

# TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH GRANTS SCHEME ROUND 4

## GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS



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# Call for Applications

## Translational Research Grants Scheme Round 4

NSW Health invites Local Health Districts (LHDs), Specialty Health Networks (SHNs), the NSW Ambulance and NSW Health Pathology to apply for funding under the Translational Research Grants Scheme (TRGS). These guidelines provide information about the submission procedure, selection process, and reporting and evaluation requirements for the scheme.

Further information on TRGS is available at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/ohmr/Pages/trgs.aspx>

For queries regarding the scheme, email [TRGS@doh.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:TRGS@doh.health.nsw.gov.au)

## Application and selection process

The process includes three stages:

1. Expressions of Interest
2. Proposal development
3. Full applications

## Submission of Applications

All applications must be completed using the application forms available on the TRGS website, at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/ohmr/Pages/trgs.aspx>. See below for submission dates.

All Expressions of Interest and Full Applications must be submitted to the Ministry of Health by the TRGS Coordinator at your Host Organisation. See below for contact details.

Please use the following naming convention for applications:

EOI\_TRGS\_<LHD>\_<FirstnameSURNAME>

Full application\_TRGS\_<LHD>\_<FirstnameSURNAME>

Full application\_  
TRGS\_<LHD>\_<FirstnameSURNAME>\_Biographies

## Key dates

STAGE 1	
Call for expression of interest	10 July 2018
Expressions of Interest submitted to Host Organisation	4 September 2018
Liaison with Pillars and potential partners	10 September - 2 October 2018
Chief Executive sign off period	3 - 9 October 2018
Expressions of Interest submitted to Ministry of Health	9 October 2019
EOI Review Panel assessment	17 October - 4 December 2018
STAGE 2	
Invitations to progress to Full Application	4 December 2018
Feedback on Expressions of Interest and Full Application development	5-23 December 2018
Host CE sign off	27 February - 6 March 2019
Partner organisation sign off	6 -12 March 2019
STAGE 3	
Full Applications close	13 March 2019
Independent Selection Panel assessment	14 March - 23 April 2019
All applicants notified of outcome	31 May 2019

Funding for successful applications will be allocated to the Host Organisations from July 2019.

## Host Organisation TRGS coordinators

Applicants must contact their TRGS coordinators to ensure that the proposed projects meet the intent of the scheme. All Expressions of Interest and Full Applications must be submitted through the TRGS coordinator for your Host Organisation. See below for contact details of TRGS coordinators.

