

National Blood Sector Research and Development Program



Frequently Asked Questions

6 July 2020

Question 1:

In Section C – Evaluation Criteria of the application form, the following is requested:
“Confirm that letters of support for this research project have been obtained from all participating institutions named in this application above. Provide a copy of each letter with your application. If you are unable to provide a copy of any letter of support please provide reasons for this.”

If the study has been approved by Ethics (which included signatures of all participating members/units) would a copy of this be sufficient or are individual letters essential?

Answer

No. A signed ethics approval is not sufficient. Individual signed letters from all participating institutions named in the application must be provided. These institutions should acknowledge the support that they are expected to provide within the application.

Question 2:

Will my specific research topic be suitable to apply for funding?

Answer

The National Blood Authority is not pre-screening applications to provide advice on whether or not a specific topic is suitable. The decision to apply or not, must be made by the applicant.

Applicants should ensure that their topic is an evidence gap in Patient Blood Management (PBM). The NBA’s PBM Guidelines include evidence gaps and can be found at <https://www.blood.gov.au/pbm-guidelines>

OR listed as a high priority topic within the Immunoglobulin (Ig) stream. These topics are listed in Sections 1.4.1 and 1.4.2 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. The topic and evidence gap should be made very clear in the application.

The application should also meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

Question 3:

Are there budget limits for each grant type?

Answer

Yes. An indicative amount for each grant type is listed below. The total funding available under Round 5 is \$1.275 million across both grant streams (PBM and Ig) for all grant types. The number of grants to be awarded for each stream and grant type depends on the number and quality of applications received.

Type	Indicative \$ amount
Project Grant	Typically \$30-150k per annum
Seed Grant	Typically under \$50k
Scholarship	Typically \$25-30k for post graduate students and postdoctoral research fellows

Question 4:

Where the application form stipulates confirmation that essential partners and stakeholders named in this application have agreed to be named within the application and have endorsed the application, is written evidence of such confirmation required?

Answer

No. There is no requirement to provide evidence. However, if you cannot answer “Yes” then you must provide the reasons that the essential partners or stakeholders named in the application have not agreed to be named or have not endorsed the application.

Question 5:

Is written confirmation required from Chief Investigators, Associate Investigators and other research team members named in a Project or Seed Grant application?

Answer

No. There is no requirement to provide evidence. However, if you cannot answer “Yes” to the question that asks if research team members have agreed to be named within the application and endorsed the application then you must provide reasons.

<p>Question 6:</p> <p>Are completed and signed conflict of interest forms required as a part of the initial application?</p>
<p>Answer</p> <p>No. A conflict of interest form is not required as a part of your initial application.</p>
<p>Question 7:</p> <p>Where can I find the Evidence Gaps for the Patient Blood Management Guidelines?</p>
<p>Answer</p> <p>The Patient Blood Management Guidelines comprise six modules. Evidence gaps are identified in each of these modules and can be found on the National Blood Authority website at https://www.blood.gov.au/pbm-guidelines</p>
<p>Question 8:</p> <p>Do biographies need to be included for the Chief Investigator(s) named in a Project or Seed Grant application even if funding will not support them directly?</p>
<p>Answer</p> <p>Yes. Biographies for Chief Investigators are required for Round 5. The research team will be considered as part of the Quality assessment criterion.</p>
<p>Question 9:</p> <p>Can employees of the Australian Red Cross Blood Service apply for a grant?</p>
<p>Answer</p> <p>Yes</p>

Question 10:

Can grant topics include those funded under the Deed of Agreement between the Australian Red Cross Blood Service and the National Blood Authority on behalf of all Australian governments?

Answer

No. The intent of the funding provided under the Deed of Agreement is for the Blood Service to conduct research where the outcomes are directly translatable into changes at the Blood Service. That is, research to inform and improve the Blood Service's core activities as funded under the Deed of Agreement, removing risk and adding value, thereby ensuring sufficiency of supply of safe and cost effective blood and blood products. Governments invest approximately 1.6% of the total funding to the Blood Service for research and development.

Question 11:

If I am not an Australian Citizen or don't have Permanent Australian Residency, can I apply for funding?

Answer

It is required that, at the time of submitting an application and for the duration of a grant, the Principal Chief Investigator and Chief Investigators (for Project and Seed Grants) and Scholars (for Scholarships) must be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident of Australia, or a New Zealand citizen with Special Category Visa (subclass 444) status.

The National Blood Authority may waive this requirement where it can be demonstrated that the research is based in Australia and will benefit health and medical research in Australia.

Requests to waive this requirement need to be made by the Research Administration Office of the Administering Institution on behalf of the Applicant/Scholar at the time of submitting the application. The request to waiver must demonstrate how the research will benefit health and medical research in Australia and confirmation that the research is based in Australia.

The National Blood Authority may request further information in relation to these requirements, including evidence of residency and/or citizenship.

Question 12:

How do I work out the activity milestones in the application?

Answer

When listing activity milestones and dates for your project it is very important to ensure they are measurable, realistic and achievable. Consider the time it will take to deliver the activity and include allowances for delays. Ensure planning considers a realistic start date that will

account for the time required to receive the outcome of the application and planning of the project. Setting realistic and achievable timelines in the planning stage will result in much smoother management of the grant once it is in place. The potential impacts of COVID-19 restrictions should be considered in setting milestones.

Question 13:

Can I adjust the activity milestone dates I put in my application when finalising the Funding Agreement?

Answer

Yes. Prior to executing the Funding Agreements with successful grantees, the NBA will review the milestones and ask you to ensure they remain realistic and achievable. It is possible to adjust milestones and vary the commencement and completion dates at this time provided they fall within the requirements for the type of grant. Grants may start on execution of the Funding Agreement or the start date (and corresponding completion date) may be delayed as required.

Question 14:

In which format should I provide the application?

Answer

The application should be provided as a PDF to ensure it can't be changed. However, it is helpful for the NBA to receive a Word version also for ease of transfer of information into other documents such as Funding Agreements.

Question 15:

Can I still lodge an application if I do not lodge an Expression of Interest during the application period?

Answer

Yes. The request for Expressions of Interest in lodging an application is to assist the NBA in planning for the assessment of applications. Having an indication of the stream and topic of applications ahead of time will allow the NBA to ensure the assessment panel has the expertise required to assess them. An Expression of Interest should be lodged when requested by the NBA if possible. Response to this query will be voluntary and non-binding, and will not comprise a mandatory precondition for submission of a grant application.