Portfolio Budget Statement Program 1.1: Health and Medical Research, which contributes to Outcome 1: Improved health and medical knowledge. 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: biomedical, clinical, public health and health services research.

1.1.2 Policy clarifications

- Updated various sections to clarify that Associate Investigators (AIs) are not considered as part of the assessment against the Synergy and Track Record criteria.
- Inserted *Section 5.1.1* to provide further clarification on salary support.
- Inserted *Section 5.2* to provide further clarification on funding overseas grant activities and researchers.
- Updated *Section 7.3* to provide clarification on the use of web links and publication metrics.
- Updated *Section 7.8* to reflect the publication of frequently asked policy questions.
- Updated *Section 8.2.1* to reflect that in Stage One of the assessment, applications need to meet a threshold score for the Knowledge Gain as well as the Synergy criterion.

2. About the grant program

The objective of the Synergy Grant scheme is to support outstanding multidisciplinary teams of investigators to work together to answer major questions that cannot be answered by a single investigator.

The expected outcomes are:

- multidisciplinary research that addresses major problems in all areas of human health and medical research, from discovery to translation
- highly collaborative teams of diverse researchers including by gender, career stage and cultural background, working together to address major problems in human health.

2.1 NHMRC structural priorities, Synergy Grants 2019 priorities and funding with other organisations.

NHMRC's *Corporate Plan* (the 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 its strategic priorities.

Information on NHMRC's structural priorities, Synergy Grants priorities and Synergy Grants 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 Synergy Grants 2019 grant opportunity is estimated to be up to \$50 million. NHMRC's Research Committee annually reviews and recommends indicative budget amounts to be awarded across individual funding schemes.

A Synergy Grant provides a total budget of \$5 million, paid evenly over the grant period.

3.2 Grant period

A Synergy Grants 2019 grant opportunity is awarded for a fixed five-year term.

4. Eligibility criteria

Applications will only be accepted from NHMRC-approved Administering Institutions. A list of NHMRC-approved Administering Institutions and NHMRC's Administering Institution Policy are 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 ruled 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.

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

Grant offers may be withdrawn and action taken over the life of a grant, if eligibility criteria to accept and/or continue holding a grant are not met.

NHMRC staff will not make eligibility rulings prior to an application being submitted.

4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

4.1.1 Chief Investigators and Associate Investigators

The minimum number of Chief Investigators (CIs) allowed on a Synergy Grants 2019 application is four and the maximum number is 10 (CIA – CIJ).

Chief Investigator 'A' (CIA)

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; the other CIs may be international collaborators.

Chief Investigators

The role and contribution of each CI must be described in the grant application. PhD students may be named as CIs in exceptional circumstances where the PhD student is critical for the successful completion of the proposed research. CIs are expected to remain active on the Research Activity as outlined in the application for the duration of the grant.

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). Note that AIs are not considered as part of the assessment against the Synergy and Track Record criteria. A maximum number of 10 AIs may be listed on an application.

4.2 Multiple applications/grants

Limits apply to the number of NHMRC grants that a CI may concurrently hold and/or apply for. These limits do not apply to AIs.

Eligibility to apply for, and hold, a Synergy Grant is linked to numbers of grants applied for or held from the Investigator and Ideas Grant schemes, as well as NHMRC Program 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 Ideas 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 apply for and hold a Synergy Grant
- CIs who hold two Ideas Grants can apply for and hold an Investigator Grant.

Detailed information on how eligibility for Synergy Grants is affected by a CI's grant application(s) and/or currently held grants is available at [Appendix B](#) and the [NHMRC web eligibility tool for the new grant program](#).

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.

4.2.1 Limits on the number of Synergy Grant applications

CIIs may submit one Synergy Grant application in a given funding round, subject to other NHMRC grants concurrently held or applied for.

If any CI (CIA-CIJ) on a given Synergy Grant submits a Synergy, Investigator or Ideas Grant application(s) in excess of the maximum for which they are eligible to apply 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
- that CI's position or role on the application.

CIIs may only reapply for a Synergy Grant in the final year of a current Synergy Grant or if no CIIs hold a Synergy Grant.

4.2.2 Limits on the number of Synergy Grants that may be held

CIIs may hold only one Synergy Grant.

NHMRC Program Grant holders are ineligible to concurrently hold a Synergy Grant, but may apply for a Synergy Grant in the final year of their Program Grant.

For more eligibility information, see [Appendix B](#) and the [NHMRC web eligibility tool for the new grant program](#).

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 these 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 Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA)
- 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 a finding of research misconduct or a breach of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (the Code), or a Probity Event. See the Code for a definition of 'research misconduct' and the *NHMRC Policy on Misconduct related to NHMRC Funding* available from [NHMRC's website](#).

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

If a decision to exclude an application from further consideration is made, 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. Further information is available in [section 13.1](#).

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1 Eligible grant activities and expenditure

Funding provided by NHMRC for a Research Activity must be spent on costs directly incurred in relation to that Research Activity. Further guidance on the expenditure of funding for a Research Activity is provided in the *Direct Research Cost Guidelines* on the [NHMRC website](#). The application does not require inclusion of a research budget.

5.1.1 Salary support

Synergy Grants do not include a salary component as the CIs' salaries are normally funded otherwise. However, where required the grant money can be used to fund a CI's salary if the CI is employed by an [NHMRC Approved Administering Institution](#) based in Australia. The salary must be based on Personnel Support Packages.

Funds cannot be used to provide salary support for AIs.

5.2 Funding to support overseas grant activities and researchers

Synergy Grants 2019 funds are for research cost expenditure in Australia. Funding may be used to support specific grant activities to be undertaken overseas if 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.

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 that previously has been or currently is being funded.

Where NHMRC believes that a CI has submitted similar research proposals to NHMRC and has been successful with more than one application, the CI 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.

NHMRC may disclose applicants' personal 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. See NHMRC's Privacy Policy and the *Privacy: confidentiality and protection of personal information* section of these guidelines for further information.

6. The assessment criteria

Applicants for Synergy Grants 2019 should consider how their application meets the scheme objectives. Applications will be assessed against the Assessment Criteria listed below and the category descriptors at [Appendix D](#).

- Track Record, relative to opportunity (40%)
- Knowledge Gain (30%), and
- Synergy (30%).

Track Record - NHMRC defines 'Track Record' for the Synergy Grant scheme as the value of an individual's past research achievement, relative to opportunity, not prospective achievements, using evidence. Assessment of Track Record comprises peer reviewers' consideration of:

- Publications (20%)
- Research Impact (15%)
- Leadership (5%).

Track Record assessment only includes CIs and not AIs. This assessment is undertaken relative to career stage based on two categories: researchers who are ≤10 years post-PhD or equivalent and researchers who are >10 years post-PhD or equivalent.

Knowledge Gain - NHMRC defines 'Knowledge Gain' for the Synergy Grant scheme as the quality of the proposed research and significance of the knowledge gained. It incorporates theoretical concepts, hypothesis, research design, robustness and the extent to which the research findings will contribute to the research area and health outcomes (by advancing knowledge, practice or policy).

Synergy - NHMRC defines 'Synergy' for the Synergy Grant scheme as the quality of a diverse team's multidisciplinary and collaborative approach to solving a major health and medical research question, while building workforce capacity. AIs are not assessed as part of the research team.

Further information on the concept of 'Synergy' for the Synergy Grant scheme is at [Appendix C – Concept of Synergy](#).

Applications are assessed relative to opportunity, taking into consideration any career disruptions where applicable (see [Appendix E](#)).

It is recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants often make additional valuable contributions to policy development, clinical/public health leadership and/or service delivery, community activities and linkages, and are often representatives on key committees. If applicable, these contributions will be considered when assessing research output and track record.

6.1 Health research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

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.

These applications will be assigned to peer reviewers with specific expertise in Indigenous health research. The peer reviewer(s) will consider how well the application addresses the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria*.

7. How to apply

7.1 Overview of application process and timing

6 March 2019	Applications open in NHMRC's granting system
17.00 AEST	
17 April 2019	Minimum data due in NHMRC's granting system
17.00 AEST	
1 May 2019	Applications close in NHMRC's granting system
July 2019	Anticipated peer review week – Stage One
September 2019	Anticipated peer review week – Stage Two
November 2019*	Anticipated notification of outcomes

*Date is indicative and subject to change.

Applications must be submitted electronically using NHMRC's granting system unless otherwise advised by NHMRC.

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

Applicants should refer to NHMRC's granting system Training Program on [NHMRC's website](#) 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 Minimum data requirements

Minimum data must be entered in NHMRC's granting system 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 Synergy Grants 2019 are outlined within [Appendix F](#).

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.

7.3 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. For example, the application should not include any 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 as <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au>).

NHMRC is a signatory of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment. As such, it is not appropriate to use journal-based metrics such as Journal Impact Factors or the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) Ranked Journal List in any part of your application.

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.

7.4 Consumer and community participation

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 Consumers Health Forum of Australia Ltd and NHMRC worked in partnership with consumers and researchers to develop the Statement.

Researchers are encouraged to consider the benefits of actively engaging consumers in their proposed research. Further information on the Consumer Health Forum and the Statement on Participation is available on [NHMRC's website](#).

7.5 Certification and submission

Once complete, applications must be electronically certified and then submitted to NHMRC through the RAO of an NHMRC-approved Administering Institution using NHMRC's granting system.

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

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

7.5.1 CIA certification

The CIA must provide the RAO with evidence that the application is complete and that all CIs have agreed to it, i.e. through written evidence such as email. Such written evidence should be retained by the Administering Institution and must be provided to NHMRC if requested.

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, and all eligibility and other application requirements have been met.
- All personnel contributing to the Research 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.

- All CIs and AIs have provided written agreement to be named on the application, to participate in the manner described in the application and to the use of their personal information as described in the *NHMRC Privacy Policy*.
- All CIs have provided written agreement for the final application to be certified.
- The application may be excluded from consideration if found to be in breach of any requirements.

And if funded,

- The research will be carried out in strict accordance with the conditions governing NHMRC grants at the time of award. Conditions may change during the course of the grant, for example, reporting obligations may change. CIs will need to meet new/changed conditions.
- The reported outcomes of the research may be used for internal NHMRC quality evaluations/reviews.
- Grant offers may be withdrawn and action taken over the life of the grant, if eligibility criteria to accept and/or continue holding a grant are not met.

