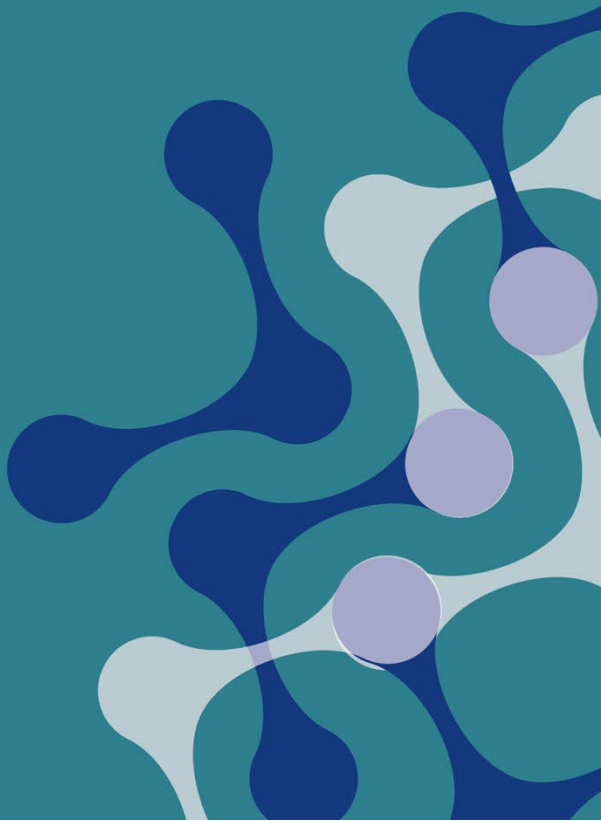
Office for Health and Medical Research

Cardiovascular Collaborative Grants

Guidelines

2024 v1.0



NSW GOVERNMENT

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www.medicalresearch.nsw.gov.au

Further copies of this document can be downloaded from the Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program webpage: www.medicalresearch.nsw.gov.au/cardiovascular/

SHPN (OHMR) 240630

ISBN: 978-1-76023-924-4

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Call for Applications

NSW Health invites eligible researchers to apply for NSW Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program Collaborative Grants. These grants support NSW-led collaborations involving multiple institutions to achieve success with national funding opportunities.

Funding for Collaborative Grants will be provided for two-year research projects. Eligible researchers are encouraged to apply, including clinician researchers, researchers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers, and primary carers who have experienced career disruptions.

For the purpose of these Grants, a collaboration is defined as:

- a multidisciplinary team of researchers led by a NSW-based Chief Investigator A (CIA)
- a minimum of three research institutions, including at least two NSW-based research institutions
- up to 8 Chief Investigators, including a minimum of two early-mid career (EMC) researchers, where EMC is defined as up to 10 years post PhD.

Additional team members (such as Associate Investigators) and partnerships with other types of organisations, are encouraged, where appropriate.

The NSW-based CIA will apply on behalf of the collaboration. NSW Health will enter into one funding agreement per Collaborative Grant with the eligible host organisation at which the CIA is employed, or eligible administering organisation if the funds are being administered separately. Any subsequent agreements with other eligible NSW host organisations who are collaborating on the grant are to be managed by that funded organisation.

Objectives

Cardiovascular Collaborative Grants aim to:

- fund research that improves wellbeing and health outcomes
- encourage collaboration, leadership, and capability building in the NSW research environment
- support the development of multidisciplinary NSW-led collaborations to leverage national funding opportunities to further research and its translation in NSW
- foster research excellence and increase the number of outstanding cardiovascular researchers in NSW
- embed high-quality, innovative cardiovascular research in the NSW health system
- bridge the gap between research, policy, and practice to increase and document research impact and translation.

