

Research Grants Variation Guide

Translational Research Grants and Career Support Grants

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1. Introduction

Through its Translational Research and Career Support Grant programs, the Cancer Institute NSW (the Institute) supports innovative research that aims to lessen the impact of cancer in NSW.

Upon review by the Grants Review Committee and approval by the Board, the Institute enters into a Funding Agreement with the successful Grantee's Administering Institution. The Funding Agreement states that '*the Administering Institution must not use the Funds for any purpose other than the conduct of the Grant for which the Funds were provided*' (5.1) and includes a Schedule which outlines the details of the grant (Grantee's name and application reference, start and end date, funds awarded, and payment schedule). Any change to a grant schedule or research program requires a grant variation. This document outlines the process to follow when completing a grant variation.

2. Variation Requests

An Administering Institution may submit a variation request on behalf of a Grantee. The Institute will review all variation requests and at its sole discretion may approve or reject a request to vary a grant. In making its decision, the Institute may consider each variation request relative to the following:

- The individual circumstances and/or justification outlined in the variation request.
- The grant opportunity guidelines under which the grant was applied for.
- The fundamentals of the grant that were approved by the Board.
- The best outcomes for the grant against its aims and objectives.
- Whether the grant will continue to align with the objectives of the grant scheme.
- Any other matters of which the Institute is aware relevant to the grant, Administering Institution or the researchers.

In addition to the above, the Institute requires the following:

- Variation forms must be submitted via the Administering Institution Research Office to the Institute's Research Grants Team – CINSW-Grants@health.nsw.gov.au
- Variation request forms must be signed by all required parties prior to submission. Incomplete forms will not be accepted.
- The request should not be made within the first three months following commencement of the grant.
- The request must be submitted at least three months prior to the current contract end date.
- A variation can only be processed within the funding period of the existing active Funding Agreement.

3. The Variation Request Process

1. All variation requests must be supported and submitted by the Grantee's Administering Institution. Requests are submitted to the Institute's Grants team – CINSW-Grants@health.nsw.gov.au
2. The Institute will review the request.
3. If the request is supported, the Institute will prepare the Deed of Variation for execution. The Deed of Variation will be sent to the Administering Institution for first sign off.
4. Following final sign off by the Institute, a copy of the fully executed Deed of Variation will be returned to the Administering Institution.

Variations can take 4-6 weeks to process, depending on the request, the time it takes for each party to sign the document and the method of sign off (DocuSign or wet ink signature). Please ensure that all requests are submitted with sufficient time for execution by the desired date. If enough time has not been allowed for, the variation will not be approved. Variation requests will not be accepted within three months of the grant's end date.

4. Variation Types

4.1 Time Extension Request – Unforeseen Delays

Time extension requests due to unforeseen delays are submitted when there has been a delay to the performance/completion of a research activity and the scheduled end date has consequently been impacted. Examples of delays include limited access to lab or a delay in personnel recruitment.

A budget reallocation is only required if there is a change to how or when funding will be spent. *Requests to change the payment schedule will not be accepted.*

Time extension requests may be submitted within 3-12 months of the scheduled grant end date. The Institute will allow up to 12 calendar months in total for this variation type. Variation requests exceeding 12 calendar months will only be considered in extenuating circumstances.

4.2 Time Extension Request – Career Disruption

Time extension requests due to career disruption are submitted for the following scenarios:

- Parental Leave
- Carer's Leave
- Extended Sick/Injury Leave

Unless otherwise agreed at least 4 weeks prior to leave commencing, all grant funding will pause. If any funding is requested to continue, detail and justification must be provided as to what work will continue, under whose supervision, and the remaining work that the Grantee will resume upon return. Approval is at the discretion of the Cancer Institute NSW.

The Grantee can opt to return to work as per their original FTE, or at a reduced FTE. A budget reallocation must be submitted for both scenarios, as the payment schedule will be shifted due to the pause in research. For Grantees returning at a reduced FTE, an amendment to the quarterly scheduled payments is required.

The Institute will allow an extension of up to 24 calendar months in total for the life of the grant for this variation type. Variation requests exceeding 24 calendar months will only be considered in extenuating circumstances.

4.3 Change of Administering Institution

This variation request is submitted when a Grantee wishes to transfer their grant from one Administering Institution to another approved Administering Institution. This typically occurs when a Grantee commences employment at a new organisation. A letter of acknowledgement and support is required from both the outgoing and the new Administering Institution.

The Institute will recoup any unspent funds from the original Administering Institution and include the recouped amount in the first scheduled payment to the new Administering Institution. A new Funding Agreement will be executed with the new Administering Institution. This will be inclusive of the updated payment schedule.

4.4 Change in Chief Investigator

Requests to change the Chief Investigator will only be accepted for Translational Research Grants. *Fellows cannot transfer their grants.* Chief Investigators are expected to remain on the grant until its completion, however, a change to the Chief Investigator will be considered in the following circumstances:

- The Chief Investigator's employment dramatically changes (e.g., interstate or international employment, retirement)
- The Chief Investigator can no longer dedicate a minimum of 0.2FTE towards the activities of the program
- Personal reasons (e.g., illness or injury)

The variation request must be supported by the incoming Chief Investigator and the Administering Institution.

4.5 Fellowship Category Change

Fellows nominate to undertake their grant as either a full-time researcher (Category 1) or a Clinician/Researcher (Category 2). Category 2 researchers must dedicate between 0.6FTE and 0.9FTE to the Fellowship. Requests to change the Fellowship category must be justified by a change to employment (e.g., a Category 1 Researcher changing to a Clinician/Researcher role). Requests from Category 1 Researchers to decrease FTE with no justification will not be accepted.

Note - *It is expected that the Fellowship grant will be completed by the original intended end date, even if changing categories. Funding cannot be extended beyond the initial three-year time frame.*

A budget reallocation request may be submitted if required.

4.6 Request to Change Scope

Requests to change scope are submitted when the Grantee would like to vary the original aims/deliverables of the program and is indicating a change to both the research plan and the budget allocation of the approved research plan. Requests to change scope (including the removal of and/or additional of aims/deliverables) must be clearly justified and supported by the Administering Institution. The Institute will only approve a change to scope in extraordinary circumstances.

4.7 Relinquishment of Grant

A grant relinquishment occurs when a Grantee terminates their grant after having already commenced and received payments from the Institute. *The Grantee must submit a final report and final financial report when submitting a relinquishment notification.*

All unpaid funds will be relinquished by the Institute and unused funds that were paid by the Institute will be recouped.

5. Enquiries

Any enquiries about this document should be directed to the Institute's Research Grants team at CINSW-Grants@health.nsw.gov.au