



RMH Kearnton Conference Grant Guidelines

RMH Research Funding Program

Date guidelines updated: March 2026



The Royal
Melbourne
Hospital

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Kearnton Conference Grant

Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the Kearnton Conference Grant (KCD) administered by the Office for Research. Applicants must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

About the Royal Melbourne Hospital Research

Funding Program

At The Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH) we're inspired by our vision of *Advancing health for everyone, every day*.

The RMH is one of Australia's leading health care providers and a key player in hospital-based research. Clinical research is part of patient care and provides an opportunity for our patients to access new interventions such as: investigational drugs; vaccines; medical devices; health service changes; preventative care strategies; and more.

Our commitment to research has been demonstrated by providing RMH staff with access to research funding support through an internal contestable research funding scheme.

The RMH Research Funding Program (RFP) is financially supported by philanthropic trusts, bequests and funding raised by the RMH Foundation.

About the grant program

Funding for the Kearnton Conference Grant is provided to the RFP through a bequest.

The objective of the Kearnton Conference Grant is to provide assistance to RMH staff to present their research at national and international conferences.

Three rounds of funding will be held every year and in each round three national grants, valued at up to \$1500 each, and one international grant, valued at up to \$4000, will be awarded.

Funding Rules and Guidelines

1. Enquiries and correspondence

All research grants are administered by the Office for Research (OFR). Any enquiries regarding the administration of grants or about the content of the funding rules and guidelines should be addressed to:

Name: Research Endeavours
Email: ResEndeavours@mh.org.au
Phone: +61 3 9342 8530

2. How to apply

All applications must be submitted electronically using SmartyGrants. Applicants who are not yet registered must do so before they commence their application. Help on how to complete the online application form can be found on the SmartyGrants website at: <https://applicanthehelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/>

Applications must be certified and submitted by the closing date of the funding scheme. Late submissions will not be considered.

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.

3. Funding calendar

The Kearton is open to accept applications all year round however applications need to be submitted by nominated closing dates to be considered for the respective round. These dates are published on the OFR website at: <https://www.thermh.org.au/research/researchers/grants/rfp/kearton>

Conferences must commence in the months indicated within each round as shown below:

- » Round 1 is for conferences commencing in February, March, April and May
- » Round 2 is for conferences commencing in June, July, August and September
- » Round 3 is for conferences commencing in October, November, December and January the following year.

4. Outcome of applications

The OFR will advise applicants of the outcome of the application as early as possible. Successful

applicants will be published on the Kearton Conference Grant web page at:

<https://www.thermh.org.au/research/researchers/grants/rfp/kearton>

Advice of outcome may be provided earlier if an application has been determined to be ineligible.

5. Eligibility

The Kearton Conference Grant is open to RMH staff only and applicants are required to provide their Employee Number in the application form.

To be eligible for the Kearton Conference Grant, the applicant must also:

- » be employed within a department/unit of the RMH for at least 60% of their total employment time;
- » hold either a full time or part time appointment (minimum 0.2 FTE).
- » be employed by the RMH at the time the conference is held. This grant can only be awarded to and expended by RMH employees;
- » be supported by relevant Divisional Director or Head of Department;
- » provide confirmation of abstract acceptance*;
and
- » provide evidence the applicant is the presenting author.

The Kearton Conference Grant **is not available to:**

- » senior medical staff; and
- » casual employees; and
- » employees who hold honorary appointments at RMH.

Applications not meeting the eligibility requirements will be removed from the selection process.

*Applications received without the confirmation of abstract acceptance will be considered on the assumption that the abstract will be accepted by the conference organisers for a presentation. However, funds will not be paid until proof of abstract acceptance has been provided to the OFR.

Multiple Applications

Applicants may submit only one application per round. Staff submitting more than one application per round will have all applications withdrawn for consideration in that round.

Other Requirements

Applicants may only receive one Kearton Conference Grant per year. Previous recipients are eligible to apply.

The applicant must also:

- » not have received alternative grant funding for the conference; and
- » obtain approval for Conference or Annual Leave (whichever is appropriate) to participate in the conference in accordance with policy.

6. Conditions of Award

All grants are offered in accordance with the conditions specified in the *Kearton Conference Grant Terms and Conditions of Award*.

7. Acceptance of a Grant

Successful applicants must accept the offer of award by the date indicated in the *Kearton Conference Grant Terms and Conditions of Award*. The offer may be withdrawn if not accepted by that date.

8. Grant Funding

The Kearton Conference Grant will only cover, where applicable the costs of:

- » direct economy airfares;
- » conference registration;
- » accommodation; and
- » travel insurance

The Grant will not cover meals, transport expenses other than the airfares or any other expenses related to the trip, except those items indicated above.

IMPORTANT: RMH policy applies with regard to travel for work purposes. If there are travel restrictions and RMH suspends work-related travel to the destination in the application, funding will not be awarded to cover travel costs.

In these cases, successful applicants will be funded for the cost of the conference registration only so long as they are still presenting their research.

For reimbursement, recipients of the award need to complete and submit a Staff Reimbursement Form with supporting documentation (receipts, boarding passes, etc.) to the OFR prior to or within one month of attending the conference.

