



Centres of Research Excellence 2022 Guidelines

Opening date:	20 October 2021
Closing date and time:	17.00 ACT local time on 01 December 2021
Commonwealth policy entity:	National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)
Enquiries:	<p>Applicants requiring further assistance are to direct enquiries to their Administering Institution's Research Administration Officer. Research Administration Officers can contact NHMRC's Research Help Centre for further advice:</p> <p>Phone: 1800 500 983 (+61 2 6217 9451 for international callers)</p> <p>Email: help@nhmrc.gov.au</p> <p>NHMRC will not respond to any enquiries submitted after 13:00 ACT local time on 01 December 2021.</p> <p>Note: NHMRC's Research Help Centre aims to provide a reply to all requests for general assistance within two working days. This timeframe may be longer during peak periods or for more detailed requests for assistance.</p>
Date guidelines released:	20 October 2021
Type of grant opportunity:	Targeted competitive

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1. Centres of Research Excellence 2022: processes

NHMRC's Centres of Research Excellence (CRE) scheme is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

The CRE scheme is a component of the Portfolio Budget Statements Program 1.1: Health and Medical Research, which contributes to Outcome 1: Improved health and medical knowledge.



The grant opportunity opens

NHMRC publishes the grant guidelines on GrantConnect.



Applicants complete and submit a grant application

Applicants must complete the application form and address all of the eligibility criteria to be considered for a grant.



Applications are verified and assessed

Applications are verified against eligibility criteria and applicants are notified if not eligible. Peer reviewers assess applications against the assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value with money.



Grant decisions are made

NHMRC's CEO seeks approval of funding recommendations from the Minister for Health.



NHMRC notifies applicants of the outcome



Applicant's Administering Institution signs the NHMRC Grant Schedule(s) setting out the grant activity



Delivery of grant

Grantees undertake the grant activity as set out in the schedule to the Funding Agreement. NHMRC manages the grant through the relevant Administering Institution.



Evaluation of the CRE scheme

NHMRC undertakes periodic evaluations of the performance and administration of its funding schemes to determine strengths and to identify where improvements can be made.

1.1. Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the Centres of Research Excellence (CRE) 2022 grant opportunity.

Applicants must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant scheme/grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how grant applications are considered and selected
- how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
- how grants will be monitored and evaluated
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

GrantConnect (www.grants.gov.au) is the authoritative source of information on this grant opportunity. Any alterations or addenda to these Guidelines will be published on GrantConnect.

The CRE 2022 grant opportunity will be undertaken in accordance with the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017* (CGRGs), available from the [Department of Finance website](#).

NHMRC recognises the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Australia's health and medical research community. NHMRC's [Relative to Opportunity Policy](#) specifies that circumstances associated with the pandemic and other calamities are considered, where applicable, in assessment of an applicant's track record. In their application, applicants can outline the interruption and impact on their research productivity.

1.1.1. About NHMRC

NHMRC is the Australian Government's key entity for managing investment in, and the integrity of, health and medical research. NHMRC works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program in accordance with the *National Health and Medical Research Council Act 1992* (NHMRC Act) and the CGRGs.

NHMRC awards grants through several research funding schemes to advance health and medical knowledge and to improve the health status of all Australians. NHMRC invests in the highest quality research and researchers, as determined through peer review, across the four pillars of health and medical research: basic science, clinical medicine and science, public health and health services research.

2. About the grant program

Funding for the program will be provided from the NHMRC Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA), which is underpinned by section 51 of the NHMRC Act.

The objectives of the CRE scheme are to:

- improve health outcomes
- promote or improve translation of research outcomes into policy and/or practice
- support researchers in capacity building activities, including in specific areas of need identified by NHMRC.

The intended outcomes of the CRE scheme are to:

- support the conduct and development of innovative, high quality, collaborative research
- promote effective translation of research into health policy and/or practice
- foster and build capacity in the health and medical research workforce
- provide opportunities to expand and improve collaborations between research teams.

The CRE 2022 grant opportunity will provide support for teams of researchers to pursue collaborative research and develop capacity in clinical research, health services research and public health research.

Applicants nominate the stream that best fits their research proposal, although NHMRC appreciates that there is often overlap. The following definitions are provided to assist applicants to select the appropriate stream.

- Clinical research is an interdisciplinary field intended to produce knowledge valuable for understanding human disease, preventing and treating illness, and promoting health. Clinical research embraces a range of study areas and disciplines involving interactions with patients, diagnostic clinical materials or data, or populations (adapted from the Association of American Medical Colleges and American Medical Association definition).
- Health services research is an interdisciplinary field that studies how social factors, financing systems, organisational structures and processes, health technologies, and personal behaviours affect access to health care, and its quality, cost and outcomes. It provides data, evidence and tools to make health care affordable, safe, effective, equitable, accessible and patient-centred (adapted from *An Organizational Guide to Building Health Services Research Capacity*, October 2012, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality).
- Public health research, considered within these guidelines to be synonymous with population health research, is an interdisciplinary field focused on improving or protecting population health outcomes. It includes the study of factors that influence the health status of groups or whole populations, as well as the testing and evaluation of policies and interventions designed to prevent ill-health, improve the health of populations and ameliorate health disparities (adapted from Kindig D, Stoddart G. *What Is Population Health?*, Am J Public Health. 2003 March; 93(3): 380–383; NHMRC Report of the Review of Public Health Research Funding in Australia (Nutbeam Report) 2008; and the NHMRC Act 1992).

A CRE may be a single physical entity or institute, or a geographically disparate network linking across more than one institution. Centres are encouraged to collaborate with, and participate in, national and international research studies.

2.1. Key changes

Applicants need to note the following changes for the CRE 2022 grant opportunity:

- Information on the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent has been included in section 10. Related record keeping requirements are described in [Appendix A](#).
- NHMRC will consider preprints in track record assessment. For further details on what constitutes an acceptable preprint and how to include preprints in the 'My Profile' section of Sapphire, refer to [Appendix C](#) (see section 4.5, 'Publications').

2.2. NHMRC structural priorities

NHMRC's [Corporate Plan](#) outlines strategic priorities and major health issues for the period covered by the Plan, including how NHMRC will address these issues, and a national strategy for medical research and public health research. Each year, NHMRC identifies structural priorities for

funding to deliver against certain strategic priorities. Information on NHMRC's structural priorities is provided in [Appendix A](#).

3. Grant amount and grant period

3.1. Grants available

The provisional funding allocation for the CRE 2022 grant opportunity is up to \$35 million. NHMRC's Research Committee annually reviews and recommends indicative budget amounts to be awarded across individual funding schemes.

Subject to the receipt of competitive applications, the number of CRE grants to receive funding will be:

- up to six CREs in Clinical Research
- up to four CREs in Health Services Research
- up to four CREs in Public Health Research.

A CRE 2022 grant in each of these streams provides a fixed budget of \$2.5 million per grant, paid evenly over the grant period.

3.2. Grant period

A CRE 2022 grant is awarded for a five-year term.

4. Eligibility criteria

Applications will only be accepted from NHMRC Administering Institutions. A list of NHMRC Administering Institutions is available on [NHMRC's website](#).

The Chief Investigator A (CIA) and Administering Institution must ensure applications meet all eligibility requirements, as set out in these guidelines, at the time of submission and for the duration of peer review. Applications that do not meet these eligibility requirements may be ineligible and may be excluded from further consideration.

An eligibility ruling may be made by NHMRC at any stage following the close of applications, including during peer review. Where an eligibility ruling is being considered, NHMRC may request further information in order to assess whether the eligibility requirement has been met.

Decisions are made based on current policies and considerations specific to this grant opportunity. Decisions made in relation to previous grant opportunities or other NHMRC funding schemes will not be regarded as precedents and will not be considered when assessing compliance with the requirements of this grant opportunity.

Administering Institutions will be notified in writing of ineligible applications and are responsible for advising applicants.

Grant offers may be withdrawn if eligibility criteria are not met. Action may also be taken over the life of a grant if eligibility criteria to continue holding a grant are not met.

NHMRC staff will not make eligibility rulings before an application is submitted.

4.1. Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

4.1.1. Chief Investigators and Associate Investigators

The maximum number of CIs allowed on a CRE 2022 application is 10.

Chief Investigator 'A'

At the time of acceptance and for the duration of a grant the CIA must be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, or a permanent resident of Australia, or have an appropriate work visa in place. The CIA must also be based in Australia for at least 80% of the funding period.

Chief Investigators

The role and contribution of each CI must be described in the grant application. PhD students may be named as CIs where the PhD student is critical for the successful completion of the proposed research. CIs may undertake research on a part-time basis for all or part of the duration of the grant.

CIs are expected to remain on the grant activity for the duration of the grant, unless a variation is approved by NHMRC in accordance with the [NHMRC Grantee Variations Policy](#). NHMRC will only approve a change in CIs in exceptional circumstances and a variation request must not be used as a means to meet NHMRC eligibility requirements.

Associate Investigators

An Associate Investigator (AI) is defined as an investigator who provides some intellectual and/or practical input into the research and whose participation may warrant inclusion of their name on any outputs (e.g. publications).

There is no restriction on who may be named as an AI on an application. However, a maximum number of 10 applies.

4.2. Multiple applications/grants

4.2.1. Limits on the number of CRE applications

Duplicate applications should not be submitted across multiple CRE streams. Applicants must select the CRE stream that best fits the broad research area of their research proposal based on the stream definitions provided in section 2. Duplicate applications may be ineligible and excluded from consideration.

Note: Applications to the CRE scheme are not capped relative to Investigator, Synergy and Ideas Grants and will not affect a CI's eligibility to apply to the latter schemes (refer to the respective scheme grant opportunity guidelines for eligibility requirements).

4.2.2. Limits on the number of CRE grants that may be held

There is no limit to the number of CRE grants that a CI may hold concurrently. However, the amount of time committed by the CIs on the proposed CRE grant will be considered in the assessment of the CRE application. The time allocated by the CIs must be sufficient to ensure the viability of the CRE, and will be considered in the peer review process under the feasibility of the proposed research (see section 6).

4.3. Exclusion of applications

An application may be excluded from further consideration if NHMRC identifies that:

- it contravenes an eligibility rule or other requirement as set out in the Grant Guidelines
- it, or the CIA/any CI named on the application, contravenes an applicable law or code
- it is inconsistent with the objectives of the NHMRC Act and/or the purposes of the MREA, or

- the CIA/any CI named on the application is the subject of a decision by NHMRC's CEO or Delegate that any application they make to NHMRC, for specified funding schemes, will be excluded from consideration for a period of time, whether or not they otherwise meet the eligibility requirements. For example, such decisions will generally reflect consequential action taken by NHMRC in response to findings of a serious breach of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (the Code) (including a finding of research misconduct, where this term is used) or a Probity Event. See the Code for a definition of 'research misconduct' and the *NHMRC Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy* available from [NHMRC's website](#).

