

Research Grant Funding Rules

Applies to the “Early Career Research Grant”
and the “Seed Grant”

ACIPC Research Committee

1/5/17

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ACIPC Research Grant Rules

Background

The College is the peak body for Infection Prevention and Control professionals in the Australasian region. A key strategic focus of the College is to enable members to identify areas for research that will lead to improved knowledge, evidence based education and practice and improved outcomes.

In alignment with this key strategy, the College provides a unique opportunity for its members to undertake research with the assistance of annual ACIPC Research Grants.

Aims of research grants

Early career research grant

The aim of this grant is to support early career researchers undertake research relevant to infection prevention and control. Early Career Researchers (ECR) are researchers who are within five years of the start of their research careers when they submit their applications. This normally means that you have been awarded a PhD or equivalent research doctorate within five years. See the “Eligibility” section for more detail.

Seed grant

The aim of the seed grant is to support ACIPC members who wish to undertake high quality pilot, exploratory or small scale infection prevention and control research. This grant aims to address a gap between early concepts and large scale funding provided by larger bodies such as the National Health Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and Australian Research Council (ARC). The grant is also aimed at providing support to researchers who have not yet had success with specific national category 1 competitive funding NHMRC and ARC grants

Enquires

Enquiries about the content of *ACIPC Funding Rules* should be addressed to the ACIPC Research Committee via the ACIPC Secretariat.

Submission

Submissions must be made by midnight on the stated closing date. Submissions must be made in electronic format via email to the ACIPC Secretariat.

Withdraw

Applicants may withdraw their application at any time in writing to the ACIPC Secretariat.

Incomplete, False or Misleading Applications

All details in the application, particularly concerning any current grants and other applications, must be current and accurate at the time of application. Examples of false or misleading information in an application include, but are not restricted to:

- providing a dishonest statement regarding time commitments to the research for which support is being sought;
- providing incomplete or inaccurate facts regarding other sources of funding;
- providing fictitious track records;
- falsifying claims in publication records (such as describing a paper as accepted for publication when it has only been submitted).

If the ACIPC believes that omissions or inclusion of misleading information are intentional, it may refer the matter for appropriate legal action and other relevant action regarding ACIPC memberships status consistent with the ACIPC Constitution.

Funding

The College are pleased to offer funding to grants up to \$12 000 under the Early Career Research Category and up to \$15 000 under the Seed Grant. Grants are awarded on merit and grant requesting smaller sums of money are also welcomed. The ACIPC may provide funding in a staged process to successful applicants, pending satisfactory progress report and ethics approvals.

The amount of funds awarded to any application is at the discretion of the ACIPC. Applicants may be funded in whole or in part where insufficient funds are available. Where funds are provided in part, contact will be made with the applicant to determine the feasibility and any adjustments that may be required to the research project.

The decision to award funding is based on the assessment criteria. If there is a small amount of funds remaining after the initial grant(s) is awarded, the ACIPC may review existing applications requiring less funding and award such applications on merit, based on the assessment criteria.

Privacy

Documents containing personal information are handled and protected by ACIPC in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy Act 1988*.

Eligibility

Applications for all ACIPC research grants are subject to eligibility rules. Failure to comply with all the eligibility criteria below will render an application void. Please also see the section "Incomplete, False or Misleading Applications".

Criteria:

- The Chief Investigator (CI) must have been a continuous member of the ACIPC in the 12 months prior to the closing date

- The majority (50% or more) of all investigators (including the CI) have been continuous ACIPC members in the 12 months prior to the closing date
- The application must be submitted in a manner consistent with applicant guidelines. Failure to complete all required information or failure to adhere to application guidelines will render the application void
- Data Collection for the proposed research must be undertaken in countries generally considered to be included in the Asia-Pacific region *and*
- For the **early career research grant**:
 - The Early Career Researchers (ECR) are researchers who are within five years of the start of their research careers when they submit their applications. This normally means that you have been awarded a PhD or equivalent research doctorate within five years, however, an extension to this limit may be approved owing to significant career interruptions.
 - The CI must not have previously held the position of CI for a successful ACIPC research grant application in the past three years.
 - The CI must not be in receipt of or be a named CI investigator on a current NHMRC (project, program or fellowship) grant or ARC (discovery, linkage or fellowship) grants.
- For the **seed grant**:
 - The CI and any of the named applicants must not be in receipt of or a named CI investigator on a current NHMRC (project, program or fellowship) grant or ARC (discovery, linkage or fellowship) grant.

Decision making process

The ACIPC Research Committee will oversee the process for administering grants. Grants will be reviewed on a peer-review based process. The committee may engage external reviewers as part of this process or at any stage. Where members of the ACIPC Research Committee are applicants, they will be recused entirely and will not be involved in any related discussions. The inclusion of at least two external reviewers will be mandatory where one or more members of the ACIPC Research Committee or ACIPC Executive Council are applicants. A majority decision from remaining members of the Research Committee and external reviewers will determine successful applicants.

