Frequently Asked Questions

31 May 2018

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 listed as an evidence gap in the Patient Blood Management Guidelines (PBM) at https://www.blood.gov.au/pbm-guidelines
OR listed as a high priority topic within the Immunoglobulin stream. These topics are listed on page 6 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

The application should also meet the eligibility requirements outlined on Page 8 of the 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 3 is $1.275 million across both grant streams (Patient Blood Management and Immunoglobulin) 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 per annum 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, Administering Institutions and other research team members named in the application?

Answer

No. There is no requirement to provide evidence. However, if you cannot answer "Yes" then you must provide the reasons that the Chief Investigators, Administering Institution or other research team members have not agreed to be named in the application.

Question 6:

Are completed and signed conflict of interest forms required as a part of the initial application?

Answer

No. A conflict of interest form is not required as a part of your initial application. However, conflict of interest forms will be required before finalisation of funding agreements with successful applicants.

Question 7:

Where can I find the Evidence Gaps for the Patient Blood Management Guidelines?

Answer

The Patient Blood Management Guidelines for modules 1 to 6 can be found on the NBA Website at https://www.blood.gov.au/pbm-guidelines

Question 8:

Do you want biographies' for the Chief Investigator(s) even if they are not being funded?

Answer

Yes. Biographies for Chief Investigators are required for Round 3.

Question 9:

Can employees of the Australian Red Cross Blood Service apply for a grant?

Answer

Yes

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 this funding 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.

R&D project outcomes provide evidence to inform decision making and help drive best practice, thereby maximising return on investment. The Blood Service R&D is underpinned by a robust business plan that is reviewed by the NBA and focuses on five strategic themes as detailed below. These five themes provide detail to the activities outlined in the Deed of Agreement. All research activities provided under this grant must fall within one of these five themes. Any changes to these themes must be agreed with the NBA.

1. Donor behaviour

Donor behaviour R&D applies behavioural and social science theory and methods to describe, explain, predict and influence blood donation behaviour. The Donor behaviour research theme focuses on recruitment, retention, conversion, flexibility and sustainability of plasma, platelet and whole blood donor panels.

2. Donor health and wellbeing

Donor health and wellbeing R&D focuses on prevention and management of donation-related adverse events and on the promotion of long-term donor health.

3. Product development and storage

Product development and storage R&D contributes to the strategic direction of the Blood Service by investigating novel ways to manufacture and store blood components. The goals are to maximise donation potential, create efficiencies and reduce waste, improve component quality and shelf-life, and meet the clinical demand for blood components.

4. Product safety

Product safety R&D consists of projects to improve the understanding of the clinical effects of transfused blood and blood products. This R&D provides information on the risk of transfusion transmitted infections, the underlying causes of adverse transfusion reactions and the characterisation of rare blood groups which may require specialised transfusion support. This area of R&D also focuses on the quantification of risk to ensure the safety of blood components for clinical use.

5. Product usage

Product usage R&D focuses on the safety, efficacy and appropriate use of transfused blood components. Work is conducted in collaboration with other research groups by carrying out human clinical trials, and development, analysis and linkage of clinical registries and other data.
Each year R&D proposals are assessed by the Research Advisory Committee.

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 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 Principal Chief Investigator or Applicant 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:

Do the Chief Investigators also need to be Australian citizens, a permanent resident, or a New Zealand citizen with a Special Category Visa (subclass 444) status for project or seed grant applications?

Answer

Only the Principal Chief Investigators needs to be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident, or a New Zealand citizen with Special Category Visa (subclass 444) status.