7.5.2 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.
- The appropriate facilities and salary support will be available for the Funding Period.
- Approval of the Research 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.
- Written evidence of consent has been obtained from all CIs and AIs and provided to the RAO.

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

7.6 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 NHMRC's granting system.

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.

7.7 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 NHMRC's granting system 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.

7.8 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.

All policy enquiries must be submitted in writing to NHMRC's Research Help Centre who will process enquiries as follows:

1. Enquiries from individual applicants will be redirected to the Administrative Institution's RAO.
2. Frequently asked policy questions will be collated and responded to via the scheme Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) document on GrantConnect. NHMRC will advise if an enquiry will be responded to via the FAQ document, which will be updated as needed.
3. Redirection to the FAQ document will occur when a specific enquiry has already been addressed in the FAQ document.

If applicable, the final addenda will be released 24 April 2019. All policy enquiries should be submitted by 23 April 2019.

NHMRC's Research Help Centre

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

E: help@nhmrc.gov.au.

Please 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 (see section 4) and are assessed against the assessment criteria (see section 6) by peer reviewers.

8.2 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 according to the Code to ensure that only the highest quality, value with money research is recommended for funding.

NHMRC will conduct peer review for this funding round in accordance with the *NHMRC's Principles of Peer Review*, available from [NHMRC's website](#).

Applicants must not make contact about their application with anyone who is directly engaged with its peer review. Doing so may constitute a breach of the Code and result in the application being excluded from consideration.

8.2.1 Synergy Grants assessment process

Peer reviewers will independently undertake an initial assessment of applications, using the Knowledge Gain and Synergy assessment criteria. Some applications may be discussed by peer reviewers. Applications that meet a threshold score for the Knowledge Gain as well as the Synergy criteria will be shortlisted.

Peer reviewers will independently assess individual CIs on shortlisted applications, relative to opportunity and taking into account career disruptions, using the Track Record assessment criterion. Some applications may be discussed by peer reviewers. The overall scores of shortlisted applications (consolidated Synergy, Knowledge Gain and Track Record assessment criteria scores) 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 website](#).

8.3 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 may advise applicants of their 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

CIAs whose applications are approved will have access to a letter of offer through NHMRC's granting system. Administering Institutions responsible for administering approved applications will also have access to the letter of offer. In addition, the Administering Institution will have access, through NHMRC's granting system, 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 granting 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 awardees

Awardees may be required to supply additional information about their Research 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 Research Activities must be referred for approval to the relevant institutional committees and approval bodies and relevant licences must be held from commencement. 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
- 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 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 Code.

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 be compliant with, all relevant legislation and policies relating to the conduct of the Research 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 these grant guidelines and the NHMRC *Grantee Variation Policy* available on the [NHMRC website](#).

Funding may also be suspended by NHMRC when it is reasonable to consider there has been a failure to comply with a Policy or Guideline, or on the basis of a Probity Event or an investigation of alleged research misconduct, as set out in the Funding Agreement.

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](#) 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 limited circumstances where it is appropriate to vary an NHMRC grant (including the Research Activity) relative to the peer reviewed application. Requests must comply with these grant guidelines and the NHMRC *Grantee Variation Policy*. Requests to vary the terms of a grant should be made to NHMRC via the Grantee Variation portal in NHMRC's granting system. For information on grant variations see NHMRC's *Grantee Variation 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 Research Activity. Scientific reporting requirements can be found on [NHMRC's website](#). 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 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, funding schemes, or designing future schemes.

12.2.3 NHMRC National Institute for Dementia Research

Grantees undertaking research related to dementia must contribute their expertise to the NHMRC National Institute for Dementia Research, which is responsible for strategically expanding, coordinating and translating the national dementia research effort. The NHMRC National Institute for Dementia Research is drawing on the expertise of researchers and other dementia stakeholders via a membership model to drive Australia's dementia research and translation effort, and work together to maximise the impact of research.

Additional reporting on NHMRC funded dementia research will also be sought from Administering Institutions as required to inform the Institute's work plan and subsequent research activities.

12.3 Evaluation of the Synergy Grant scheme

NHMRC undertakes periodic evaluations of the performance and administration of its funding schemes 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, demonstration of research achievement, improve track record assessment processes 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*.

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 should be directed to the Complaints Team at: complaints@nhmrc.gov.au.

NHMRC will provide a written response to all complaints.

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.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

13.2 Privacy: confidentiality and protection of personal information

NHMRC treats applicants' personal information according to the 13 Australian Privacy Principles set out in the *Privacy Act 1988*. This includes identifying:

- what personal information NHMRC collects
- why NHMRC collects applicants' personal information
- who NHMRC gives applicants' personal information to.

Applicants are required as part of their application to declare their ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988*, including the Australian Privacy Principles, and impose the same privacy obligations on any subcontractors engaged by the applicant to assist with the activity.

Personal information can only be disclosed to someone else in any of the following situations:

- if the disclosure is related to the purpose for which it was collected
- where disclosure is authorised or required by law or is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law
- if it will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to a person's life or health
- if the applicant has consented to the disclosure.

Where this occurs, applicants are given reasonable notice of the disclosure.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under this scheme in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

NHMRC may reveal confidential information to:

- the peer review committee and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help NHMRC manage the 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

- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

Applicants or grantees must ask for the Australian Government's consent in writing before disclosing confidential information.

NHMRC may share information provided to it by applicants with other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes including government administration, research or service delivery and according to Australian laws, including the:

- *Public Service Act 1999*
- *Public Service Regulations 1999*
- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*
- *Crimes Act 1914*
- *Criminal Code Act 1995.*

13.3 Freedom of Information

NHMRC is subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and is committed to meeting the Australian Government's transparency and accountability requirements.

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 activity, 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	Is 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.
funding round	Collectively refers to the Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Grants opportunities commencing funding in the same year.
grant	<p>A grant is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) under which relevant money, or other consolidated revenue funds, is to be paid to a recipient other than the Commonwealth b) which is intended to assist the recipient achieve its goals c) which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy objectives. <p>under which the recipient may be required to act in accordance with specified terms or conditions.</p>
grant activity	Is the project /tasks /services that the grantee is required to undertake with the grant money. It is described in the schedule to the NHMRC Funding Agreement.

Term	Definition
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 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	Is 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.
grantee	An individual/organisation that has been awarded a grant.
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)	<p>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.</p>
NHMRC's granting system	NHMRC's electronic grants management solution for grant application, assessment and administration.
peer reviewers	Individuals (peers) with knowledge and expertise appropriate for the applications they are reviewing.
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.

Term	Definition
Probity Event	<p>Probity Event means any event or occurrence which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) has a material adverse effect on the integrity, character or honesty of the Administering Institution, a Participating Institution or Personnel involved in a Research Activity; or b) relates to the Administering Institution, a Participating Institution or Personnel involved in a Research Activity and has a material adverse effect on the public interest or public confidence in the Administering Institution, Participating Institution or Research Activity.
schedule	<p>Means the contract template used by NHMRC to form part of the Funding Agreement. The schedule sets out the research activity and is signed by NHMRC and the CIA's Administering Institution.</p>
value with money	<p>Value with money in this document refers to 'value with relevant money' which is a term used in the CGRGs and is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of the project proposal and activities • fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives • that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government's outcomes being achieved • the potential grantee's relevant experience and performance history.

Appendix A - NHMRC structural priorities, Synergy Grants 2019 priorities and funding organisations

A1 NHMRC key structural priorities

Each year, NHMRC identifies key structural priorities for funding to deliver against strategic priorities. NHMRC's current key structural priorities are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research and researchers
- health services research
- 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. 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.

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 research into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is of the highest scientific merit and is beneficial and acceptable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

Applicants proposing to undertake research that specifically relates to the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, 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:

- *NHMRC Road Map 3: A Strategic Framework for Improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health through Research*
- *Values and Ethics: Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research*, and
- *Keeping research on track: A guide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples about health research ethics*

Health Services Research

Increasing the number of health services research grants is a strategic priority. Of the total 1035 competitive grants awarded in 2017, only 6.9% of these grants were for Health Services Research, which is significantly lower than Basic Science at 47.3%, Clinical Medicine and Science at 31.2% and Public Health at 14.6%.

Gender Equality

Funding outcomes have highlighted the underrepresentation of female chief investigators across many of NHMRC's funding schemes. This supports the need for a robust and sustainable approach to improving success rates for female researchers and to encourage more female researchers to apply to NHMRC funding schemes.

A2 Synergy Grants 2019 priority areas

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

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

Note: Special Awards have not been identified for this grant opportunity.

Synergy Grants funded by other organisations

Synergy 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 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 Synergy 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 Synergy Grants that may have been fully funded by the funding partner, will not be supported by NHMRC.

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

The following organisations may partner NHMRC in funding grants under this grant opportunity:

- Department of Health (MRFF).

MRFF funded Synergy Grants

Eligibility assessment for MRFF funded Synergy Grants is undertaken by NHMRC. As the same selection criteria will apply to both NHMRC funded, and MRFF funded grants, a single assessment process will be used to produce a single ranked list. MRFF funded Synergy Grants will be awarded in merit order to applicants whose research aligns with MRFF priorities.

MRFF Million Minds Mission

This grant opportunity may be used to determine recipients under the MRFF Million Minds Mission. The program will support research to improve the diagnosis and treatment of patients with mental health issues. Further information on the program, including funding, is available on the [Department of Health website](#).

