



Western Australian
Future Health Research
& Innovation Fund

DISCOV3R Focus Grants

Guidelines and Conditions

**Minimum Data Form due by:
1:00 PM (AWST), Thursday 23 March 2023**

**Application due by:
1:00 PM (AWST), Thursday 6 April 2023**

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1. Introduction

The DISCOV3R Focus Grants is a Program of the Western Australian (WA) [Future Health Research and Innovation \(FHRI\) Fund](#).

The 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.

This Program contributes to the [FHRI Fund Priority Goals](#):

- Enhance skills in innovation (including commercialisation), which will advance the quality and capacity of innovation in WA and help WA innovators to obtain funding to support their work.
- Support the development of early- and mid-career researchers, helping them to achieve an independent and self-sustaining career.

The expected outcomes are in alignment with the following objectives of the *Western Australian Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Act 2012*:

- improving the financial sustainability of Western Australia's health system
- improving Western Australia's economic prosperity
- advancing Western Australia to being, or maintaining Western Australia's position as, a national or international leader in research and innovation activities.

The Program is administered by the Office of Medical Research and Innovation (OMRI), WA Department of Health (Department of Health). Queries may be directed to DOH.OMRI@health.wa.gov.au.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the DISCOV3R Program is to investigate Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) as a sustainable long-term testing solution for COVID-19. '3R' refers to the three streams of the Program: Reassure; Reclaim; and Repurpose.

This Program aims to take a holistic approach to the use of RATs in the detection of COVID-19 infection, which includes their effective use, shelf life and responsible disposal.

The objectives of DISCOV3R are to:

- identify whether RATs are effective in detecting new and emerging variants of SARS-CoV-2 and potentially other coronaviruses
- identify whether RATs are effective beyond their stated shelf lives
- identify alternative uses for excess RATs in stockpiles around the world, especially WA
- improve the capability of the WA health and medical research sector in the life-cycle management of health and medical waste, focusing on RATs.

3. Program description

The Program will award funding for activities that will be undertaken over a period of six months maximum. The Activity must align with one of the 3R streams:

1. Reassure

Research into the accuracy and sensitivity of RATs in detecting emerging COVID-19 variants. High quality applications to this stream will demonstrate an accurate and repeatable methodology for assessing RATs, a feasible plan for accessing and testing COVID-19 variant samples and a competitive budget.

2. Reclaim

Research into the expiry dates of RATs to determine shelf-life validity, factors impacting shelf-life and whether RATs can be used to diagnose COVID-19 beyond the stated shelf-life. High quality applications to this stream will demonstrate an accurate and repeatable methodology for assessing RATs, a robust and thorough plan for testing variables that may affect shelf life and a competitive budget.

3. Repurpose

Identify opportunities for re-purposing of RATs that are beyond their shelf-life, for example for research use for COVID-19 and/or other coronavirus diseases. High quality applications to this stream will identify and test innovative and significant uses for RATs.

The Coordinating Principal Investigator (Activity Lead) will be responsible for coordinating the Activity and ensuring its timely execution.

The Responsible Entity will be accountable for the governance and financial management of any funding awarded.

Funding will be awarded through a competitive and merit-based process.

4. Eligibility

To be eligible for this Program all of the following criteria apply:

- The Responsible Entity must:
 - have an active Australian Business Number (ABN)
 - have a physical and operational presence in WA
 - not be a manufacturer of the RATs being researched.
- The Activity Lead must:
 - be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, a permanent resident of Australia, or have an appropriate work visa in place for the period of the Activity
 - be based in WA for a minimum of 80 per cent of the period of the Activity
 - have no overdue reports for any OMRI or FHRI Fund grant funding programs from any year (excludes authorised extensions)
 - ensure that an OMRI or FHRI Fund grant has not been awarded for the same Activity
 - have a position or title at the Responsible Entity for the period of the Activity
 - The Activity Lead will be required to specify which of the following applies:*
 - (a) *employee of the Responsible Entity; or*
 - (b) *honorary or adjunct title at the Responsible Entity.*
 - In the case of (b), if the Activity Lead is employed by another entity (the Employer), this entity must have a physical and operational presence in WA, and confirmation must be provided that either:*
 - i. *an affiliation agreement exists between the Responsible Entity and the relevant Employer; or*
 - ii. *the intention is for this Activity to be subcontracted to the relevant Employer.*
- Applications to **Reassure** and **Reclaim** streams must use RATs that are, or are in the process of becoming, commercially available in Australia.
- The grant funding must not constitute the entire financial base of the Responsible Entity.