Indicative Grant timeline

Stage	Date
Call for Applications opens	2 September 2024
Online briefing for applicants	12pm – 1pm 27 September 2024
Applications close	6 December 2024 (5pm AEDST)
Applicants notified of outcomes	By 30 April 2025
Research commences	1 July 2025

Online Briefing for Applicants

A briefing for applicants will be held online on Friday 27 September from 12pm – 1pm. Please email MOH-OHMRGrants@health.nsw.gov.au to register your interest.

Queries

Answers to frequently asked questions and updates on the Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program are available on the Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program webpage.

Any queries regarding NSW Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program grants may be directed by email to: MOH-OHMRGrants@health.nsw.gov.au.

Submission of applications

All applications should be submitted by email to MOH-OHMRGrants@health.nsw.gov.au by 5pm (AEDST) on 6 December 2024.

Applicants must use the Collaborative Grants 2024 Application Form (available on the Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program webpage). Please submit both a word and PDF version of the application and attach any other required documents.

All applications will receive an email to acknowledge receipt within 72 business hours. It is the applicant's responsibility to follow up if no acknowledgement email is received.

The maximum email size is 20MB. Larger emails will be rejected by the NSW Health server and you may not be notified that the email has been rejected.

Eligible areas of research

Funding will support researchers working in cardiovascular research across basic science, biomedical, clinical medicine and health services research, data science, and population health research. Grants also support research towards the development of novel therapeutics.

Across the total Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program, approximately 60% of total funding will be allocated to basic science research and 40% to clinical medicine and science research, health services research, data science, and population health research.

Cardiovascular research

The term cardiovascular is used to encompass all diseases and conditions of the heart and blood vessels, including but not limited to:

- heart disease
- stroke
- heart failure
- vascular disease and vascular health
- cardiovascular complications of diabetes and obesity
- major independent risk factors for cardiovascular disease
- rheumatic heart disease
- congenital heart disease.

Funding amounts

Collaborative grants have a 2-year duration. A total of up to $750,00 may be awarded per grant. The total funding pool for this round is $3 million.

Grants are for research projects or programs and can cover a combination of salaries of the research team (clinical and/or non-clinical), backfill for clinicians to quarantine research time, consumables and equipment.

Funding conditions and exclusions

1. Each collaboration must include a minimum of two Early-Mid Career Researchers as Chief Investigators. An EMC researcher is defined as a researcher who is 10 years or less post-PhD, relative to opportunity (see page 8 for career disruptions which may be taken into consideration in determining time post-PhD).
2. Researchers may submit a maximum of one application as a Chief Investigator. Researchers may be named on additional applications as Associate Investigators or partners but not as Chief Investigators.
3. Research funded through a Collaborative Grant must be conducted in NSW, either in the NSW health system or affiliated organisation (university, medical research institute, industry partner, community setting).
4. NSW Health recognises that interstate and international partners will strengthen collaborations and support success with future national funding opportunities and supports their inclusion. Collaborators external to NSW are expected to cover the cost of their participation in the collaboration.
5. Collaborative Grants must not be spent on capital works, general maintenance costs, organisational infrastructure or overheads (including administrative and other general costs of the recipient that are not directly associated with the performance of the Project), telephone/ communication systems, basic office equipment, such as desks and chairs, rent and the cost of utilities.
6. Applicants are required to declare the source, duration and level of funding already held for research in the subject area of the application. Applications must clearly describe the purpose of the additional funding and justify that the additional research adds value and is not duplicative.
7. Funding is conditional on the CIA and the authorised representative of the host/administering organisation agreeing to the required declarations when submitting the application form. These declarations outline the obligations of each party.
8. Collaborative Grant recipients must apply for at least one collaborative NHMRC, MRFF or equivalent national grant scheme by 30 June 2027 and provide evidence of the application submission, scores, feedback and outcome to NSW Health.
9. Past recipients of a NSW Health Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program grant may apply for

Collaborative Grants, **except CIAs of Collaborative Grants funded in 2023**. Where any previous NSW Health grant is still underway, applicants will need to justify how they will manage multiple grants if successful.