Appendix B - Eligibility for Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Grant schemes (2019 funding round)

Grant/s held on 1 January 2020	Grants eligible to apply for in the 2019 funding round (for funding in 2020)
No Fellowship, Program or Project Grants held on 1 January 2020	<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 offered), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant
One Project Grant held on 1 January 2020	<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 offered), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant
Two or more Project Grants held on 1 January 2020	<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 offered), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant
One Program Grant held on 1 January 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant (100% reduction to RSP)
One Program Grant and one Project Grant held on 1 January 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant (100% reduction to RSP)

Grant/s held on 1 January 2020	Grants eligible to apply for in the 2019 funding round (for funding in 2020)
NHMRC Fellowship (<u>not</u> in the final year) held on 1 January 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant
NHMRC Fellowship (in the final year) on 1 January 2020	<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 offered), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant
NHMRC Fellowship (<u>not</u> in the final year) and 1x Project Grant held on 1 January 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant
NHMRC Fellowship (in the final year) and 1x Project Grant held on 1 January 2020	<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 offered), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 2x Ideas Grants, OR • 1x Synergy Grant
NHMRC Fellowship (<u>not</u> in the final year) and 2 or more Project Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant

Grant/s held on 1 January 2020	Grants eligible to apply for in the 2019 funding round (for funding in 2020)
NHMRC Fellowship (in the final year) and 2 or more Project Grants	<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 offered), OR • 1x Ideas Grant, OR • 1x Ideas Grant + 1x Synergy Grant, OR • 1x Synergy Grant
NHMRC Fellowship (<u>not</u> in the final year) and 1x Program Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants
NHMRC Fellowship (in the final year) and 1x Program Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant* (100% reduction to RSP)
NHMRC Fellowship (<u>not</u> in the final year), 1x Project Grant and 1x Program Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not eligible to apply for any Investigator, Synergy or Ideas Grants
NHMRC Fellowship (in the final year), 1x Project Grant and 1x Program Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Investigator Grant* (100% reduction to RSP)

* 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 C - Concept of Synergy

Preamble

The Synergy Grant scheme incorporates an assessment criterion on “Synergy” that will assess the merits of an applicant team’s multidisciplinary approach, the diversity of the research team and its “collaborative gain”. With respect to multidisciplinary and diversity, only the CIs of the proposed research team will be assessed; the AIs are not considered for this criterion.

The criterion will consider the quality of the diverse team’s multidisciplinary and collaborative approach to solving a major health and medical research question, as well as the capacity-building/workforce development outcomes.

Successful Synergy Grant proposals will have an outcomes focus, demonstrating the skills essential to solve the research question, and will provide evidence of a discernible benefit over “homogenous” research teams (through multidisciplinary and diversity).

A multiple disciplinary approach to research

Solving major research questions and achieving transformative health outcomes increasingly require new technical and intellectual approaches (new ways to think about and/or address a question) through a convergence of perspectives from different disciplines. Each discipline provides specific intellectual knowledge, experimental approaches, methodological considerations, analytical approaches, and theoretical context. Together, these elements provide new insights to address major and challenging research questions.

In addition to integration between the broad research areas of basic science, clinical medicine and science, public health and health services research, a multidisciplinary approach may involve single or multiple methods (i.e. qualitative, quantitative, multimethods and mixed methods) across a range of research disciplines including, for example, social sciences, policy analysis, economics, engineering, mathematics and physical sciences. Such approaches may be critical to address major questions in health care delivery, health systems strengthening or population health.

The concept of research involving multiple disciplines is often denoted by terms such as multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary. However, the definition of these terms, and even the concept of a “discipline”, is constantly evolving and lacks consensus across different areas of health and medical research.

For the purposes of Synergy Grants, “multiple disciplinary research” covers ‘*research by teams that integrate information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, methodologies and/or theories from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge to advance fundamental understanding or to solve questions whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice*’.

Applicants should identify a major health and medical research related question and justify:

- why it requires the integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge
- how the multiple disciplinary approach can provide novel solutions and insights that would not be achieved with a single discipline or traditional approaches
- how the research question is operationalised and addressed using different disciplines complementarily
- the sustainability of the research collaboration and scope for long term outcomes extending beyond the life of the project

- the methods that will keep the multiple disciplinary team of CIs focused, integrated and cohesive and that will drive outcomes.

Diversity of research teams

NHMRC recognises the need to foster diversity in health and medical research teams beyond multiple disciplinary.

Health and medical research, from basic science to clinical and translational research, and policy formation, requires creativity and a range of skillsets and viewpoints.

Synergy Grant research teams will foster both collaborative gain and capacity building through the recruitment of talented researchers from diverse backgrounds and groups.

Diversity in Synergy Grants could span under-represented groups in health and medical research. This could include career stage, gender and researchers from different cultures (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers). Given the broad spectrum of research encompassed in the health and medical research sector, the opportunities to engage a particular group will depend on the type of research being undertaken. It is, however, essential that each of the CIs contributes to the scientific development and execution of the project in a substantive and measurable manner.

In addition to diversity in the research team, NHMRC strongly encourages and values collaborations with stakeholders who have direct experience and knowledge, or who are direct beneficiaries, of the proposed research. This could include consumers, community groups, policy makers and people from different cultures (such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people). The active involvement of these stakeholders will enhance research priority setting, increase the relevance of the research and its translation and provide critical knowledge that increases the quality and direction of the research.

Diversity is a broad concept with different dimensions and approaches across the health and medical research sector. Each of the different dimensions is important and diversity should be embraced in its broadest sense. Rather than mandate a particular approach to achieving diversity or ascribe a hierarchy of importance (e.g. gender versus career stage), NHMRC requires applicants to establish and demonstrate diversity in research teams that is aligned to the major research question of the proposal. The inclusion of a particular team member should be considered in the context of the research question, by valuing and engaging diverse personnel to enhance a project's quality and outcomes and advancing workforce development/capacity.

Applicants should justify the diversity within the CIs of the proposed research team by outlining:

- the type(s) of diversity fostered and how it will enhance the outcomes of the project and its scientific quality, including why the research question cannot be addressed without the proposed personnel, and
- how the team of CIs will contribute to the capacity building, mentoring, career development and diversification of the research workforce.

Examples of multiple disciplinary research teams are outlined below to illustrate the concepts in the context of Synergy Grants. These examples are not indicative of the potential merit of an application.

Synergy Grant applications will be assessed against published assessment criteria based on the specific details of each proposal. Applicants should refer to the Category Descriptors, which identify the expectations for each score across a seven point scale.

Examples

- 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.
- The development of cancer-screening tools undertaken by teams including clinicians, research nurses, geneticists, bioinformaticians, biochemists etc. Together, these researchers identify a suitable patient cohort, obtain clinical samples, identify likely biomarkers that correlate with tumour development using genetics, define the role of that gene/protein in the development of cancer and undertake subsequent development of diagnostic tests for screening in patient cohorts.
- Research into the assessment and management of cardiovascular risk to develop new approaches to individualised absolute risk assessment and management. This may require a research team that includes 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).
- Research to identify new approaches to manage antibiotic resistance could incorporate researchers from biology and biochemistry, immunology, biomedicine and pharmacology. Such a team could work with mathematicians and statisticians to develop new antibiotics, as well as with behavioural scientists and economists to understand how patterns of resistance develop and develop new behavioural strategies to reduce antibiotic use or to provide incentives for appropriate use of new antibiotics

Appendix D - Synergy Grants 2019 Category Descriptors

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

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 category descriptors are a guide to a “best fit” outcome. Peer reviewers will consistently refer to these category descriptors to ensure thorough, equitable and transparent assessment of applications.

Assessing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Contributions

It is recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants make additional valuable contributions to policy development, clinical/public health leadership and/or service delivery, community activities and linkages, and are often representatives on key committees. If applicable, these contributions should be considered when assessing research output and track record.

Track Record, relative to opportunity (40%)

Publications (20%)

Table 1: Publications

Score	Performance Indicator	Category Descriptors
7	Exceptional	Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an exceptional record of publications in terms of quality and contribution to science
6	Outstanding	Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an outstanding record of publications in terms of quality and contribution to science
5	Excellent	Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an excellent record of publications in terms of quality and contribution to science
4	Very Good	Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a very good record of publications in terms of quality and contribution to science
3	Good	Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a good record of publications in terms of quality and contribution to science
2	Satisfactory	Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a satisfactory record of publications in terms of quality and contribution to science
1	Weak or limited	Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a weak or limited record of publications in terms of quality and contribution to science

Research Impact (15%)

Table 2: Reach and significance of the research impact

Less than 10 years post-PhD (taking into account career disruptions)	Category Descriptors			More than 10 years post-PhD (taking into account career disruptions)
	There is robust, verifiable evidence of:	Note: Applicants do not need to demonstrate all types of research impact	There is robust, verifiable evidence of:	
7	an exceptional knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a paradigm changing development that has led to (a) new knowledge within the field that is recognised across multiple countries, (b) significant influence beyond the specific field of research or (c) the development of a new field(s) of research that has been recognised across multiple countries/beneficiaries 	an exceptional knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	7
		<p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a paradigm changing development that has improved health or health systems, services, policy, programs or clinical practice that (a) had a significant impact on health with an extensive reach, (b) had a profound impact on health with a modest reach, (c) profoundly improved the health of Australia's Indigenous people or (d) led to a significant, scalable and sustainable change in health systems and services in a large number of communities <p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of a service delivery or system change, prevention program, intervention, device, therapeutic or change in clinical practice that led to (a) the generation of significant commercial income or (b) a profound reduction in healthcare costs <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes in policy that have had (a) a significant impact on the social well-being, equality or social inclusion of very large numbers of people at a national level or across multiple countries or (b) a profound impact on the social well-being of the end-user, public and community of a smaller number of individuals at a national level or across multiple countries 	an outstanding knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	6

Less than 10 years post-PhD (taking into account career disruptions)	Category Descriptors			More than 10 years post-PhD (taking into account career disruptions)
	There is robust, verifiable evidence of:	Note: Applicants do not need to demonstrate all types of research impact	There is robust, verifiable evidence of:	
7	an exceptional knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a major development that has led to (a) new knowledge within the field that is recognised nationally or across multiple countries, (b) a major influence beyond the specific field of research or (c) a major influence on the development of a new field(s) of research that has been recognised nationally or across multiple countries/beneficiaries <p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an important development that has improved health or health systems, services, policy, programs or clinical practice that (a) had a major impact on health with an extensive reach, (b) had a significant impact on health with a modest reach, (c) led to a significant improvement in the health of Australia's Indigenous people or (d) led to major scalable and sustainable change in health systems and services in a number of communities 	an excellent knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	5
6	an outstanding knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	<p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of a service delivery or system change, prevention program, intervention, device, therapeutic or change in clinical practice that led to (a) the generation of considerable commercial income or (b) a major reduction in healthcare costs <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes in policy that have either had (a) a major impact on the social well-being, equality or social inclusion of very large numbers of people at a local, state/territory or national level or (b) a significant impact on the social well-being of the end-user, public and community of a smaller number of individuals at a local, state/territory or national level 	a very good knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	4
5	an excellent knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a change that has led to (a) new knowledge within the field that is recognised nationally or across multiple countries, (b) had some influence beyond the specific field of research, or (c) some influence on the development of a new field(s) of research that has been recognised nationally or across multiple countries/beneficiaries 	a good knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	3