NAME	EMAIL ADDRESS	HOST ORGANISATION
Ms Rosemary Carney	<a href="mailto:rosemary.carney@health.nsw.gov.au">rosemary.carney@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	NSW Ambulance Service
Ms Amanda Jackson	<a href="mailto:Amanda.JacksonAitken@health.nsw.gov.au">Amanda.JacksonAitken@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	CC LHD
Ms Kristy Morris	<a href="mailto:Kristy.Morris@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au">Kristy.Morris@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au</a>	HNE LHD
Professor Leonard Arnolda	<a href="mailto:leonard.arnolda@health.nsw.gov.au">leonard.arnolda@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	IS LHD
Ms Julia Bowman	<a href="mailto:Julia.Bowman@justicehealth.nsw.gov.au">Julia.Bowman@justicehealth.nsw.gov.au</a>	JH&FMHN
Ms Nicole Raschke	<a href="mailto:Nicole.Raschke@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au">Nicole.Raschke@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au</a>	MNC LHD
Ms Marianne Warren	<a href="mailto:marianne.warren@health.nsw.gov.au">marianne.warren@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	Murrumbidgee LHD
Ms Penny Mahairas Ms Marietta Coutinho	<a href="mailto:NBMLHD-ResearchOffice@health.nsw.gov.au">NBMLHD-ResearchOffice@health.nsw.gov.au</a> <a href="mailto:Marietta.Coutinho@health.nsw.gov.au">Marietta.Coutinho@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	NBM LHD
Dr Alexandre Stephens	<a href="mailto:Alexandre.Stephens@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au">Alexandre.Stephens@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au</a>	NNSW LHD
Ms Annette McCook Ms Jodi Humphreys	<a href="mailto:Annette.mccook@sydney.edu.au">Annette.mccook@sydney.edu.au</a> <a href="mailto:Jodi.Humphreys@health.nsw.gov.au">Jodi.Humphreys@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	NS LHD
Ms Amanda Koegelenberg	<a href="mailto:NSWPATH-Research@health.nsw.gov.au">NSWPATH-Research@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	NSW Health Pathology
Professor Chris Cowell	<a href="mailto:chris.cowell@health.nsw.gov.au">chris.cowell@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	SCHN
A/Prof Christopher White	<a href="mailto:Christopher.White@health.nsw.gov.au">Christopher.White@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	SES LHD
Mr Tony Robben	<a href="mailto:Tony.Robben@health.nsw.gov.au">Tony.Robben@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	SNSW LHD
Philip Cunningham Ms Anna Byrne	<a href="mailto:p.cunningham@amr.org.au">p.cunningham@amr.org.au</a> ; <a href="mailto:anna.byrne@svha.org.au">anna.byrne@svha.org.au</a>	SVHN
Ms Rachel Goldrick	<a href="mailto:SWSLHD-ResearchDirectorate@health.nsw.gov.au">SWSLHD-ResearchDirectorate@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	SWS LHD
Ms Lisa Daly	<a href="mailto:lisa.daly1@health.nsw.gov.au">lisa.daly1@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	Sydney LHD
Stephen Rodwell	<a href="mailto:Stephen.Rodwell@health.nsw.gov.au">Stephen.Rodwell@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	FW LHDs
Dr Alice Munro	<a href="mailto:Alice.Munro@health.nsw.gov.au">Alice.Munro@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	WNSW
Mr Mark Smith	<a href="mailto:MarkT.Smith@health.nsw.gov.au">MarkT.Smith@health.nsw.gov.au</a>	WS LHD

# Supporting Resources

## Information sessions

Information sessions are available on the Office for Health and Medical Research website. Link:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/ohmr/Pages/trgs-information-session-videos.aspx>

## Translational Research Grants Scheme Website

The TRGS website contains further information and resources for applicants including:

- An overview of process guidelines for Expression of Interest and Full Application review
- General feedback to applicants to the previous round of the scheme which identifies common areas where past applications could have been strengthened
- Details of funded projects from previous rounds which provides an indication of the range of project types funded through the scheme
- Checklists for applicants on how to address the selection criteria
- 'Exemplar' application examples for different study types
- Frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the scheme's processes and requirements

## Translational Research Framework

The Translational Research Framework has been developed by the Sax Institute to assist with the program intent to build research capacity. The Framework assists grant applicants to refine research questions, and identify feasible research methods to answer these questions.

The Framework provides a number of prompts to help identify the steps you need to take to:

- demonstrate that a health service, program or policy innovation works;
- understand the conditions under which it was successful (or unsuccessful);
- where appropriate, identify how to scale up an innovation for greatest impact.

The Framework has been developed for health professionals who may have limited research experience, but may also be useful for more experienced researchers as a structured reminder of the range of issues that will be taken into account in the screening and assessment of proposals.

You can access the Framework at: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/ohmr/Pages/trgs.aspx>

# Guidelines for Applicants

## Introduction

TRGS is currently in its fourth round of funding. The scheme offers funding to staff within NSW LHDs, SHNs, NSW Ambulance, and NSW Health Pathology, including medical staff, nursing staff, allied health professionals and population health practitioners. Grants support research projects that will translate into better patient outcomes, improve the delivery of health services and improve population health and wellbeing.

**In Round 4, Expressions of Interest will be capped to a maximum of five per Host Organisation.**

Host Organisations are required to carefully consider the applications that are submitted, and encouraged only to submit those that reflect the intent of the TRGS and are of a high standard.

Host Organisations commit to the implementation of research results if successful, and need to ensure they can support this.