10. Applications will be awarded according to merit based on the selection criteria, with two caveats:
    a. If two applications are of equal merit, relative to opportunity, preference will be given to applicants that have not previously received a NSW Health grant.
    b. In the event that two applications are of similar merit and the Chief Investigators of one collaboration have more developed track records, due to holding one or more current national grants, the review panel may choose to recommend funding the collaboration with the less developed track records, in line with the Program's focus on building research capacity and capability in NSW.
11. Applicants who have received a previous NSW Health grant under any program must justify further funding according to productivity and impact specifically related to the previous grant(s) in their application, including:
    a. publications arising from the grant
    b. advances arising from the research, including any translation that has occurred
    c. external funding applications and funding received
    d. capacity building, including students, trainees and fellows arising from the grant.

Clinician researchers

Clinicians, including medical, nursing, and allied health professionals, are encouraged to apply.

Clinicians may use up to 50% of the grant to backfill their clinical role(s), with appropriate justification. If the grant is to be used for this purpose the application must be signed by the appropriate department head in the local health district. The salary limits are as follows:

- Clinician – medical: Salary limit – up to 0.6 FTE Staff Specialist or Visiting Medical Officers
- Clinician – non-medical: Salary limit – up to 0.6 FTE as per Allied Health (including Pharmacist and radiographers) and Nursing awards.

NSW Future Health Strategy

Applicants are encouraged to consider the strategic framework that is guiding the next decade of health care in NSW 2022-2032. How does your proposed research question relate to NSW Health's vision for a sustainable health system that delivers outcomes that matter most to patients and the community, is personalised, invests in wellness and is digitally enabled? Please consider how the outcomes of your research complement or overlap with the six outcomes identified in the strategy. More information is available here.

Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF)

Applicants are encouraged to consider, and align their research where appropriate, with the MRFF Cardiovascular Health Mission Roadmap and Implementation Plan, including the underlying considerations and funding principles. More information is available here.

Australian Cardiovascular Alliance (ACvA)

Please consider opportunities associated with ACvA's strategic research initiatives.

ACvA's Clinical Theme Initiative is bringing together the cardiovascular sector to develop ambitious collaborative research solutions to address unmet needs in six areas: coronary artery disease, heart failure, arrhythmias, stroke, hypertension and improving cardiovascular outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

ACvA has seven flagships that span the translational pipeline and include: Disease Mechanisms; Drug Discovery; Biomedical Engineering; Big Data; Clinical Trials; Precision Medicine and Implementation and Policy. The flagships provide a platform of expertise from basic research to clinical care. The Directors of each ACvA flagship are willing to provide advice on alignment of research with flagship strategic directions and the opportunities for enhancing collaborative networks, as well as cross-disciplinary mentorship and career development opportunities.

Further information about ACvA, the Clinical Themes Initiative and the Flagships is available here. For further information please email acva@ozheart.org. Mark your email for the attention

of Dr Catherine Shang and include 'NSW Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program' in the subject line.

Eligibility criteria

Applications must meet all eligibility criteria.

Eligibility of Chief Investigator A

Based in NSW and employed by an eligible host/ administering organisation

Chief Investigator A and the majority of the team must reside in or plan to move to NSW for the duration of the grant and must be employed by an eligible NSW-based medical research institute, university, or non-government organisation.

Cardiovascular research

The research project must be in the field of cardiovascular research (See Scope of Cardiovascular Research on page 5).

Submit a complete application

Chief Investigator A must complete the application form fully, attach all relevant and required documentation; agree to the declarations on the form and receive certification from the host/ administering organisation.

Right to work in Australia

Chief Investigator A must be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident of Australia or have an appropriate working visa for the full term of the Grant.

Eligibility of the collaboration

The Collaboration must:

- include a minimum of three eligible research institutions, at least two of which are based in NSW, along with other team members and partners
- include at least 2 EMC researchers as Chief Investigators (10 years or less post-PhD, relative to opportunity).
- include no more than 8 Chief Investigators.