Such exclusion may take place at any time following CIA and Administering Institution certification of the application.

If a decision is made to exclude an application from further consideration, NHMRC will provide its decision and the reason(s) for the decision to the Administering Institution's Research Administration Officer (RAO). The Administering Institution's RAO is responsible for advising applicants of the decision. Decisions to exclude an application may be reviewable by [NHMRC's Commissioner of Complaints](#).

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1. Eligible grant activities and expenditure

Funding provided by NHMRC for a grant activity must be spent on costs directly incurred in that grant activity that satisfy the principles and requirements outlined in the *Direct Research Costs Guidelines* on the [NHMRC website](#).

5.1.1. Salary support

CRE grants are not normally intended to provide salary support for CIs. However, if salaries are sought for CIs, the costs must be directly associated with achieving the outcomes of the research.

CIs, including the CIA, can draw a salary from the CRE 2022 grant if they are based in Australia for at least 80% of the funding period. CIs based overseas are not able to draw a salary, but salary support is available for research support staff based overseas (see section 5.2). Salary costs must be based on Personnel Support Packages (PSPs) outlined on the [NHMRC website](#).

Applicants can receive up to 100% salary across all NHMRC grants held. Multiple partial salaries can be drawn up to 100%, if allowed in the grant guidelines for the respective grant opportunities.

Associate Investigators cannot draw a salary from CRE 2022 grants.

5.2. Funding to support overseas grant activities and researchers

CRE 2022 grant funds are for research cost expenditure in Australia. Funding can be used to support specific grant activities to be undertaken overseas, including salary support for overseas-based research support staff, if the overseas grant activity is critical to the successful completion of the project, and the equipment/resources required for the grant activity are not available in Australia.

See *Direct Research Costs Guidelines* on the [NHMRC website](#) for further guidance on the expenditure of funding for a grant activity.

5.3. Duplicate funding

NHMRC may compare the research proposed in grant applications with grants previously funded, currently funded, and funded by other agencies (e.g. Australian Research Council or Department of Health) and published research. NHMRC will not fund research that it considers duplicates research previously or currently being funded.

Where NHMRC believes that an applicant has submitted similar research proposals to NHMRC and has been successful with more than one application, the applicant may be required to provide NHMRC with a written report clearly identifying the difference between the research aims of the research activities. If NHMRC subsequently does not consider the research activities to be sufficiently different, the applicant will be required to decline or relinquish one of the grants.

6. The assessment criteria

Applications for CRE 2022 grants are assessed by peers against the assessment criteria listed below and the category descriptors at [Appendix B](#).

Track records are assessed [Relative to Opportunity](#), taking into consideration any career disruptions, where applicable.

It is recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants often make additional valuable contributions to policy development, clinical/public health leadership and/or service delivery, community activities and linkages, and are often representatives on key committees. If applicable, these contributions will be considered when assessing research output and track record.

Criterion One

Generate new knowledge that leads to improved health outcomes (20%)

- clarity of research objectives and theoretical concepts
- strengths and weaknesses of the research design(s), or the appropriateness and robustness of the proposed methodology/ies or appropriateness of the broader strategy of the research program of the Centre
- feasibility of the proposed research
- aims and concepts of the research are innovative or pioneering on an international level
- likelihood that significant new findings will be produced and substantially advance knowledge in the field.

Criterion Two

Promote effective transfer of research outcomes into health policy and/or practice (20%)

- the quality of the plan for research translation.
- plans for promoting the Centre's activities to the wider community, including where appropriate, for commercial gain.
- the involvement of consumers and the community in the planning, implementation and uptake of the research program.

Criterion Three

Develop the health and medical research workforce by providing opportunities to advance the training of new researchers, particularly those with a capacity for independent research and future leadership roles (20%)

- strategy to generate new researcher capability, mentoring and encouragement of further career development
- clarity of measures for integrating new researchers into the teams including mentoring strategies.

Criterion Four

Facilitate collaboration (20%)

Teams are required to outline past and/or proposed collaborative arrangements within the applicant team, and address the means whereby the collaborators will ensure the cohesive running of the research during its funding period, including but not limited to:

- likely effectiveness of working collaborations and intellectual exchange
- the relationship with other groups in the particular field of research
- integration and cohesiveness of the team.

Criterion Five

Record of research and translation achievement – relative to opportunity (20%)

This criterion assesses whether the previous research and translation experience of applicants demonstrates that the team has the appropriate mix of research skills and experience to deliver the proposed project.

Record of achievement encompasses the national and international standing of the applicants based upon their research and translation achievements, relative to opportunity, including but not limited to:

- research outputs – most recent significant publications; publications that illustrate innovation and significance of past accomplishments; outcome and impact of previous research achievements, including effects on health care practices or policy
- contribution to discipline or area – invitations to speak at international meetings, editorial appointments, specialist and high level health policy committee appointments
- evidence of research translation, such as: influence on clinical/health policy or practice; provision of influential advice to health authorities and government; impacts on health via the broad dissemination of research outcomes e.g. via mainstream media, the community or industry involvement.

6.1. Health research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

As part of NHMRC's stated commitment to advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research, NHMRC has requirements and processes designed to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research is of the highest scientific merit and is beneficial and acceptable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

Applicants proposing to undertake research which specifically relates to the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, or which includes distinct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, biological samples or data must refer to the following documents in formulating their proposal:

- [Roadmap 3: A strategic framework for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through research](#)

- [Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders](#), and
- [Keeping Research on Track II](#), which is a companion document on how the values and principles outlined in the [Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders](#) can be put into practice in research.

To qualify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research, at least 20% of the research effort and/or capacity-building must relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

Qualifying applications must address NHMRC's *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria* as follows:

- **Community engagement** - the proposal demonstrates how the research and potential outcomes are a priority for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with relevant community engagement by individuals, communities and/or organisations in conceptualisation, development and approval, data collection and management, analysis, report writing and dissemination of results.
- **Benefit** - the potential health benefit of the project is demonstrated by addressing an important health issue for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This benefit can have a single focus or affect several areas, such as knowledge, finance and policy or quality of life. The benefit may be direct and immediate, or it can be indirect, gradual and considered.
- **Sustainability and transferability** - the proposal demonstrates how the results of the project have the potential to lead to achievable and effective contributions to health gain for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, beyond the life of the project. This may be through sustainability in the project setting and/or transferability to other settings such as evidence-based practice and/or policy. In considering this issue, the proposal needs to address the relationship between costs and benefits.
- **Building capability** - the proposal demonstrates how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and researchers will develop relevant capabilities through partnerships and participation in the project.

Peer reviewer(s) with specific expertise in Indigenous health research will evaluate how well the application addresses the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria*. This evaluation will be taken into consideration in the overall assessment of the application, using the assessment criteria outlined in section 6 (it does not alter the weighting of the assessment criteria).

7. How to apply

7.1. Overview and timing of grant opportunity processes

20 October 2021	Applications open in Sapphire
17.00 ACT local time 17 November 2021	Minimum data due in Sapphire
17.00 ACT local time 01 December 2021	Applications close in Sapphire
Feb – May 2022*	Anticipated peer review period

*Date is indicative and subject to change.

Applications must be submitted electronically using Sapphire (unless otherwise advised by NHMRC).

Electronic submission requires Administering Institutions and all CIs on an application to register for an account in Sapphire. Applicants who are not registered can submit a new user request via the login page of Sapphire.

Applicants should refer to the [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#) for detailed user instructions, or contact their RAO or NHMRC's Research Help Centre for further assistance.

Late applications will not be accepted.

7.2. Application extensions

Requests for application extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be submitted by email to help@nhmrc.gov.au before the scheme close date and time. Requests will only be considered for:

- unforeseen circumstances, e.g. natural calamities such as bushfires, floods or cyclones;
- exceptional circumstances that affect multiple researchers, e.g. power and/or internet network outages, or
- where an applicant, or a member of their immediate family¹, is incapacitated due to an unforeseen medical emergency, such as life-threatening injury, accident or death.

Extensions will be for a maximum of seven calendar days. This is to ensure that subsequent peer review processes and approval of funding recommendations are not delayed, especially as eligibility decisions for some NHMRC schemes depend on an applicant's success with other schemes.

Requests for extensions submitted after the scheme close date and time will not be considered.

7.3. Minimum data requirements

Minimum data must be entered in Sapphire by the specified due date. Applications that fail to satisfy this requirement will not be accepted. Applicants must complete the required fields with correct information. Using placeholder text such as "text", "synopsis" or "xx" etc. is not acceptable as minimum data.

Applicants are discouraged from making any changes to minimum data fields following the minimum data deadline as NHMRC uses minimum data to identify appropriate peer reviewers to assess the application. Incorrect minimum data may result in less suitable peer reviewers assessing the application.

Minimum data fields for CRE 2022 are outlined in [Appendix C](#) (see section 2.2, 'Minimum Data Requirements') and within Sapphire.

¹ Immediate family comprises a spouse, child, parent or sibling. It includes de facto, step and adoptive relations (e.g. de facto, step or adopted children).

Failure to meet this deadline will result in the application not proceeding. RAOs are not required to certify applications for the purpose of minimum data. Applications are only to be certified once complete and ready for submission.

7.4. Application requirements

The application is to contain all information necessary for assessment without the need for further written or oral explanation or reference to additional documentation. Further information on what can and cannot be included in the application is provided at [Appendix C](#).

All details included must be current at the time of submission, as this information is relied on during assessment.

Applications must comply with all content and formatting requirements. Incomplete or non-compliant applications may be ineligible.

Additional requirements and guidance in relation to each component of the application are outlined at [Appendix C](#).

7.5. Attachments to the application

NHMRC requires the following documents with your application:

- a grant proposal

You must attach supporting documentation to the application in line with the instructions provided in Sapphire or [Appendix C](#). Only attach requested documents. NHMRC will not consider information in attachments that it does not request.

7.6. Consumer and community involvement

The *Statement on Consumer and Community Involvement in Health and Medical Research* (the Statement) has been developed because of the important contribution consumers make to health and medical research. The Statement's purpose is to guide research institutions, researchers, consumers and community members in the active involvement of consumers and community members in all aspects of health and medical research. The Consumers Health Forum of Australia Ltd and NHMRC worked in partnership with consumers and researchers to develop the Statement.

To complement the statement, NHMRC has released a Toolkit with resources on consumer and community involvement in, and expectations of, health and medical research. Researchers are encouraged to consider the benefits of actively engaging consumers and to use this Toolkit throughout all stages of research, including the planning and preparation of grant applications, the conduct of research and the evaluation of outcomes.

Further information on The Consumers Health Forum, the Statement and the Toolkit is available on [NHMRC's website](#). Consumer and community involvement in the proposed research will be considered, as relevant, as part of the applicable assessment criteria (see section 6).

