



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**



Western Australian
Future Health Research
& Innovation Fund

Biobank Interim Support Program 2021

Guidelines and Conditions

Closing Date: 1:00pm, Tuesday 18 May 2021

fhrifund.health.wa.gov.au

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The Biobank Interim Support Program 2021 is administered by the [Research and Innovation Office \(RIO\)](#), Department of Health. Queries regarding the Program and the application process can be submitted to RIO.DOH@health.wa.gov.au

PLEASE NOTE: THESE GUIDELINES WERE UPDATED ON 11 MAY 2021 TO CORRECT AN ERROR IN THE STATED CALCULATION FOR THE PHD DOLLAR VALUE EQUIVALENT. THE PHD DOLLAR VALUE EQUIVALENT SUB-TOTAL DOES NOT NEED TO BE DIVIDED BY THREE.

1. Introduction

Biobanks

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) defines a biobank as a “generally large collection of human biological materials (biospecimens) linked to relevant personal and health information (which may include health records, family history, lifestyle and genetic information) and held specifically for use in health and medical research”¹.

Biobanks provide a valuable resource to researchers in their efforts to advance our understanding of human health and disease. Biobanks usually have a focus on the public interest; they are less focussed on individual benefit for participants themselves and are more about public benefit for future generations through the translation and application of research findings².

Despite the value of biobanks to health and medical research, they can face high costs in collecting and maintaining biospecimens and associated data that are often not met from research grant funding or access fees paid by researchers. Therefore, some biobanks operate from uncertain financial positions.

Future Health Research and Innovation Fund

The Future Health Research and Innovation (FHRI) Fund provides a secure source of funding to drive health and medical research, innovation and commercialisation and through these activities, improve the health and prosperity of all Western Australians. It also provides an opportunity to diversify the economy, create jobs, improve the sustainability of the health system and position WA as a leader in research and innovation.

Funding is applied through Programs and Initiatives that have been developed to address one or more FHRI Fund Priorities. The Priorities are critical to achieving the vision and objectives of the [FHRI Fund Strategy](#) (Strategy).

The *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* is in alignment with the following:

- *Strategy Platforms Theme, Objective D: to develop and implement plans to advance enabling infrastructure in key areas ... [including] biobanking.*
- *2020/21 Priority: Determine a biobank model that meets WA research and innovation needs and that represents international best practice.*

The Minister for Health approved the *Enhancing biobank capacity and sustainability in WA Program*, to meet the above 2020/21 Priority, which will be delivered in two components:

- Component 1: Bridging operational funding for established WA biobanks to ensure they can transition to the new WA biobank model once it is determined (this Program).

¹ National Health and Medical Research Council, *Biobanks Information Paper 2010*, (Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra: 2010), 6, <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/biobanks-information-paper#block-views-block-file-attachments-content-block-1>

² Department for Health and Wellbeing, *Guidance Document for Human Research Biobanks and Associated Data* (Government of South Australia: September 2018), p 3, <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/clinical+resources/clinical+program+s+and+practice+guidelines/blood+organ+and+tissue/biobanking>

- Component 2: Determine a biobank model that meets WA research and innovation needs and that represents international best practice.

The *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* provides funding support for the 18-month period 1 July 2021 to 31 December 2022.

2. Eligibility

2.1 Applications

- Applications must be submitted through a WA administering institution that:
 - is responsible for the financial activities of the biobank
 - has a registered Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Applications must be made by an appropriate representative of the biobank, for example, a Chief Executive Officer or an individual who has a formal management role at the biobank such as a Director or Manager.
- For applications to be considered eligible, all sections must be completed (including all required signatures) and submitted according to the application instructions.

2.2 Biobanks

- Must be an established biobank, in accordance with the NHMRC definition, located in WA with biospecimens and associated data that are maintained and catalogued, and which are made available for current and future health and medical research use, including use by researchers not directly involved in the collection and maintenance of the biobank.
- Must have outward facing public engagement with consumers and the community to provide information about the biobank studies and activities.
- Must involve PhD students who have projects/studies based on or using the biobank's samples and/or associated data.
- Must have Total Research Income of at least \$1,000,000 over a period of three years which is comprised of:
 - (a) the Eligible Research Grant Income
 - (b) the Eligible PhD Dollar Value Equivalent.
- The above amounts are determined as follows:
 - (a) Eligible Research Grant Income

The research grant income may be received by any institution, not just the WA administering institution named on the *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* application, or the biobank itself (if it is eligible to receive research grants directly).

Definition of Eligible Research Grant Income

Eligible Research Grant Income is defined as follows:

- Grants are for health or medical research.
- The Grants are not:
 - Grants from WA Department of Health funded programs such as the Collaborative Cancer Grant Scheme, Clinician Research Fellowships,

Merit Awards, Neurotrauma Research Program, Registrar Research Fellowships, Research Translation Projects or WA Child Research Fund.

