Women's Cardiovascular Health Grant Guidelines

Office for Health and Medical Research

2026

Office for Health and Medical Research

NSW GOVERNMENT

Office for Health and Medical Research

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Contents

Call for applications

NSW Health invites eligible women and gender diverse chief investigators to apply for the NSW Health Women's Cardiovascular Health Grants.

A total funding pool of $5 million is available. Funding for these grants will be provided for 3-year research projects. All eligible researchers are encouraged to apply, including clinician researchers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers, researchers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and primary carers who have experienced career disruptions.

Grant objectives

Women's Cardiovascular Health Grants aim to:

- advance gender equity in cardiovascular research and leadership positions
- address evidence gaps in cardiovascular conditions or outcomes that disproportionately affect women and girls
- foster research excellence and increase the number of outstanding women and gender diverse cardiovascular researchers in NSW
- fund research that improves wellbeing and health outcomes for women and girls
- embed high-quality, innovative cardiovascular research in the NSW health system
- encourage collaboration, leadership, and capacity building of women and gender diverse researchers in the NSW research environment
- support NSW women and gender diverse researchers to leverage national funding opportunities to further research and its translation in NSW
- bridge the gap between research, policy and practice to increase research impact and translation.

Funding amounts

- **EMC researchers** will be awarded a maximum total grant amount of **$450,000** per grant
- **Senior researchers** will be awarded a maximum total grant amount of **$750,000** per grant

Grants are for research projects or programs and can cover a combination of salaries of the research team (clinical and/or non-clinical), backfill for clinicians to quarantine research time, consumables and equipment.

Approximately 60% of total program funding will be allocated to basic science research and 40% to clinical medicine and science research, health services research, data science, and population health research.

Indicative timeline

Stage	Date
Call for Applications open	14 August 2026
Applications close	5 Nov 2026 5pm AEST
Applicants notified of outcomes	April 2027
Research commences	1 July 2027

Application process

All applications forms must be submitted by 5pm (AEST) on 5 November 2026.

Further information, including the application form and the submission process, is available via the OHMR website. All applicants will receive an email to acknowledge receipt within 72 business hours. It is the applicant's responsibility to follow up if no acknowledgement email is received.

Any queries may be directed by email to moh-ohmrgrants@health.nsw.gov.au.

Eligibility

Applications must meet all eligibility criteria. These should be addressed in the application.

Eligible areas of research

Broad research areas

Funding will support research across the research spectrum including in basic science, biomedical, clinical medicine and health services research, data science, and population health research. Grants also support research towards the development of novel therapeutics.

Cardiovascular research

The term cardiovascular is used to encompass all diseases and conditions of the heart and blood vessels, including but not limited to:

- coronary heart disease
- stroke
- heart failure
- vascular disease and vascular health
- cardiovascular complications of diabetes and obesity
- major independent risk factors for cardiovascular disease
- rheumatic heart disease
- congenital heart disease.

Cardiovascular conditions or outcomes that disproportionately affect women and or girls

The research must focus on a cardiovascular condition or outcome that disproportionately affects women and or girls.

Researcher eligibility

Chief investigator is a woman or gender diverse

The chief investigator is an adult who identifies themselves as a woman or gender diverse.

Based in NSW and employed by an eligible host/ administering organisation

For the duration of the grant, the Senior or EMC researcher must reside in NSW and be employed by an eligible host/ administering organisation (see below).

Submit a complete application

The Senior or EMC researcher must complete the application form fully, attach all relevant and required documentation; agree to the declaration and receive certification from the host/administering organisation.

Australian citizen, permanent residency status or appropriate visa

The researcher must be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident of Australia or have an appropriate working visa for the full term of the grant.