Eligibility of the Host organisation

Collaborative Grants may have multiple host organisations, where the research will be conducted. The host organisation of Chief Investigator A must be in NSW, will enter into the funding agreement with NSW Health and will then enter into subsequent funding agreements with other host organisations. The host organisation may choose to have the funds administered by a separate administering organisation who will enter into the agreement with NSW Health and take on other responsibilities (see below).

The host organisation must be in NSW, conduct health and medical research, and be one of the following:

- a university
- an independent medical research institute
- a not-for-profit organisation
- a local health district or other public health organisation.

Clinician researchers may undertake clinical work separately from where research is undertaken. If the grant is to be used to quarantine research time and backfill a clinical position, the application must also be endorsed by the Chief Executive/ Executive Director of the organisation where clinical duties are undertaken.

The host organisation will provide the appropriate infrastructure support for the research project, including wet/dry lab space, computer equipment, and desk space.

The host organisation may also choose to provide additional in-kind and cash support to the project.

All support should be detailed in the application form and will be assessed against the selection criteria during the review process.

An authorised representative of the host organisation is required to review the application form and to certify that the organisation complies with the requirements of the grant.

If the host organisation is a NSW Health organisation, grant funds must be paid to an administering organisation that can manage funds across financial years as the full funding amount will be paid upfront. Please refer to administering organisation requirements.

Eligibility of Administering organisation

An administering organisation is only required where the funds are held by a separate organisation to the host organisation.

In such cases, the administering organisation will enter into the funding agreement with NSW Health, manage the funds, enter into subsequent agreements with collaborating organisations where required, submit financial reports and coordinate other reporting requirements as outlined in the funding agreement.

Grant funds must be paid to an administering organisation that can manage funds across financial years as the full funding amount will be paid upfront.

The administering organisation must be:

- a university
- a medical research institute, or
- a not-for-profit organisation that conducts health and medical research in NSW.

Note: For-profit organisations are not eligible to be host or administering organisations or to apply for funding but may be partners on the grant.

Relative to opportunity policy

Applicants' track records will be assessed by expert reviewers against the selection criteria relative to opportunity, which means in the context of their career stage and personal circumstances. These circumstances might include career disruption due to pregnancy, major illness/injury and/or carer responsibilities, as well as other relative to opportunity considerations as outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC's) Relative to Opportunity Policy. Please refer to the NHMRC policy here.

To be eligible for these Collaborative Grants, the team must include at least two EMC researchers as Chief Investigators, with EMC researchers defined as up to 10 years post PhD. Career disruptions due to pregnancy, major illness/ injury and /or carer responsibilities may be taken into account in determining the time since PhD, with appropriate justification such as a statutory declaration or other evidence. NSW Health reserves the right to determine whether a researcher is classified as an EMC researcher for the purpose of this grant.

Selection criteria

All applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed against the following selection criteria. In addressing the selection criteria, applicants should specifically highlight the relevance to cardiovascular health.

Applications should be written in plain English, as applications may be reviewed by a panel member with expertise in a different area of cardiovascular science to that of the application.

Track record in research and impact - 20%

The team's collaborative track record will be assessed against the criteria in the Collaboration section below.

The individual track records of Chief Investigators will be assessed on:

- academic and relevant clinical qualifications
- research, clinical and industry experience, including demonstrated capacity to work in multidisciplinary teams
- skills and experience directly related to the topic area(s) and methodology of the research project.
- track record in research and research impact, relative to opportunity.
- potential for the Chief Investigator(s) to leverage this grant to gain research funding and fellowships from other funding bodies.

Potential for knowledge gain and impact – 40%

- a clearly articulated need for the research including evidence of a gap in knowledge and how the proposed research fits within the current Australian and international research landscape, how this project will advance knowledge and why this is important.
- clarity of the research aim(s) and research question(s) and strength, rigour and appropriateness of the research design and methodology in achieving the aims
- the extent to which the proposed research is innovative and novel
- feasibility of successfully completing the research project within the proposed timeframe and budget
- likelihood and extent of impact including:
    - program logic, with potential outputs and outcomes of the research and a credible pathway for influencing clinical, health service or population health practice in NSW in the short or long term

- plan for research translation, with evidence of relationships with key stakeholders who will likely use the research findings
- consideration of data management and access, commercialisation and intellectual property where appropriate
- consideration of equity of health outcomes where appropriate
- scalability and generalisability of results.