Other Funding

If a recipient is awarded alternative grant funding for the same conference, they must notify the OFR immediately.

Repayment of Funds

If a recipient does not attend the conference, all funding must be returned to the OFR for redistribution in future rounds.

9. Varying a Grant

No variations will be considered for the Kearton Conference Grant.

The award can only be used to cover expenses for the conference submitted in the application.

10. Reporting

Within one (1) month of attending the conference, the recipient must submit a report to the OFR via SmartyGrants. This report should include an assessment of the conference attended, feedback received from the presentation, and other general information.

All reports submitted to the OFR may be used for internal reporting and in other RMH communications including the organisation's Annual Report, website or social media accounts.

Where an applicant fails to submit satisfactory reports as required, the OFR may seek to recover funds awarded.

In addition, an applicant who fails to submit satisfactory reports may not be eligible to apply for future funding rounds of the RMH Research Funding Program.

11. Selection Process by Draw

Applications meeting all the criteria will be pooled and the successful applicants will be chosen by draw.

Advice and Instructions to Applicants

1. General information

The application should contain all information necessary for assessment without further written or oral explanation or reference to additional documents.

Applications must comply with all content and formatting requirements.

Incomplete or non-compliant applications may be assessed as ineligible.

2. Starting a New Application

To start your application, visit the RMH Research page on the RMH website at:

<https://www.thermh.org.au/research/office-for-research/research-endeavours/rmh-research-funding-program/kearton>

Read the essential documentation, and then click the “Apply Now” button.

Each application will be assigned a unique application identification number. Use this ID number to identify your application in any correspondence when referring to your application.

There are three sections to be completed in the application:

- » Applicant Details
- » Travel Details
- » Certification

3. Applicant Details

Applicant Information

Enter your personal details in this section including your department and RMH Employee ID Number as identified on your payslip.

Current Appointment(s)

Provide details on **all** your current appointments. Include the position title, classification, organisation and EFT for each appointment. Staff classifications are noted on their payslips.

4. Conference Details

IMPORTANT: RMH policy always applies with regard to travel for work purposes. Should there be

a moratorium on travel to the destination of the conference, funding will not cover travel costs.

Proposed Itinerary

If attending in person, enter the destination and the anticipated dates of departure and return. For international travel, list the town, city and country.

Conference Details

Indicate whether you are applying for a domestic or international conference grant. Provide details of the conference name, the organiser, location, start and end date.

Summary of Activities

Write a brief summary of activities for which funding is sought. Indicate if your attendance and presentation will be via webinar or if you intend to attend in person.

Provide information on the title of the abstract and the type of presentation. Indicate whether you are the First or Last Author presenting this abstract.

Attach and upload in **a single PDF** the following:

- » A copy of the submitted abstract;
- » Registration confirmation; and
- » The invitation to present.

5. Certification

To complete this section, original signatures need to be obtained using the Certification Form Travel Grants. The following certifications are required:

- » Certification by the Applicant
- » Certification by Department/Unit Manager

6. Submission Details

Once you have completed the application form, it is recommended you save a copy of your application for your records. When you are confident that all the information is correct and you have uploaded all necessary attachments, submit your form.

Please note that you will not be able to make any changes to your application once submitted.

Once your application has been submitted, you will receive an email confirming receipt of your submission.

Frequently Asked Questions

I don't know how to use the online application form. Where can I get help?

If you need help to use SmartyGrants, an online guide is available at: <http://help.smartygrants.com.au/display/SG2011/Help+guide+for+applicants>.

You may also contact the OFR for assistance at: ResEndeavours@mh.org.au.

How much is a Kearton Conference Grant worth?

There are two tiers of funding available which are dependent on where the conference is being held.

The award for international conferences is valued at up to \$4000; and for domestic conferences, the award value is up to \$1500.

I work in the hospital, however I am not an employee of the RMH, can I still apply?

No. This award is for paid employees of the RMH (Melbourne Health) only.

It is therefore open to staff employed in all divisions of the RMH, including the Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratories and NorthWestern Mental Health.

Further criteria also applies. See the section *Eligibility* on page 4 of this document.

What if my abstract hasn't been approved at the time of submission?

You may still submit an application for a Kearton Conference Grant without the confirmation of abstract acceptance.

Applications will be considered with the assumption that the abstract will be accepted by the conference organisers for a presentation. However, funds will not be paid until proof of abstract acceptance has been provided to the OFR.

If you are not successful, inform the OFR immediately.

I missed the deadline for the eligible round. Can I submit a late application?

Although you will be able to submit an application, it will not be considered for that round. Applications

received after 5.00 pm on the closing date will not be accepted.

When will I be notified of the outcome of my application?

We aim to inform you within one week of the closing date of the respective round.

What expenses are covered by the Grant?

The Kearton Conference Grant will provide funding up to the amount awarded for the following expenses only:

- » direct economy flights;
- » accommodation;
- » conference registration;

If there are travel restrictions, the grant will only cover conference registration so long as you are still able to present your research.

Grant recipients will need to complete a Staff Reimbursement Form along with all receipts to ensure full reimbursement of costs incurred.

How are the successful grants selected?

Applications meeting all the criteria will be pooled and the successful applicants will be chosen by draw.



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