Classified as a Senior or EMC researcher

For the purpose of these grants:

- an EMC Researcher is defined as a researcher who is within 15 years of the conferral of their PhD (or equivalent) on the date on which applications close and has not reached full professorial level. Associate Professors are eligible to apply if less than 15 years post doctorate. PhD students who expect to have their PhD conferred by 31 December 2026 are eligible to apply. EMC Researcher Grant applicants will be assessed in two categories: 0 years up to 8 years post-PhD, and 8 years up to 15 years post PhD.
- a Senior Researcher is defined as a researcher who is 15 years or more postdoctoral OR a researcher who is less than 15 years postdoctoral, but who has reached full Professor level. Note: Associate Professors may apply as EMC researchers if they are less than 15 years post-doctoral.

See also *Relative to opportunity policy*.

Clinician researchers

Clinicians, including medical, nursing, and allied health professionals, are encouraged to apply.

Clinicians may use up to 50% of the grant to backfill their clinical role, with appropriate justification. If the grant is to be used for this purpose the application must be signed by the appropriate delegate in the local health district.

The salary limits are as follows:

- Clinician – medical: Salary limit – up to 0.6 FTE Staff Specialist or Visiting Medical Officers.
- Clinician – non-medical: Salary limit – up to 0.6 FTE as per Allied Health (including Pharmacist and radiographers) and Nursing awards.

Host organisation eligibility

The host organisation is where most of the research is conducted.

The host organisation must be in NSW, conduct health and medical research, and be one of the following:

- a university
- an independent medical research institute
- a not-for-profit organisation that conducts health and medical research
- a local health district or other public health organisation.

The host organisation will provide the appropriate infrastructure support for the research project including wet/dry lab space, computer equipment, desk space.

The host organisation is encouraged to provide additional in-kind and cash support to the project. All support should be detailed in the application form and will be assessed against the selection criteria during the review process.

An authorised representative of the host organisation is required to review the application form and to certify that the organisation complies with the requirements of the grant. Where an applicant has noted career disruption due to pregnancy, illness/ injury and/ or carer responsibilities, the host organisation must certify that they have evidence of career disruption and can provide this to NSW Health if requested.

If the host organisation is a NSW Health organisation, grant funds must be paid to an administering organisation that can manage funds across financial years. Please refer to administering organisation requirements.

Administering organisation eligibility

An administering organisation is only required where the funds are held by a separate organisation to the host organisation.

Grant funds must be paid to an administering organisation that can manage funds across financial years, as the full grant amount will be paid upfront.

The administering organisation must be:

- a university
- a medical research institute, or
- a not-for-profit organisation that conducts health and medical research in NSW.

Note: For-profit industry organisations are not eligible to be host or administering organisations or to apply for funding but may be partners on the grant.

Selection criteria

All applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed against the following selection criteria.

Applications should be written in plain English.

Chief Investigator (40%)

Applicants will be assessed on:

- academic and relevant clinical qualifications
- research, clinical and industry experience, including demonstrated capacity to work in multidisciplinary teams
- skills and experience directly related to the topic area(s) and methodology of the research project
- track record in research and research impact, relative to opportunity
- potential for the Chief Investigator to leverage this grant to gain research funding and fellowships from other funding bodies.

Research project and team (40%)

A clear and detailed description and justification for the project is required, including aims, methodology, and expected outputs and outcomes. The research project will be assessed against the following criteria:

- potential to achieve impact against one or more of the strategic outcomes of the NSW Health Research and Innovation Strategy
- evidence of a gap in knowledge, provided by prior systematic reviews and/or gap analyses, and a clearly articulated need for the research
- evidence of how the proposed research is a cardiovascular condition or outcome that disproportionately affects women and or girls
- how the proposed project will advance existing knowledge and why this is important
- the extent to which the proposed research is innovative and novel
- clarity of the research aim(s) and research question(s)
- strength, rigour and appropriateness of the research methodology in achieving the aims of the project
- consideration of equity of health outcomes and the impact of the proposed research on this
- active inclusion of consumers across various levels of research activity as appropriate
- consideration of how sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics and/or sexual orientation are integrated in the proposed research
- program logic, with the potential outputs and outcomes of the research and how the research will improve clinical practice and/or patient outcomes in the short or long term
- feasibility of successfully delivering the research project within the proposed timeframe
- the plan for research translation and impact, including consideration of data management and access, commercialisation and intellectual property where appropriate
- engagement with appropriate partners to support translation
- the skills of the proposed research team that are relevant to the project and its translation, and how each team member contributes meaningfully to the research
- relationship to existing research undertaken by the host organisation and the research team
- strong project governance structure with evidence of appropriate and sustainable relationships with key stakeholders including those who will likely use the research findings
- budget should be detailed and well-justified and will be assessed on:
  - value for money
  - appropriateness and purpose of each line item
  - existing funding for the research, and how this relates to the additional funding requested without duplication
  - other contributions and support for the project.