- Grants received from the FHRI Fund, such as the FHRI Focus Grants: COVID-19 and WA Near-miss Awards.
- Grants for quality assurance, clinical audit, needs analysis or literature review; or grants for equipment, travel, infrastructure or training/education.
- o The research is based on or uses samples and/or associated data from the biobank.
- o The Research Grant Income has been received in the previous three consecutive calendar years (2018-2020).
- o Grants are from a funding source where the grant is nationally or internationally openly competitive and scientific peer-review is performed at a national or international level.

Funding sources deemed eligible for the purposes of the *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* are listed in Appendix A: Eligible Funding Sources.

If a funding source is not listed in Appendix A: Eligible Funding Sources, eligibility of the funding source for *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* purposes will need to be assessed and *Application Form Section 11 – Funding Source Assessment* must be provided. It is incumbent on the Applicant to complete the statements of compliance and provide all necessary documentation; otherwise the grant will not be included, and this may affect overall eligibility if the minimum Eligible Research Grant Income requirement is not met.

The Department of Health has the final determination regarding eligibility status of grants.

Eligible Research Grant Income Applies to Multiple Biobanks

If a research grant being claimed for the *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* is based on or uses samples and/or associated data from more than one biobank that is applying to this Program, then Applicants from the relevant biobanks must determine which of the biobanks will count the research grant income in their application.

If there is agreement between Applicants to split grant income for *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* purposes, *Application Form Section 10 – Split Grant Details* must be provided as evidence of that agreement. A copy of *Section 10* must be included in the application for each relevant Applicant.

(b) Eligible PhD Dollar Value Equivalent

The number of PhD students conducting research that is based on or uses samples and/or associated data from a biobank will be accounted for by allocating a dollar amount per full-time PhD student over the previous three calendar years (2018-2020).

This amount is \$30,000 per year per PhD student. Only the first three years of the PhD student's candidacy may be counted (or the equivalent of this at part-time loads) and only for those years that fall in the previous three calendar years (2018-20).

If PhD students are not undertaking their studies full-time, the Eligible PhD Dollar Value Equivalent will be calculated relevant to the fractional commitment to the PhD (e.g. 50 per cent, or \$15,000 per year, for 0.5 full-time equivalent). The formula is \$30,000 x number of relevant years between 2018 and 2020 x FTE.

3. Calculation of Funding

The grant amounts awarded will be calculated based on the Total Research Income and will be dependent on the applications received and the *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* funding allocation available.

An initial limit of \$500,000 per application has been set to ensure support can be provided across eligible biobanks, however RIO reserves the right to revise this limit to a higher or lower figure.

4. Expenditure Conditions

4.1 Included Expenditure Items

Recipients may use their *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* grant on the following items which must be associated with the biobank activities during the period of the grant:

- Salaries of the core personnel associated with the management of the biobank
- Salaries of the core personnel associated with cohort assessment and data and specimen collection
- Core costs associated with cohort assessment/retention, data and specimen collection costs (other than core personnel salary) and consumer consultation
- Management, curation and storage of previously collected data and biospecimens and the purchase of equipment, such as storage freezers
- Core infrastructure costs of collection, transport, receipt, cataloguing, processing and secure storage of biospecimens and the costs associated with retrieval, dispatch and transport to researchers within WA (excluding services paid by users)
- Purchase or upgrade/hire of software (including user licences) and ICT hardware
- Facilitating agreements with researchers
- General administrative services for the biobank.

4.2 Excluded Expenditure Items

The following are excluded expenditure items (the list is not exhaustive):

- National or international travel
- Non-research purposes such as for diagnostic, therapeutic, forensic, audit, public health surveillance, or marketing authorisation purposes.

5. Grant Conditions

- The *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* grant must be spent in support of the biobank's activities in WA and in accordance with the *Guidelines and Conditions Section 1* NHMRC definition of a biobank.
- If, prior to the *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* grant being fully expended, there are changes to the information provided in the *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021 Application Form*, such as the closure of the biobank or transfer of samples to another biobank, the Department of Health's RIO must be notified immediately to assess eligibility implications.
- The *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* expenditure is subject to the *Financial Management Act 2006* (WA), and may be subject to audit by the Office of the Auditor General or their representative and/or the Department of Health.