- Applications must be submitted in accordance with the 'Application instructions' section of this document.

An applicant may submit more than one application to this Program, including related applications submitted to different DISCOV3R streams. However, such related applications must be feasible in their own right and not depend on the other application(s) being funded through this Program.

OMRI reserves the right to request further information and make final decisions regarding eligibility.

5. Program funding

Funding between \$100,000 and \$350,000 will be awarded to the top-ranked application in each stream. Subject to budget availability and the quality of applications received, additional applications may be awarded funding.

Funding may be used in accordance with the following:

- Salary costs:
 - Salaries must be directly attributable to the delivery of the Activity outcomes.
 - Salaries of up to \$150,000 per annum, including on-costs, may be requested for each individual, with this limit adjusted to a pro rata amount for fractional Full Time Equivalent (FTE) and the duration of the Activity.
 - Salary on-costs may be requested to up to 30%. However, WA public health system applicants must claim salary on-costs in accordance with the WA Health Financial Management Manual s521 'Internal Salary Recoup (within WA Health entities)' table.
 - Salary funding can be used for leave entitlements that accrue during the Activity, however, extended leave payments and leave entitlements accrued outside this period are not supported and must not be paid through this funding. In addition, severance and termination payments must not be paid through this funding.
- Activity costs:
 - Activity costs may include funding for essential services, equipment, consumables, consumer involvement and other additional expenses directly related to the Activity.
 - Subcontracting to interstate or international service providers is acceptable up to a maximum of 49% of the grant value if expertise, services or capabilities are not available in WA.
 - Travel costs will not be approved unless these are strongly justified as being essential to the undertaking of the Activity.
- Overhead charges:
 - Overhead charges (also referred to as indirect/infrastructure costs, e.g. utilities) may be requested up to 10% of the total budget. However, WA public health system applicants cannot claim standard overhead charges, as per the Financial Management Manual s522.

Requested Activity costs and duration must reasonably reflect the proposed Activity.

Funding will only be made available for the scope of work described in the Application Form, or with any modifications approved by OMRI. The Department of Health will not underwrite any recurrent or capital costs beyond the funding awarded through this Program.

At least 51% of awarded funding must be spent within WA unless goods and services expenditure items are not available in WA (see Activity costs above).

All budget items should be adequately described and justified as consideration is given to budgets during the assessment process.

Applicants should calculate budgets accurately, as requests for additional funding will not be considered.

Funding is offered subject to budget availability, which could be varied in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

6. Application instructions

The instructions below must be followed when making a submission:

Minimum Data Form

- The Minimum Data Form (MDF) available from the [FHRI Fund website](#) must be submitted by **1:00 PM (AWST) Thursday 23 March 2023** to be eligible to submit an Application Form.
- The MDF does not need to be submitted through the Responsible Entity and may be emailed directly by the applicant to DOH.OMRI@health.wa.gov.au.
- The email subject line must be titled as follows:
Applicant SURNAME, First name – DISCOV3R MDF
e.g. SMITH, Alex – DISCOV3R MDF

Application Form

- Application Forms will only be accepted if a Minimum Data Form has been submitted by the required date/time above.
- The Application Form available from the [FHRI Fund website](#) must be submitted by **1:00 PM (AWST) Thursday 6 April 2023**.
- The application must be completed in Arial font 11 point or larger.
- Electronic signatures are acceptable. The onus is on the applicant to ensure approval to use an electronic signature has been obtained.
- The application is to be emailed to DOH.OMRI@health.wa.gov.au as a **single** Adobe Acrobat PDF or Microsoft Word file, not exceeding 5 MBs, including CVs, and bibliographic references (if applicable). The application and email subject line must be titled as follows:
Applicant SURNAME, First name – DISCOV3R
e.g. SMITH, Alex – DISCOV3R
- Applications must be complete, include requested certifications and be submitted by the closing date/time. Applicants are responsible for complying with internal deadlines.

Acknowledgement of receipt of application will be provided via email to the Responsible Entity and Activity Lead within 5 working days of the closing date.

Queries regarding the application process should be directed by email to DOH.OMRI@health.wa.gov.au.

7. Selection process

Assessment process

Funding will be awarded on merit, based on a process of assessment and selection. The assessment process shall be conducted by a review panel comprising of experienced researchers, experts and consumer representation.