Less than 10 years post-PhD (taking into account career disruptions)	Category Descriptors			More than 10 years post-PhD (taking into account career disruptions)
	There is robust, verifiable evidence of:	Note: Applicants do not need to demonstrate all types of research impact	There is robust, verifiable evidence of:	
4	a very good knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a development that has improved health or health systems, services, policy, programs or clinical practice that (a) had some impact on health with an extensive reach, (b) had a major impact on health with a modest reach, (c) led to a major improvement in the health of Australia's Indigenous people, or (d) led to some scalable and sustainable change in health systems and services in a small number of communities 		
3	a good knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	Economic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of a service delivery or system change, prevention program, intervention, device, therapeutic or change in clinical practice that led to (a) the generation of some commercial income or (b) some reduction in healthcare costs 	a satisfactory knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	2
2	a satisfactory knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	Social <ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes in policy that have had (a) some impact on the social well-being, equality or social inclusion of very large numbers of people at a local, state/territory or national level or (b) an impact on the social well-being of the end-user, public and community of a smaller number of individuals at a local, state/territory or national level 		
1	a weak or limited knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	There is limited or weak evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the development of new knowledge improved health systems and services reductions in health care costs or economic growth improvements in social well-being, equality or social inclusion. 	a weak or limited knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact	1

Table 3: Research Program’s contribution to the Research Impact

Score	Performance Indicator	Category Descriptors
7	Exceptional	Relative to opportunity and to their field of research, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant’s research program made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an exceptional contribution to the knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact
6	Outstanding	Relative to opportunity and to their field of research, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant’s research program made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an outstanding contribution to the knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact
5	Excellent	Relative to opportunity and to their field of research, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant’s research program made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an excellent contribution to the knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact
4	Very good	Relative to opportunity and to their field of research, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant’s research program made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a very good contribution to the knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact
3	Good	Relative to opportunity and to their field of research, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant’s research program made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a good contribution to the knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact
2	Satisfactory	Relative to opportunity and to their field of research, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant’s research program made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a satisfactory contribution to the knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact
1	Weak, Limited or No	Relative to opportunity and to their field of research, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant’s research program made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a weak, limited or no contribution to the knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact

Table 4. Research Program’s contribution to the Research Impact

Score	Performance Indicator	Category Descriptors	
7	Exceptional	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an exceptional contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	Leadership AND/OR instrumental role in a research program
6	Outstanding	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an outstanding contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	
5	Excellent	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an excellent contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	Leadership of a component AND/OR collaborative role (e.g. co-investigator) in a research program
4	Very Good	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a very good contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	
3	Good	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a good contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	Contribution to a research program
2	Satisfactory	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a satisfactory contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	
1	Weak, Limited or No	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a weak, limited or no contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	Limited or no contribution to a research program

Table 4: Applicant's contribution to Research Program

Score	Performance Indicator	Category Descriptors	
7	Exceptional	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an exceptional contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	Leadership AND/OR instrumental role in a research program
6	Outstanding	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an outstanding contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	
5	Excellent	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an excellent contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	Leadership of a component AND/OR collaborative role (e.g. co-investigator) in a research program
4	Very Good	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a very good contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	
3	Good	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a good contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	Contribution to a research program
2	Satisfactory	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a satisfactory contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	
1	Weak, Limited or No	Relative to opportunity and to their field, there is robust verifiable evidence that the applicant made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a weak, limited or no contribution to the research program that led to a knowledge, health, economic and/or social impact 	Limited or no contribution to a research program

Leadership (5%)

Table 5: Leadership

Score	Performance Indicator	Category Descriptors
7	Exceptional	<p>Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates exceptional performance in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervision, mentoring, training and/or career development of staff and/or students within and/or beyond their research group • experience and contribution to the peer review of publications and grant applications, nationally and/or internationally • contribution to community engagement, public advocacy, government advisory boards or committees, professional societies at a local, national and/or international level • non-research contribution(s) to department, centre, institute or organisation e.g. leadership or membership of committee • conception and direction of a research project or program • building and maintaining collaborative networks necessary to achieve research outcomes within and/or beyond institution.
6	Outstanding	<p>Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates outstanding performance in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervision, mentoring, training and/or career development of staff and/or students within and/or beyond their research group • experience and contribution to the peer review of publications and grant applications, nationally and/or internationally • contribution to community engagement, public advocacy, government advisory boards or committees, professional societies at a local, national and/or international level • non-research contribution(s) to department, centre, institute or organisation e.g. leadership or membership of committee • conception and direction of a research project or program • building and maintaining collaborative networks necessary to achieve research outcomes within and/or beyond their institution.
5	Excellent	<p>Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates excellent performance in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervision, mentoring, training and/or career development of staff and/or students within and/or beyond their research group • experience and contribution to the peer review of publications and grant applications, nationally and/or internationally • contribution to community engagement, public advocacy, government advisory boards or committees, professional societies at a local, national and/or international level • non-research contribution(s) to department, centre, institute or organisation e.g. leadership or membership of committee • conception and direction of a research project or program • building and maintaining collaborative networks necessary to achieve research outcomes within and/or beyond their institution.

Score	Performance Indicator	Category Descriptors
4	Very Good	<p>Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates very good performance in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervision, mentoring, training and/or career development of staff and students within and/or beyond their research group • experience and contribution to the peer review of publications and grant applications, nationally and/or internationally • contribution to community engagement, public advocacy, government advisory boards or committees, professional societies at a local, national and/or international level • non-research contribution(s) to department, centre, institute or organisation e.g. leadership or membership of committee • conception and direction of a research project or program • building and maintaining collaborative networks necessary to achieve research outcomes within and/or beyond their institution.
3	Good	<p>Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates good performance in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervision, mentoring, training and/or career development of staff and/or students within and/or beyond their research group • experience and contribution to the peer review of publications and grant applications, nationally and/or internationally • contribution to community engagement, public advocacy, government advisory boards or committees, professional societies at a local, national and/or international level • non-research contribution(s) to department, centre, institute or organisation e.g. leadership or membership of committee • conception and direction of a research project or program • building and maintaining collaborative networks necessary to achieve research outcomes within and/or beyond their institution.
2	Satisfactory	<p>Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates satisfactory performance in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervision, mentoring, training and/or career development of staff and/or students within and/or beyond their research group • experience and contribution to the peer review of publications and grant applications, nationally and/or internationally • contribution to community engagement, public advocacy, government advisory boards or committees, professional societies at a local, national and/or international level • non-research contribution(s) to department, centre, institute or organisation e.g. leadership or membership of committee • conception and direction of a research project or program • building and maintaining collaborative networks necessary to achieve research outcomes within and/or beyond their institution.
1	Weak or limited	<p>Relative to opportunity (including career stage) and to their field of research, the applicant demonstrates weak or limited performance in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervision, mentoring, training and/or career development of staff and/or students within and/or beyond their research group • experience and contribution to the peer review of publications and grant applications, nationally and/or internationally • contribution to community engagement, public advocacy, government advisory boards or committees, professional societies at a local, national and/or international level • non-research contribution(s) to department, centre, institute or organisation e.g. leadership or membership of committee • conception and direction of a research project or program • building and maintaining collaborative networks necessary to achieve research outcomes within and/or beyond their institution.

Knowledge Gain (30%) and Synergy (30%)

Table 6: Category Descriptors for Knowledge Gain and Synergy

Category	Knowledge gain	Synergy
7 Exceptional	<p>The proposed multidisciplinary research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensively integrates complementary information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts and/or theories, from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge, that are essential to solve a major research question that is beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is supported by an extremely well justified and reasoned hypothesis/rationale ○ the scientific framework, design, methods and analyses are flawless, highly developed, completely complementary and integrated and highly appropriate ○ the integration of research components is extremely likely to result in novel conceptual approaches and insights. • Demonstrates to an extremely high level that the research proposal tackles a major question addressing an issue of critical importance to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the issue) • Collectively has or has access to exceptional technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and if required, has access to additional expertise necessary to achieve project outcomes • Will result in extremely significant and transformative changes/outcomes in the scientific knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues • Will lead to extremely significant research outputs (e.g. intellectual property, publications, policy advice, products, services, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.) • Would be extremely competitive with the best, similar, research proposals internationally. 	<p>The proposed research team provides exceptional synergy (diversity, multidisciplinary and collaborative gain) as it:</p> <p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprises a diverse team (in terms of gender, career stage and/or researchers from different cultures) that will provide expertise and build capacity aligned to the research question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides investigators diverse experience and vital perspectives, without which the research question cannot be addressed. <p>AND</p> <p>Multidisciplinary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensively demonstrates why the research requires the integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines and has processes to ensure the research question is addressed using these different disciplines complementarily • Integrates researchers with highly complementary expertise and insights across disciplines necessary and sufficient to address the major research question and lead to transformative outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Achieves integration of the various researchers' skills and perspectives that is extremely likely to produce sustainable synergy and novel outcomes, which would not be possible by the CIs pursuing the components as separate projects. <p>AND</p> <p>Collaborative gain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates to an extremely high degree, comprehensive and suitable plan(s) for the research team to work synergistically, including milestones and evaluation measures and strategies for intellectual exchange, governance, grant sharing and resources • Demonstrates sustainable collaborations that are highly likely to