Applicants are encouraged to consult with the Research Director and TRGS Coordinator of their Host Organisation well in advance of drafting an expression of interest. Research Directors and TRGS Coordinators may want to have a 'pipeline' of projects that may be better suited for future rounds. Irrespective of what priority themes are identified in future rounds, TRGS applicants can submit projects which can demonstrate they address a local priority.

Applicants are encouraged to consult with the Research Director and TRGS Coordinator of their Host Organisation and to partner with other LHDs, universities and medical research institutes. The scheme is designed to support the development of local research capabilities and accelerate evidence translation and uptake within the NSW health system.

## Purpose and objectives

The overarching purpose of TRGS is to harness the research capacity within NSW Health to improve the health system, patient outcomes and population health and wellbeing in NSW. TRGS aims to incentivise research that is a priority for the State or articulated in local strategic research plans, and to support the translation of that research into policy and practice.

TRGS intends to:

1. Foster the generation of high quality research which is directly relevant to clinical, health service and population health practice in NSW. The scheme supports:
  - projects that demonstrate sufficient evidence and background to justify the research proposed
  - rigorous research with appropriate research design which aligns with the question
  - the following examples of types of research (which must be supported by a rigorous methodology): randomised control trials, pragmatic clinical trials, implementation science, translational research, health services research, population health research, and proof of concept studies.
2. Support projects that have the potential to be translated into policy and practice. The research proposal must be supported by a robust knowledge translation/implementation plan. Such research includes:
  - research that is translatable: that is, research that can be generalised and scaled across other LHDs/SHNs across the state
  - translation research: that is, implementation science projects which examine how to more effectively apply best practice in models of care.
3. Reduce the time from evidence generation to practice implementation. The scheme:
  - Supports research with a governance framework to:
    - guide the research project and drive knowledge translation,
    - ensure existing evidence and policy is implemented, and
    - facilitate engagement with key stakeholders who help to drive both the project and implementation of results, if successful.
  - Encourages engagement with key policy makers, networks, health system administrators and practitioners to ensure the proposed research is effective.

4. Enhance health and medical research capability and capacity within the NSW health system including:

- enabling opportunities to leverage complementary programs which support workforce development such as the NSW Health Early-Mid Career Fellowships and the NSW Health PhD Scholarships, and other researcher development workshops
- enabling opportunities to leverage philanthropy and non-government organisation in-kind and financial support for research.

5. Drive collaboration and practice change that improves health outcomes. The scheme supports meaningful collaborations that support the above.

## Details of funding

Grants ranging from \$50,000 to \$1 million will be provided to successful applicants for projects of a maximum two year period.

TRGS funding may be used for costs associated with the research project and translation activities, but cannot be directed towards research administration costs, capital works, general maintenance costs, telephone/ communication systems, basic office equipment such as desks and chairs, rent and the cost of utilities.

## New priority themes

Round 4 of TRGS will focus on a number of priority themes. Priority themes proposals will be reviewed through standard TRGS processes, and must be in keeping with the scheme's focus to support research that translates into better patient outcomes, improves the delivery of health services, and improves population health and wellbeing.

1. **Aboriginal health**
2. **Hospital acquired infections**
3. **Frail elderly**
4. **Delirium**
5. **Low value care**
6. **Models to support shared decision making with consumers**
7. **Other locally identified priorities**

## Ethics considerations to strengthen your research proposal

Take time to consider how your research proposal will address ethics considerations. While you will not be required to have ethics approval at EOI or full application stage, you will need to demonstrate that ethics has been considered early.

You should review and consider all the requirements of the National Health and Medical Research Council's National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. You should also consider discussing your proposal with the Executive Officer of the relevant HREC at your institution.