7.7. Certification and submission

Once complete, applications must be electronically certified and then submitted to NHMRC through the RAO of an NHMRC Administering Institution using Sapphire.

Certification is required firstly by the CIA and then by the Administering Institution RAO by the specified due date or the application will be ineligible and excluded from further consideration.

Once submitted to NHMRC, the application is considered final and no changes can be made.

7.7.1. CIA certification

The following assurances, acknowledgements and undertakings are required of the CIA prior to submitting an application:

- All required information has been provided and is complete, current and correct.
- All eligibility and other application requirements have been met.
- All personnel contributing to the grant activity have familiarised themselves with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#), the [Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes](#) and other relevant NHMRC policies concerning the conduct of research, and agree to conduct themselves in accordance with those policies.
- The application may be excluded from consideration if found to be in breach of any requirements, in accordance with the grant guidelines.

And if funded,

- The research will be carried out in strict accordance with the conditions governing NHMRC grants at the time.
- The Head of Department of the Administering Institution (and Participating Institution/s, if applicable) will ensure the appropriate facilities will be available.
- The research may be used for internal NHMRC quality evaluations/reviews.

7.7.2. Certification from other Chief Investigators (CIB-CIJ) and Associate Investigators

By accepting an invitation to participate on an application, Chief and Associate Investigators certify that, at the time of application submission, they:

- Agree to be named on the application
- Endorse application certification by the Chief Investigator A and submission for endorsement by the Administering Institution's RAO
- Have familiarised themselves with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#), the [Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes](#) and other relevant NHMRC policies concerning the conduct of research, and agree to conduct themselves in accordance with those policies
- Agree to participate in the manner described in the application and to handling of personal information contained within the application as described in the *NHMRC Privacy Policy*.

7.7.3. Administering Institution certification

The following assurances, acknowledgements and undertakings are required of the Administering Institution prior to submitting an application:

- Reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the application is complete and correct and complies with all eligibility and other application requirements.
- CIA is an Australian or New Zealand citizen or permanent resident at the time of accepting the successful grant.
- CIA will be based in Australia for at least 80% of the funding period.

- Where the CIA is not an Australian or New Zealand citizen or permanent resident, they will have the requisite work visa in place at the time of accepting the successful grant and will be based in Australia for at least 80% of the funding period.
- The appropriate facilities and salary support will be available for the funding period.
- Approval of the grant activity by relevant institutional committees and approval bodies, particularly for ethics and biosafety, will be sought and obtained prior to the commencement of the research, or the parts of the research that require their approval.
- Arrangements for the management of the grant have been agreed between all institutions associated with the application.
- The application is being submitted with the full authority of, and on behalf of, the Administering Institution, noting that under section 136.1 of the *Commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995*, it is an offence to provide false or misleading information to a Commonwealth body in an application for a benefit. This includes submission of an application by those not authorised by the Institution to submit applications for funding to NHMRC.

Administering Institutions must ensure that the RAO is authorised to certify and submit applications.

7.8. Retracted publications

If a publication relevant to an application is retracted after the application has been submitted, the applicant must promptly notify their RAO. The RAO must advise NHMRC at the earliest opportunity of the retraction by email (help@nhmrc.gov.au) with an explanation of the reasons for the retraction.

In addition, where the publication forms part of the applicant's track record, the applicant must immediately record that information in their Profile in Sapphire.

If an application is largely dependent on the results of a retracted publication, the applicant should also consider withdrawing the application. If, under these circumstances, an applicant chooses not to withdraw the application, the RAO must advise NHMRC in writing (to help@nhmrc.gov.au), clearly outlining the reasons for not withdrawing the application.

7.9. Withdrawal of applications

Applications may be withdrawn at any time by written notice from the Administering Institution's RAO to NHMRC.

An application may be 'marked for deletion' by the applicant in Sapphire before the close of the round. This authorises NHMRC to delete the application once the grant opportunity has closed. The application will not be deleted while the grant opportunity remains open for application submission.

7.10. Questions during the application process

Applicants requiring further assistance should direct enquiries to their Administering Institution's RAO.

All policy enquiries must be submitted in writing by the Administering Institution's RAO to NHMRC's Research Help Centre. Policy enquiries from applicants will be re-directed to the RAO.

NHMRC's Research Help Centre details:

Phone: 1800 500 983 (+61 2 6217 9451 for international callers)

Email: help@nhmrc.gov.au

Refer to the [Research Help Centre webpage](#) for opening hours.

8. The grant selection process

8.1. Assessment of grant applications

NHMRC considers applications through a targeted competitive grant process. Applications are required to meet eligibility requirements as set out in these guidelines and are assessed against the assessment criteria (see section 6) by independent peer reviewers.

The extent to which applications represent value for money is considered as part of the broader category descriptors at [Appendix B](#), which includes assessment of applications against the scheme's objectives and intended outcomes (see section 2), the quality of the proposed research and the capability of the applicant(s).

8.1.1. Who will assess applications?

NHMRC's peer review process is designed to provide a rigorous, fair, transparent and consistent assessment of the merits of each application to ensure that only the highest quality, value with money research is recommended for funding.

Applicants must not seek to identify or make contact about their application with anyone who is directly engaged with its assessment, in keeping with NHMRC's principles of impartial and independent peer review. Seeking to influence the process or outcomes of peer review may constitute a breach of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) and may result in the application being excluded from consideration.

8.1.2. CRE assessment process

NHMRC will conduct peer review for this funding round in accordance with the following principles:

- Fairness. Peer review processes are fair and seen to be fair by all involved.
- Transparency. All stages of peer review are transparent.
- Independence. Peer reviewers provide independent advice. There is also independent oversight of peer review processes by independent Chairs and Observers.
- Appropriateness and balance. The experience, expertise and operation of peer reviewers are appropriate to the goals and scale of the funding vehicle.
- Research community participation. Persons holding taxpayer-funded grants should willingly make themselves available to participate in peer review processes, including mentoring of junior researchers, whenever possible.
- Confidentiality. Participants respect that confidentiality is important to the fairness and robustness of peer review.
- Impartiality. Peer review is objective and impartial, with appropriate processes in place to manage real and perceived conflicts of interest (Col).
- Quality and excellence. NHMRC will continue to introduce evidence-based improvements into its processes to achieve the highest quality decision-making through peer review.

Peer reviewers will independently undertake an initial assessment of applications against the assessment criteria (see section 6).

The outcome of this review will be used to create a shortlist of applications that are then assessed against the assessment criteria by a panel of peer reviewers. The overall scores from the panel assessment will be used to produce a rank ordered list of applications, on which funding recommendations will be based.

Further information on the assessment process is on the [NHMRC website](#).

8.2. Who will approve grants?

In accordance with paragraph 7(1)(c) of the NHMRC Act, NHMRC's CEO makes recommendations on expenditure from the MREA to the Minister with portfolio responsibility for NHMRC. The Minister, acting on the advice of the CEO, determines expenditure from the MREA (paragraph 51 (2) of the NHMRC Act).

9. Notification of application outcomes

NHMRC will advise applicants and their nominated Administering Institution's RAO of the outcome of the application as early as possible, following the approval of grants. Advice of outcomes may occur before the approval of grants if an application has been assessed as uncompetitive or excluded for other reasons.

NHMRC may advise applicants and their Administering Institution's RAO of the outcome under embargo. This means that the information must not be made public until the embargo is lifted. During the embargo period, applicants must not publicise the information or post comments about the grant outcomes in public domains such as social forums, websites, journals or newspapers. [NHMRC's website](#) provides further information on what can and cannot happen where information on a grant is released under embargo.

10. Successful grant applications

CIAs whose applications are approved for funding will have access to a letter of offer through Sapphire. Administering Institutions responsible for administering approved applications will also have access to the letter of offer and to the Schedule to the Funding Agreement. The Administering Institution is responsible for accepting the Schedule through the online signing/acceptance process within Sapphire.

NHMRC's CEO or delegate may withdraw or vary an offer of a grant if they consider that it is reasonably necessary to protect Commonwealth revenue.

10.1. Information required from grantees

Grantees may be required to supply additional information about their grant activity before payments commence. This will be stated in the letter of offer.

10.2. Obligations and approvals

NHMRC-funded grant activities must comply with applicable guidelines, laws and approval requirements. For further information see [NHMRC's website](#).

The University Foreign Interference Taskforce [Guidelines to counter foreign interference in the Australian university sector](#) (UFIT Guidelines) have been developed to protect the university sector against foreign interference. NHMRC has determined that these Guidelines are to be implemented by all NHMRC Administering Institutions, including non-university institutions.

Institutions applying for NHMRC funding (both Administering and Participating Institutions) must also be aware of their obligations under the [National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse – Grant Connected Policy](#). Relevant institutions which have been named in an application for the Redress Scheme or named in the Royal Commission, and which have not joined the Redress Scheme, will be ineligible to access NHMRC funding.

NOTE: NHMRC research with ethics and biosafety considerations must be referred for approval to the relevant institutional committees and approval bodies.

10.3. NHMRC Funding Agreement

All grants are offered in accordance with the Funding Agreement (with any conditions specified in Schedules and these Grant Guidelines), which is a legal agreement between NHMRC and the Administering Institution. Schedule(s) are accepted by the Administering Institution electronically in accordance with the provisions of the Funding Agreement.

Details of the Funding Agreement can be found on [NHMRC's website](#) under Funding Agreement and Deeds of Agreement. A grant will not commence, nor grant funds be paid, until:

- the Funding Agreement between NHMRC and the Administering Institution is in place, and
- the appropriate Schedule to the Funding Agreement is executed in accordance with clause 2.3 of the Funding Agreement.

10.3.1. Responsible and ethical conduct of research

NHMRC expects the highest levels of research conduct and integrity to be observed in the research that it funds. Under the Funding Agreement, NHMRC funded research must be conducted in accordance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*. Further information about the Code can be found on [NHMRC's website](#).

10.4. NHMRC policies

Under the Funding Agreement, it is the responsibility of Administering Institutions and CIs to be aware of, and comply with, all relevant legislation and policies relating to the conduct of the grant activity.

For further information see [NHMRC's website](#).

10.5. Payments

Payments will commence once all outstanding obligations (e.g. conditions, eligibility rules or data requirements specified in the Schedule to the Funding Agreement, relevant grant guidelines or letter of offer) have been met by the CIA and the Administering Institution.

10.6. Suspension of grants

NHMRC funding may be suspended for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, requests made by the CIA. Variations will generally only be granted if allowed in the grant guidelines and the *NHMRC Grantee Variation Policy* available on the [NHMRC website](#).

Funding may also be suspended by NHMRC, in circumstances as set out in the Funding Agreement, including when there has been a failure to comply with a Policy or Guideline, or on the basis of a Probity Event or an investigation of an alleged breach of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (including research misconduct, where this term is used).