Conflicts of interest that may arise will be treated in accordance with the WA health system [Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy](#).

Applications must meet the eligibility requirements and will be assessed based on the criteria and weightings set out in the table below.

Assessment Criteria	Reassure / Reclaim	Repurpose
Significance of the activity Relevance and significance of the activity, including clearly described: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issues and/or gaps • anticipated contribution relevant to issues and/or gaps (e.g. advancing knowledge, improving health care or health outcomes. expected benefits and impacts.	-	10
Activity plan Quality of the research proposal including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well defined hypothesis, research questions and objectives • well defined methodology, including objective measurement of outcomes • achievable timeline. 	30	30
Consumer involvement Appropriate levels of consumer involvement throughout the activity timeline including project design. Refer to Section 8 for guidance on consumer involvement.	10	10
Feasibility Feasibility of the research, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevance and strength of qualifications of the investigators and policy and practice partners and their availability to conduct activity • collective gain of the team to the activity • access to required resources, including expertise and materials. 	20	10
Translation and implementation Potential for translation and implementation of research findings into policy and practice, commercialisation and/or to lead to future funding proposals to external bodies. Plan for public communication of findings to inform policy and practice change.	10	10
Novelty Novel approach and distinction from similar or related research in this area. Potential benefit and value of novel approach.	10	20
Budget The value for money of the proposed budget, relative to other applications. Value for money does not mean 'cheapest'. Instead, this term refers to the cost in the context of the quality, extent and suitability of the proposed activity.	20	10

Selection of recipients

Based on the review panel assessments, the Department of Health will determine and approve the awarding of grants in accordance with the Department of Health financial and procurement processes and delegation authorities.

OMRI reserves the right to:

- request further information from applicants if the reviewers require clarification before a final decision is made
- negotiate lower funding rates than requested

- request modification to the Activity on a case-by-case basis.

8. Consumer involvement

In line with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) definition, consumers are people who have lived experience of a health issue. They include patients, their friends, families, carers and members of the general public. Consumers can also be people who represent the views and interests of a consumer organisation, a community or a wider constituency.

There is increasing recognition of the benefits of involving consumers in research and innovation. Effective consumer involvement can ensure research and innovation is relevant to the WA community and improves translation into policy and practice.

Applicants should engage with health consumers during the development of funding applications and embed them in the proposed Activity by including them in the team where appropriate and providing a detailed description of their role and contribution.

Consumer involvement should incorporate:

- Clearly defined relationships with health consumers or community groups who have 'lived experience' of the issue the Activity addresses.
- Demonstrated understanding of the benefits derived from involving people with a lived experience.
- Inclusion of consumers in the Activity where appropriate.
- Plans to involve consumers in the Activity throughout the delivery timeline.
- Budget strategy with funds allocated to support, implement and acknowledge consumer involvement (e.g. stakeholder training opportunities, honoraria and payments, additional time to support involvement activities, administration support and consultations and events associated with involvement activities).

Guidance on consumer involvement can be found at the [Consumer and Community Involvement Program](#) website and the [NHMRC Statement on Consumer and Community Involvement in Health and Medical Research 2016](#).

It is encouraged that all team members complete the free 30 minute [Consumer and Community Involvement in Health Research](#) course.

9. Contractual arrangements

Grants to entities external to the WA public health system are offered in accordance with the Department of Health Grant Funding Agreement (and its Terms and Conditions) which is a legal agreement between the Department of Health and the Responsible Entity. Within the WA public health system, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be entered into.

The Department of Health reserves the right to withdraw an offer of award to a Responsible Entity if the Grant Funding Agreement and/or Grant Funding Agreement Terms and Conditions, or MOU, cannot be agreed between the parties.

Insurance

A Responsible Entity external to the WA public health system will be required to provide evidence of insurance as a condition of the Grant Funding Agreement.

Note that Activity that requires site governance approval will also be required to provide evidence of appropriate insurance during the governance process, which may vary depending on the site.

