NHMRC Partnership Projects scheme-specific Advice and Instructions to Applicants for Applications Received in 2018

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1 INTRODUCTION

The following sections provide additional advice about parts of the application that are specific to National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Partnership Projects, and must be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- the NHMRC Advice and Instructions to Applicants 2018
- the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018, incorporating the Partnership Projects scheme-specific Funding Rules,
- the Guide to NHMRC Peer Review 2018, incorporating the Partnership Projects scheme-specific Peer Review Guidelines,
- the NHMRC Funding Agreement

2 KEY CHANGES TO THE SCHEME-SPECIFIC PARTS OF THE APPLICATION FORM

- Additional funding is available to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research through a Special Initiative (see section 9 of the Partnership Projects Funding Rules).
- CV requirements now include CV-CD: Career Disruption and CV-RO: Relative to Opportunity.

3 CV REQUIREMENTS

Relevant sections of your Research Grants Management System (RGMS) Curriculum Vitae (CV) must be completed as part of your application (see section 10.3.1 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018). For Partnership Projects, you are only required to complete those sections outlined below. Should you enter more information than is required, only the required information will be imported into your application.

This requirement applies to all Chief Investigators (CIs) named on the application. It is accordingly advisable to check that other CIs have completed/upated their RGMS CVs before finalising an application.

It is important that relevant CV information is up-to-date at the time of application submission as it is imported into the application and used by assessors. It may also be used for analyses of NHMRC’s funding profile and to capture grant outcomes. CV information can be updated at any time. However, any changes made to the CV after Chief Investigator A (CIA) certification will not appear in the submitted application.

Instructions for entering CV information in RGMS are provided in the RGMS User Guide – Introduction to RGMS on the NHMRC website. Additional advice on completing relevant parts of your RGMS CV is provided in the following sections.

3.1 CV-CD: Career Disruption

Career disruption, during the last five years

The NHMRC is committed to ensuring that every applicant is treated fairly and this means that we
recognise that some candidates will have had career disruptions that should be considered when evaluating their track record. For guidance on what constitutes a career disruption, refer to section 6.2.1 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018. All career disruptions will be reviewed to ensure they meet policy guidelines.

If applicable, you (or members of your CI Team) should use this opportunity to declare any career disruptions that may be relevant to your most recent five year research career history. This will ensure that your track record, and the scientific quality and significance and/or innovativeness of the application, are assessed objectively taking all relevant factors into account.

For example, if in the last five years you have taken six months of maternity/carers leave and then returned to work at 0.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for three years before resuming at a full-time level, you will have worked an equivalent of three years FTE over the past five years (see Table).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work status over past 5 years</th>
<th>Effective Full Time Equivalent (FTE) (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5 years maternity leave (6 months)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5 FTE for 3 years</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 years full time</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL in past 5 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Career Disruption**
Please select the nature of career disruption from the drop down menu. If the career disruption is highly sensitive and the applicant does not wish to disclose the nature of the career disruption, indicate in this section that they wish to make a claim under sensitive career disruption provisions and provide additional information as outlined in the subsections below.

**Note:** Relative to opportunity circumstances considered under section 6.2 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018 are not career disruptions. A career disruption is defined as a prolonged interruption to an applicant’s capacity to work due to pregnancy, major illness/injury and/or carer responsibilities.

**Impact**
Provide a brief explanation on the impact the career disruption/s has had on your research and research achievements and associated productivity relative to stage of career.

**Note:** Applicants are not required to describe the nature of the career disruption. (maximum of 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks)

**Additional Research Outputs**
Provide details of additional research outputs (those that occurred in the relevant preceding years) that you want the reviewers to consider when assessing your application. If applicable, indicate any national or international conferences where you were invited to give a major presentation and were not able to do so because of considerations associated with the career disruption. Other significant invitations may include joining an editorial board or major journal or to write a major review.

(maximum of 2000 characters including spaces and line breaks)
Dates
You are required to nominate the periods where you have had a disruption (approximate dates).
Entries will be listed in reverse chronological order.

Note: The duration where career disruptions can be accounted for in the Partnership Projects scheme is five years.

3.2 CV-RO: Relative to Opportunity

All applications submitted to NHMRC are assessed relative to opportunity.

If applicable, the applicant should use this opportunity to provide details on any relative to opportunity considerations and the effect this has had on their research and research achievements during the last five years (see section 6.2 of the NHMCR Funding Rules 2018 for information on what constitutes ‘relative to opportunity’).