Leadership and capacity building (20%)

Applicants will be assessed on skill development, leadership and capacity building with slightly different emphasis between these components expected from EMC Researchers and Senior Researchers.

EMC researcher grant applicants will be assessed on skill development activities undertaken to date, and proposed skill development during the period of the grant. Activities should align with the researcher's vision for their research career.

Examples of skill development activities that may be undertaken include:

- leading or participation in clinical quality assurance activities
- receiving regular formal mentoring
- attending training, for example in research skills or research leadership
- taking on leadership roles
- mentoring or supervising junior researchers
- involvement in collaborations, for example

with other research groups or policy agencies
- active roles in relevant networks, advisory committees or governance groups
- collaboration with clinicians and others involved in translation of research findings.

EMC researchers in the 8-15 years post-PhD category should also include reference to leadership potential and capacity development, including:

- recruitment and retention of research staff
- building a program of research
- leading collaborations within NSW, Australia and internationally
- leading applications for national grant funding
- lead roles in relevant networks, advisory committees or governance groups.

Senior researcher grant applicants are asked to provide a vision for leadership and capacity development in research, taking into consideration the examples of skills development and capacity building given above, including:

- development of leadership skills during the researcher's career to date, and the contributions and impacts of this leadership in NSW
- how these will be further developed during the period of funding, and what the outcomes of this will be
- how the grant and the applicant will help to build and maintain capacity in cardiovascular research in NSW.

Funding conditions and exclusions

1. Research funded must be conducted in the New South Wales public health system or an affiliated organisation (university, medical research institute, industry partner).
2. Funding is conditional on the Researcher and the chief executive(s) of the host/administering organisation(s) agreeing to the **required declarations** when submitting the application form. These declarations outline the obligations of each party.
3. Funding must not be spent on capital works, general maintenance costs, organisational infrastructure or overheads, telephone/ communication systems, basic office equipment such as desks and chairs, rent and the cost of utilities.
4. Applicants are required to declare the source, duration and level of funding already held for research in the subject area of the application. Applications must clearly describe the purpose of the additional funding and justify that the additional research will be complementary not duplicative and is value for money.
5. Grants may be applied for regardless of other funding currently held or applied for, including NHMRC funding, provided there is no duplication of research effort. Please also refer to conditions 9-11 below.
6. Researchers may submit a maximum of one application as Chief Investigator. Researchers may be named on additional applications as Associate Investigators or team members.
7. Under the Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program, applicants may only apply for either a Early-Mid Career Researcher Grant or a Senior Researcher Grant in the same grant round, not both.
8. Successful applicants must apply for federal funding (NHMRC, MRFF, ARC, etc,) at least once during the funded period or within 12 months of the grant end date and provide evidence of the application, scores, feedback and outcome to NSW Health.
9. Past recipients of a NSW Health Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program grant may apply for funding in this round if their final report will be delivered to OHMR by 31 March 2027. If a grant holder seeks to vary the end date of a grant, the variation agreement must be fully executed by the grant application closing date to be eligible to apply in this round.
10. If you have also applied for a Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program Senior or EMC Researcher Grant in 2026, you are eligible to apply for a Women's Cardiovascular Health Grant. Should you be successful in both rounds you will only be awarded one grant, not both.
11. Applications will be awarded on a merit basis according to the selection criteria, with three caveats:

    a) If two applications are of equal merit, preference will be given to applicants that have not previously received a NSW Health grant.
    b) In the event that two applicant's research projects are of similar merit and one applicant has a more developed track record, in part due to holding one or more current grants in areas of related research, the review panel may choose to recommend funding the applicant with the less developed track record, in line with the Program's focus on building research capacity and capability in NSW
    c) NSW Health will consider the recommendations of the expert panel and may consider principles of equity before making a final decision.