Category	Knowledge gain	Synergy
		<p>extend beyond the life of the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporates comprehensive and exceptional strategies to integrate, provide mentoring and development opportunities and increase capability of under-represented groups/researchers (e.g. health professionals, consumers, community groups, policy makers and people from different cultures).
6 Outstanding	<p>The proposed multidisciplinary research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrates complementary information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts and/or theories, from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge, that are essential to solve a major research question that is beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is supported by a very well justified and reasoned hypothesis/rationale the scientific framework, design, methods and analyses are well developed, complementary and integrated and highly appropriate with only a few minor weaknesses the integration of research components is highly likely to result in novel conceptual approaches and insights. Demonstrates to a very high level that the research proposal tackles a major question addressing an issue that is very important to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the issue) Collectively has or has access to outstanding technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and if required, has access to additional expertise necessary to achieve project outcomes Will result in very highly significant and substantial changes/outcomes in the scientific knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues Will lead to very highly significant research outputs (e.g. intellectual property, publications, policy advice, products, services, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.) 	<p>The proposed research team provides outstanding synergy (diversity, multidisciplinary and collaborative gain) as it:</p> <p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprises a diverse team (in terms of gender, career stage and/or researchers from different cultures) that will provide expertise and build capacity aligned to the research question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides investigators diverse experience and vital perspectives, without which the research question cannot be addressed. <p>AND</p> <p>Multidisciplinary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates to a very high degree why the research requires the integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines and has processes to ensure the research question is addressed using these different disciplines complementarily Integrates researchers with complementary expertise and insights across disciplines necessary and sufficient to address the major research question and lead to substantial outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieves integration of the various researchers' skills and perspectives that is highly likely to produce sustainable synergy and novel outcomes, which would not be possible by the CIs pursuing the components as separate projects. <p>AND</p> <p>Collaborative gain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates to a very high degree, comprehensive and suitable plan(s) for the research team to work synergistically, including

Category	Knowledge gain	Synergy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be highly competitive with the best, similar, research proposals internationally. 	<p>milestones and evaluation measures and strategies for intellectual exchange, governance, grant sharing and resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates sustainable collaborations that are highly likely to extend beyond the life of the project. • Incorporates comprehensive and outstanding strategies to integrate, provide mentoring and development opportunities and increase capability of under-represented groups/researchers (e.g. health professionals, consumers, community groups, policy makers and people from different cultures).
5 Excellent	<p>The proposed multidisciplinary research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates complementary information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts and/or theories, from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge, that are essential to solve a major research question that is beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is supported by a well justified and reasoned hypothesis/rationale ○ the scientific framework, design, methods and analyses are well developed, complementary and integrated and highly appropriate with several minor weaknesses ○ the integration of research components is likely to result in novel conceptual approaches and insights. • Demonstrates to a high level that the research proposal tackles a major question addressing an issue that is of considerable importance to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the issue) • Collectively has or has access to excellent technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and if required, has access to additional expertise necessary to achieve project outcomes • Will result in highly significant and substantial changes/outcomes in the scientific knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues • Will lead to highly significant research outputs (e.g. intellectual property, publications, policy advice, products, services, teaching 	<p>The proposed research team provides excellent synergy (diversity, multidisciplinary and collaborative gain) as it:</p> <p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprises a diverse team (in terms of gender, career stage and/or researchers from different cultures) that will provide expertise and build capacity aligned to the research question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides investigators diverse experience and vital perspectives, without which the research question cannot be addressed. <p>AND</p> <p>Multidisciplinary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates to a high degree why the research requires the integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines and has processes to ensure the research question is addressed using these different disciplines complementarily • Integrates researchers with complementary expertise and insights across disciplines necessary and sufficient to address the major research question and lead to substantial outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Achieves integration of the various researchers' skills and perspectives that is likely to produce sustainable synergy and novel outcomes, which would not be possible by the CIs pursuing the components as separate projects. <p>AND</p>

Category	Knowledge gain	Synergy
	<p>aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be competitive with the best, similar, research proposals internationally. 	<p>Collaborative gain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates to a high degree, comprehensive and suitable plan(s) for the research team to work synergistically, including milestones and evaluation measures and strategies for intellectual exchange, governance, grant sharing and resources • Demonstrates sustainable collaborations that are likely to extend beyond the life of the project • Incorporates comprehensive and excellent strategies to integrate, provide mentoring and development opportunities and increase capability of under-represented groups/researchers (e.g. health professionals, consumers, community groups, policy makers and people from different cultures).
4 Very Good	<p>The proposed multidisciplinary research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates broadly complementary information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts and/or theories, from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge, that are essential to solve a major research question that is beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is supported by a well justified and reasoned hypothesis/rationale ○ the scientific framework, design, methods and analyses are well developed, broadly complementary and integrated and highly appropriate with a few minor concerns ○ the integration of research components is likely to result in novel conceptual approaches and insights. • Demonstrates that the research proposal tackles a major question addressing an issue that is of importance to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the issue) • Collectively has or has access to very good technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and if required, has access to additional expertise necessary to achieve project outcomes • Likely to result in significant and substantial changes/outcomes in the scientific knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human 	<p>The proposed research team provides very good synergy (diversity, multidisciplinary and collaborative gain) as it:</p> <p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprises a diverse team (in terms of gender, career stage and/or researchers from different cultures) that will provide expertise and build capacity aligned to the research question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides investigators diverse experience and vital perspectives, without which the research question cannot be addressed. <p>AND</p> <p>Multidisciplinary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadly demonstrates why the research requires the integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines and has processes to ensure the research question is addressed using these different disciplines complementarily • Integrates researchers with complementary expertise and insights across disciplines necessary and sufficient to address the major research question and likely lead to substantial outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Achieves integration of the various researchers' skills and perspectives that could produce sustainable synergy and novel outcomes, which would not be possible by the CIs pursuing the

Category	Knowledge gain	Synergy
	<p>health issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to lead to significant research outputs (e.g. intellectual property, publications, policy advice, products, services, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.) • Would be likely to be competitive with high quality, similar research proposals internationally. 	<p>components as separate projects.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Collaborative gain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates comprehensive and suitable plan(s) for the research team to work synergistically, including milestones and evaluation measures and strategies for intellectual exchange, governance, grant sharing and resources • Demonstrates sustainable collaborations that could extend beyond the life of the project • Incorporates comprehensive and very good strategies to integrate, provide mentoring and development opportunities and increase capability of under-represented groups/researchers (e.g. health professionals, consumers, community groups, policy makers and people from different cultures).
3 Good	<p>The proposed multidisciplinary research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates broadly complementary information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts and/or theories, from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge, essential to solve a major research question that is beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is supported by a justified and sound hypothesis/rationale ○ the scientific framework, design, methods and analyses are developed, broadly complementary and integrated and appropriate with several minor concerns ○ the integration of research components could result in novel conceptual approaches and insights. • Demonstrates that the research proposal tackles a major question addressing an issue that is of some importance to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the issue) • Collectively has or has access to good technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and if required, has access to additional expertise necessary to achieve project outcomes 	<p>The proposed research team provides good synergy (diversity, multidisciplinary and collaborative gain) as it:</p> <p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprises a diverse team (in terms of gender, career stage and/or researchers from different cultures) that will provide expertise and build capacity aligned to the research question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides investigators diverse experience and vital perspectives, without which the research question cannot be addressed. <p>AND</p> <p>Multidisciplinary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largely demonstrates why the research requires the integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines and has processes to ensure the research question is addressed using these different disciplines complementarily. • Integrates researchers with expertise and insights across disciplines necessary and sufficient to address the major research question and could lead to substantial outcomes

Category	Knowledge gain	Synergy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could result in significant and substantial changes/outcomes in the scientific knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues • Could lead to significant research outputs (e.g. intellectual property, publications, policy advice, products, services, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.) • Would be somewhat competitive with high quality, similar research proposals internationally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Achieves integration of the various researchers' skills and perspectives that could in general produce sustainable synergy and novel outcomes, which would not be possible by the CIs pursuing the components as separate projects. <p>AND</p> <p>Collaborative gain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates suitable plan(s) for the research team to work synergistically, including milestones and evaluation measures and strategies for intellectual exchange, governance, grant sharing and resources • Demonstrates collaborations that could extend beyond the life of the project • Incorporates clear and good strategies to integrate, provide mentoring and development opportunities and increase capability of under-represented groups/researchers (e.g. health professionals, consumers, community groups, policy makers and people from different cultures).
2 Satisfactory	<p>The proposed multidisciplinary research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates broadly complementary information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts and/or theories, from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge, essential to solve a major research question that is beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is supported by a reasoned hypothesis/rationale ○ the scientific framework, design, methods and analyses are generally sound, complementary and integrated but may lack clarity in some aspects and/or may contain notable weaknesses/concerns ○ the integration of research components could result in some novel conceptual approaches and insights. • Demonstrates that the research proposal tackles a major question addressing an issue that is of marginal importance to advance the research or health area (not prevalence or magnitude of the 	<p>The proposed research team provides moderate synergy (diversity, multidisciplinary and collaborative gain) as it:</p> <p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprises a diverse team (in terms of gender, career stage and/or researchers from different cultures) that will provide expertise and build capacity aligned to the research question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides investigators diverse experience and vital perspectives, without which the research question cannot be addressed. <p>AND</p> <p>Multidisciplinary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates to some degree why the research could require the integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines and has processes to ensure the research question is addressed using these different disciplines complementarily, but poses some concerns.