10.7. Tax implications

All amounts referred to in these Grant Guidelines are exclusive of GST, unless stated otherwise. Administering Institutions are responsible for all financial and taxation matters associated with the grant.

11. Announcement of grants

Grant outcomes are publicly listed on the [GrantConnect website](#) within 21 calendar days after the date of effect as required by the CGRGs.

12. How NHMRC monitors grant activity

12.1. Variations

A variation is a change (including a delay) to a grant. There are specific circumstances under which grantees are to report and seek approval of a variation to an NHMRC grant (including the grant activity) relative to the peer reviewed application. Requests must comply with the grant guidelines and the *NHMRC Grantee Variations Policy*. Requests to vary the terms of a grant are to be made to NHMRC via the Grantee Variation portal in Sapphire. For information on grant variations see the *NHMRC Grantee Variations Policy* available on the [NHMRC website](#).

Note that CIs are expected to remain on the grant for the full funding period and NHMRC will only approve changes to CIs in exceptional circumstances. Before a CIA applies for a grant variation, they and the relevant RAO will need to confirm that all CIs have agreed to the variation, noting the impact that it may have on their suite of grants and their eligibility to hold/apply for other grants. Grant variations cannot be used as a means to meet NHMRC eligibility requirements.

12.2. Reporting

Administering Institutions are required to report to NHMRC on the progress of the grant and the use of grant funds. Where an institution fails to submit reports (financial or otherwise) as required, NHMRC may take action under the provisions of the Funding Agreement. Failure to report within timeframes may affect eligibility to receive future funding.

12.2.1. Financial reports

Annual financial reports are required in a form prescribed by NHMRC. At the completion of the grant or upon transfer to a new Administering Institution, a financial acquittal is also required. Refer to [NHMRC's website](#) for details of format and timing.

12.2.2. Non-financial reports

The Funding Agreement requires the CIA to prepare reports for each grant activity. Scientific reporting requirements can be found on [NHMRC's website](#). While having outstanding obligations from previous NHMRC grants does not disqualify applicants from applying for other NHMRC grants, it is a condition of funding that outstanding obligations from previous NHMRC grants, including submission of a Final Report, have been met prior to acceptance of a new grant.

Information included in the Final Report may be publicly released. Use of this information may include publication on [NHMRC's website](#), publicity (including release to the media) and the promotion of research achievements.

All information provided to NHMRC in reports may be used for internal reporting and reporting to government. This information may also be used by NHMRC when reviewing or evaluating funded research projects or funding schemes, or designing future schemes.

12.2.3. Registration of clinical trials

Research involving clinical trials must be registered in the Australian New Zealand Clinical Trials Registry (ANZCTR) or equivalent before recruitment of the first participant. Information on how to register your clinical trial is available at www.anzctr.org.au. Cohort studies can be registered in the ANZCTR and successful grantees are encouraged to register their study with the registry, if applicable.

12.3. Evaluation of the CRE scheme

NHMRC undertakes periodic evaluations of the performance and administration of its grant opportunities to determine their effectiveness and to identify where improvements can be made.

12.4. Open Access Policy

NHMRC supports the sharing of outputs from NHMRC funded research including publications and data. The aims of NHMRC's *Open Access Policy* are to mandate the open access sharing of publications and encourage innovative open access to research data. This policy also requires that patents resulting from NHMRC funding be made findable through listing in SourceIP. NHMRC's *Open Access Policy* is available on [NHMRC's website](#).

Combined, these approaches will help to increase reuse of data, improve research integrity and contribute to a stronger knowledge economy. Open access will also assist with reporting and demonstration of research achievement, improve track record assessment processes for the long term and contribute to better collaborations.

All recipients of NHMRC grants must comply with all elements of NHMRC's *Open Access Policy* as a condition of funding.

13. Probity

13.1. Complaints process

Applicants or grantees can lodge a formal complaint about an NHMRC process related to funding via the Administering Institution's RAO and in writing to NHMRC Complaints Team at: complaints@nhmrc.gov.au. Complaints must be lodged within 28 days of the relevant NHMRC decision or action. NHMRC will provide a written response to all complaints. NHMRC will not review the merits of a funding decision, but it will investigate complaints about the administrative process followed to reach a funding decision.

If applicants or grantees are dissatisfied with the response from the NHMRC Complaints Team, you can raise your concerns with the NHMRC Commissioner of Complaints (the Commissioner). Note that the Commissioner of Complaints does not undertake a merits review. Refer to NHMRC's Complaints Policy and the Commissioner of Complaints [webpage](#) for further information.

Applicants or grantees can complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman if they do not agree with the way NHMRC has handled their complaint. The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with NHMRC and, where relevant, the Commissioner of Complaints.

13.2. Conflicts of Interest

NHMRC is committed to ensuring that interests of any kind are dealt with consistently, transparently and with rigour, in accordance with sections 16A and 16B of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (made under the subsection 29(2) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act)).

Applicants are not required to declare actual or perceived interests.

To manage any conflicts of interest with applicants, NHMRC requires peer review participants to declare interests, actual or perceived, and sign deeds of confidentiality. Peer review participants declare any direct or indirect, pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest, which is reviewed by NHMRC, prior to being granted full access to an application. Any peer reviewer who is determined by NHMRC to have a 'high' conflict of interest will not be able to participate in the review of that application.

By managing any conflict, NHMRC maintains objectivity, impartiality and integrity in the assessment of applications. Further information relating to the conflict of interest process is available in the *Centres of Research Excellence 2022 Peer Review Guidelines*.

13.3. Privacy: confidentiality and protection of personal information

NHMRC treats applicants' personal information in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles, and the *Privacy Act 1988*. The [NHMRC Privacy Policy](#) details the types of personal or sensitive information that may be collected by NHMRC and how it will be handled. Applicants need to familiarise themselves with the NHMRC Privacy Policy before providing personal information to NHMRC.

Information that is generally regarded as confidential information is application information and any other information specifically identified as such by applicants and grantees, and will be received by NHMRC on the basis of a mutual understanding of confidentiality.

NHMRC may disclose personal and/or confidential information to:

- overseas entities, Australian, State/Territory or local government agencies, organisations or individuals where necessary to assess an application or to administer a grant
- the peer review committee and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help NHMRC manage the grant scheme effectively
- employees and contractors of NHMRC to research, assess, monitor and analyse schemes and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in reports and consultations
- NHMRC approved Administering Institutions' Research Administration Offices
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, and
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

In addition, NHMRC will provide certain limited personal information of the Chief Investigator/s included in an application to Administering Institutions for the purpose of certification of eligibility requirements.

13.4. Freedom of Information

NHMRC as a Commonwealth agency is subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and is committed to meeting the Australian Government's transparency and accountability requirements. Freedom of Information laws facilitate the general public's access to documents held by national government agencies, including application and funding documentation relating to NHMRC researchers. This right of access is limited where documents, or parts of documents, are exempt under the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Researchers are to familiarise themselves with NHMRC's Freedom of Information procedures before submitting an application. Further information on the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, NHMRC's Freedom of Information application process and relevant contacts can be found on the [NHMRC website](#).

14. Glossary

Term	Definition
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent	Identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent follows the advice given on the AIATSIS website . This states that government agencies and communities usually accept three 'working criteria' as confirmation of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent • identifying as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, and • being accepted as such by the community in which you live, or formerly lived.
assessment criteria	The specified principles or standards against which applications will be judged. These criteria are used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive granting opportunity, to determine applicant rankings.
date of effect	This will depend on the particular grant. It can be the date the schedule to a grant agreement is executed or the announcement of the grant, whichever is later.
eligibility criteria	The principles, standards or rules that a grant applicant must meet to qualify for consideration of a grant.
<i>Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017 (CGRGs)</i>	The CGRGs establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration.
final year	The final 12 calendar months of a grant.
Funding Agreement	For NHMRC MREA grants, the grant agreement is the NHMRC Funding Agreement and the Schedule to the Funding Agreement. It is available on NHMRC's website .
grant	As defined in the NHMRC Funding Agreement.

Term	Definition
grant activity	Defined as “Research Activity” in the NHMRC Funding Agreement.
GrantConnect	<p>GrantConnect is the Australian Government’s whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs. It is available at www.grants.gov.au.</p> <p>Non-corporate Commonwealth entities must publish grant opportunities on GrantConnect to meet the grant publishing requirements under the CGRGs.</p> <p>Where information is published in more than one location, and there are inconsistencies, GrantConnect is the authoritative, auditable information source.</p>
grant opportunity	A notice published on GrantConnect advertising the availability of Commonwealth grants.
grant program	A group of one or more grant opportunities under a single entity Portfolio Budget Statement Program. This is referred to as a scheme in this document.
Grantee	An individual/organisation that has been awarded a grant. For NHMRC’s purposes, grants are awarded to the Administering Institution for the benefit of the grant recipients (however described).
Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA)	The purpose of the MREA is to provide assistance to Federal and State Government Departments, institutions, universities and/or persons engaged in medical research.
Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF)	<p>The MRFF was established on 26 August 2015 by the <i>Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015</i> (MRFF Act). Refer to the Department of Health website:</p> <p>https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/medical-research-future-fund</p>
peer reviewers	Individuals (peers) with appropriate knowledge and expertise who review grant applications.
Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) Program	Described within the entity’s PBS, PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be Grant Programs (schemes). A PBS Program may have more than one Grant Program (scheme) associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities.
Probity Event	As defined in the NHMRC Funding Agreement.

Term	Definition
Sapphire	NHMRC's electronic, secure system that allows research administrators, applicants, assessors, grant holders and NHMRC staff to manage all aspects of the granting lifecycle.
Schedule	As defined in the NHMRC Funding Agreement.

Appendix A. NHMRC structural priorities

A1 NHMRC key structural priorities

Each year, NHMRC identifies key structural priorities for funding to help achieve its broader goals. Applications that meet structural priorities may be funded in order of merit, supplementary to applications within the budget for the grant opportunity, based on advice from NHMRC's Research Committee. NHMRC's current key structural priorities are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research and researchers,
- female lead investigators.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research and researchers

NHMRC is committed to improving the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and encourages applications that address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. Accordingly, NHMRC is committed to allocating at least five per cent of the annual allocation from its Medical Research Endowment Account to research directed at improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Support for health and medical research and research translation is central to achieving improvements in this area. It is also important to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers and recognise the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, and how this diversity relates to health issues in these communities.

Applicants identifying as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent are asked to indicate this in their Sapphire profile.

Identification of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent follows the advice provided on the [AIATSIS website](#). This states that government agencies and communities usually accept three 'working criteria' as confirmation of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, namely:

- being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- identifying as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, and
- being accepted as such by the community in which you live, or formerly lived.

Administering Institutions must retain evidence, consistent with AIATSIS guidance, of a Chief Investigator A's identification as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person and must provide this evidence to NHMRC, if requested.

