THE ALFRED RESEARCH TRUSTS

SMALL PROJECT GRANTS – 2022 Round

GUIDE TO APPLICANTS

The Alfred Research Trusts Small Project Grants scheme provides funding for small research studies to be conducted by Alfred Health staff members that have had little or no research experience. The proposed research must be of potential benefit to Alfred Health patients.

The primary aims of the Small Project Grants scheme are to:
- encourage individuals and groups who have not previously been involved in research activities or have had limited research experience;
- assist graduates in the Health Sciences to initiate research studies or complete research projects which form part of higher qualification requirements (these grants are not intended for PhD students);
- fund a small study that is complete in itself and not merely part of a major study.

Grants of up to **$25,000** are offered to fund projects of up to **two year's duration**.

Eligibility
To be eligible to apply for a Small Project Grant, all of the following criteria must be met:
- The lead applicant must have a paid Alfred Health appointment;
- The lead applicant must have received no more than $20,000 in total research funding during the previous 5 years;
- Previous recipients of Alfred Research Trusts Small Project Grants or the Henry O'Hara Surgical Award are not eligible to apply as the lead applicant;
- The applicant's proposed research project must take place on the Alfred campus under the direction of an experienced researcher who is a staff member of Alfred Health;
- All co-Investigators must have Alfred Health appointments (which may be honorary).

Investigators
The lead applicant (Principal Investigator) is considered the lead researcher of the project, who will be responsible for driving the project under the guidance of an experienced researcher (Supervisor). The Principal Investigator will be responsible for all project reporting.

Up to five other Alfred staff members can be nominated as co-Investigators on the Project. Note that the scheme is not intended to support research that is primarily part of a PhD project for the Principal Investigator or co-Investigators or other graduate / postgraduate research projects being conducted primarily by the co- Investigators.

Budget
Funding for Small Project Grants will not exceed **$25,000**.

Funding from The Alfred Research Trusts is to be applied only to the work described in the successful submission. If other funding is granted for the same project, you must notify the Research Office. In this case, funding from The Alfred will only be provided to cover the difference between the external funding and funding offered by The Alfred.

Funds may be requested for fractional salary support for Investigators or other positions supporting the research (e.g. data mangers, project co-ordinators), consumable items needed to conduct the research and small items of equipment. Any equipment purchased will remain the property of The Alfred.

Note that The Alfred hospital subsidises biostatistical support (via the Monash / Alfred Biostatistics Consulting Platform) for researchers who have at least a 0.40 FTE fractional appointment with The Alfred. As such, funds for biostatistical support should generally not be requested.

Computers (unless integral to a piece of equipment) needed for the research project will not be funded.
Travel will not be funded.
Publication costs should not be requested up front (although if funds are remaining at the end of the grant, they may be used for journal publication costs).

Infrastructure / indirect costs of research should not be requested.

Ethics
Ethical approval must be obtained **before** commencement of the project. Further information on the ethics approval process can be found at https://www.alfredhealth.org.au/research/ethics-research-governance for human ethics and http://amrepaec.bakeridi.edu.au/ for animal ethics.

Grant payments will not be made without evidence of ethics clearances.

For information on ethical standards, consult the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) –updated 2018: https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2007-updated-2018

Award Term
The grant is awarded for **up to two years**.

Commencement date for successful 2022 applications will not be before 1 January 2023, with start and end dates to be advised in the letter of award. The Research Office must be notified and approval must be sought for any extension in time to the period of a grant at least 2 months before the end date. It will not normally be possible to extend a grant beyond 12 months of the original end date. Exceptions may be considered for personal circumstances or other extenuating circumstances such as those restricting continuity of research at The Alfred (e.g. COVID pandemic restrictions). No additional funds will be made available to extend the grant or for any other reason.

These awards are **not** designed to support long-term funding of research projects.

The Alfred reserves the right to terminate funding where progress is deemed unsatisfactory.

Reporting and Grant Payments
Annual reports on the progress of the research as well as a final report at the conclusion of the grant will be required according to a schedule outlined in the award letter.

Expenditure reports (normally 6-monthly and on conclusion of the grant) will be required according to a schedule outlined in the award letter.

Reporting templates will be available on the Alfred Health website at https://www.alfredhealth.org.au/research/funding/small-project-grants and should be forwarded to Rebecca Erlich, Senior Research Administrator, Research Office (r.erlich@alfred.org.au).

Grant payments will be dependent on receipt of ethics clearances and progress / expenditure reports, according to a schedule to be outlined in the letter of award.

The Allocation Process

Applications will initially be assessed for completeness and eligibility. Incomplete or ineligible applications will not be assessed further.

Applications will then be shortlisted for invitation to interview based on merit and scheme fit.

The panel will pay particular attention to the following when reviewing applications:

- the quality and significance of the research question
- feasibility of the study design and timeline
- applicability of the research to The Alfred and the time frame for improving patient care
- an appropriately costed and justified budget
- the likely impact on the career or activities of the principal applicant

Applicants should avoid submitting projects that are:

- purely of a quality control nature
- determination of normative data only without an hypothesis-driven research question
- development work without a research component, e.g. new assays
- evaluation of new or proposed equipment
- accumulation or acquisition of descriptive data without an outcome

Well written applications should:

- Present a compelling case for the research
- Clearly state the objectives
- Provide a concise relevant background
- Provide a concise research plan
- Include a feasible timeline of the research plan, taking into consideration what can be realistically achieved during the tenure of the grant (e.g. consider rate of patient recruitment where relevant)

It is suggested that new applicants seek the advice of an experienced researcher or a biostatistician when designing their projects. Members of the Monash/Alfred Biostatistics Consulting Platform (BCP) located within the Monash School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine are available to provide biostatistical support to researchers located at The Alfred, who have an Alfred appointment of at least 0.4FTE. This support is subsidised by the Alfred hospital.

See: https://www.monash.edu/medicine/sphpm/units/biostats-consulting

The primary BCP contact for Alfred Departments is Eldho Paul (Email: Eldho.Paul@monash.edu)

Application Submission

The application should be complete in itself and should not assume that readers will have access to previous applications. If you are unsure of what is required, please contact Rebecca Erlich, Research Office, on 8532 1772 for assistance with your application.

The application should be presented on the correct application form using **11 point arial** in the spaces provided. Please convert the application form into a pdf (**PDF < 2 MB)** and email an electronic copy to Rebecca Erlich, Senior Research Administrator, Research Office (r.erlich@alfred.org.au).

The closing date for applications is **5 pm, Thursday 3 November 2022.** Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Your Obligations

The conditions for receipt of a Small Project Grant are attached to the Application Form for your signature. Please ensure you have fully understood the conditions before signing.