Circumstances
Provide details of any relative to opportunity considerations which may have had an impact on your track record.

(maximum of 200 characters including spaces and line breaks)

Impact
Provide a brief explanation on the impact this has had on your research and research achievements and associated productivity relative to stage of career.

(maximum of 1500 characters including spaces and line breaks)

Dates
You are required to nominate the periods where you have had a disruption (approximate dates).
Entries will be listed in reverse chronological order.

3.3 CV-RF: NHMRC Research Funding

Click ‘New’ to start a new entry for any previous and/or current NHMRC funding, including offers received for future funding. Entries will be listed in reverse chronological order. Provide sufficient details about the funding to make clear what the funding was intended for, what you achieved and your role within these grants.

Note: You are strongly advised to ensure that your role is clearly defined on each grant, so that assessors can readily identify your contribution to the grant.

3.4 CV-ORF: Other Research Funding

Click ‘New’ to start a new entry for any previous and/or current funding from sources other than NHMRC, including offers received for future funding. Entries will be listed in reverse chronological order. Complete all fields.

Note: You are strongly advised to ensure that your role is clearly defined on each grant, so that assessors can readily identify your contribution to the grant.
3.5 CV-Pub: Publications

Publication information can be uploaded using a tab delimited file using Microsoft Excel® or by exporting your EndNote® Library as an .xml file. Further details on how to upload publications are provided in the RGMS User Guide - Introduction to RGMS on the NHMRC Website, and on the CV-PU: Publication Uploads page in RGMS.

Your publications will be grouped together by the type of publication. They will also automatically be given an RGMS Identification Number (ID). **DO NOT** use the RGMS ID number or RGMS sequence number created in the ‘Snapshot Reports’ to refer to specific publications in other sections of your application.

For further information on Track Record please refer to section 5.2 (section D of the B-GP Grant Proposal) of this document.

4 MINIMUM DATA REQUIREMENTS

Each peer review cycle will have a set minimum data due date. Minimum data must be entered in RGMS by the set due date to allow the NHMRC to commence sourcing suitable assessors. Please refer to section 4 of the Partnership Projects scheme specific Funding Rules for the critical dates associated with each peer review cycle. Applications that fail to satisfy this requirement will not be accepted. Applicants are also reminded to complete the recommended fields below with correct information. Using placeholder text such as “text”, “synopsis” or “xx” etc. are not acceptable as minimum data.

Minimum data for Partnership Projects consists of the following:
- A-PA General: Specifically, Administering Institution, Application Title, Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Research and Synopsis
- A-RC Research Classification
- A-RT Research Team

Research Administrative Officers (RAOs) are not required to certify applications for the purpose of minimum data. Applications should only be certified once complete and ready for submission (see section 10.4 of NHMRC Funding Rules 2018 and section 6 of the Advice and Instructions to Applicants 2018).

**Note:** The above information will be used to identify review panels and assessors. Applicants are advised that any change made to the above fields after the specified due date may impact the review of the application.

Completed applications must be submitted to the NHMRC in RGMS by the specified due date for each peer review cycle. Late applications will not be accepted.

5 PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS APPLICATION DETAILS

The following sections of the application form are specific to Partnership Projects, and must be completed as part of your application. Step-by-step instructions for entering application details in RGMS are provided in the Applying for Grants user guide and eLearning module available on the
NHMRC website.

**5.1 B-SI Special Initiative**

Applications addressing the Special Initiative in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health are required to upload the completed *Supplementary Questions* form which can be downloaded from the GrantConnect website (see section 9 of the *Partnership Projects Funding Rules* for more information).

**5.2 B-GP: Grant Proposal**

A pre-formatted Microsoft Word template for the grant proposal can be downloaded from the GrantConnect website. Applicants must use this template to complete their grant proposal. Naming, size and formatting requirements are set out in section 10.3.3 of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2018*. Applications that fail to comply with these requirements or the above page limits will be excluded from consideration (see section 10.7 of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2018*).

Applicants and RAOs are advised to retain a copy of the PDF file. If printing the PDF file for the purposes of checking formatting and page length, ensure that page scaling is set to ‘None’ in the print settings.