Female Lead Investigators

Funding outcomes have highlighted the underrepresentation of female chief investigators across many of NHMRC's funding schemes. By providing structural priority funding for female lead investigators, NHMRC is seeking to give more outstanding female researchers the opportunity to receive funding and to encourage more to apply.

Appendix B. Centres of Research Excellence 2022 Category Descriptors

The following category descriptors are used as a guide to scoring an application against each of the assessment criteria. Note that all criteria have equal weighting. Categories 1–3 are not fundable. Categories 4–7 are potentially fundable, subject to the availability of funds.

While the category descriptors provide peer reviewers with some benchmarks for appropriately scoring each application, it is not essential that all descriptors relating to a given score are met.

The category descriptors are a guide to a “best fit” outcome. Peer reviewers will consistently refer to these category descriptors to ensure thorough, equitable and transparent assessment of applications.

It is recognised that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants often make additional valuable contributions to policy development, clinical/public health leadership and/or service delivery, community activities and linkages, and are often representatives on key committees. If applicable, these contributions will be considered when assessing research output and track record.

Criterion 1. Generate new knowledge that leads to improved health outcomes

- clarity of research objectives, and theoretical concepts
- strengths and weaknesses of the research design(s), or the appropriateness and robustness of the proposed methodology/ies or appropriateness of the broader strategy of the research program of the Centre
- feasibility of the proposed research
- aims and concepts of the research are innovative or pioneering on an international level
- likelihood that significant new findings will be produced and substantially advance knowledge in the field.

Score	Performance Indicator	Category Descriptors
7	Exceptional	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has objectives that are well-defined, highly coherent and strongly developed • is exemplary in design • is state of the art in concept • will be the subject of invited plenary presentations at international meetings, often with relevance across several fields • is highly innovative and introduces advances in concept • is highly feasible.
6	Outstanding	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is clear in its intent and logical • has an outstanding design • is appropriate for the experience level of the applicant and team • could be the subject of invited plenary presentations at international and national meetings • is innovative with respect to the question being addressed and the approach to it • is highly feasible.
5	Excellent	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has clear objectives • any reservations regarding study design are minor • could be the subject of invited plenary presentations at national specialty meetings • contains innovative ideas • will likely be successfully achieved.
4	Very Good	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is sound in terms of its objectives • may have some novel aspects, while others underpin or extend existing knowledge • has areas of minor concern in the experimental design and/or its feasibility.

3	Good	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is satisfactory in terms of its objectives, but may not be successful with all of them • contains some study design problems or flaws • has a number of areas of concern • has relatively little novelty or innovation.
2	Satisfactory	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides a program of research which will at best, only incrementally advance current knowledge • contains a study design which is inadequate in a number of areas • is not innovative or significant • contains a research plan which does not seem to be feasible in some areas.
1	Weak or Limited	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will not advance current knowledge in the field • contains a study design which is inappropriate in most areas • is not innovative or significant • raises major concerns about the feasibility of the research plan.

Criterion 2. Promote effective transfer of research outcomes into health policy and/or practice		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the quality of the plan for research translation plans for promoting the Centre's activities to the wider community, including where appropriate, for commercial gain the involvement of consumers and the community in the planning, implementation and uptake of the research program. 		
Score	Performance Indicator	Category Descriptors
7	Exceptional	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses an issue of utmost importance to human health will translate into fundamental outcomes in the science and/or practice of clinical medicine or public health or fundamental changes in health policy will lead to published research that will be highly influential in the promotion of change in policy and/or practice has exceptional involvement of consumers and the community in all key project phases: priority-setting; design and development; governance; communication and implementation.
6	Outstanding	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses an issue of major importance to human health is highly likely to translate into fundamental outcomes in the science and/or practice of clinical medicine or public health or fundamental changes in health policy will lead to published research that should be very influential in the promotion of change in policy and/or practice has extensive involvement of consumers and the community in all key phases of the project.
5	Excellent	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses an issue of considerable importance to human health is likely to translate into fundamental outcomes in the science and/or practice of clinical medicine or public health or fundamental changes in health policy will lead to published research influential in the promotion of change in policy and/or practice has relatively extensive involvement of consumers and the community in all key phases of the project.
4	Very Good	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses an issue of some importance to human health has potential to translate into fundamental outcomes in the science and/or practice of clinical medicine or public health or fundamental changes in health policy will lead to published research which may be influential in the promotion of change in policy and/or practice has some involvement of consumers and the community in all key phases of the project.
3	Good	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses an issue of some concern to human health will lead to published research which may be influential in the promotion of change in policy and/or practice has some involvement of consumers and the community but not in all key phases of the project.

2	Satisfactory	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addresses an issue of only marginal concern to human health • only follows behind previously well documented and studied concepts or previously well used approaches • will lead to published research that is unlikely to be influential in the promotion of change in policy and/or practice • raises concerns about successful completion • has little involvement of consumers and the community.
1	Weak or Limited	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not address an issue of concern to human health • is unlikely to be completed successfully • will lead to publication of research that will not be influential in the promotion of change in policy and/or practice • has virtually no involvement of consumers and the community.

Criterion 3. Develop the health and medical research workforce by providing opportunities to advance the training of new researchers, particularly those with a capacity for independent research and future leadership roles

- strategy to generate new researcher capability, mentoring and encouragement of further career development
- clarity of measures for integrating new researchers into the teams including mentoring strategies.

Score	Performance Indicator	Category Descriptors
7	Exceptional	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes an exceptional strategy to generate new researcher capability, mentoring and career development • includes impressive measures for integrating new researchers into teams.
6	Outstanding	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes a well-articulated strategy to generate new researcher capability, mentoring and career development • includes well-articulated measures for integrating new researchers into teams.
5	Excellent	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes a persuasive strategy to generate new researcher capability, mentoring and career development • includes articulated measures for integrating new researchers into teams.
4	Very Good	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes a sound strategy to generate new researcher capability, mentoring and career development • includes articulated measures that should integrate new researchers into teams.
3	Good	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes a strategy that should generate new researcher capability, mentoring and career development • includes few measures to integrate new researchers into teams.
2	Satisfactory	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes a weak strategy to generate new researcher capability, mentoring and career development • has few viable measures to integrate new researchers into teams.
1	Weak or Limited	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not articulate a viable strategy to generate new researcher capability, mentoring and career development • has few if any measures to integrate new researchers into teams.

Criterion 4. Facilitate collaboration

Teams are required to outline past and/or proposed collaborative arrangements within the applicant team, and address the means whereby the collaborators will ensure the cohesive running of the research during its funding period, including but not limited to:

- likely effectiveness of working collaborations and intellectual exchange
- the relationship with other groups in the particular field of research
- integration and cohesiveness of the team.

Score	Performance Indicator	Category Descriptors
7	Exceptional	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would be highly effective in promoting working collaborations and intellectual exchange • has very strong relationships with other researchers • has an exceptional degree of team integration and cohesiveness • clearly articulates the roles and responsibilities within the team for achieving the objectives of the project.
6	Outstanding	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would be highly effective in promoting working collaborations and intellectual exchange • has strong relationships with other researchers • has a very high degree of team integration and cohesiveness • articulates the roles and responsibilities within the team for achieving the objectives of the project.
5	Excellent	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would be effective in promoting working collaborations and intellectual exchange • has good relationships with other researchers • has a high degree of team integration and cohesiveness • articulates the roles and responsibilities for most of the team for achieving the objectives of the project.
4	Very Good	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would be reasonably effective in promoting working collaborations and intellectual exchange • has positive relationships with other researchers • has a good degree of team integration and cohesiveness • articulates the roles and responsibilities of some of the team for achieving the objectives of the project.
3	Good	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would have some effectiveness in promoting working collaborations and intellectual exchange • has some viable relationships with other researchers, although weak • has some degree of team integration and cohesiveness • requires further clarification of the roles and responsibilities within the team for achieving the objectives of the project.
2	Satisfactory	The proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may be effective in promoting working collaborations and intellectual exchange • has little evidence of relationships with other researchers • has minimal team integration and cohesiveness • requires further clarification of the roles and responsibilities within the team for achieving the objectives of the project.

1	Weak or Limited	<p>The proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• raises doubts about its effectiveness in promoting working collaborations and intellectual exchange• has no evidence of relationships with other researchers• has little or no evidence of team integration and cohesiveness• does not define the roles and responsibilities of team members for achieving the objectives of the project.
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Criterion 5. Record of research and translation achievement – relative to opportunity

This criterion assesses whether the previous research and translation experience of applicants demonstrates that the team has the appropriate mix of research skills and experience to deliver the proposed project.

Record of achievement encompasses the national and international standing of the applicants based upon their research and translation achievements, relative to opportunity, including but not limited to:

- research outputs – most recent significant publications; publications that illustrate innovation and significance of past accomplishments; outcome and impact of previous research achievements, including effects on health care practices or policy
- contribution to discipline or area – invitations to speak at international meetings, editorial appointments, specialist and high level health policy committee appointments
- evidence of research translation, such as: influence on clinical/health policy or practice; provision of influential advice to health authorities and government; impacts on health via the broad dissemination of research outcomes e.g. via mainstream media, the community or industry involvement.

Score	Performance Indicator	Category Descriptors
7	Exceptional	Relative to opportunity, the applicants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are generally the most outstanding translation-oriented researchers in the country for their peers/cohort • have very strong records of research and translation achievements • have strong international reputations or are well on the way to developing them • hold leadership positions in highly regarded scientific or professional societies • are highly recognised for their contribution to their field of research, including those promoting knowledge translation.
6	Outstanding	Relative to opportunity, the applicants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a record of translation-oriented research achievement that places them in the top 10-20% of peers/cohort • have a growing international reputation • have established a position of leadership, or are emerging leaders, in their field • hold leadership positions in well regarded scientific or professional societies • are well recognised for their contribution to their field of research, including those promoting knowledge translation.
5	Excellent	Relative to opportunity, the applicants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a record of translation-oriented research achievement, that places them well above average for their peers/cohort • have a growing national reputation and their research appears frequently at national meetings • are well recognised for their contribution to their field of research, including those promoting knowledge translation.
4	Very Good	Relative to opportunity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the applicants have a solid record of translation-oriented research achievement • one or more of the CIs has an existing or emerging national reputation • the applicants have made valued contributions to their field of research, including those promoting knowledge translation.
3	Good	Relative to opportunity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the applicants have a moderate record of translation-oriented research achievement • one or more of the CIs has an existing or emerging national reputation, albeit in a niche area • the applicants have made contributions to their field of research, including those promoting knowledge translation.