- Recipients must provide Progress Reports for the period 1 July 2021 to 31 December 2021 by 28 February 2022 and for the period 1 January 2022 to 30 June 2022 by 31 August 2022.
- Recipients must provide a Final Report associated with the duration of the *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* grant (1 July 2021 to 31 December 2022) by 28 February 2023.
- The Progress and Final Report templates and instructions for completing the report will be provided by RIO prior to the due date.
- An Acquittal Statement outlining the expenditure of funds for the grant duration (1 July 2021 to 31 December 2022) must be submitted to RIO by 28 February 2023. Acquittal Statements must be certified by an authorised finance officer at the WA administering institution. The Acquittal Statement template will be provided by RIO prior to the due date.
- The recipient must endeavour to spend the entire *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* grant within the duration of the grant (1 July 2021 to 31 December 2022). If this is not possible an Acquittal Statement and an updated Final Report must be provided three-monthly until funds are expended. Where relevant, Acquittal Statements must include the amount of any unspent funds, reasons for the carry over, and an estimation of when funds will be expended.
- Failure to comply with any of the above conditions may jeopardise eligibility for future funding under the FHRI Fund.

Appendix A: Eligible Funding Sources

If Applicants claim grants from funding sources that are not on the lists below, eligibility of the funding source for *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021* purposes will need to be assessed and *Application Form Section 11* must be provided. It is incumbent on the Applicant to complete the statements of compliance and provide all necessary documentation; otherwise the grant will not be included, and this may affect overall eligibility if the minimum grant income requirement is not met.

The following funding sources are deemed eligible for the *Biobank Interim Support Program 2021*:

1. Australian Competitive Grants Register (ACGR)

Grants for medical or health research from funding sources on the 2018 Australian Competitive Grants Register (ACGR) are eligible and may be found at:

https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/2018_acgr_listing_final.pdf

Note: the ACGR will not be updated beyond 2018.

2. Department of Health-Approved Funding Sources

- A Foundation Building Strength for NemaLine Myopathy, USA
- Action Duchenne, UK
- Arthritis Australia
- Association Francaise Contre les Myopathies
- Asthma Australia - National Research Program Grants
- Asthma Foundation of Western Australia
- Australian Paediatric Endocrine Group (APEG) - Novo Nordisk
- Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute (APHCRI) - Foundation Grants
- Autism Speaks, USA
- Avner Pancreatic Cancer Foundation Limited - Accelerator Grant
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Requests for Proposals RFPs stream only)
- Brain Foundation - McArdle Disease Award (Research Gifts)
- BrightFocus Foundation
- British Heart Foundation
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- Cancer Australia - Project Grant
- Cancer Council NSW - STREP Grants
- Cancer Council WA - Epidemiology Initiative
- Cancer Council WA - Research Project Grants
- Cancer Council WA - STREP Funding Scheme
- Cancer Research Trust - Postdoctoral Fellowships
- Cancer Research Trust - Collaborative Cancer Grant
- Cooperative Research Centres (if specific project was an identifiable part of the original application; each will be reviewed on a case by case basis)
- Cure Brain Cancer Foundation i Innovation Grant
- Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, USA
- Department of Health and Ageing – Dementia and Aged Care Services Fund - Research and Innovation Funding Round
- Duchenne Ireland

- Dutch Duchenne Parent Project - Small Project Grant
- Exercise and Sports Science Australia (ESSA) - Clinical Exercise Physiology Research Grant
- Healthway - Priority Driven Research
- Heartkids Australia - Grants-in Aid
- Howard Hughes Medical Institute - International Research Scholars Program (America)
- International Olympic Committee - Anti-Doping Research Fund
- International Rett Syndrome Foundation
- Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) International, USA
- Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF), UK
- Michael J Fox Foundation (MJFF), USA
- Muscular Dystrophy Association (USMDA), USA
- National Breast Cancer Foundation - Pilot Study
- National Institute of Health Research (NIHR), UK - Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Programme
- National Institutes of Health, USA
- National Stroke Foundation - Seed Grant
- Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy, USA - Exploratory Award
- Pfizer Australia - Paediatric Endocrine Research grant
- Ramaciotti Foundations
- Red Nose Foundation - Project Grant
- Retina Australia
- Slater and Gordon Research Grant
- The Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia (ORIA) Research Grants
- US Department of Defense/Congressionally Directed Medical Research Schemes/Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program/Discovery Award
- Victorian Neurotrauma Initiative (VNI)
- Waltham/Isaz - Waltham Collaborative Research Award in Human Animal Interactions
- Wellcome Trust, UK
- World Health Organization

Please note funding sources which have been deemed ineligible include:

- Cancer Council WA - Capacity Building and Collaboration Grant
- Cancer Council WA - Research Fellowship
- Healthway - Research Fellowship
- Healthway - Starter Grant

These grants may only be submitted for assessment if the funding scheme criteria have been modified since 2018 and now meet the Biobank Interim Support Program 2021 eligibility criteria.



This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

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