

# Cancer Institute NSW

## Guidelines for Translational Program Grant Scheme

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## Version history

Version history	Number	Date	Change description
	1.0	31 Jan 2019	First version that is not year dependent. Streamlined formatting, updated assessment criteria and clarified wording.
	2.0	19 Mar 2021	Additional conditions of funding and requirements for full application.
	3.0	14 Feb 2022	Additional information about project milestones (section 2.4.4), minor administrative updates.

## 1. Overview

### 1.1 Introduction

The Cancer Institute NSW (the Institute) is the NSW government's cancer control agency. The Institute is driving innovation in cancer care by working in partnership with leaders in the field to deliver the best cancer results for the people of NSW. The Institute's five-year Translational Program Grant (TPG) will fund world-class translational research in NSW. The research will provide the evidence to drive rapid improvements in cancer prevention, treatment and subsequently survival and quality of life for cancer patients in NSW.

### 1.2 The Cancer Institute NSW Research Programs

The Institute is committed to pursuing and supporting excellence and innovation in cancer research as a key method to improve outcomes in NSW. The research supported by the Institute must be performance-driven and deliver meaningful and significant outcomes. Applications are considered against specific criteria for each program, as well as adherence to the following principles:

- Consistent with the priorities for action in the NSW [Cancer Plan](#).
- Commitment to excellence and innovation.
- Commitment to the needs of people right across the state.
- Commitment to rapid translation of research findings to clinical practice and policy.
- A focus on the importance of the outcomes of research.
- Supporting recruitment and development of excellent cancer researchers in NSW.
- Promoting, enhancing or complementing areas with existing outstanding research strengths in NSW including molecular or cell biology, cancer genetics, clinical research, psycho-oncology, population health, and health systems research.
- Addressing major cancer problems facing NSW.
- Promoting attainment of additional scientific depth by collaboration, co-location, amalgamation or research involving a number of research disciplines.
- Strengthening key research infrastructure, platforms, technologies and research expertise to increase the productivity of research.
- Supporting the development of links with key national or overseas research programs and industry.
- Developing the research culture within the NSW health system.
- Identifying the relevance of the research to NSW.
- Responding to National and State priorities and community opinions about research.

## 2. Translational Program Grant

### 2.1 Purpose

The Translational Program Grants (TPG) are prestigious awards aimed at supporting multi-disciplinary approaches to cancer research that will rapidly translate research discoveries into clinical programs and policy.

A list of Translational Program Grants previously funded by the Institute is available online under ['Grants we've funded'](#).

## 2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the TPGs are to:

- Support high achieving research teams who have the ability and capacity to rapidly translate biological discovery, or known effective treatments, to clinical practice within five years.
- Invest in programs with a logical progression and pipeline of research that will produce significant outcomes, and which could not be achieved by pursuing the components as separate projects.
- Support programs that develop novel methods and create new knowledge and translation in important areas of cancer research and control at an internationally competitive level.
- Strengthen cancer research collaborations, networks and/or consortia to provide greater translational cancer research depth e.g. by attracting researchers from interstate and overseas to the program team.
- Foster collaborative use of specialised facilities or expertise that had not previously been harnessed.
- Encourage collaborations between Universities, Local Health Districts and Medical Research Institutes.
- Fund programs that span at least two phases of the [Model of Translational Research](#).

Expected outcomes from the TPGs include:

- The translation of a biological discovery to 'first in human' studies within the first half of the program leading to full roll out within the five years. Research on the biological discovery should be well advanced at the time of submission to ensure that clinical testing will be a major focus of the application.
- The translation of known effective treatments into clinical practice across the health system by developing a program of practice-based research and dissemination research/implementation research e.g. the development of guidelines and systematic reviews.

## 2.3 Funding Available

Funds of up to \$750,000 (ex-GST) per annum will be offered for a total funding period of five years, to the total of \$3,750,000 (ex-GST) per grant.

## 2.4 Conditions of Funding

### 2.4.1 Commencement Date

Successful applicants must commence the grant within the same financial year of the full TPG application submission.

### 2.4.2 Program Logic

Successful applicants must develop a [program logic](#) for their program of research within 3 months of commencing the grant. The program logic will be co-designed with the Institute using the principles from [The Framework to Assess the Impact from Translational health research \(FAIT\)](#).

### 2.4.3 Risk Management Plan

Successful applicants must provide a risk management plan within 3 months of commencing the grant.

### 2.4.4 Project Milestones

Project milestones provided in the full application will be included in the funding agreement and used to monitor progress. The Institute may pause payments or cease funding if satisfactory progress is not being made within the agreed timeframes.