2	Satisfactory	<p>Relative to opportunity, the applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a weak record of translation-oriented research achievement • have published a number of works in a field relevant to this application in the last 5 years, but many have been less productive than might reasonably be expected • are deficient in some areas of expertise that will be required to successfully complete the proposed research • have limited track records in the field of the proposed research, including those promoting knowledge translation.
1	Weak or Limited	<p>Relative to opportunity, the applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are not productive in a research translation sense to any significant extent in relevant fields • have not published more than a few works in other relevant fields of research • are heavily underpowered in terms of relevant expertise required to successfully complete the research program.

Rating - The final rating will be determined by calculating the average of each voting member's score for each of the five equally weighted assessment criteria. The final rating, as calculated arithmetically to three decimal places, will then be used to determine the category.

Category - this will be determined based on the calculated rating, as follows:

Rating Range	Category
6.501 – 7.000	Category 7
5.501 – 6.500	Category 6
4.501 – 5.500	Category 5
3.501 – 4.500	Category 4
2.501 – 3.500	Category 3
1.501 – 2.500	Category 2
1.001 – 1.500	Category 1

Appendix C. Centres of Research Excellence 2022 Guide to Applicants

1. Preparing an Application

The following sections provide additional advice about parts of the application that are specific to the Centres of Research Excellence (CRE) 2022 grant opportunity.

- Refer to the [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#) for general instructions on how to apply for a grant in Sapphire.
- CRE 2022 scheme-specific policy and instructions for applying in Sapphire (grey boxes) are provided in this Appendix.
- For further assistance during the application process, see section 7 'How to apply' of the Guidelines.

2. Application Requirements

A complete application is comprised of:

- Completed mandatory sections of 'My Profile' ([Appendix C](#) section 3) and 'My Profile' Requirements for CRE 2022 ([Appendix C](#) section 4)
- Completed application form ([Appendix C](#) section 5)
- Grant Proposal as an attachment ([Appendix C](#) section 5.7).

Applications must comply with all requirements as set out in the Guidelines. Failure to adhere to any of these requirements may result in non-acceptance or exclusion of your application (see section 4 'Eligibility' of the Guidelines).

2.1 Use of gender neutral language

The aim of [NHMRC's Gender Equality Strategy \(2018–2021\)](#) is to achieve a gender-equal health and medical research workforce by supporting an increase in the retention and progression of women. Using gender-neutral language is one strategy to support this goal, serving to de-emphasise gender in the assessment of grant applications and reduce the potential impact of unconscious bias.

NHMRC strongly encourages the use of gender-neutral language in applications. This means that, wherever possible and appropriate, applicants should avoid the use of words that reveal their gender or the gender of team members. These words include (but are not limited to) her, him, she, he, Mr, Ms, Mrs and Miss, as well as first names and terms such as 'maternity leave'.

It is recognised that there will be instances where reference to the gender of applicants or team members is unavoidable or desirable.

However, wherever possible and relevant, applicants should:

- use the first person, i.e. I/me/my, rather than referring to themselves in the third person, or if third person is preferred, then use CI last-name or CIA
- use CIB, CIC, etc. or plural pronouns, i.e. their/they, when referring to others, rather than he/she or her/his
- use the format 'CI last-name', e.g. CI Jones, rather than using first names when referring to individuals
- use gender-neutral nouns, e.g. researcher, staff, etc., including when completing career disruption information, if relevant, e.g. parental leave, rather than maternity/paternity leave,

- review the application for instances of ‘masculine form by default’ prior to submission and remove them, e.g., ‘every team member will manage his data according to this protocol’ can instead use the plural pronoun *their*.

Note the aim is to de-emphasise **applicant** gender. Where gender is important for the research being proposed, it should be included in the application.

2.2 Minimum Data Requirements

Minimum data must be entered in Sapphire by the specified due date. Applicants must complete the required fields with correct information and are discouraged from making changes to this information after minimum data close. NHMRC uses this information to identify peer reviewers who are best suited to assess the application.

Minimum data are indicated in Sapphire by a blue flag (🚩), and are comprised of:

- Administering Institution
- CRE stream
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Research Focus (yes/no)
- Project synopsis
- Privacy agreement
- Research Classification:
 - Broad research area
 - Field(s) of research
 - Peer Review Areas
 - Research keywords
- Chief Investigator A (complete CIA Role and Name)

Minimum data must be entered into Sapphire by 17:00 ACT local time on 17 November 2021. Applicants are to refer to section 7.3 ‘Minimum data requirements’ of the Guidelines for further information.

Failure to meet this deadline will result in the application not proceeding.

Research Administration Officers (RAOs) are not required to certify applications for the purpose of minimum data. Applications only require certification once complete and ready for submission to NHMRC.

3. ‘My Profile’ Requirements

Within an applicant’s profile in Sapphire, there is mandatory information that must be provided and/or updated prior to submitting an application (see section 7 ‘How to apply’ of the Guidelines). This information includes personal details, academic/research interests, and peer review information.

Mandatory Profile information is indicated by a red asterisk in Sapphire (*). This requirement applies to all Chief Investigators (CIs) named on the application. Please verify that each of the CIs has completed and/or updated their profiles before an application is certified, noting that an error message will appear when a CI is added as a team member, if they have not completed all mandatory fields in their Profile. Existing NHMRC grant holders cannot commence or be named on an application until all mandatory ‘My Profile’ fields are complete.

3.1 About My Profile

Provide your primary institution name under Primary Institution. If this is an Administering Institution, the Research Administration Officers will have access to view your profile; you may also allow the RAO to edit your profile.

Note: to update your Primary Institution name in Sapphire, you will need to go to 'Account Settings', 'Personal details' and click on 'Primary Institution'.

3.2 Personal Information

Provide your most current details in this section. It is important that your title, names, phone and email details are up to date as these are the details on which NHMRC relies to contact you.

3.3 Academic Information

Indicate whether you have a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), and if applicable, the pass date (year) of your thesis (not the date of conferral).

3.4 Peer Review Information

Select a Broad Research Area, 5 - 10 Research Keywords most applicable to your main area of research, and up to 3 Peer Review Areas (PRA) that best describe your research interests. You can also provide further detail about your research interests or areas of expertise. This could include, but is not limited to, your research methodologies, student supervision and areas in which you have published.

You can add as many Fields of Research as required. Indicate when you started your research in that field, the classification of the research (e.g. primary), and whether the research is current or terminated. Individuals are encouraged to list all Fields of Research. Only current Fields of Research will be displayed.

Note: An opportunity is provided in the application to select research areas, fields of research and keywords that best describe your research proposal, as opposed to your personal research interests. The above information will not determine the peer reviewers selected for your application.

3.5 Unavailability Calendar

Peer Review is an integral part of NHMRC funding schemes. NHMRC grant recipients have obligations to contribute to the assessment of applications (as outlined in the *NHMRC Funding Agreement*). If you are not available to act as a peer reviewer, please provide a statement detailing your reasons, and the period for which you are unavailable. To maintain the list of available peer reviewers within Sapphire, NHMRC requests that all applicants update their availability routinely. This will avoid unnecessary contact if you are unavailable.

3.6 Contributions to NHMRC

Please indicate in which role you have contributed to NHMRC, if you have previously participated in an advisory, peer review, guideline development or other NHMRC activity requiring expert stakeholder input via formal appointment.

Click '+' to start a new entry to specify the below:

- Select a 'Contribution Role', from the drop down menu
- Indicate the year in which you held the Contribution Role.
- Indicate the number of times you acted in that role in each year.

You will need to create a new entry for each type of contribution in a particular year.

4. 'My Profile' Requirements specific to CRE 2022

The following sections provide advice about parts of the application that are specific to the CRE 2022 grant opportunity. For the purposes of this grant opportunity, you are only required to complete the sections outlined below. If you enter more information than is required, only the required information will be imported into your application.

It is important that relevant 'My Profile' information (for all CIs) is up to date at the time of application submission, as it is used to contact applicants, imported into the application and used by peer reviewers. It may also be used for analyses of NHMRC's funding profile and to capture grant outcomes. 'My Profile' information can be updated at any time. However, any changes made to 'My Profile' (for any CI) after Chief Investigator A (CIA) certification will not appear in the submitted application.

Instructions for entering 'My Profile' information in Sapphire are provided in the [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#).

Note: You are required to list research outputs in relevant subsections of your profile. You are encouraged to link the entered research output to NHMRC Grant IDs, where applicable.

4.1 My Grants

This section is for internal purposes and will not be taken into account by peer reviewers when assessing applications.

NHMRC grants accepted by you are automatically pre-populated. However, you will need to verify this information and notify the help desk if there are any discrepancies.

4.2 Other Funding

This section is for internal purposes and will not be taken into account by peer reviewers when assessing applications.

Click '+' to start a new entry of any previous and/or current funding from sources other than NHMRC, including offers received for future funding. Provide as many details as you can in the spaces provided. Ensure that your role is clearly defined on each grant. Entries will be listed in reverse chronological order.

4.3 Career Disruptions (within the last 5 years)

NHMRC is committed to ensuring that every applicant is treated fairly, and this means that it recognises some applicants will have had career disruptions that need to be considered when evaluating their track record and eligibility. If applicable, applicants should use this opportunity to declare any career disruptions that may be relevant to their career history.

The period of career disruption may be used to determine an applicant's eligibility for a grant opportunity or to allow additional track record information to be considered during assessment.

Career Disruption

A career disruption is defined as a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work due to pregnancy, major illness/injury and/or carer responsibilities. For guidance on what constitutes a career disruption and how it is considered, refer to NHMRC's [Relative to Opportunity Policy](#).

Career disruption claims will not be considered for applications that fail to comply with the following requirements:

The last 5 years of Career Disruptions will be included for each CI and provided to peer reviewers for assessment.

Disruption Type

To enter a Career Disruption, click '+'. Select a 'Disruption type' from the drop down menu.

Impact

Applicants are required to provide a brief explanation of the impact the career disruption(s) has had on their research, research achievements and associated productivity relative to their career stage. Do not describe the nature of the career disruption in this field.

Note that the information in this field will be provided to peer reviewers.

Additional Research Outputs

Provide details of publications only that you would like to claim in relation to this Career Disruption.

Dates

Applicants are required to nominate the periods when they have had a disruption (approximate dates). Entries will be listed in reverse chronological order.

4.4 [Relative to Opportunity \(within the last 5 years\)](#)

If applicable, the applicant can use this section to provide details of any [relative to opportunity](#) considerations and the effect they have had on their research and research achievements, including (but not limited to) interruptions due to calamities e.g. bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The last 5 years of Relative to Opportunity will be included for each CI and provided to peer reviewers for assessment.

Circumstances

Provide a brief explanation of the type of Relative to Opportunity circumstance.

Impact

Provide a brief explanation of the impact this has had on your research, research achievements and associated productivity relative to stage of career.

Date

You are required to nominate the periods where you have had a relative to opportunity circumstance (approximate dates). Entries will be listed in reverse chronological order.