12. Applicants who have received a previous NSW Health grant under any program must justify further funding according to productivity and impact specifically related to the previous grant in their application.

Program governance, impact and translation

Program logic and research impact

Applicants are required to submit a program logic, including project aim, inputs, activities, outputs, and expected outcomes and impacts. Resources explaining how to complete a program logic may be accessed here.

Research impact assessment

The program logic will be used to optimise the probability of research impact at application stage. If the research is funded, the program logic will guide the measurement of impact throughout the project and at its conclusion.

Note: that outcomes and impacts may not be realised during the funded period; they may be projected to occur in future. Particularly for basic science, the 'next users' who are responsible for taking the research findings to the next step for translation should be involved from the start of the project so they understand the research and can move the findings towards translation.

Research impact will be considered across six domains:

1. Knowledge Advancement
2. Capacity and Capability Building
3. Policy and Practice
4. Heath and Community
5. Economic Benefit
6. Sustainability

Further information can be found here.

Research translation

All research projects should have potential to lead to changes in health outcomes, clinical practice or health policy in the short and/or long term, even if not during the funded period. Applications must clearly describe:

- the long-term goal and clinical significance of the research
- the expected pathway for this to occur (note this may not be linear)
- how the researchers will engage with 'next users', i.e. research partners and other stakeholders who will take the research to the next step on the translation pathway.

Appendix A contains two examples of translation pathways. Applicants may use their preferred framework.

Intellectual property

To maximise benefits arising from the public funding of research, all grant recipients must comply with the National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research as a condition of funding. In addition, intellectual property (IP) arrangements should be agreed between all research partners and organisations. IP arrangements must cover both background IP and IP that is developed during the project. IP arrangements should consider the contributions of all parties. The arrangements should be detailed in the application.

Please refer to NSW Health's Policy *Directive Intellectual Property arising from Health Research* which provides a clear and consistent guide for public health organisations to protect their intellectual property arising from research. NSW Health has also released a *Commercialisation Framework*. Both documents are available here.

Ethics and regulation

The host organisation (and where appropriate the administering organisation) must certify that the project has received all appropriate research ethics and regulatory approvals and must ensure these are maintained as required for the duration of the grant. All organisations and personnel contributing to the project must comply with (or their replacements and other relevant National Health and Medical Research Council policies):

- the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
- the NHMRC Open Access Policy
- the National Statement of the Ethical Conduct of Human Research
- Ethical guidelines for research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities
- Principles for consumer involvement in research funded by the Medical Research Future Fund
- Statement on consumer and community involvement in health and medical research
- Statement on Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation in Health and Medical Research
- the Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (including but not limited to the application of the 3Rs 'replacement', 'reduction' and 'refinement' at all stages of animal care and use).
- relevant Commonwealth or State or Territory laws; and of
- regulatory bodies that have jurisdiction over the project. This includes, but is not limited to, the Therapeutic Goods Administration and the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.

Further information and resources on ethics and

governance are available here.

Equity of health outcomes

It is important that all research projects consider and respond to the distribution of the burden of disease within the population and the needs of higher risk and priority populations where appropriate. These may include women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, individuals from a non-English speaking background, socioeconomically disadvantaged groups and people living in regional, rural and remote areas among others.

Relevant partners should be engaged early to ensure that the research design and conduct will be effective and appropriate for these population groups.

NSW Health is committed to achieving gender equity in healthcare. Research projects must consider gender and sex in their design, and ensure research is accessible to people of all genders. Please refer to the NSW Health Gender Equity Action Plan, the NHMRC Gender Equity Strategy and the NHMRC and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing joint Statement on Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation in Health and Medical Research.