- whether the project is value for money.

Budget

The budget should be detailed and well-justified and will be assessed on:

- overall value for money
- appropriateness and purpose of each line item
- existing funding for the research, and how this relates to the additional funding requested
- other contributions and support for the project.

Collaboration - 40%

The Collaboration, including Chief Investigators and other team members and partners, will be assessed against the following criteria:

- each team member's ability to provide vital skills and perspectives which are necessary to address the research question, to produce outcomes which would not be possible by the Chief Investigators pursuing the components as separate projects
- potential to build capacity in cardiovascular research in NSW, including how the project will enhance the career path of the EMC Chief Investigators
- evidence of past collaboration
- evidence that the future collaboration is supported by a plan for the team to work together including milestones, strategies for intellectual exchange, grant sharing and resources
- diversity of the research team (e.g. gender, career stage and/or researchers and clinicians from rural areas and different cultures)
- evidence of appropriate and sustainable engagement with key stakeholders including those who will likely use the research findings and/ or support implementation or translation
- co-contributions from host and partner organisations, noting that, at a minimum, host organisations must provide in-kind support, which should be detailed in the budget.

Important Considerations

Program Logic and research impact

Applicants are required to submit a Program Logic diagram with their application, including project aim, inputs, activities, outputs, and expected outcomes and impacts.

Research Impact Assessment

The Program Logic will be used to optimise the probability of research impact at application stage. If the research is funded, the Program Logic will guide the measurement of impact throughout the project and at its conclusion.

Note that outcomes and impacts may not be realised during the funded period, and they may be projected to occur in the future. Particularly for basic science, the 'next users' who are responsible for taking the research findings to the next step for translation should be involved from the start of the project so they understand the research and can move the findings towards translation.

Research impact will be considered across five domains:

Domain 1: Knowledge Advancement

- New interventions, treatments, diagnostics or drug targets
- New clinical or medical prototypes
- Peer-reviewed publications and presentations at conferences
- Media coverage and other non-peer-reviewed publications

Domain 2: Capacity and Capability Building

- New partnerships leveraged
- Training and professional development
- Research students supported.

Domain 3: Policy and Practice

- Instances where research findings are considered in policy development
- Instances of change in clinical practice
- Instances of new health technology or new treatments used in clinical care

Domain 4: Heath and community

- Improved health outcomes, including:
  - change in the time to develop an outcome
  - change in the likelihood of an outcome occurring.

Domain 5: Economic benefit

- Research jobs created and sustained
- Patents and commercialisation
- Value of leveraged research funding (external grants awarded due to NSW Health funding)
- Reduction in cost of delivering care
- Potential for return on investment

Research Translation

All research projects must have potential to lead to changes in health outcomes, clinical practice or health policy in the short and/or long term, even if not during the funded period. Applications must clearly describe:

- the long-term goal and clinical significance of the research
- the expected pathway for this to occur (note this may not be linear)
- how the researchers will engage with 'next users', i.e. research partners and other stakeholders who will take the research to the next step on the translation pathway.

Appendix A contains two examples of translation pathways. Applicants may use their preferred framework.

Intellectual Property

To maximise benefits arising from the public funding of research, all recipients of Senior and EMC Researcher Grants must comply with the *National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research* as a condition of funding. In addition, intellectual property (IP) arrangements should be agreed between all research partners and organisations. IP arrangements must cover both background IP and IP that is developed during the project. IP arrangements should consider the contributions of all parties. The arrangements should be detailed in the application.