A brief description of each component is provided below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page Limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Introduction</td>
<td>1 page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Research Proposal</td>
<td>8 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Team Quality and Capability Relevant to this Proposal</td>
<td>1 page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. CI Track Record (including top five publications in the last five years)</td>
<td>2 pages per CI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Track Record of Translation into Policy/Practice</td>
<td>1 page per CI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Associate Investigator (AI) Contribution</td>
<td>¼ page per AI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria (if applicable)</td>
<td>2 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. References</td>
<td>2 pages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A. Introduction (maximum one A4 page)**

The Introduction should describe the following:

1. Provide up to half a page of text describing the work to be undertaken using language that an educated reader who is not a specialist in the particular research field may understand.
2. Provide up to half a page of text describing how this application aligns with the objectives of the Partnership Projects funding scheme including why this application is not appropriate for the Project Grants scheme. Make particular reference to evidence in support of the proposal influencing policy and/or practice.
B. Research Proposal *(maximum eight A4 pages)*

The CIA is the project leader and is responsible for the successful completion of the research proposal. All scientific information relating to the proposal must be contained in this section. The research proposal will be assessed by experts in the field and you should include any pilot or feasibility study data supporting the research planned. When drafting this section, keep in mind the assessment criteria and the detailed category descriptors which reviewers will use to evaluate the application. Refer to section 5 of the *Partnership Projects scheme specific Funding Rules* for further details. Consideration should also be given to the crucial design elements that enhance reproducibility of research findings.

The research proposal should describe the following:
1. Aims of the proposed project including a clear statement of hypotheses to be tested.
2. Background to the proposed project including the importance of the problem and rationale for this research.
3. Detailed experiment design where appropriate including the techniques to be used, methods of statistical analysis and justification of sample-size including power calculations, details and justification of controls, strategies for randomisation and/or stratification, ethical implications of the research, community involvement and/or plans to transfer knowledge to stakeholders or into practice and a timeline for the project.
4. Role of the partner organisation.
5. Expected outcomes and significance of the proposed project.

References cited in the research proposal should be listed separately under references (refer to section H below).

C. Team Quality and Capability Relevant to this Proposal *(maximum one A4 page)*

A summary of the research team’s quality and capability should be provided in this section.

Applicants should detail the following:
1. The expertise and productivity of team members relevant to the proposed project.
2. The influence team members have in their specific field of research.
3. How the team will work together to achieve the project aims.

D. CI Track Record *(including top five publications in the last five years)* *(maximum of two A4 pages per CI)*

For each CI, please provide the:
1. five (5) most significant publications in the last five years and
2. overall track record for the last five years.

**1. Five most significant publications in the last five years**

Applicants are asked to provide comments on their five most significant publications, papers, reports and other contributions in the last five years, taking career disruption into consideration. Please provide a reason for including these five publications.
NHMRC is a signatory to the *San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)*. NHMRC no longer uses the impact factor of journals as part of its assessment processes. Therefore, the impact factor of each publication should not be included in applications.

Further explanation of the NHMRC’s decision to cease using impact factors of journals can be found at section 4.8 of the *Guide to NHMRC Peer Review 2018*.

### 2. Overall Track Record for the last five years

Applicants are encouraged to use this section to identify aspects of their track record that are in addition to their publication record. This includes any relative to opportunity considerations you want assessors to take into consideration. Assessors will have access to the last five years of publications through the *Assessor Snapshot Report*. Therefore, the following details should be included:

- Career summary - including qualifications, employment and appointment history.
- Research support - including grants and fellowships.
- Contribution to field of research – this may include the impact of previous research including translation of research into health outcomes.
- Patents –include whether the patent has been licensed, when it was licensed and to whom, and whether the license has expired.
- Collaborations.
- Community engagement and participation.
- Professional involvement - including committees, conference organisation, conference participation.

### E. Track Record of Translation into Policy/Practice (maximum one A4 page per CI)

Describe any of your research that has resulted in changes to organisational or government policy/practice in the last five years. The five year period refers to the date of translation, NOT the date of the original research.

For each CI, please provide the following:

- If the research was translated into either policy or practice, then indicate the year of translation and provide details on the research itself.
- Indicate if the research was supported by NHMRC, another Australian funding source or an international funding source.
- Provide details of the organisation or government department which benefitted from the translation of the research. Indicate the year the change was translated/implemented, including details of the changes resulting from your research. You can also provide details on what outcomes have occurred if known (this is optional).

### F. Associate Investigator (AI) Contribution (maximum ¼ A4 page per AI)

For each AI named at A-RT: Associate Investigator, outline their contribution to the research project.
G. Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria (if applicable) (max 2 A4 pages)

If at least 20% of your research effort and/or capacity building relates to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health and you answered ‘yes’ to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research question at A-PA: Application Properties, you will need to:

- describe and demonstrate what proportion of the research effort and/or capacity building activity will be directed to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health, and
- address the Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria as set out in section 6.3 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018.