Category	Knowledge gain	Synergy
	<p>issue)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collectively has or has access to some/most but not all of the technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and if required, has access to additional expertise necessary to achieve project outcomes Could result in appreciable improvements/outcomes in the scientific knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues Could lead to moderately significant research outputs (e.g. intellectual property, publications, policy advice, products, services, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.) Would be marginally competitive with high quality, similar research proposals internationally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrates researchers with expertise and insights across disciplines that are relevant to the major research question and may lead to improved outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieves integration of the various researchers' skills and perspectives that could produce some synergy and novel outcomes, which would not be possible by the CIs pursuing the components as separate projects. <p>AND</p> <p>Collaborative gain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates moderately suitable plan(s) for the research team to work synergistically, including milestones and evaluation measures and strategies for intellectual exchange, governance, grant sharing and resources Demonstrates to some extent collaborations that may extend beyond the life of the project. Incorporates moderate strategies to integrate, provide mentoring and development opportunities and increase capability of under-represented groups/researchers (e.g. health professionals, consumers, community groups, policy makers and people from different cultures).
1 Marginal to Poor	<p>The proposed multidisciplinary research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not integrate information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts and/or theories, from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge, essential to solve a major research question that is beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has a weak hypothesis/rationale the scientific framework, design, methods and analyses have significant shortcomings and may contain major weaknesses. Fails to demonstrate that the research proposal tackles a major research question Does not have access to the technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, or access to additional expertise 	<p>The proposed research team provides limited synergy (diversity, multidisciplinary and collaborative gain) as it:</p> <p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not comprise a diverse team (in terms of gender, career stage and/or researchers from different cultures) or the proposed team is diverse but investigators do not provide diverse experience and vital perspectives aligned to the research question. <p>AND</p> <p>Multidisciplinary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not demonstrate why the research requires the integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines and has no processes to ensure the research question is addressed using these different disciplines

Category	Knowledge gain	Synergy
	<p>necessary to achieve project outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is unlikely to result in improvements/outcomes in the scientific knowledge, practice or policy underpinning human health issues of significance • Is unlikely to lead to research outputs (e.g. intellectual property, publications, policy advice, products, services, teaching aids, consulting, contract research, spin-offs, licensing etc.) of significance • Is unlikely to be competitive with similar research proposals internationally. 	<p>complimentarily</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not integrate researchers with expertise and insights across disciplines necessary to address the major research question. <p>AND</p> <p>Collaborative gain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not demonstrate suitable plan(s) for the research team to work synergistically, including milestones and evaluation measures and strategies for intellectual exchange, governance, grant sharing and resources • Does not demonstrate collaborations that are likely to extend beyond the life of the project • Does not incorporate strategies to integrate provide mentoring and development opportunities and increase capability of under-represented groups/researchers (e.g. health professionals, consumers, community groups, policy makers and people from different cultures).

Appendix E – NHMRC Relative to Opportunity policy

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline NHMRC's Relative to Opportunity Policy with respect to

- NHMRC peer review
- eligibility to apply for Emerging Leadership Investigator Grants.

The audience is applicants and peer reviewers.

NHMRC's objective is to support the best Australian health and medical research and the best researchers, at all career stages. NHMRC seeks to ensure that researchers with a variety of career experiences and those who have experienced pregnancy or a major illness/injury or have caring responsibilities, are not disadvantaged in applying for NHMRC grants.

Policy approach

NHMRC considers Relative to Opportunity to mean that assessment processes should accurately assess an applicant's track record and associated productivity relative to stage of career, including considering whether productivity and contribution are commensurate with the opportunities available to the applicant. It also means that applicants with career disruptions should not be disadvantaged (in terms of years since they received their PhD) when determining their eligibility for Emerging Leadership Investigator Grants and that their Career Disruptions should be considered when their applications are being peer reviewed.

In alignment with *NHMRC's Principles of Peer Review*, particularly the principles of fairness and transparency, the following additional principles further support this objective:

- **Research opportunity:** Researchers' outputs and outcomes should reflect their opportunities to advance their career and the research they conduct.
- **Fair access:** Researchers should have access to funding support available through NHMRC grant programs consistent with their experience and career stage.
- **Career diversity:** Researchers with career paths that include time spent outside of academia should not be disadvantaged. NHMRC recognises that time spent in sectors such as industry, may enhance research outcomes for both individuals and teams.

The above principles frame NHMRC's approach to the assessment of a researcher's track record during expert review of grant applications and eligibility of applicants applying for Emerging Leadership Investigator Grants. NHMRC expects that those who provide expert assessment during peer review will give clear and explicit attention to these principles to identify the highest quality research and researchers to be funded. NHMRC recognises that life circumstances can be very varied and therefore it is not possible to implement a formulaic approach to applying Relative to Opportunity and Career Disruption considerations during peer review.

Relative to Opportunity considerations during peer review of applications for funding

During peer review of applications, circumstances considered under the Relative to Opportunity Policy are:

- amount of time spent as an active researcher

- available resources, including situations where research is being conducted in remote or isolated communities
- building relationships of trust with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities over long periods that can impact on track record and productivity
- clinical, administrative or teaching workload
- relocation of an applicant and his/her research laboratory or clinical practice setting or other similar circumstances that impact on research productivity
- for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants, community obligations including 'sorry business'
- the typical performance of researchers in the research field in question
- research outputs and productivity noting time employed in other sectors. For example there might be a reduction in publications when employed in sectors such as industry
- carer responsibilities (that do not come under the Career Disruption policy below).

Career Disruption considerations during peer review and eligibility to apply for Emerging Leadership Investigator Grants

A Career Disruption is defined as a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work, due to:

- pregnancy
- major illness/injury
- carer responsibilities.

The period of career disruption may be used:

- to determine an applicant's eligibility for an Emerging Leadership Investigator Grant
- to allow for the inclusion of additional track record information for assessment of an application
- for consideration by peer reviewers.

To be considered for the purposes of eligibility and peer review, a period of Career Disruption is defined as:

- a continuous absence from work for 90 calendar days or more, and/or
- continuous, long-term, part-time employment (with defined %FTE) due to circumstances classified as Career Disruption, with the absence amounting to a total of 90 calendar days or more¹.

Career Disruption and eligibility to apply for Investigator Grants

A Career Disruption can affect an applicant's eligibility to apply for an Emerging Leadership Investigator Grant. For such grants, the 10-year time limit on the number of years post-PhD may be extended commensurate with the period of the Career Disruption.

¹ For example, an applicant who is employed at 0.8 FTE due to childcare responsibilities would need to continue this for at least 450 calendar days to achieve a Career Disruption of 90 calendar days.

Implementation

Information on how applicants can demonstrate their track record, Relative to Opportunity, for the purposes of peer review is available in NHMRC's granting system and in NHMRC's *Guide to Peer Review*.

Information on how applicants can demonstrate that a Career Disruption(s) affects their eligibility to apply for an Emerging Leadership Investigator Grant is also available in NHMRC's granting system and in the Investigator Grant Guidelines.

Appendix F - Guide to Applicants

This Appendix provides guidance for submitting an application through NHMRC's Research Grants Management System (RGMS). Parts of this Appendix have been published previously as the *Synergy Grants 2019 Guide to Applicants on Preparing an Application*, which included the category descriptors. The category descriptors are now located at [Appendix D](#).

Synergy Grant scheme-specific policy and instructions for applying in RGMS (grey boxes) are provided in this Appendix. Applicants should refer to the [RGMS User Guide – Applying for Grants](#) for general instructions on how to apply in RGMS.

For further assistance during the application process, see section 7.8 of the Guidelines.

1 PREPARING AN APPLICATION

1.1 Application Requirements

A complete application is comprised of:

- mandatory sections of My Profile and CV (section 2)
- a completed application form (section 3)
- a Grant Proposal as an attachment (section 4.1)
- a Synergy Grant Track Record per CI as an attachment (section 4.2).

Applications, including the Grant Proposal and Synergy Grant Track Record attachments, must comply with all rules and requirements as set out in the Guidelines and elsewhere in this Appendix. Failure to adhere to any of these requirements will result in non-acceptance or exclusion of your application (see section 4.9 of the Guidelines).

1.2 Minimum Data Requirements

Minimum data is comprised of:

- Administering Institution
- Application Title
- Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Research (yes/no)
- Synopsis
- Participating Institution/s
- Research Classification (all fields).

Minimum data must be entered into RGMS by 17:00 AEST on 17 April 2019. Applicants should refer to section 7.1 of the Guidelines for further information. It is possible to make changes after the close of minimum data. However, researchers are recommended not to make any significant changes following the minimum data due date, as preliminary panel identification will already be underway. NHMRC will start to use the information collected from minimum data to identify the allocation of applications to the most appropriate Grant Review Panel. As such, changes *may* impact on the review of the application.

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.

2 CI PROFILE AND CV REQUIREMENTS IN RGMS

Within an applicant's profile in RGMS, there is mandatory information that must be provided and/or updated prior to submitting an application. This information includes, but not exclusively:

- personal details
- academic/research interests
- peer review information.

In addition to this information, applicants are also required to complete the following sections outlined below. Should more sections be completed than is required, only the required information will be imported into the application.

It is important that relevant profile information is up to date at the time of application submission as it is imported into the application and used by peer reviewers. Any changes made to the profile after Chief Investigator A (CIA) certification will not appear in the submitted application.

2.1 CV-CD: Career Disruption (within the last 10 years)

A Career Disruption is defined as a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work (see [Appendix E](#)).

Career Disruption

To enter a Career Disruption, select the 'New' button. Under Circumstances select the career disruption reason from the dropdown list.

Impact

Clearly outline the impact the Career Disruption had on your research and research achievements (maximum of 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks).

Only include details of the impact upon your career, not the nature of the disruption, noting this field is provided to peer reviewers.

Additional Publication Outputs

Provide details of **publications only** that you would like to claim in relation to this Career Disruption (maximum of 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks).

Enter the 'Start date' and 'End date'.

2.2 CV-RO: Relative to Opportunity (within the last 10 years)

If applicable, details of any Relative to Opportunity considerations and the effect on your research and research achievements can be provided here (see [Appendix E](#)).

Circumstance

Provide a brief explanation of the type of Relative to Opportunity circumstance (maximum of 200 characters including spaces and line breaks).

Impact

Applicants are required to provide a brief explanation of the impact this has had on their research, research achievements and associated productivity relative to their career stage (maximum of 1500 characters including spaces and line breaks).

Date

Applicants are required to nominate the periods when they have had a disruption (month and year).

2.3 CV-Pub: Publications

Publication information can be uploaded by exporting an EndNote® Library as an .xml file.

NHMRC accepts nine types of publication: Journal Articles (Original Research), Accepted for Publication, Journal Articles (Review), Books/Chapters, Research Report – commissioned by Government, Industry or Other, Technical Report, Text Book, Editorials and Letters to the Editor.

Publications will be grouped together by the type of publication. They will also automatically be given an Identification Number (ID). DO NOT use the ID number to refer to specific publications in other sections of the application.

Provide details of your publications here. The last 10 years of publications will be included in your application and provided to peer reviewers for assessment.

Any publications claimed outside of this period due to a Career Disruption are to be provided in CV-CD: Career Disruption (section 2.1).

Details of your best five (5) publications are to be provided in the Synergy Grant Track record PDF upload.

3 COMPLETING AN APPLICATION FORM IN RGMS

All parts of the application form must be completed (see section 7.3 of the Guidelines).

3.1 Creating an Application Form**Administering Institution**

There can only be one Administering Institution for each application. The CIA must ensure that the institution chosen as the Administering Institution is the correct institution for the application. If in doubt, contact the RAO of the Administering Institution.