### 2.4.5 Reporting Requirements

Chief Investigator(s) must provide an annual progress report and final report for the grant using the provided template. These reports must demonstrate the actualisation of the agreed project milestones, and report on any new leveraged funding and/or partnership opportunities. The progress reports may be used by the Funder for grant scheme auditing or evaluation purposes. The Institute will not provide funding if satisfactory progress reports are not submitted.

## 2.5 Two-Stage Application Process

### 2.5.1 Stage 1: Expression of Interest (EOI)

The purpose of the EOI is to provide high level details about the proposed program of translational research, the Chief Investigator, Co-Investigator(s) and the budget summary. The successful EOIs will be notified and invited to submit a full application. Applicants who are not shortlisted will also be notified.

### 2.5.2 Stage 2: Full Application (by invitation only)

The full application should build on the information provided in the EOI to provide a more detailed research plan and budget justification. The following additional information will be required:

- Consumer Review Form (*to be submitted as an attachment*)
- Aboriginal Health Impact Statement (*to be submitted as an attachment if the Aboriginal community is a key focus area of the proposed research*)

Applicants will also have the opportunity to address any feedback from the reviewed EOI.

## 3. Eligibility Criteria

### 3.1 Chief Investigator

Each TPG application will have one named Chief Investigator with a minimum 0.2 FTE towards the activities of the program. The Chief Investigator must be employed at an

institution within NSW for the duration of the grant. The Chief Investigator may indicate if they are a member of a NSW Translation Centre on the TPG application form, however, membership is not a pre-requisite for applying.

An applicant can only be named as Chief Investigator on one TPG application for each annual grant round and may hold one Cancer Institute NSW TPG at a time. They may be named as a co-investigator on applications submitted by other Chief Investigators.

Applicants are required to have an Open Researcher and Contributor ID ([ORCID](#)) identifier, and to enter this onto their profile on the Grants Management System (GMS). The ORCID will allow the GMS to pre-populate key information from the applicant's profile such as name, position, institution, qualifications, employment history and publications.

### 3.2 Co-Investigators

Researchers may be named as a Co-Investigator across multiple applications.

### 3.3 Located in NSW

The Chief Investigator and Administering Institution must be located in NSW. Co-Investigators may be based interstate or overseas, however all project funds must be spent within NSW.

### 3.4 Administering Institution Endorsement

Applications must nominate a single Administering Institution who will be responsible for the management of the grant and will enter into a funding agreement with the Funder. The Administering Institution must have in place policies and procedures for the administration of public funds; for the management of Intellectual Property; and for proper conduct of research in relation to ethics. Additionally, the Administering Institution must have good scientific practice, and will provide appropriate infrastructure to allow the research supported by the grant to be undertaken.

The Administering Institution and their nominated institutional contact must be registered with the Cancer Institute NSW. Refer to the list of [Registered Administering Institutions](#) and the [Administering Institution Contact Registration Form](#).

At the time of grant application submission, an Endorsement Letter from the Administering Institution Contact on institutional letterhead must be included. This letter must confirm the following:

- Endorsement of the application by the Administering Institution;
- Proposed commencement date of the grant;
- In the event the named Chief Investigators is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident, the requisite work visa(s) in place at the time of accepting the successful grant;
- Chief Investigator will remain employed in NSW for the duration of the funding period;

- Chief Investigator has met all reporting requirements for current or previously funded grants funded by the Institute;
- Chief Investigator has completed any previously awarded Cancer Institute NSW TPG;
- Chief Investigator has not submitted any other TPG applications this grant round; and
- Any other information relevant for the application.

## 4. Assessment Criteria

The Stage 1 (EOI) application is assessed on scientific review. Assessment of Stage 2 (full application) consists of both scientific and consumer review. Scientific review will be conducted through the Grants Review Committee and consumer review will be conducted through the Cancer Council's Consumer Review Panel. The assessments will be combined using a weighting of scientific (80%) and consumer (20%) and provided to the Grants Review Committee in order to finalise the rankings of the full applications.

### 4.1 Scientific Assessment

The scientific assessment for the TPG is identical for Stage 1 (EOI) and Stage 2 (full application). However, the level of detail for Stage 1 is expected to be a high-level summary, while Stage 2 will consist of more detailed research, translation and sustainability plans. Applications will be assessed against the following selection criteria based on the weighting below:

#### 4.1.1 Significance (25%)

The excellence of the research proposal, based on the rationale, design, methodology, and the anticipated outcomes. The proposal should also provide a clear process for monitoring the progress of the research including key milestones and outcome indicators. The anticipated value-add and impact of the proposed research to increase research capacity and improve cancer outcomes and/or clinical practices in NSW. The potential for this proposed research to bring innovative approaches to cancer research.