Please refer to NSW Health's Policy Directive *Intellectual Property arising from Health Research* which provides a clear and consistent guide for public health organisations to protect their intellectual property arising from research. NSW Health has also released a *Commercialisation Framework*. Both documents are available here.

Ethics and Regulation

The host organisation (and where appropriate the administering organisation) must certify that the project has received all appropriate research ethics and regulatory approvals and must ensure these are maintained as required for the duration of the grant. All organisations and personnel contributing to the project must:

- have familiarised themselves with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, the NHMRC Open Access Policy, the National Statement of the Ethical Conduct of Human Research, the Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes* (including but not limited to the application of the 3Rs 'replacement', 'reduction' and 'refinement' at all stages of animal care and use) or their replacements and other relevant National Health and Medical Research Council policies concerning the conduct of research and agree to conduct themselves in accordance with those policies;
- comply with any requirements of relevant Commonwealth or State or Territory laws; and
- comply with any requirements of regulatory bodies that have jurisdiction over the project. This includes, but is not limited to, the Therapeutic Goods Administration and the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.

Equity of health outcomes

It is important that all research projects consider and respond to the distribution of the burden of disease within the population and the needs of higher risk and priority populations where appropriate. These may include women, Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander people, individuals from a non-English speaking background, socioeconomically disadvantaged groups and people living in regional and remote areas among others.

Relevant partners should be engaged early to ensure that the research design and conduct will be effective and appropriate for these population groups.

Research projects with a primary focus on Aboriginal health or involving Aboriginal people as participants should attach a completed Aboriginal Health Impact Statement to their application, available here.

Clinical Trials

The NSW Government is committed to improving equity of access to clinical trials in NSW.

As part of this commitment, OHMR run a Regional, Rural and Remote Clinical Trials Enabling Program. More information can be found on our website here.

If your application involves a Clinical Trial, we encourage you to consider how patients in regional, rural and remote areas can access it. Our colleagues in the Program would welcome the opportunity to connect with researchers to talk about the support they can provide to make this happen. Please contact our team if you would like to discuss this further at moh-rrr-ctep@health.nsw.gov.au.

Commercialisation Training Program

NSW Health has developed a training program in commercialisation, which grant recipients are welcome to complete if relevant. The training will provide researchers with a high-level understanding of industry, its structure, corporate roles and the process of taking a product from a concept through to market. Specifically, researchers will understand the essential steps required to create successful therapeutics from a formulation, manufacturing, regulatory and reimbursement strategy point of view. At the completion of the course researchers will understand how to construct a target product profile and associated business case for a new therapeutic product.

Research collaborations and partnerships

Applicants are encouraged to identify and engage relevant stakeholders, partners and networks who will provide a meaningful contribution to delivery of the research project and implementation of outcomes.

Partners may include:

- Patients, carers and consumer advocacy organisations
- NSW Health system partners including NSW Ministry of Health, Pillars, statewide health services and Agency for Clinical Innovation networks
- local health districts and specialty health networks
- Advanced Health Research Translation Centres and Centres for Innovation in Regional Health
- universities and medical research institutes
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services
- Primary Healthcare Networks
- research networks
- non-government organisations
- industry
- consumers and patients
- non-government organisations

Partnerships may vary in type and intensity from informal arrangements such as the provision of occasional advice, to membership of the research team or project steering committee, to formal partnerships that are the subject of a written agreement between the parties.

Where an industry organisation proposes to host a researcher at their site, the following conditions apply and NSW Health reserves the right to cancel the funding agreement with the host/administering organisation and recoup funds if they are not met:

- the host/administering organisation must enter into a legally binding agreement with the partnering industry organisation to ensure their obligations are met including the following:
    - accommodate and support the researcher and ensure that the researcher has the support of the industry organisation's Chief Executive Officer or equivalent position
    - meet all standard employer responsibilities and obligations in accordance with relevant regulations and value gender equity in practice

- provide cash and/or in-kind contributions to support the project, and
- detail intellectual property arrangements in line with the NSW Health Policy and national principles.