H. References (maximum two A4 pages)

Provide a list of all references cited in the application in an appropriate standard journal format such as:

- author-date (Harvard System)
- author-number (Vancouver System) or
- documentary-note

Applicants should not include links to external websites, except where references to journal articles, guidelines, government reports, datasets and other outputs are only available online. Where links are included, provide the URL in full (e.g. the NHMRC website https://www.nhmrc.gov.au). See section 10.3 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018 for further information.

5.3B-P: Partner(s)

All partners participating in this application are to be listed at B-P: Partner(s). Refer to section 6.2 of the Partnership Projects scheme specific Funding Rules for further information on who can be a partner. Information provided in this section will be used primarily to assess Criterion 4: Strength of Partnership. It may also be used to assess Criterion 3: Relevance and Likelihood to Influence Health and Research Policy and Practice.

Assessment will focus on the extent to which the application demonstrates the capacity to develop or sustain a strong partnership. Factors such as the following will be considered:

- Evidence of co-development of the proposal.
- The financial and/or in-kind commitment of the partner(s).
- Previous evidence of effective working relationships with partner organisations.
- The proposed governance or partnership arrangements. Applications should show how the team will foster and maintain a collaborative approach between the researchers and decision makers over the course of the initiative.
- The roles of staff in the partner agency or agencies in the research process.

In evaluating the strength of the partnership, applications will be assessed on the extent to which the proposal is achievable through the provision of skills, linkages, infrastructure and milestones. NHMRC will also take into account value for money in terms of justification for equipment and facilities and other items of expenditure to sustain the partnership.

Applicants should include the value of support, in either cash or in-kind, providing detailed justification of the contribution, confirmed by a letter of support that matches the figures entered in
RGMS. Where no value for the contribution is stated, the organisation cannot be named as a partner. However, details of the involvement of the organisation may be included in the research proposal as a participating institute if the applicant believes that it may be beneficial for the application (this is not ideal).

Administering Institutions cannot be included as a partner unless they have applied and been accepted for a waiver from NHMRC. Please see section 6.2 of the Partnership Projects scheme specific Funding Rules for further details.

Partners Part 1 (B-P: Part 1)

This screen captures the address of the partner, details for a contact person at the partner organisation and the details of their contribution.

Funding Partner Details

Provide the name, address and registered ABN of the funding partner and the details of your nominated representative within the organisation.

Funding Partner Contribution

Collaborating partner organisations are expected to make a significant contribution in cash and/or in-kind to the project. The total contribution of all funding partners must be equal in value or greater than the amount sought from NHMRC. Please provide details of support from each partner organisation including the cash value of each in-kind contribution. Refer to the Partner Contribution Guidelines at Attachment A of the Partnership Projects scheme-specific Funding Rules for more information. RGMS will calculate the total in-kind contribution based on the data entered in the in-kind fields.

Partners Part 2 (B-P: Part 2)

This screen asks for the partner organisation’s expectations and the attachment of a letter of support.

Research Outcomes

1. State the research question(s) or problem(s) that the policy/practice partner needs answered or solved (Free text – 1000 character limit including spaces and line breaks).
2. Provide a response to “How does the partner expect to use the outcomes of this research?” (1000 character limit).

Letter of Support (maximum five A4 pages)

Upload a letter of support from each policy/practice funding partner. The letter should be signed by the nominated representative and confirm their commitment to the proposed research. This letter must be on the organisation’s letterhead. Collaborating partner organisations are expected to make and justify a significant contribution in cash and/or in-kind to the project.

The nominated representative is the person who will be responsible for ensuring agency participation and funding. It does not need to be the Partner Investigator. The letter of support must be signed by a member of the partner organisation with the authorisation to expend the partner’s money or resources. Please note that CIs and AIs should not sign the letter of support unless they
are a member of the partner organisation and have the authorisation to expend the partner’s money or resources.