4.5 Publications

Publication information can be uploaded manually, via ORCID import, or by exporting your EndNote® Library as an .xml file. Further details on how to upload publications are provided in the [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#). To manually create a new entry, click the '+' button.

NHMRC accepts ten types of publication: Accepted for Publication; Books/Chapters; Editorials; Journal Articles (Original Research); Journal Articles (Review); Letters to the Editor; Preprints; Research Report – commissioned by Government, Industry or Other; Technical Report; and Text Book.

A preprint is a complete and public draft of a scientific document, yet to be certified by a journal through peer review.

To be considered in this category, a preprint:

- must be available in a recognised scientific public archive or repository such as arXiv, bioRxiv, Peer J Preprints, F1000 Research, etc.
- should be searchable via a digital object identifier (DOI). For preprints that are incrementally updated as work progresses, each version should have a unique DOI and only the latest version of the work should be included in the grant application.

If the work contained in a preprint is subsequently published in a peer reviewed journal, this should be updated in the publication list in Sapphire to avoid double reporting of outputs (even though upon publication, many authors retain an Open Access 'post-print', or archive copy of their work in order to preserve and make available the intellectual content of their work).

The last 5 years of publications will be included in your CRE 2022 application and provided to peer reviewers for assessment. For CRE 2022 applications the 'last 5 years' is inclusive of the entirety of 2016.

5. Application Form Requirements

The following sections of the application form are specific to the CRE 2022 grant opportunity, and must be completed as part of your application. Step-by-step instructions for entering application details in Sapphire are provided in the [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#).

5.1 Creating an Application

Click '+ New Application' to create an application.

Grant Opportunity

Select the grant round you wish to apply for, e.g. 2022 Centres of Research Excellence.

Application Title

The application title will be used to identify the application at all times during the assessment process and needs to accurately describe the nature of the research proposal.

5.2 Application Details

All fields on this page marked with a flag (🚩) must be completed to meet minimum data requirements.

Application Identification Number (APP ID)

Each application will have its own unique Application Identification Number (Application ID), which is automatically generated by Sapphire and pre-filled in the application. Please use this Application ID number (e.g. 2345678) to identify your application when referring to it in any correspondence.

Administering Institution

Select your Administering Institution by entering three characters to start searching. There can be only one Administering Institution for each application. You must ensure that the institution you choose as your Administering Institution is the correct institution for your application. If in doubt, contact the RAO at your proposed Administering Institution.

Grant Duration

For a CRE 2022 application, select 5 years.

Stream

Select the CRE stream that best fits the broad research area of your research proposal; refer to section 2 'About the grant program' of the Guidelines for stream definitions.

Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander Health Research

This question enables you to identify research that specifically investigates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health issues. It is also designed to enable NHMRC to identify those research proposals that will require assessment of the proposed research against the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria*.

Only select 'Yes' if you can demonstrate that at least 20% of your research effort and capacity building relates to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

If you have answered 'Yes' to this question, you will be required to provide details of how your application addresses the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria* in the application form. Your application may be assessed against the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria*, using information you provide in the following text boxes; 'Community Engagement', 'Benefit', 'Sustainability and Transferability' and 'Build Capacity'.

Project Synopsis

The synopsis needs to accurately, and briefly, summarise the research proposal. This information may be used to assign applications to panels and peer reviewers. It may also be considered in the peer review process.

Plain English Summary

Describe the overall aims of the research and expected outcomes in simple terms that could be understood by the general public. Avoid the use of highly technical terms. This information may be used in grant announcements, media releases and other public documents, and by funding partners (where applicable) to determine whether the research proposal meets their priorities for funding.

Privacy Agreement

NHMRC, as an agency subject to the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), is required to notify you about our collection, use and disclosure of your personal information. We do so by referring you to the NHMRC Privacy Policy ([NHMRC Privacy Policy](#)). Please ensure that you have carefully read and understood the Privacy Policy prior to completing the application. If you require further clarification, please contact the NHMRC Privacy Contact Officer via email (NHMRC.Privacy@nhmrc.gov.au) or letter (NHMRC, GPO Box 1421, Canberra ACT 2601).

Have you read and understood the NHMRC Privacy Policy?

Select 'Yes' or 'No'.

In addition, and in accordance with Australian Privacy Principle 8 in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), we seek your consent to send your personal information (consisting of an "Assessor Snapshot Report") overseas, for the purposes of peer-review of this application if required. NHMRC uses the expertise of some peer assessors who reside overseas. While we take every effort to protect your personal

information, assessors outside Australia are bound by their own country's laws and consequently we cannot provide assurance that your information will be handled in accordance with the same standards as required by the Privacy Act 1988, or that you would have similar remedies if your personal information be released in breach of local privacy laws.

Select 'Yes' or 'No'.

Partner organisation consent

Do you give consent to provide your application and assessment results to other partner organisations?

Select 'Yes' or 'No'.

If you wish to be considered for funding by a partner organisation, select 'Yes'. By selecting 'Yes' you are consenting to NHMRC providing your application and/or assessment information to potential funding partners if your application fits the funding partner's research funding objectives. For a list of funding partners, please refer to this grant opportunity's information on [GrantConnect](#).

5.3 Participating Institutions

In some cases, the institution that will administer your application may differ from the institution in which you will actually conduct the proposed research or your proposed research may be conducted at a collaborating institution in addition to your administering institution. For example, many universities administer research which will be conducted in an affiliated teaching hospital. Information, on 'Participating Institutions', is required by NHMRC to enable peer reviewers to identify potential institutional conflicts with your application and for grant administration purposes.

Research Institution

List the Participating Institution and department where the proposed research will be conducted.

To add more than one Participating Institution, press '+' and complete the required information. If the participating institution does not appear in the list, please email the institution name to the Research Help Centre (help@nhmrc.gov.au).

Research Effort (%)

If the research will be conducted at more than one institution, enter the Research Effort percentage (%) allocated to each participating institution and department. The percentages (%) entered must total 100%.

Note: If some or all of the proposed research will be carried out at your Administering Institution, create an entry with the Administering Institution and choose a percentage up to 100%. At least one institution must be listed.

5.4 Research Classification

The details entered in this section will be used in the peer review process to assist with the selection of appropriate peer reviewers for your application. It may also be used for analyses of NHMRC's Funding Profile.

All fields on this page marked with a flag (🚩) must be completed to meet minimum data requirements. You must make the selections that best describe your research proposal against each of the following fields:

- Broad Research Area
- Field(s) of Research

- Peer Review Areas
- Research Keywords
- Burden of Disease

Click '+' to add rows for each Field of Research that best describes the area of research of the application. You can select up to three Fields of Research.

Select a Burden of Disease that best describes the area of research of the application. You can select up to three Burden of Disease types. Click '+' to add rows for each additional Burden of Disease. You must allocate a percentage (%) of time against each. The percentage (%) total must not exceed 100%.

5.5 Research Team

You can include a maximum of 10 Chief Investigators (CIs) and 10 Associate Investigators (AIs) in your research team. For further information of the eligibility requirements for CIs and AIs, please refer to section 4 'Eligibility' of the Guidelines.

All fields on this page marked with a flag () must be completed to meet minimum data requirements. List all members of research team, including CIs and AIs. Complete a separate entry for each member of the team by clicking '+' to add rows.

All CIs/AIs must have a Sapphire account in order to be listed as part of the Research Team. CIs/AIs that cannot be located using the search function will need to complete registration. Submission of a registration form and activation of a Sapphire account must occur at least 72 hours prior to application close, noting that account activation processes cannot be guaranteed within this time.

Note: Click 'Invite to Register & Manage Access' to invite a Chief/Associate Investigator to complete Sapphire Registration and/or share your application with view or edit access. Enter the email address, select the corresponding access option from the dropdown menu and click 'Save and send'. Users will receive an email invitation to be assigned to the application with appropriate access rights. Click '+ Add another user' to invite any additional Investigators.

Please ensure that you have the correct email addresses for your colleagues prior to commencing your application.

Chief Investigators (CIA-CIJ)

The 'Role' and corresponding 'Name' fields for Chief Investigator A must be completed to meet minimum data requirements. If you are naming yourself for a CI/AI role, 'Invitation Response' status will automatically change to Accepted.

Indicate whether the Chief Investigator A will be based in Australia for the duration of the grant and outline their background and expertise relevant to the grant proposal.

Click '+' to add rows for additional CIs. Click the 'Role' dropdown to select a role for the CI.

To add a CI to your research team, enter their email address. If they are a registered user you can click 'Send invite'. If the user is not found, please invite them to register from the button 'Invite to Register & Manage Access' at the top. Outline the background and expertise relevant to the grant proposal for each additional Chief Investigator.

If you add a CI to your research team, an email will automatically be generated to the team member for their agreement to be named on the application. The invitation response status next to their name will indicate progress. Invitations must be accepted by CIs in order for applications to be submitted.

Note: Emails to added CIs will be sent after a short delay. Invitation status will not update to *Sent* until you have logged out of the application for 15 minutes.

Associate Investigators (AIs)

Click '+' to Add Rows for AIs. To add an AI to your research team, enter their email address. If they are a registered user you can click 'Send invite'. If the user is not found, please invite them to register from the button 'Invite to Register & Manage Access' at the top.

'Position' is optional. 'Relevant background and expertise' is optional.

If you add an AI to your research team, an email will automatically be generated to the team member for their agreement to be named on the application. The invitation response status next to their name will indicate progress. Invitations must be accepted by AIs in order for applications to be submitted.

Note: Emails to added AIs will be sent after a short delay. Invitation status will not update to *Sent* until you have logged out of the application for 15 minutes.

5.6 Ethics

If you answer "Yes" to any of the questions, you will need to obtain ethics approvals and supply evidence of these to your research office in the event your application is funded. For further information, see *Ethics and Integrity* on the [NHMRC website](#).

5.7 Grant Proposal

Applicants must not include in any part of their application:

- Links to external websites, apart from references to journal articles, guidelines, government reports, datasets and other outputs that are only available online; where links are included, provide the URL in full (e.g. the NHMRC website <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au>). Applicants are asked not to use URL shorteners as this may create a security risk.
- Publication metrics such as Journal Impact Factors, consistent with the recommendations in the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment.

The grant proposal must be written in English and submitted in a Portable Document Format (PDF) file, using NHMRC's Grant Proposal template, which will be available on GrantConnect. Applicants must use this template. The grant proposal must be uploaded into Sapphire.

Grant Proposal (Upload)

To upload your Grant Proposal PDF, select the 'Upload New' button followed by the 'Choose File' button. Select the PDF file you wish to upload and then click 'Start upload' to upload your Grant Proposal. Click 'Save' to ensure the application is submitted correctly.

To ensure that the document is displaying properly, applicants need to open a copy of the uploaded document by selecting the open icon to the right of the document name after the document has been saved in Sapphire.