Important considerations

Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF)

Applicants are encouraged to consider, and align their research where appropriate, with the MRFF Cardiovascular Health Mission Roadmap and Implementation Plan, including the underlying considerations and funding principles. More information is available here.

Australian Cardiovascular Alliance (ACvA)

Please consider opportunities associated with ACvA's Clinical Themes Initiative which is bringing together the cardiovascular sector to develop ambitious collaborative research solutions to address unmet needs in six key areas: coronary artery disease, heart failure, arrhythmias, stroke, hypertension and improving cardiovascular outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

For further information please email acva@ozheart.org. Mark your email for the attention of Dr Catherine Shang and include 'NSW Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program' in the subject line.

Research collaborations and partnerships

Host organisations are strongly encouraged to identify and engage relevant stakeholders, partners and networks who will provide meaningful contribution to delivery of the research project and implementation of outcomes.

Partners may include:

- NSW Health system partners including NSW Ministry of Health, pillars, statewide health services, and Agency for Clinical Innovation networks
- local health districts and specialty health networks
- Advanced Health Research Translation Centres and Centres for Innovation in Regional Health
- universities and medical research institutes
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services
- Primary Healthcare Networks
- research networks
- non-government organisations
- industry
- consumers and patients.

Partnerships may vary in type and intensity from informal arrangements such as the provision of occasional advice, to membership of the research team or project steering committee, to formal partnerships that are the subject of a written agreement between the parties.

Where an industry organisation proposes to host a researcher at their site, the following conditions apply and NSW Health reserves the right to cancel the funding agreement with the host/ administering organisation and recoup funds if they are not met:

- the host/ administering organisation must enter into a legally binding agreement with the partnering industry organisation to ensure their obligations are met including the following:
  - accommodate and support the researcher and ensure that the researcher has the support of the industry organisation's Chief Executive Officer or equivalent position
  - meet all standard employer responsibilities and obligations in accordance with relevant regulations and value gender equity in practice
  - provide cash and/or in-kind contributions to support the project, and
  - detail intellectual property arrangements

in line with the NSW Health Policy and national principles (see below).

Clinical trials

The NSW Government is committed to improving equity of access to clinical trials in NSW.

As part of this commitment, OHMR run a Regional, Rural and Remote Clinical Trials Enabling Program. More information can be found on our website.

If your application involves a Clinical Trial, we encourage you to consider how patients in regional, rural and remote areas can access it. Our colleagues in the Program would welcome the opportunity to connect with researchers to talk about the support they can provide to make this happen. Please contact our team if you would like to discuss this further at moh-rrr-ctep@health.nsw.gov.au.

Commercialisation Training Program

NSW Health has developed a training program in commercialisation, which grant recipients are encouraged to complete during the funding period unless completed previously.

Selection process

Step 1: Eligibility check

NSW Health will determine if each application has satisfied the eligibility criteria.

Step 2: Review by expert panel

An independent expert review panel will assess each eligible application against the selection criteria.

Step 3: Funding recommendation

The expert review panel will agree on the final ranking of all eligible applications and will make recommendations regarding funding to NSW Health.

Step 4: Decision and notification

NSW Health will determine grant recipients and amounts. All host organisations will be informed as to whether they have been awarded funding. The decision is final and may not be appealed.

Step 5: Grant agreements

NSW Health will contact host and administering organisations for successful projects to execute a funding agreement. A standard, non-negotiable funding agreement will be used.

Relative to opportunity policy

Applicant's track records will be assessed by expert reviewers against the selection criteria relative to opportunity, which means in the context of their career stage and personal circumstances. These circumstances might include career disruption due to pregnancy, major illness/injury and/or carer responsibilities, as well as other relative to opportunity considerations as outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC's) Relative to Opportunity Policy, which can be accessed here.

Applicants for EMC Researcher Grants will be assessed in two categories: 0 years up to 8 years post-PhD, and 8 years up to 15 years post PhD. For example, if your PhD was conferred 7 years and 10 months before the closing date you will be in the 0 years up 8 years category.