Application Title

NHMRC will use the application title to identify the application at all times during the assessment process and it should accurately describe the nature of the research proposal (maximum of 250 characters including spaces and line breaks).

NHMRC will use this data for reporting purposes. It is important that spelling is correct and that any acronyms are spelled out in full.

Grant Duration

Select five years.

3.2 Completing Parts of the Application Form

3.2.1 General

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research

Select 'Yes' if you can demonstrate that at least 20% of your research effort and/or capacity building relates to Aboriginal and/or 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* in your Grant Proposal (see section 4.1).

Synopsis

The synopsis should accurately, and briefly, summarise the research proposal (maximum of 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks).

Plain English Summary

Describe the overall aims of the research and expected outcomes in simple terms that could be understood by the general public (maximum of 500 characters including spaces and line breaks). Note that if the application is successful, this summary will be made public.

Privacy Notice

Please ensure that you have carefully read and understood the [NHMRC Privacy Policy](#), prior to completing the application.

Consent to provide information to International Peer Reviewers

Under amendments to the *Privacy Act 1988* that took effect in March 2014, NHMRC requires your consent to send your personal information overseas, for the purposes of peer review of applications.

Consent to provide information to other organisations

If you wish to be considered for funding by other organisations, please select 'Yes' for Partner Organisation Consent. Applicants should be aware that if they indicate they wish to be considered for funding by a partner organisation, NHMRC will provide their application and assessment results to the funding partner. For more information please refer to the [NHMRC website](#).

3.2.2 A-Inst: Institutions - Participating

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 that 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 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 Research Effort entered cannot exceed 100%.

Institution

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.

3.2.3 A-RC: Research Classification

Research classification selections will be used in the peer review process to assist with the allocation of your application to the most suitable peer reviewers and grant review panel.

All fields on this page are mandatory and must be completed to meet minimum data requirements.

Guide to Peer-Review Areas

Three nominations are required and should be listed in order of relevance (most relevant first) to the research proposal. Note the same Peer-Review Area can be nominated three times, if appropriate.

3.2.4 A-BoD: Burden of Disease

You can select up to three types of Burden of Disease and allocate a percentage (%) of time against each. The percentage (%) total must not exceed 100%.

3.2.5 A-RT: Research Team

In this section you are able to add or remove team roles. When adding team roles you will need to select the role types that are described below. You can only assign a named person to a Chief Investigator (CI) or Associate Investigator (AI) role. All other roles are not required for Synergy Grants and should not be included in the application.

CIA is the research project leader and is responsible for the successful completion of the research proposal and for completion and lodgement of the application.

Other CIs are to read the application and must agree to its contents before it is submitted.

A minimum of four and a maximum of ten CIs (including CIA) must be entered into the application form.

Existing NHMRC grant holders must have completed all mandatory fields in their RGMS Profile and CV before they can be listed as a CI. If a CI on the team has not completed all mandatory fields in their Profile and CV, an error message will appear when attempting to add them as a team member.

Ask other CIs to provide the spelling of their name as it is within RGMS – this may avoid confusion when trying to locate and identify them.

A-RT: Researcher Details for Chief Investigators

Position Title

This field does not need to be completed for CIs.

Person

Search the RGMS database and select the CI.

Role

Select the CI's role on this application.

Australian Based

Confirm whether the CIA is based in Australia as per the requirements of the scheme. For other CIs this is not applicable.

Note that PRP and TSS are not applicable for Synergy applications.

A-RT: Cancel Nomination:

This page can be used to remove a team member from the application, up until the CIA certifies the application.

A-RT: Swap CI:

This page can be used to swap two existing CI roles, up until the CIA certifies the application.

Track Record:

Refer to section 4.2 of this document (Appendix F) for details on how to complete this section of the application

Als named on the application will be advised by the CIA. The CIA must obtain written agreement from the Als named on the application. RAOs are responsible for ensuring written agreement has been received from the Als prior to certifying the application, which is to be made available to NHMRC on request.

Als do not have access to the application in RGMS and are not required to endorse the final application.

Up to ten Als may be entered into the RGMS application.

A-RT: Researcher Details for Associate Investigators**Position Title**

This field does not need to be completed for Als.

Person

Search the RGMS database and select the AI. If the candidate does not have an RGMS account, they should obtain an RGMS account via the 'New to RGMS' link at www.rgms.nhmrc.gov.au

A-RT: Cancel Nomination:

This page can be used to remove a team member from the application, up until the CIA certifies the application.

3.2.6 A-EG: Ethics General

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 ADDRESSING THE SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria will be assessed in two stages.

Stage One will assess all applications on:

- Knowledge Gain (30%)
- Synergy (30%).

Knowledge Gain and Synergy criteria are to be addressed in the Grant Proposal.

Stage Two will assess the successful applications from Stage One on Track Record, relative to opportunity of CIs.

Assessment of Track Record comprises peer reviewers' consideration of:

- Publications (20%)
- Research Impact (15%)
- Leadership (5%)

4.1 B-GP: Grant Proposal

Knowledge Gain (30%) and Synergy (30%)

Knowledge Gain

NHMRC defines Knowledge Gain for the Synergy Grant scheme as the quality of the proposed research and significance of the knowledge gained. It incorporates theoretical concepts, hypothesis, research design, robustness and the extent to which the research findings will contribute to the research area and health outcomes (by advancing knowledge, practice or policy).

Synergy

The Synergy criterion will consider the quality of the diverse team's multidisciplinary and collaborative approach to solving a major health and medical research question, as well as the capacity-building/workforce development outcomes.

Successful Synergy Grant proposals will be outcomes focused, demonstrating the skills essential to solve the research question, and provide evidence of a discernible benefit over homogenous research teams.

The Synergy criterion assesses the merits of the CI team's multidisciplinary approach, the diversity of the CI team and its collaborative gain. AIs are not considered as part of the Synergy criterion. Applicants should refer to NHMRC's 'Concept of Synergy' provided in [Appendix C](#).

<p>Diversity</p> <p>Diversity includes gender, cultural backgrounds, skills, expertise and career stages.</p> <hr/>
<p>Multidisciplinarity</p> <p>Multidisciplinary research covers research by teams that integrate information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, methodologies and/or theories from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge to advance fundamental understanding or to solve questions whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice.</p> <hr/>
<p>Collaborative Gain</p> <p>Collaborative gain reflects the ability to achieve goals that could otherwise not be achieved by the team pursuing components as separate projects</p>

Figure 1: Key definitions for the assessment of Synergy

The grant proposal must be written in English using NHMRC’s Grant Proposal template available within the Grant Opportunity on GrantConnect. The grant proposal must then be converted to a Portable Document Format (PDF) file before being uploaded into NHMRC’s granting system.

Naming and formatting requirements for the grant proposal 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
Line spacing	Single

Component	Component Requirements
Language	English

Table 2: Grant proposal details

Component	Page Limit
A. Response to the Knowledge Gain criterion (Research Proposal)	8 pages
B. References	2 pages
C. Response to Synergy criterion – Diversity (1 page) Multidisciplinarity (1 page) Collaborative Gain (1 page)	3 pages
D. Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria, if applicable	2 pages

A. Research Proposal – 8 pages

Response to the Knowledge Gain criterion.

When drafting the response to the Knowledge Gain criterion applicant teams should:

- describe the applicant teams' research strategy for the next five years
- outline the proposed research objectives, basic methodologies and expected outcomes
- describe the importance of the problem to be researched, the planned outcome of the research plan, and the potential significance of the research
- describe the support for their proposed research (e.g. access to technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and if required, access to additional expertise necessary to achieve proposed outcomes).

The significance of the study is not a measure of the prevalence/incidence of the health issue (e.g. cancer versus sudden infant death syndrome).

The assessment of Knowledge Gain will be against the category descriptors at **Table 6** of [Appendix D](#).

B. References – 2 pages

References for the Research Proposal must:

- not exceed two (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.

C. Response to Synergy criterion – 3 pages total

Synergy is assessed for CIs against the category descriptors provided at **Table 6** of [Appendix D](#). Note that AIs are **not** considered for this criterion.

Diversity (1 page)

For the purposes of Synergy Grants, diversity includes gender, cultural backgrounds, skills, expertise and career stages. NHMRC recognises the need to foster diversity in health and medical research teams beyond multidisciplinary.

Health and medical research, from basic science to clinical and translational research, and policy formation, requires creativity and a diverse range of skillsets and viewpoints.

Applicants should justify the diversity within the proposed team of CIs by outlining:

- the type(s) of diversity fostered and how it will enhance the outcomes of the research and its scientific quality, including why the research question cannot be addressed without the proposed personnel
- how the CI team will contribute to the capacity building, mentoring, career development and diversification of the research workforce.

Multidisciplinary (1 page)

For the purposes of Synergy Grants, “multidisciplinary research” covers research by teams that integrate information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, methodologies and/or theories from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge to advance fundamental understanding or to solve questions whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice.

As part of the Research Proposal, applicants will have identified a major health and medical research related question. To address the multidisciplinary approach of the Synergy criterion, the response must demonstrate:

- why the research question requires the integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge
- how the multiple disciplinary approach can provide novel solutions and insights that would not be achieved with a single discipline or traditional approaches
- how the research question is operationalised and addressed using different disciplines complementarily.

Collaborative Gain (1 page)

Synergy Grant research teams will foster both collaborative gain and capacity building through the recruitment of talented researchers from diverse backgrounds and groups. Collaborative gain reflects the ability to achieve goals that could otherwise not be achieved by the CI team pursuing components as separate projects.

The response should describe:

- the methods that will keep the team focused, integrated and cohesive and that will drive outcomes, e.g.:
 - how performance will be monitored
 - how milestones will be evaluated
 - how the grant funds and other resources will be shared, deployed, and redeployed if required
- strategies for the sustainability of the research collaboration and scope for long term outcomes extending beyond the life of the project

- how the strategy will support intellectual exchange during and beyond the life of the research project
- what mentoring, professional and personal development opportunities will be provided and how they will help increase capability of under-represented groups and researchers.

D. Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria, if applicable – 2 pages

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.

Applicants should complete this section if at least 20% of the research effort and/or capacity building relates to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and they answered 'yes' to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research question within NHMRC's granting system.