Selection process

Step 1: Eligibility check

Following the closing date for applications, NSW Health will determine if each application has satisfied the eligibility criteria.

Step 2: Review by independent expert panel

An independent panel of expert reviewers will assess each eligible application against the selection criteria.

Step 3: Funding recommendation

The independent panel will agree on the final ranking of all eligible applications and will make recommendations for funding to NSW Health.

Step 4: Decision and notification

NSW Health will determine grant recipients and amounts. All applicants will be informed as to whether they have been awarded funding.

Step 5: Grant Agreements

NSW Health will contact host/administering organisations for successful projects to execute a funding agreement. A standard, non-negotiable funding agreement will be used.

Post award requirements

A schedule for reporting will be outlined in the funding agreement and will include a requirement to provide:

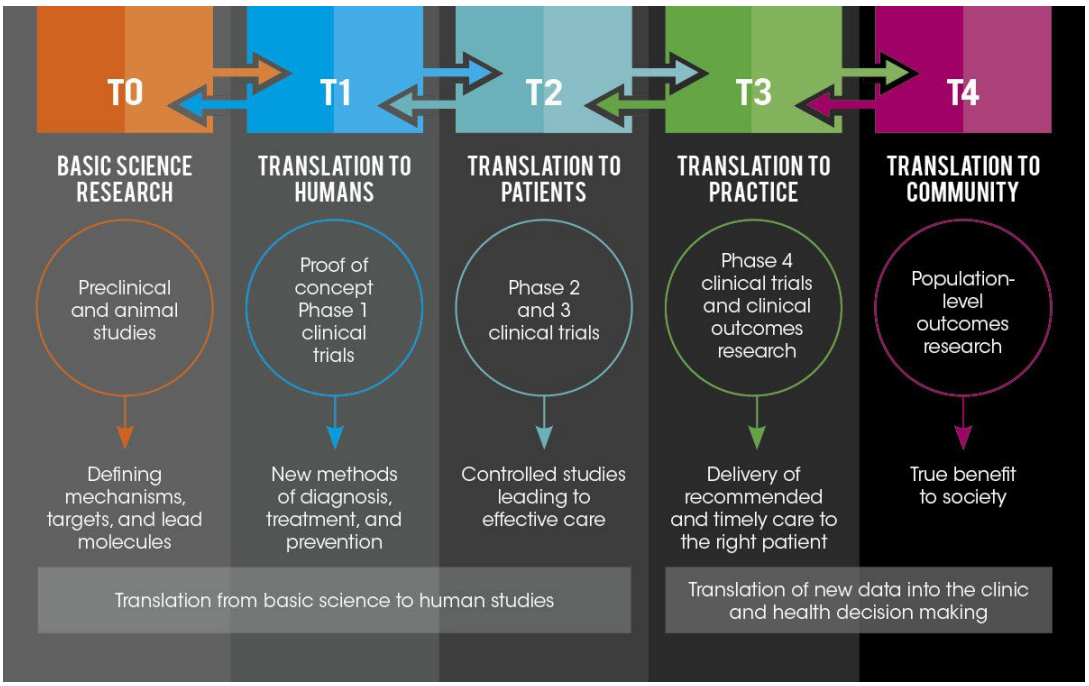
- annual progress reports
- annual financial reports
- a final report and financial acquittal following the conclusion of the term of the grant
- post-grant reports related to research translation and research impact.

Program evaluation

The Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program will periodically be assessed to ensure it is meeting its objectives. This will be done in collaboration with the host and administering organisations and funding recipients. Recipients and host/administering organisations may be required to supply information and meet with NSW Health staff to support the evaluation of the Program.

Appendix A: Examples of Research Translation Frameworks

Example 1: Biomedical Research Translation Framework



Source: University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Translational Research Institute
https://tri.uams.edu/about-tri/what-is-translational-research

Example 2: Health Services Research Translation Framework

Source: Developed by the Sax Institute for the Translational Research Grants Scheme