Career disruptions due to pregnancy, major illness/ injury and /or carer responsibilities may place you in a different category to your chronological one. Other relative to opportunity considerations do not apply for the purposes of determining the category within which your application will be assessed. For example, if you were awarded your PhD 9 years ago but have taken 3 years of parental leave since then, you may be assessed in the 0 years up to 8 years post-PhD category. Your host organisation must certify they have evidence of career disruption and can provide this to NSW Health if requested. NSW Health reserves the right to determine the category within which your application is assessed.

Note: applicants who have reached full Professor level must apply for a Senior Researcher Grant, regardless of years post PhD and/or career disruption.

Post award requirements

A schedule for reporting will be outlined in the funding agreement and will include a requirement to provide:

- annual progress reports
- annual financial reports
- a final report and financial acquittal following the conclusion of the term of the grant
- post-grant reports related to research translation and research impact
- ad hoc requests for information or interviews to support program evaluation if required.

Program evaluation

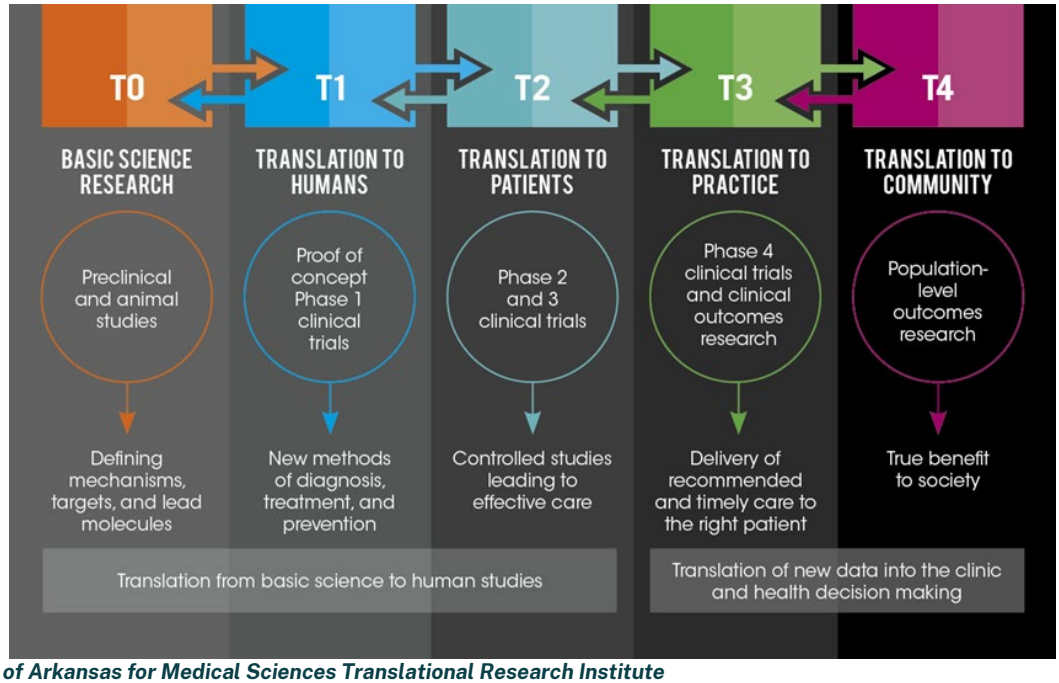
Each NSW Health grant program will periodically be assessed to ensure it is meeting its objectives. Evaluations are guided by an Evaluation Framework and done in collaboration with the host/ administering organisation(s) and funding recipients. Recipients and host/ administering organisations may be required to supply information and meet with NSW Health staff to support program evaluation.

Further Information

Any queries regarding NSW Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program grants may be directed by email to: MOH-OHMRGrants@health.nsw.gov.au.

Appendix A: Examples of research translation frameworks

Example 1. Biomedical Research Translation Framework



Source: University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Translational Research Institute
https://tri.uams.edu/about-tri/what-is-translational-research

Example 2. Health services research translation framework

Further copies of this document can be downloaded from the NSW Health website:

medicalresearch.nsw.gov.au

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