#### 4.1.2 Team Track Record (25%)

Demonstration of relevant professional qualifications, skills, knowledge, experience and resources of the named Investigators as individuals and as a research team to deliver the research program. The strength of previous successes in the proposed area of research. Evidence of existing cash and in-kind leveraged support for this program to be provided and the ability to attract future leverage national or international funding, including industry support and how this will be utilised to enhance the program of research.

#### 4.1.3 Translation (25%)

The strength of the approach to research translation to improve clinical outcomes, including strategies to ensure the research findings crosses at least two phases of the translational research pipeline of the [Model of Translational Research](#). Demonstrated establishment of strategic partnerships and stakeholder engagement strategies to ensure timely and effective research translation.



#### **4.1.4 Sustainability (25%)**

The strength of the approach to ensure research sustainability including developing pathways for scaling up research findings and increasing the State's capacity in translational research through workforce training, capacity building and recruitment opportunities. This plan should also include articulation of communication and dissemination strategies for key research findings.

### **4.2 Consumer Involvement in Research Assessment**

Consumer involvement and engagement is important in health and medical research as it can facilitate effective translation of research to deliver improved health outcomes. The Consumer Review Panel will assess each proposal according to the plain English statements on consumer involvement and the benefits of the research to the community. The consumer application form must be able to be read as a stand-alone document as the Consumer Review Panel will not see the scientific application.

## **5. Selection Process**

### **5.1 Electronic Submission**

Applications must be submitted via the Institute's [Grants Management System](#) by **1pm** of the [due date](#), unless otherwise stated. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator and the Administering Institution Contact to ensure that the application is complete and accurate prior to submission.

### **5.2 Eligibility Assessment**

Submitted EOI applications will be reviewed to ensure they adhere to all eligibility requirements including the provision of an appropriate [endorsement letter](#) from the Administering Institution.

### **5.3 Independent Review Process**

The Institute utilises an independent Grants Review Committee composed of external members. The Grants Review Committee adheres to the Institute's policies to ensure for the privacy and confidentiality of applications. The Institute requires its Grants Review Committee members and any additional independent assessors to declare any conflicts of interest. The member(s) will withdraw from reviewing individual applications where such conflict exists.

The Grants Review Committee will score and rank applications based on an assessment of merit against the stated assessment criteria. Applications may be reviewed by additional independent assessors if required. The Grants Review Committee will put forward recommendations for awarding of the grant(s) to the Cancer Institute NSW for consideration.

### **5.4 Approval and Notification Process**

The Cancer Institute NSW's Board will consider all recommendations for funding by the Grants Review Committee and approve funding for the grants to be awarded based on

merit. Once the Board has approved the awarding of the grant(s), all applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome. Feedback will not be provided to unsuccessful candidates.

## 6. Post-Award Grants Administration

### 6.1 Funding Agreement

If the application is successful, the Administering Institution and the Cancer Institute NSW will enter into a Funding Agreement. All parties must accept the terms of the Funding Agreement and the Administering Institution must sign the Agreement before payments are made. The Administering Institution will have 20 business days from the date that the *finalised* Agreement is sent to return the partially executed copy to the Institute. The offer may lapse if the partially executed Agreement is not returned within this time. Under certain circumstances, the Institute may extend this period.

It is recommended that all parties familiarise themselves with the Institute's [Competitive Grants Agreement](#) prior to submission of an application.

### 6.2 Use of Funds

Funds awarded must be used for the purposes as detailed in the application approved by the Cancer Institute NSW. Funds awarded cannot be used for any purposes associated with basic (e.g. desk, stationery, phone etc.) or overhead infrastructure costs (i.e. institutional overheads of administrative levies). Funds should not be used to support research conducted outside of NSW.

### 6.3 Administering Institution Contacts' Project Permissions

For the purpose of reporting requirements, the nominated Administering Institution Contact and Financial Officer will have the ability to view the approved project and action project milestones via the GMS. Progress and final report milestones must be written by the Chief Investigator and signed off and submitted by the nominated Administering Institution Contact. Administering Institution Financial Officers will submit invoices, acquittals and financial reports via the GMS of behalf of the Chief Investigator.

### 6.4 Variations

Any request for variation to a grant (such as time extensions, changes of scope, changes of investigators, etc) needs to be submitted via the Administering Institution Contact to the Cancer Institute NSW. A variation can only be processed within the funding period of the existing funding agreement. Approval of a variation request is at the Cancer Institute NSW's discretion.

### 6.5 Acknowledgement and Participation

Investigator(s) should acknowledge funding provided by the Cancer Institute NSW funding. Please refer to the Institute's [Funding Acknowledgment Guide](#). Investigator(s) may be required to be available for media interviews, briefings related to the grant, participate in and present at forum(s) at the request of the Cancer Institute NSW.

## **6.6 Enquiries**

Enquiries can be directed to the Grants Team at [CINSW-Grants@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:CINSW-Grants@health.nsw.gov.au).