Ethics principles should be considered when developing your research project. Research projects need to be able to demonstrate:

1. Ways to reduce/avoid harm to participants
2. Clear informed consent process
3. Ways to maintain privacy and confidentiality of participants
4. Ways to maintain quality and integrity of research project
5. How the research project will be independent and impartial
6. How the results will be reported

For research projects involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait participants, sensitivities need to be recognised. Consultation with Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council Health Research Ethics Committee is advised. Similarly all health research projects involving persons in custodial or forensic mental health settings in NSW should consult with the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (JH&MHN) Human Research Ethics Committee.

Further information and key questions for researchers about ethics is available on the OHMR website.

## Research and implementation partners

Host Organisations will need to identify and engage relevant partners who are essential for the effective delivery of the research project and implementation of the outcomes in NSW. Applicants are encouraged to partner with other organisations to assist with generalisability of the research findings. An explanation will be required if this is not considered appropriate for the research project.

These partners may include consumers, internal cross-disciplinary partners or external organisations including universities, medical research institutes, NSW Health Pillars (Agency for Clinical Innovation, Clinical Excellence Commission, Health Education and Training Institute, Bureau of Health Information), the NSW Ministry of Health, other LHDs/SHNs/NSW Ambulance, Research Hubs, relevant clinical networks non-government organisations, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and primary healthcare networks.



Where the research is likely to impact any of these groups or their policy, an appropriate partner must be included in the project Steering Committee.

## Knowledge translation

TRGS aims to generate high impact research that is directly relevant to clinical, health service and population health practice in NSW and to ensure the translation of these findings into policy and practice. TRGS aims to support meaningful research and the early identification of activities that will move the findings along the translation continuum, including scaling up the findings across a system or to other settings.

Partner engagement must occur throughout the research project and follow through to knowledge translation, for example:

- 1. Prior to and during research** key policy and practice partners must be included in the development of the research question and participate in relevant stages of the process including translation activities such as:
  - a. Co-production of research
  - b. Presentations of findings
  - c. Publication of findings in policy- or practice-relevant formats
  - d. Steps required to change practice.

### 2. At the completion of the research project

researchers and key partners in the Host Organisation will need to continue to follow through with planned translation activities. Applicants will need to consider how they will measure the success of their knowledge translation activities and the uptake of the research findings into practice, noting that the Chief Executives are required to certify that practice change will be implemented in the Host Organisation and any partner Host Organisations (see Section F in the Expression of Interest “and Full Application” forms).

Applicants may find the following publications useful in considering knowledge translation activities:

Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence. Milat AJ, Newson R, and King L. *Increasing the scale of population health interventions: A guide*. Evidence and Evaluation Guidance Series, Population and Public Health Division. Sydney: NSW Ministry of Health, 2014. <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/research/Pages/scalability-guide.aspx>

Ruppertsberg AI, Ward V, Ridout A, Foy R. The development and application of audit criteria for assessing knowledge exchange plans in health research grant applications. *Implementation Science* 2014;9:93. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/content/pdf/s13012-014-0093-0.pdf>

## Research should consider outcomes for vulnerable and other population groups

Consider whether there is a difference (gap) between vulnerable population groups (Aboriginal, non English speaking, socioeconomically disadvantaged groups) and others with regard to the prevalence of the health system or local need. Ensure that you have the right partners on board to help engage patients from vulnerable groups effectively. Engage partners (e.g. Aboriginal Medical Service) who can implement or influence change in the system to support project findings. Similarly in selecting the right design and method, consider whether the intervention is at least equally effective for Aboriginal people and other vulnerable population groups.

If the research involves Aboriginal settings, or includes a focus on Aboriginal people, is there a commitment for an Aboriginal Health Impact Statement to be completed?

If the research involves Aboriginal specific settings (e.g. Aboriginal Medical Services), a focus on Aboriginal people or includes specific design elements (e.g. data collection, intervention elements) relating to Aboriginal people, does the team include Aboriginal investigators?