The decision on the awarding of grants is final. There is no right to appeal unless a potential procedural issue that would adversely affect the decision made is identified. If an appeal is warranted, the applicant must submit an appeal in writing to the ACIPC Executive Council within 7 days of notification of the outcome of the grant process.

Investigators

The CI is the project leader who takes the lead role in the conduct of the research project, and is the investigator who takes responsibility for completion and lodgement of the application. An Associate Investigator (AI) is defined as an investigator who provides intellectual input into the research and whose participation warrants inclusion of their name on publications.

Authorship

All investigators must consent to be named investigators on this project, prior to submission. The ACIPC may contact any named investigator to validate their role in the study.

Ethical considerations

Research funded by ACIPC that involves human participants must be reviewed by a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) or an institutional low risk review process in accordance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (updated March 2014)*.

Progress Reports and Financial Report

Annual progress and financial reports will be required by 30 June of each year in a form prescribed by ACIPC. At the completion of the grant, a final report and financial acquittal will be required within six months after the period of funding ends. Failure to report within timeframes may also affect eligibility to apply for and receive funding. More frequent reports may be requested by the Research Committee.

Dissemination of Scientific Results

The ACIPC expect that results from the funded research are shared in a peer reviewed journal and conference proceedings. For any peer review publication involving results from research funded by the ACIPC (in part or in whole), the initial submission must be to *Infection, Disease and Health* for right of first refusal. Failure to adhere to this requirement will result in all named investigators being excluded for being able to apply for any future ACIPC research grants, for a period of 5 years. Additionally the results from the funded research must be submitted for consideration as an oral abstract at the ACIPC annual scientific conference.

Any publications or presentations coming from the work must include acknowledgement of ACIPC as a funding source, see Acknowledgements.

Duplicate and multiple applications

For applicants that meet the eligibility criteria for more than one grant, there is no need to submit to different applications. Simply indicate on the application form which grant(s) you wish to be considered for.

Applicants are able to submit more than one application, provided the proposals are not related. However, the ACIPC will not award more than one grant to an individual CI in any one year.

Applicants are able to seek funding from other organisations and institutions – see Budget and applications for funding to other providers.

Budget and applications for funding to other providers

Applicants are able to seek funding from other organisations and institutions in addition to apply for this grant. Where this occurs, it should be clearly indicated in the budget and application form.

Where funding from other organisations or institutions is indicated in the budget, the applicant should make it clear whether or not this funding is confirmed or whether they intend to apply. In the case of the latter, the applicant should note the feasibility of the project in the absence of being awarded additional funding or support.

Acknowledgements

For successful applicants, the ACIPC requires acknowledgement in relevant publications and dissemination of research findings.

Research priorities

The ACIPC Research Committee may specify infection prevention and control research priorities. Where this occurs, the manner in which the proposed project aligns with the research priorities will be considered under the assessment criteria (“Significance of the project”). Research priorities, when they exist, will be clearly documented on the research pages of ACIPC website.

Assessment criteria

The assessment criteria and weight applied to each, is provided below. Further descriptions of the assessment criteria are also provided.

Early career researcher grant

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Quality of the project | 45% |
| • Significance of the project | 35% |
| • Chief Investigator track record | 10% |
| • Research team track record and support for the CI | 10% |

Seed grant

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Quality of the project | 40% |
| • Significance of the project | 30% |
| • Chief Investigator track record | 20% |
| • Research team track record and collaboration (including external) | 10% |

Quality of the project

Under this assessment criterion, reviewers will consider the strength of the proposed study design, setting, participants, data collection, data analysis, feasibility of the study – including budget and timeframe.

Significance of the project

Under this assessment criterion, reviewers will consider in relation to infection prevention and control the aims of the research, how the results will advance knowledge, the significance of the project and results for practice/policy/research and the dissemination plan. Where the ACIPC specific research priorities, they will be considered under this assessment criteria.

Specific to the Early Career Research Grant, applicants should articulate how they plan to develop collaborations and build research partnership as part of their project.

Specific to the Seed Grant, consideration will also be given to the scalability of the project.

Chief Investigator

Under this assessment criterion, reviewers will consider the research experience/skills; the potential to succeed and related track record; prizes, awards, conferences of the CI; the involvement of the CI in supporting of infection prevention and control activities, including ACIPC college involvement.

Specific to the Early Career Research Grant, applicants should articulate how this grant will be used to advance their research career.

Specific to the Seed Grant, applicants should articulate how this grant will enhance infection prevention and control capacity in the workforce.

Research team and collaboration

Under this assessment criterion, reviewers will consider the research experience/skills of the research team, existing collaborations between the investigators, who the research team skills address and support the project. In addition, where collaboration with industry or other partner organisations exists, this will be considered under this point. The support for CI will also be strongly considered for the early career research grant.

For the early career research grant, one page detailing the support and supervision to be provided by one of the research team members is to be included in the application (see advice for applicants' document). This must be signed by the person providing the support/mentorship.