The partner organisation and named Partner Investigator(s) will be assessed by the peer review panel. Up to half of the criterion weighting will be determined by the experience and relevance of the partner organisation and Partner Investigator(s) to the research proposal. It is expected that partner organisations named on an application have the following:

- The capacity to use the findings to influence policy decision making and health system performance. This will be assessed by reference to, for example, the roles and/or areas of responsibility of the organisation or the partner organisation’s demonstrated record of achievement in effecting such changes.
- Experience and success in drafting health policy or delivering a health programme or health service.
- Expectations that align with the goals of the CI team.
- The inclusion of at least one named Partner Investigator from the policy and/or practice partner organisation is mandatory. The assessment of these ‘Partner Investigators’ will be on the basis of:
  - relevant experience and authority to support the partnership
  - demonstrated evidence of leadership in the relevant field
  - experience of translating research findings into policy and/or practice and
  - demonstrated evidence of successfully implementing change in a field relevant to the proposal.

Partner letters are to be a maximum of five A4 pages and should include the following information:

- Contact details for the nominated representative.
- Partner Investigator(s).
- Partner’s registered ABN.
- A brief profile of the organisation.
- Details about the question or problem that the partner organisation needs answered or solved and how the partner organisation intends to use the outcomes of the research.
- Details of the proposed governance or partnership arrangements.
- Details regarding the cash and in-kind support that will be provided, including detailed justification of the in-kind amounts and the purpose of each contribution. It is recommended that this data is presented as a table similar to the example provided in the Guide to Partner Letter of Support on the NHMRC website. The commitments in each letter of support must match the data entered into RGMS by the applicant.
- Provide consent for the NHMRC to identify partners in successful applications in media releases, on the NHMRC website and in future NHMRC Partnership Projects documentation, and be signed by a person with appropriate authority to commit the organisation.

A Guide to Partner Letter of Support can be found on the GrantConnect website. Applicants should provide this example to partners as a guide.

The PDF file must be named in a convention that is no more than 40 characters long (including spaces), and does not need to contain the application ID. For example: LoS_PartnerName
Annual Report

Please provide the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Funding Partner’s most recent Annual Report. If a URL is not available, attach a copy of the Annual Report (2MB limit). If neither of these is available, please state why in either of the free text fields under ‘Research Outcomes.’

NHMRC Website

NHMRC publishes information on successful grants on its website. This may include the name(s) of partners on Partnership Projects. Please indicate if the partner has agreed to allow NHMRC to publish their name and that this is stated in the letter of support. This is a mandatory question and therefore must be answered. If the answer is “No” please provide an explanation in the Publishing Approval Comments field.

NHMRC is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (the FOI Act). Please refer to sections 9.5 and 9.7 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018 for more information.

5.4 B-PBRF: Proposed Budget – Research Facilities

Applicants often need to receive services from third parties to enable their research to be successfully undertaken. This may include bio specimens and associated data from research facilities such as bio banks or pathology services, organisations that maintain non-human primate colonies or organisations that provide clinical trials services. Specific examples include the Australian Twin Registry, Cell Bank Australia and the Trans-Tasman Radio Oncology Group.

Please note this list is illustrative and is by no means exhaustive.

Is this application using services provided by a research facility?
If you answer ‘Yes’, provide details of the costs of using services provided by research facilities under B-PB: Proposed Budget – DRC And Equipment as Direct Research Costs (DRCs) and ensure they are fully justified.

Applicants should consult with research facilities to ensure that the services they require can be provided and that the cost included in the research budget accurately reflects their charges. Letters from research facilities confirming their collaboration can be uploaded on this page.

5.5 B-PB: Proposed Budget – DRC and Equipment

Enter details of the budget you seek as NHMRC funding, bearing in mind any limits on level and duration specified in the Partnership Projects scheme specific Funding Rules. Further details on permitted uses of NHMRC funds and setting of budgets can be found in the NHMRC Direct Research Costs Guidelines, the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018 incorporating the Partnership Projects scheme specific Funding Rules.

Personnel Support Packages (PSPs) should be requested separately under A-RT: Research Team. For all other budget items, you must enter:
- the item type (e.g. Direct Research Cost, Equipment, etc)
- the name/description of the item
- the total value of the item requested for each year
• a justification for the particular item requested. This information must be aligned with the
proposed aims of the study, be detailed on a yearly basis and be fully justified (including,
in the case of equipment, why the equipment cannot be provided by the Institution)

(Maximum of 500 characters including spaces and line breaks).

The total annual amount requested for each line item will be automatically rounded to the nearest
$5,000 by the application form. The final rounded number is available at the ‘summary’ tab of the
application form.

Please note:
• NHMRC funds the direct costs of research based on advice from peer review.
Applications with poorly justified budget proposals accordingly run the risk of having
their budget adjusted, in accordance with section 8.1 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018.
• Funding cannot be used for infrastructure.
• There will be no provision to increase funds for any reason.