Naming and formatting requirements for the grant proposal, to ensure fairness and consistency across applicants, are listed in Table 1. Applications that fail to comply with these requirements may be excluded from consideration.

Details to be addressed in the grant proposal and associated page limits are set out in Table 2. Applicants should note that peer reviewers will, as part of their assessment, consider the reproducibility and applicability of the proposed research and research design. Within the experimental design of the proposal, applicants need to include sufficient information to demonstrate that robust and unbiased results will be produced.

Table 1: Formatting Requirements

Component	Component Requirements
File format	The grant proposal must be saved and uploaded as a PDF file
File size	The PDF file MUST NOT exceed 2MB in size
File name	The PDF file must be named using the following: Applicant's Surname_Document Type/Name.pdf E.g.: Smith_Grant Proposal.pdf
Page size	A4
Header	Application ID, CIA surname and document title must be included in the header
Footer	Page number must be included in the footer
Font	NHMRC recommends a minimum of 12 point Times New Roman font. Applicants must ensure the font is readable.
Margins	Pages must have 2 cm top, bottom, left and right margins
Line spacing	Single
Language	English

Table 2: Grant Proposal Components

Component	Page Limit
Cover page	1 page
Response to assessment criteria	20 pages
CI track record	2 pages per CI
AI contribution, if applicable	¼ page per AI
Consumer and community participation, if applicable	1 page
References	4 pages

A brief description of each component is provided below.

Cover Page – 1 page

The cover page should include:

- application ID
- title of CRE
- a list of Chief Investigators, including research title (e.g. CIA), academic title (e.g. Professor), given names and family name.

Response to Assessment Criteria – 20 pages

Address the assessment criteria as specified in section 6 'The assessment criteria' of the Guidelines. Irrelevant information should not be included. All text in this component must be under the heading of the assessment criterion that is being addressed. Headings must include the assessment criterion number and title.

Responses should provide sufficient information for the research approach to be assessed by peer reviewers, either by reference to published work or by including the essential components which may include research plan, methods and techniques to be used. Consideration should be given to the crucial design elements that enhance reproducibility of research findings. Where appropriate, the following should be addressed:

- detailed description of the experiment design, including any research facility services required
- techniques to be used
- details and justification of controls
- details for appropriate blinding
- strategies for randomisation and/or stratification
- justification of sample-size, including power calculation
- justification of statistical methods
- strategies to compensate for the effects of sex-differences, different animal strains and/or different end-points.

Guidance on addressing consumer and community involvement

NHMRC understands and values the importance of meaningful engagement with consumers and community members in all phases of research from priority setting through to implementation. Applicants are encouraged to use the suite of resources available on [NHMRC's website](#), and outline the strategies that will be employed to effectively engage with consumers and community members throughout the research project. Where language barriers or additional complexities surrounding community engagement and participation may affect the project, applicants should consider how these will be addressed and include contingencies where appropriate.

Guidance on addressing collaboration and capacity building

In order to demonstrate that the grant proposal will develop the health and medical research workforce, the following could be addressed:

- the need for increased capacity in the workforce of the research field(s) of the grant proposal
- the diversity of research capacity building activities aimed at upskilling and developing leadership potential in researchers from different career stage, discipline, sector, roles and responsibilities
- communication strategies across the Centre that will promote diverse mentoring, coaching and sharing of expertise
- networking opportunities with partners and stakeholders if applicable
- mechanisms for reward and recognition of talented developing researchers.

In order to demonstrate that the grant proposal will facilitate collaboration, the following could be addressed:

- the governance of the project including management, coordination and integration of activities into the project as a whole
- the roles and responsibilities of the leadership team, including time commitment, for achieving the objectives of the project
- project management and communication strategies
- data storage requirements, data sharing, digital solutions
- engagement with partners and stakeholders if applicable.

Guidance on addressing research impact

Applicants are encouraged to consider the breadth of research impact that can be assessed under the record of research and translation achievement. NHMRC defines the impact of research as the demonstrable benefit that research makes to knowledge, health, the economy and/or society. Impact is the effect of the research after it has been adopted, adapted for use, or used to inform further research. Research impact is the verifiable outcomes from research and not the prospective or anticipated effects of the research. Research impact also includes research that leads to a decision not to use a particular diagnostic, treatment or health policy.

References cited in this document are to be listed in the separate References section.

CI Track Record – 2 pages per CI

This section has two components:

- the top five publications in the last five years
- overall track record in the last five years.

Top five publications in the last five years

Applicants are asked to list their top five publications in the last five years and reasons why these publications have been selected.

Note: Peer Reviewers will use this information to assess the track record quality of the research team.

Note: Peer Reviewers will have access to the CI's last five years of publications through the My Profile section. For CRE 2022 applications the 'last five years' is inclusive of the entirety of 2016. CIs may select their top five publications from this time period.

Overall track record in the last five years

Applicants are encouraged to use this section to identify aspects of their track record that are in addition to their publication record. This includes any relative to opportunity considerations they wish the peer reviewers to take into account. The following areas may be considered:

- career summary – including qualifications, employment and appointment history
- contribution to field of research – this may include the impact of previous research including translation of research into knowledge, health, economic and/or societal outcomes as outlined in the NHMRC definition of research impact above
- patents – this information should include if the patent has been licensed, when it has been licensed, to whom it has been licensed and if that licence is current or not
- collaborations
- community engagement and participation
- professional involvement – including committees, conference organisation, conference participation
- international standing – including invitations to speak, international committees
- supervision and mentoring
- peer review involvement (including NHMRC, other granting organisations, manuscripts, editorial responsibilities)
- other contributions to NHMRC
- any other information the applicant thinks is vital to the application.

Note: Peer reviewers will use this information along with each CI's publication record from the My Profile section as an indicator of the productivity of the research team.

Note: Applicants should specify the time period in which track record activities occurred. This must not extend prior to 2016 unless there are relevant career disruptions.

Associate Investigator (AI) Contribution – ¼ page per AI

For each AI named in the Research Team, outline their contribution to the research project.

There are no restrictions on individuals who may be named as an AI on an application; however, a maximum of 10 AIs may be added to a CRE application.

Consumer and Community Participation – 1 page

If the intended research involves consumer and/or community participation:

- Applicants should describe how they will ensure that research participants will have access to their own results, and how they will be accountable to participants for the overall results of the research
- Applicants should describe how they will ensure that consumers will be involved in the research and how they will communicate the results of the research to participants and the community.

The Consumers Health Forum of Australia Inc. (CHF) and NHMRC worked in partnership with consumers and researchers to develop the Statement on Consumer and Community Involvement in Health and Medical Research (the Statement). The Statement was developed in recognition of the contribution that consumers can make to research, as well as their right to participate in research.

Further information on the CHF and the Statement is available on [NHMRC's website](#).

References – 4 pages

References for the Research Proposal must:

- not exceed 4 pages
- provide a list of all references cited in the application in an appropriate standard journal format (NHMRC prefers the Author-date (also known as the Harvard System), Documentary-note and the Vancouver Systems)
- list authors in the order in which they appear in PubMed
- only include references to cited work
- must be written in English.

5.8 Third Party Research Facilities

Applicants often need to receive services from research facilities to undertake their research.

Such facilities include but are not limited to: biospecimens and associated data from biobanks or pathology services, non-human primate colonies, the Australian Twin Registry, Cell Bank Australia, and the Trans-Tasman Radio Oncology Group and other organisations that provide clinical trials services.

Applicants will need to consult with research facilities to ensure that the services they require can be provided. Letters from research facilities confirming their collaboration must be submitted with the application.

Indicate whether you will be using services provided by a research facility to complete your research. If you select 'yes', then upload your letter from the research facility confirming their collaboration.

To ensure that the document is displaying properly, applicants need to open a copy of the uploaded document by selecting the open icon to the right of the document's name after the document has been saved in Sapphire.

6. Certifying your application

Once all 'My Profile' details, application form details and supporting documents have been entered/uploaded, the application can be certified and submitted in Sapphire. Certification is required of both the CIA and Administering Institution. Refer to section 7.7 'Certification and submission' of the Guidelines for further details.

Before completing these steps:

Review the application to ensure it is accurate and complete and meets all eligibility/application requirements. The following tools are available to assist applicants in checking their applications:

- Applicants retain responsibility for confirming that their application satisfies the stated eligibility requirements.
- For funding schemes where the applicant has nominated a research budget, the summary tab automatically generates a summary of the requested budget from the relevant sections.
- A checklist for applicants applying for NHMRC funding is provided at [Appendix C](#) section 7.
- Ensure you have read and understood the assurances, acknowledgements and undertakings required of CIAs and Administering Institutions as part of this step. These are outlined in section 7.7 'Certification and submission' of the CRE 2022 Guidelines.
- Note that certification will lock down the application and prevent further editing. The final snapshot produced at this time will include relevant information from your 'My Profile' any subsequent changes to these areas of Sapphire will not appear in the application. If changes are needed after CIA certification but before submission to NHMRC, your RAO will need to reject the application in order for you to make the changes.
- Note that your personal information may be provided to another Administering Institution for the purpose of certifying the application where a researcher is either currently receiving NHMRC funding or is on a different and separate application for NHMRC funding.

Instructions for certifying and submitting an application in Sapphire are provided in the [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#).

Once submitted to NHMRC, your application will be considered final and no changes can be made unless the application is withdrawn for amendment prior to the closing date.

7. Checklist for applicants

Before creating an application:

- Ensure Sapphire Accounts for all CIs are active and mandatory 'My Profile' fields are complete (indicated by a red asterisk *).
- Familiarise yourself with the Guidelines and [Sapphire Learning and Training Resources](#).
- Check application lodgement close date and time.
- Update your Sapphire 'My Profile' in accordance with requirements set out in this document.

- Read the relevant ethical guidelines/associated documentation if ethics approval is required for the proposed application.
- Inform your RAO of your intention to submit an application.
- Be aware of any Administering Institution internal deadlines and requirements for submission.

During the creation of an application:

- Check any minimum data requirements.
- Check eligibility requirements.
- Complete all parts of the application.
- Create and upload your Grant Proposal.
- Identify any relative to opportunity considerations, including career disruptions, where applicable, within your application.
- Consider any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander requirements your application has, including addressing any additional selection criteria.
- Make sure all required attachments are uploaded.

Before submitting an application:

- Read and understand the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018](#). Submission of an application indicates that the Administering Institution and research team understand and will comply with the principles and responsibilities set out in the Code.
- Check your compliance with formatting and page requirements.
- Ensure any Approvals or licences are acquired or applied for.
- Check all information is correct and complete.
- Familiarise yourself with your obligations should you be successful.
- Certify the application and ensure RAO certification and submission occurs before the close date and time.

Remember, your RAO is your primary contact for advice and assistance. RAOs will contact the Research Help Centre for further advice if required.