# Eligibility criteria

## Project criteria

1. The project must be conducted in NSW, within a Local Health District, Specialty Health Network, the NSW Ambulance, or NSW Health Pathology.
2. The Host Organisation for the project must be a LHD, SHN, the NSW Ambulance or NSW Health Pathology (see Host Organisation criteria below).
3. The project must directly align with the strategic plan of the Host Organisation, Premier's priorities, state priorities, or the TRGS priorities:
  - Aboriginal health
  - Hospital acquired infections
  - Frail elderly
  - Delirium
  - Low value care
  - Models to support shared decision making with consumers
  - Other locally identified prioritiesInvestigators are encouraged to identify specific research questions that are a priority for the Host Organisation and where there is potential to apply the findings in policy or practice and/or scale up a successful intervention.
4. The project cannot be specific to one site only, unless justified because it is a proof of concept study. The results of the research must be generalisable into policy and/or practice, and be applicable to other LHDs/ SHNs or across the Ambulance service/NSW Health Pathology. The project and its results must have the capacity to be scaled up across settings, for example in other LHDs or state-wide. Projects involving collaborations across multiple sites within an LHD, or between one or more LHD/SHN or across the Ambulance Service/ NSW Health Pathology will be prioritised.

5. The application must demonstrate engagement and consultation with relevant stakeholders (e.g. clinicians, consumers, health service administrators, researchers, patient groups, policy makers).
6. Applicants must provide a clear governance structure, including a steering committee for the project, including confirmation that grant funds will be quarantined for the purposes of the specified research project through a dedicated cost centre in the general fund.
7. Applicants must commit to report six monthly on research progress and expenditure.

## Host Organisation criteria

1. Host Organisation must provide financial and in-kind support for the research/translation activities.
2. Host Organisations must conduct a review of the applications, ensuring they meet the intent of scheme before submission.
3. The Chief Executive of the Host Organisation must sign off on the grant application and agree that practice change (if part of the project will be conducted or implement the outcome if successful) will be implemented if the results from the project are positive. Partner organisations affected by practice change will need to co-sign the Full Application.

## Selection criteria

All Expressions of Interest and Full Applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed against the following selection criteria:

1. Extent to which the project will generate new and relevant evidence for policy and/or practice; and likely impact of the results of the study on disease prevention, patient care or health service delivery.
2. Strength, rigour and appropriateness of the research design, including the ability of the research team to carry out the proposed project in the timeframe<sup>1</sup>
3. Extent to which the project supports the translation of positive research outcomes into policy and practice, including formal and informal activities for research translation and knowledge exchange.
4. Consideration of sustainability and scalability of the results of the study in the research design and translation plan, including that the study design will provide evidence to support funding decisions regarding the implementation of positive outcomes.
5. Engagement with appropriate stakeholders (e.g. researchers, clinicians, consumers, policy makers and the community) including:
  - a. Consultation with partners and consumers in the development of the proposal.
  - b. Inclusion of essential partners who will contribute to the conduct and management of the research project.
  - c. Ongoing engagement with relevant stakeholders for the dissemination of new knowledge as it emerges, including clear links to the groups that will likely implement positive outcomes from the research.

### Out of scope

This grant scheme is targeted at supporting practice-based research projects. The types of research listed below are out of scope for this grants scheme.

1. Basic science research.
2. Research only occurring in a primary health care network.
3. Commercially-sponsored clinical trials.
4. Descriptive research – research that is ‘idea generation’ or ‘monitoring’ as described in the Translational Research Framework.
5. Projects with a primary focus on cancer. Funding in this area is provided by the Cancer Institute NSW and includes the Translational Program Grants.
6. Projects where the host LHD is not responsible for implementation of the research findings.

<sup>1</sup> Projects with fundamental flaws in the methods will not progress through to the Full Application stage or be funded.

# Application and selection process

## Review panels

The TRGS EOI Review Panel and Independent Selection Panel are Chaired by the Chief Health Officer and Deputy Secretary Population and Public Health, NSW Ministry of Health. The review process guidelines and Terms of Reference for all committees are detailed on the TRGS website.

## Stakeholder engagement

The Ministry of Health will engage with a range of policy and health service stakeholders on specific applications throughout the review process. Advice may be sought from the EOI Subcommittee, NSW Health Pillars, relevant policy and program areas within the NSW Ministry of Health and other experts at any stage of the assessment process.

