Applying for research funding

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Funding bodies

• Listed on Australian Competitive Grants Register
  • Australian Research Council: Discovery programme, Linkage programme
  • National Health and Medical Research Council: Program Grants
  • Cancer Australia: Priority-driven Collaborative Cancer Research Scheme

• Local funding
  • Cancer Council Queensland: Research Project Grants
  • Advance Queensland: Innovation Partnerships
  • Institutional funding, including RBWH Foundation, PA Research Foundation, Wesley Medical Research, etc.
Alignment with priorities

- Funding bodies often identify research priorities

- Themes from PdCCRS:
  - Aetiology; prevention and risk
  - Early detection
  - Particular tumour types (even including ‘cancer of unknown primary’)
  - Particular populations (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; Young women; Non-smokers with lung cancer)

- Most are very general:
  - Test in a preclinical model a treatment / therapy / intervention for cancer or for management of a problem experienced by cancer patients as a result of their cancer, and the major health focus of the study is cancer (Cancer Council QLD)
  - Research addressing cancers of the lung, colon and rectum, pancreas, cancer of unknown primary, lymphoma, kidney, bladder, stomach or oesophagus is strongly encouraged. (Cancer Australia)
Applying for grants

- Need to start as early as possible

- Universities require notifications of intent to apply months in advance for applications for the big projects

- RGMS (used by NHMRC, Cancer Council, Cancer Australia) requests a lot of information for entry in online forms or by populated CSV files
  - Entered in online forms
  - Personal details, qualifications, employment history, publications, editorial responsibilities, career disruptions, conference participation, community engagement, professional memberships, translation into practice, supervision, etc.
  - Ongoing availability (not just during grant season).
Investigators

• Investigators need to have defined time commitments (e.g. 0.1 FTE).

• Chief Investigators
  • Track record is a significant factor in assessment

• Associate Investigators / Partner Investigators
  • NHMRC grants – track record not as important, named when involvement would, for example, warrant inclusion as an author on publications (up to 10 named)
  • ARC grants – place of employment is a consideration of CI/AI distinction

• Track record
  • Field of Research ‘Other Physical Sciences’ (code 0299) contains Medical Physics (code 029903).
  • Average annual output of 1.6 publications per annum per person
What needs to be written

- **NHMRC**
  - 9 pages describing project proposal
  - 2 pages describing references
  - 1 page describing team quality
  - 2 pages per chief investigator
  - In addition to populated RGMS records, summaries of proposal & proposed budget

- **ARC**
  - 10 pages of project description
  - For each investigator (in addition to personal details, current employment, etc.):
    - Details of career and opportunities for research
    - Significant research outputs (books, journal articles, conference papers, grants)
    - Ten career-best research outputs
    - Achievements other than research output, impact relative to opportunity
  - All in addition to summaries of proposal & proposed budget
Other notes

• “Administering Institution”
  • Administering institutions are generally the employers of the investigator
  • Not all of our employers qualify as ‘administering institutions’ for research funding
  • CIAs whose primary employer is a State or Territory health department can have a university (or other organisation) act as administering institution by organising a formal academic appointment
• NHMRC approved institutions include:
  • Metro South Hospital and Health Service, Princess Alexandra Hospital
  • Queensland University of Technology
  • University of Queensland
  • Griffith Universities
  • Queensland Institute of Medical Research
  • Trans-Tasman Radiation Oncology Group