Intellectual Property

Intellectual Property (IP) that arises out of the Activity will vest with the Responsible Entity. However, consideration will be given to the provisions of the [Western Australian Government Intellectual Property Policy 2015](#) (or any future iterations of this) that IP rights should be allocated to optimise the economic, social or environmental benefits for WA from the use, commercialisation and disposal of the IP. Applicants should make themselves aware of the IP clause that will apply to this Program:

1. The ownership of any Intellectual Property generated by undertaking the Activity shall vest in You.
2. The ownership of any background or pre-existing Intellectual Property and associated Moral Rights, used or incorporated in the Activity that is presently vested in a Party shall remain vested in that Party, unless otherwise agreed.
3. Each Party will be entirely and solely responsible for the use in the Activity of any Intellectual Property and associated Moral Rights it has provided to the undertake the Activity which belongs to, or is licensed from, any other party, and indemnifies the other Party against all claims by a third party arising out of use of that Intellectual Property and associated Moral Rights.
4. Subject to the confidentiality provisions of the Agreement, You hereby grant to Us, a non-exclusive, irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free licence to use (excluding the ability to sub-licence or grant further licences) any of the Intellectual Property generated in the Activity, and which falls within the scope of WA Health's normal activities. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, activities related to healthcare provision, teaching, training and research. This license does not automatically extend to any potential or eventual commercial development of the Intellectual Property, and any commercial products that might directly or indirectly result from the Activity Intellectual Property. However, where You believe that there is the potential for commercialisation of the Intellectual Property developed in the course of the Activity, both Parties shall negotiate in good faith the appropriate legal and beneficial interests, rights and access to the Intellectual Property by Us.

The Responsible Entity must ensure that appropriate agreements are in place with the Activity Lead, team members and participating entities. This includes relevant permissions to use third-party IP required to deliver the Activity and have Freedom to Operate for the Activity. When a team includes a member(s) from the WA public health system as a participant in the Activity (i.e. the WA public health entity is not the Responsible Entity), the IP agreement must be authorised at an appropriate level by the relevant WA public health system entity.

Any questions regarding such IP matters should, in the first instance, be directed to OMRI (DOH.OMRI@health.wa.gov.au).

Requests for variation

Requests for variations to the Grant Funding Agreement or MOU, such as Activity description, Activity Lead or Responsible Entity, must be directed to OMRI. Approval of the variation will be at the discretion of the Department of Health. If variations are not approved this could result in termination of the grant with associated funding reverting to, or being recoverable by, the Department of Health, where for example eligibility or viability of the Activity is affected.

10. Funding conditions

Payment instalments

Funding will be provided in instalments to the Responsible Entity as follows:

- The first instalment will be subject to execution of a Grant Funding Agreement or MOU.
- Subsequent instalments (if applicable) will be subject to satisfactory progress being achieved against the Activity milestones, as demonstrated in Progress Reports.

If ethics and governance approvals are required (refer to 'Approvals' section of this document), then the Responsible Entity may only release the first instalment to the Activity Lead once all approvals for the Activity have been obtained and lodged with the Responsible Entity.

Additional funding sources

Applicants are permitted, and encouraged, to seek additional sources of funding for the duration of the Activity, provided it complements, but does not duplicate, the Activity for which the funding was awarded.

Partial payment or suspension of funds

The Department of Health reserves the right to:

- provide funding instalments in parts, based on milestone achievement and risk assessment of future milestones
- suspend payment of funding instalments or part instalments where Activity viability has become uncertain.

Termination of funds

Funds shall revert to, or be recoverable by, the Department of Health in instances where:

- eligibility requirements are no longer met, unless a request for variation to address this is approved by OMRI
- the Activity is terminated by OMRI as a result of insufficient progress being made at the time of Progress Reports or any interim Progress Report, or it has been otherwise determined by either the funding recipient or OMRI that the Activity is no longer viable
- funding for the Activity is obtained from another source
- funds are used for purposes other than those for which they were awarded
- funds were spent on activities that require ethics and/or governance approvals and such approvals were not obtained before undertaking the activities
- funds are not fully expended at the conclusion of the Activity (including any extensions approved by OMRI)
- it is determined that misleading or fraudulent information has been provided.

11. Approvals

Research ethics and research governance

The Responsible Entity, and any participating entity, will be responsible for obtaining and lodging all relevant research ethics and governance approvals that are required for undertaking funded activities, and ensuring these are maintained as required for the duration of the Activity.

Research ethics approvals must be obtained from relevant ethics committees (human and/or animal). Research governance authorisation (also known as site specific assessment or access request review) must be obtained from each relevant institution/site conducting the Activity or providing access to data, participants or tissue samples.

For information on research ethics and governance submission requirements for the WA public health system please refer to the following websites: [Research Ethics](#); [Research Governance](#); [Multi-centre Research](#).

Use of data collections

An Activity that requires access to and use of WA Department of Health data collections requires review and approval for data release in accordance with the [Health Services Act 2016](#) and the [Health Services \(Information\) Regulations 2017](#). This is in addition to research ethics and governance approvals and will include a feasibility assessment to determine whether the data requested is appropriate for the purposes of the study and approval for use of the data from the data custodian.

Preliminary cost and time estimates can be obtained from contacting DataServ@health.wa.gov.au. Cost estimates should be included in the proposed budget and an estimate of time for release of the data should be incorporated into the milestones in the Application Form.

For further information please review the [Data Linkage Services](#) website.

Should the application for funding be successful, we recommend you immediately begin the data request and approval process.

12. Reporting

The Activity Lead and Responsible Entity are responsible for meeting reporting requirements over the duration of the Activity and at its conclusion.

All reports are to be completed on templates provided by OMRI.

Progress Reports

Progress reports outlining the progress against the milestones listed in the Activity plan will be required as stipulated in the Grant Funding Agreement or MOU.

OMRI reserves the right to request a progress report at any point.

OMRI reserves the right to suspend or withdraw funding where insufficient progress has been made.

Final Report

A final report detailing the Activity and outcomes is to be submitted to OMRI at the conclusion of the Activity. Failure to submit the final report at this time may render all team members ineligible for further funding from the FHRI Fund and OMRI until the final report is received.

Financial Acquittal Statement

A financial acquittal statement outlining the expenditure of funds must be submitted to OMRI at the conclusion of the Activity. Acquittal statements must be certified by an authorised finance officer (or equivalent) of the Responsible Entity.

OMRI reserves the right to request interim financial reports at any stage during the Activity.

Any unexpended funds must be returned to the Department of Health. Any over-expenditure is the responsibility of the Responsible Entity and no claim may be made against the Department of Health.

Community Stakeholder Brief

In order to provide feedback to stakeholders, a one-page *Community Stakeholder Brief* which includes an outline of the Activity, its outcomes, and next steps is to be provided to all participating consumer groups (including Aboriginal communities) and a copy submitted to OMRI, at the conclusion of the Activity.

13. Publicising, acknowledgements and publications

The Minister for Medical Research and/or the Department of Health will publicly announce recipients, including the title of the Activity. All other parties must withhold announcement/media coverage until after OMRI advises this has occurred.

Acknowledgement of FHRI Fund support must be made in publications, conference presentations, public discussion, press statements etc.

In order to maximise knowledge exchange, funding recipients must comply with the NHMRC's 'Publication and dissemination of research: a guide supporting the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research', which can be downloaded from the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) page, and the NHMRC's [Open Access Policy](#).

All peer-reviewed publications that are supported in whole or in part by the FHRI Fund must be made immediately open access, that is, without any embargo period at the time of first online publication, regardless of whether such publication is an advanced or early online publication or the Version of Record. Funding recipients are encouraged to upload to a pre-print site any draft publication or report resulting in whole or in part from the funded Activity prior to submission to a peer-reviewed publication (if permitted by the publisher) The funding recipient must notify OMRI of all publication DOIs. If the paper is peer-reviewed and published, the funding recipient must notify OMRI of the publication DOI. The corresponding author's ORCID should also be notified to OMRI.

If successful, the Activity Lead or a suitable team member will be required to submit an abstract and attend the annual *Science on the Swan* conference after the first year of the grant.

14. Confidentiality

Activity title, Activity Lead, funding amount, Responsible Entity, plain language summaries and sections indicated on applications or reports may be used for publicity purposes as stated on the relevant templates.

All other information provided in applications and reports will be maintained confidentially by OMRI, review panels, evaluation panels and the FHRI Fund Advisory Council. If requests are received by OMRI to make public any aspect of the Activity, other than the aspects listed above, the authorisation of the Responsible Entity will be sought, notwithstanding information requested under the [Freedom of Information Act 1992 \(WA\)](#) or information pertaining to the receipt of State Government financial assistance tabled in the Parliament of Western Australia.

15. Evaluation

OMRI undertakes evaluations of Funding Programs, which will include unsuccessful applications. All parties in the application, including team members and consumer representatives, are required to contribute to the evaluation.

16. Complaints

Applicants who feel that their interests have been adversely affected by an action taken by OMRI in administering the Program may lodge a complaint. Complaints can only be considered when they refer to the administrative process and not to the funding decision. Complaints must be submitted via email (marked Confidential) to: Deputy Director General (OfficeoftheDDG@health.wa.gov.au).



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