## Host Organisation review

Prior to submission, Expressions of Interest are reviewed and certified by the Host Organisation. Each Host Organisation has its own review processes to ensure that applications

- meet the intent of the scheme;
- are aligned with organisational, state or TRGS priorities;
- propose high quality research projects with appropriate methodological design; and
- are certified by the Chief Executive of the Host Organisation.

This process allows for Host Organisations to select the applications they will submit to the scheme, and to work with applicants to improve the quality of submitted Expressions of Interest.

## Expression of Interest review

On behalf of the applicant, the TRGS coordinator will submit an Expression of Interest that has been reviewed and supported by the Host Organisation's Research Directors/Coordinators and approved by the Chief Executive.

Expressions of Interest will be assessed by the EOI Review Panel against both eligibility and selection criteria. Expressions of Interest must meet all eligibility criteria. The EOI Review Panel may contact applicants in order to clarify or confirm information contained in the Expression of Interest.

All applicants will be informed as to whether they have been selected to progress to Stage 2. The EOI Review Panel's decision is final. General feedback on Expressions of Interest will be made publicly available.

## Proposal development

Stage 2 involves a **participatory feedback process** involving ongoing engagement between reviewers and applicants. This stage is intended to enhance the quality of research proposals, ensure that proposals are consistent with the objectives of the TRGS, capitalise on potential synergies between projects and build research and translation capability.

**Successful applicants will be provided with detailed feedback on their Expression of Interest and an opportunity to speak with the EOI Review Panel member who assessed their Expression of Interest.**

As a key part of the feedback process, applicants will be provided with advice on potential partners and specialist expertise to improve the rigor of the research proposal or the associated translation activities. The Ministry of Health will facilitate engagement with relevant collaborators to further develop the proposal, based on the recommendations of the EOI Review Panel.

Reasons for reviewers to suggest new partners to involve in a proposal might include:

- connecting project teams to researchers with existing capability or expertise across the state;
- connecting the research project to similar research that is ongoing in other organisations;
- involving different organisations and/or demographics to increase the applicability of results to facilitate state-wide scale-up of successful outcomes;
- testing the scalability of an intervention in a different setting/organisation with a different organisational structure, skill set or history that might impact implementation; or
- ensuring policy/strategic alignment of the research with NSW Ministry of Health and the Pillars.

Where applicants from two or more LHDs submit similar proposals, and there may be benefits of working together, the EOI Review Panel may recommend a meeting of relevant applicants.

All Stage 2 participants will be invited to submit a Full Application. Development of the Full Application is the responsibility of the research team. Participation in Stage 2 of the process is not a guarantee of funding.

## Full Application review

On behalf of the applicant, the TRGS coordinator will submit a Full Application approved by the Chief Executive of the Host Organisation. Partner sites that will be affected by research or implementation activities will also need to co-sign the Full Application.

All applications must be submitted to partner Chief Executives for approval by 6 March 2019.

The TRGS Selection Panel will assess all Full Applications against the selection criteria. The Selection Panel may contact applicants in order to clarify or confirm information in the application.

All applicants will be informed as to whether they have been successful in receiving funding. The Chief Executives of all Host Organisations will be informed of the outcomes for their organisation at the same time.

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## Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants will enter into a funding agreement with NSW Health which sets out obligations including that the applicants provide six-monthly financial acquittals and forecasts; and progress reports on research and translation activity.

Funding for the subsequent year will be made available only when the Host Organisation has provided these reports showing satisfactory progress.

Should the project cease for any reason, remaining project funds will need to be returned to the Ministry.

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## TRGS Implementation assessment

The scheme will periodically be assessed to ensure it is meeting its objectives. This will be done in collaboration with the Host Organisations and grant recipients.

TRGS recipients may be asked to meet with staff from the Ministry of Health from time to time during the funding period. Meetings with recipients will facilitate feedback and inform the future direction of the scheme.