Applicants should ensure that they address each Indigenous Research Excellence Criterion as set out in section 6.1 of the *Synergy Grants 2019 Guidelines* and demonstrate:

- what proportion of the research effort will be directed to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
- that the Indigenous community was instrumental in identifying and inviting further research into the health issue and that the research outcomes will directly benefit the 'named' communities
- that there is a history of working together with the 'named' communities e.g. co-development of the grant, involvement in pilot studies or how the 'named' communities will have input/control over the research process and outcomes across the life of the project
- that there is opportunity for two-way capacity development for both non-Indigenous and Indigenous investigators
- that the above points are explicit throughout the application and not just addressed separately within the Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria section of the grant proposal.

Grant Proposal (Upload)

The Grant Proposal PDF can be uploaded through B-GP: Grant Proposal. Select the document from the location that it has been saved to by double clicking on it. The name will be displayed in the 'Choose File' field. 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 documents name after the document has been saved to in RGMS.

4.2 Track Record, relative to opportunity (40%)

The Track Record criterion applies to CIs only. Track Record, relative to opportunity, is to be addressed by each CI in the Synergy Grant Track Record template and submitted to the CIA for upload into NHMRC's Grant Management System. This template can be found in the Grant Opportunity on GrantConnect and must have all fields completed.

The Track Record assessment comprises consideration of:

- Publications (20%)
- Research Impact (15%)

- Leadership (5%).

Track Record for each CI (upload)

The Track Record PDF can be uploaded through A-RT: Research Team. Choose the CI and via the Properties tab choose A-RT: Track Record and attach. Use the naming convention: Synergy Grant Track Record (Upload) APPID_CI Surname_Track Record

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 documents name after the document has been saved.

The following advice should be considered when completing the Synergy Grant Track Record template.

Publications

Applicants will be assessed based on their publications from the past 10 years (taking into account any Career Disruptions) as recorded in the applicant's CV and profile in RGMS (see section 2.2).

The assessment of publications will be against the category descriptors at **Table 1** of [Appendix D](#).

Nominate in the text space provided in the template your five (5) best publications from those 10 years and provide explanations of why these publications have been selected, outlining the quality of the publications selected and their contribution to science (max 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks).

Research Impact

Applicants will be assessed based on:

- the significance and reach of their claimed research impact (5%)
- the contribution of their research program to the research impact (5%)
- the contribution of the applicant to the research program (5%).

Definitions used to assess Research Impact are provided in Figure 2.

NHMRC defines the impact of research as the verifiable outcomes that research makes to knowledge, health, the economy and/or society. Impact is the effect of the research after it has been adopted, adapted for use, or used to inform further research.

Research impact is the verifiable outcomes from research and *not the prospective or anticipated effects of the research*.

Research impact also includes research that leads to a decision not to use a particular diagnostic, treatment or health policy.

<p>Research Impact</p> <p>The verifiable outcomes that research makes to knowledge, health, the economy and/or society. Impact is the effect of the research after it has been adopted, adapted for use, or used to inform further research.</p> <hr/> <p>Research Program</p> <p>A cohesive body of research by the applicant, not limited to an individual case study (as used in a clinical context) or a single publication. It may be recent or in the past.</p> <hr/> <p>Research program’s contribution to the research impact</p> <p>The degree to which the applicant’s research program was necessary to achieve the impact(s) (knowledge, health, economic, and/or social impact).</p> <hr/> <p>Applicant’s contribution to the research program</p> <p>The level of the applicant’s contribution (e.g. leadership, intellectual and/or technical input) to the research program.</p>
--

Figure 2: Key definitions for the assessment of Research Impact

NHMRC identifies four specific types of impact (**Table 3**). Examples of evidence are listed in **Table 3**. Evidence examples may be relevant to more than one research impact type.

Table 3: Types of Research Impact and Examples of Evidence of Research Impact

Type of impact	Description of research impact	Examples of evidence (not exhaustive)
Knowledge impact	New knowledge, demonstrating the benefits emerging from adoption, adaption or use of new knowledge to inform further research, and/or understanding of what is effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognition of research publications (e.g. citation metrics, particularly field weighted) • data sharing • contribution to registries or biobanks • prizes and conference presentations • uptake of research tools and techniques • evidence of uptake of the research by other disciplines
Health impact	Improvements in health through new therapeutics, diagnostics, disease prevention or changes in behaviour; or improvements in disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment, management of health problems, health policy, health systems, and quality of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy or program adopted • a clinical guideline adopted • international or national practice standards adopted • improved service effectiveness • Phase I, Phase II and Phase III clinical trials underway or completed • improved productivity due to research innovations (e.g. reduced illness, injury) • Quality-Adjusted Life Years, Disability-Adjusted Life Years, Potential Years of Life Lost, Patient Reported Outcome Measure and other relevant indicators • relative stay index for multi-day stay patients, hospital standardised mortality

Type of impact	Description of research impact	Examples of evidence (not exhaustive)
		ratio, cost per weighted separation and total case weighted separation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reports (including community and government)
Economic impact	Improvements in the nation's economic performance through creation of new industries, jobs or valuable products, or reducing health care costs, improving efficiency in resource use, or improving the welfare/well-being of the population within current health system resources. An economic impact may also contribute to social or health impacts, including human capital gains and the value of life and health.	Health Care System Savings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relative stay index for multi-day stay patients, hospital standardised mortality ratio, cost per weighted separation and total case weighted separation • reduction in Medicare Benefits Schedule/Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme costs • improved productivity due to research innovations (e.g. reduced illness, injury) • improved service effectiveness Product Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a research contract with an industry partner and an active collaboration • granting of a patent • execution of a licensing agreement with an established company • income from intellectual property • raising funding from venture capital or other commercial sources or from government schemes that required industry co-participation • successful exit from start-up company (public market flotation, merger or acquisition) • development of pre-good manufacturing practice prototype • successful generation or submission of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a regulatory standard data set ○ applications for pre-market approval of a medical device ○ a new drug or device for registration (e.g. by Food and Drug Administration, European Medicines Agency, Therapeutic Goods Administration) • product sales
Social impact	Improvements in the health of society, including the well-being of the end user and the community. This may include improved ability to access health care services, to participate socially (including empowerment and participation in decision making) and to quantify improvements in the health of society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uptake or demonstrated use of evidence by decision makers/policy makers • qualitative measures demonstrating changes in behaviours, attitudes, improved social equity, inclusion or cohesion • improved environmental determinants of health • improved social determinants of health • changes to health risk factors

Indicate in the Synergy Grant Track Record template which of the research impact types you would like to be considered in the assessment of your application (select one or more).

How to demonstrate Research Impact

Applicants should only include one research program to demonstrate research impact(s) across one or more of the four types of impact. Applicants will be asked to indicate in the Synergy Grant Track Record template which of the research impact types they would like considered in the assessment of their application. If the research program can be used to demonstrate multiple impacts, the overall research impact score is determined holistically and on balance across the four types, (it is not additive). This means that an applicant with one type of impact can score as well as or better than an applicant with multiple types of impact.

Whilst it is expected that the research impact is recent, the research program that contributed to the research impact may be from any time in a researcher's career – there are no time limits on when a researcher made a contribution to the research program or when the research program contributed to the research impact.

Applicants should note that there is no requirement for their research impact to align with the research proposal/vision in their application – these are assessed independently against separate assessment criteria and category descriptors.

The assessment of Research Impact will be against the category descriptors at **Tables 2, 3 and 4** of Appendix D.

Applicants should provide robust, verifiable evidence (qualitative and/or quantitative, see **Table 3**) to support the claimed research impact that can be independently assessed by peer reviewers.

Applicants should note that with regards to corroborating evidence, it is the quality of the evidence provided, not the quantity. Applicants only need to provide evidence sufficient and strong enough to verify the claims, not all evidence that may be on the public record.

Reach and significance of the research impact

Within the Synergy Grant Track Record template describe the research impact and outline with corroborating evidence its reach and significance (maximum of 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks).

Reach is the extent, spread, breadth, and/or diversity of the beneficiaries of the impact, relative to the type of research impact.

Significance is the degree to which the impact has enabled, enriched, influenced, informed or changed the performance of policies, practices, products, services, culture, understanding, awareness or well-being of the beneficiaries (not the prevalence or magnitude of the issue).

Research program's contribution to the research impact

Outline with corroborating evidence how the research program contributed to the research impact (maximum of 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks).

A *research program* is a cohesive body of research by the applicant. It is not limited to an individual case study (as used in a clinical context) or a single publication. A research program may be recent or in the past. Applicants need to outline the research program with corroborating evidence that can be independently assessed by peer reviewers.

Research program's contribution to the research impact is the degree to which the applicant's research program was necessary to achieve the impact(s) (knowledge, health, economic, and/or

social impact) based on robust and verifiable evidence. The relationship between the applicant's research program (including related activities) and the impact may be foreseen or unforeseen, and may be an end product or demonstrated during the research process. Research impact examples may include the adoption or adaptation of existing research.

Applicant's contribution to the research program

Outline with corroborating evidence your contribution to the research program (maximum of 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks).

An *applicant's contribution to the research program* is, relative to opportunity and to the applicant's field of research, the level of the applicant's contribution (e.g. leadership, intellectual and/or technical input) to the research program based on robust and verifiable evidence.

Leadership

For the assessment of leadership, applicants are required to outline their outputs over the past 10 years (taking into account Career Disruptions) across each of the four Leadership elements:

- Research Mentoring
- Research Policy and Professional Leadership
- Institutional Leadership
- Research Programs and Team Leadership.

The assessment of Leadership will be against the category descriptors at **Table 5** of [Appendix D](#).

Address each of the leadership elements in the fields provided (maximum of 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks per field).

B-SP: Strategic Priorities

Medical Research Future Fund Research Opportunities

The Department of Health is offering the opportunity for researchers to apply for Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) funding through the Synergy Grant scheme.

The MRFF funding opportunities available to applicants include the *Million Minds Mission*.

Applicants should refer to [Appendix A](#) and the Department of Health [website](#) for the complete list of requirements in order to be considered for the individual MRFF funding.

Indicate whether you would like your application to be considered for the Million Minds Mission.

If you select this MRFF opportunity, indicate in the free text space below how your proposed research aligns to the objectives of the opportunity (maximum of 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks).