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## Introduction

This document serves to outline the overarching funding rules of the NorthWestern Mental Health (NWMH) Seed Grants program, administered by the Office for Research through the RMH Research Funding Program (RFP).

The NWMH Research Committee developed the Seed Grants to encourage NWMH employed clinicians to carry out research projects. This program is funded by the NWMH Research Fund.

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## Enquiries and Correspondence

All grants are administered by NWMH. Any enquiries regarding the administration of grants, or about the content of these Funding Rules should be addressed by email to the Executive Assistant, NWMH (EA) at [jenny.mcateer@mh.org.au](mailto:jenny.mcateer@mh.org.au) telephone on +61 3 9342 7865. You may also refer to the *Advice and Instructions to Applicants* document.

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## 1. Submitting an Application

Applications must be submitted electronically using Melbourne Health's online grant management system, SmartyGrants. Applicants who are not yet registered must do so before they apply.

When completing an application, refer to the *Advice and Instructions to Applicants* at: <https://www.thermh.org.au/research/researchers/grants/RFP/NWMH>.

The application should contain all information necessary for assessment without the need for further written or oral explanation, or reference to additional documentation. All details included must be current at the time of application.

Applications must be certified and submitted by the closing date of the funding scheme. Late submissions will not be considered. Please refer to the closing date in the *Advice and Instructions* document.

Help on how to complete the online application form can be found on the SmartyGrants website at: <http://help.smartygrants.com.au/display/SG2011/Help+guide+for+applicants>

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## 2. Outcome of Application

The EA NWMH will advise applicants of outcome via email as early as possible following the review process.

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## 3. Approvals to be Obtained Prior to Funding Commencing

In general, funding for RFP grant or fellowships will not commence until all relevant approvals, particularly in relation to ethics and governance, have been received and provided to the RAO prior to the commencement of the research.

Exception: If part of the funding requested will be used to pay the ethics approval fee for the project, that portion of funds will be released to cover the application fee.

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## 4. Consumer and Community Participation

Researchers are encouraged to consider the benefits of actively engaging consumers in their proposed research. Applicants should refer to The Consumer Health Forum of Australia Inc and NHMRC Statement available at: <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/r22-r23-r33-r34>

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## 5. Conditions of Award

All grants are offered in accordance with the conditions specified in the *Terms and Conditions, RMH Research Funding Program, Research Support*. In signing an acceptance of the award, the applicant is agreeing to abide by all the conditions.

The Recipient will comply with all Melbourne Health policies and procedures, with special attention to the Research; Financial Management; and Human Resources policies.

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## 6. Parental Leave

Current Recipients who wish to apply for Parental Leave should contact their departmental managers. Once Parental Leave has been approved, inform the EA NWMH in writing requesting an amendment to the terms of the award. The amendment may include a request to extend the duration of the project for up to 12 months.

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## 7. Varying a Grant

Variations occur when a grant needs modification from the original proposal submitted. This may include changes in personnel or an amendment to the budget.

Extensions to a project end date will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, with a maximum extension of 6 months. Amendments due to Parental Leave requests may differ (see 6. *Parental Leave*).

Contact the EA NWMH to request a Grant Variation Form.

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## 8. Reporting

Annual progress and financial reports will be required. All information provided to the Office for Research in progress and final reports may be used for internal reporting and any Melbourne Health publications including the organisation's Annual and Research reports.

Where an applicant fails to submit satisfactory reports as required, the Office for Research may terminate funding and determine that all or part of the funding must be repaid. Alternatively, the Office for Research may withhold the remainder of the applicant's funding under the scheme. In addition, an applicant who fails to submit satisfactory reports may not be eligible to apply for any future funding rounds of the Research Funding Program.

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## 9. Intellectual Property

All Intellectual Property (IP) generated as a result of research funded by the RFP will be managed in accordance with Melbourne Health IP Policy.

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## 10. Eligibility

Applications to the NWMH Seed Grant program are subject to eligibility requirements.

- » Grants are open only to NWMH employed clinicians
- » The research must be undertaken at Melbourne Health

Applications which do not meet the eligibility requirements may be removed from the assessment process.

To ensure that funds are spread across NWMH, only one project for each area of service will be funded in any one year

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## 11. Duration of Award

The NWMH Seed Grants are 12-month awards and funding must be expended within the period of award.

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## 12. Acceptance of a Grant

Successful applicants must accept an offer of award by the date nominated in the Schedule. Recipients who have accepted an offer of award must commence by **30 June** of the first year of the award.

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## 13. Funding Details

All positions funded by grants must be processed through Melbourne Health's Human Resources department and payroll. The amount awarded will cover the total employment costs of the position and EFT requested. No additional allowances or claims may be made.

Salary Packaging may be an option and incumbents should enquire with Human Resources.

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## 14. Review Process

The NWMH Research Council oversees the NWMH Seed Grants scheme and employs a grant review process. All applications will be reviewed and scored by independent reviewers. Funding will be awarded to the highest scoring applications.

The sequence of events in the peer review process is as follows:

1. Applications Received
2. Applications assigned to reviewers
3. Grant Review Panel Assess and Rank Applications
4. Funding Recommendations Prepared
5. NWMH Research Council
6. Advice to Applicants

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## 12. Scoring Matrix

Applications for grants are assessed in accordance with the criteria below.

CRITERIA	PERCENTAGE
<b>Introduction, Study Aims, Hypothesis</b> Has the method/framework/approach been partially tested? What outcome is sought in the proposed study? What exactly is the outcome measure? Is it well integrated and adequately developed?	10%
<b>Background</b> Relationship to previous knowledge; sufficiently researched. Does the background make a good case for the relevance of the experiments?	10%
<b>Research Plan: Study Design and Method</b> What are the strengths and weaknesses of the study and its design? Have any major pitfalls or problems been overlooked? Have alternative approaches been considered? Is the plan well informed by knowledge of the literature? Is the design appropriate for the aims of the research?	40%
<b>Significance and Innovation to Health</b> Consider the implications for practice and/or benefit for human health. Is the problem important? Will the work or research have an impact? Is the proposed research new/novel or creative (has imagination been used)? How will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will be the effect of the study on the concepts or methods that drive this field? Does the research challenge existing models or develop new technologies or new study methods? How well does the proposal describe the new ideas, procedures, technologies, programs or health policy settings?	20%
<b>Feasibility</b> Will the research plan successfully address the stated hypothesis or research objectives? Are the goals concrete and achievable? Is the investigating team appropriate – is it capable of achieving the goals? Does it have the right skills and expertise?	10%
<b>Relevance to NWMH Research Strategy</b>	10%