Research Translation Projects 2017 (Round 11)

‘Evidence for a Sustainable Health System’

Guidelines for Applicants

CLOSING DATE: 1.00pm Monday 8 May 2017
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Research Translation Projects
‘Evidence for a Sustainable Health System’
Guidelines for Applicants

The Department of Health is making available funding for high-quality research projects that have the potential to demonstrate improved cost effectiveness and/or efficiencies that can be delivered to WA Health\(^1\) in the short-term, while maintaining or improving patient outcomes, with a focus on the translation of research outcomes into health care policy and practice in WA.

For this round a two-stage application process will apply which will consist of an Expression of Interest and for those short-listed, a Full Application.

Both stages of the application process will be in accordance with the conditions described in these Guidelines. The Research Translation Projects 2017 (Round 11) Expression of Interest form is available at the Research Development Website.

1. Introduction
The Research Translation Projects (RTP) program was introduced by the former State Health Research Advisory Council (SHRAC) in 2007. The program has a focus on translation and implementation of research findings into improved health policy and practice and as such it aligns with the priorities set out in the WA Health Strategic Intent 2015-2020 and is in accord with the National Health and Medical Research Council Strategic Direction 2015-16 to 2018-19.

Project proposals that have the potential to become the basis for subsequent implementation, commercialisation or research grant applications to national funding bodies are strongly encouraged. Where the application has the capacity to be broadened to a larger partnership-type study, such as for an NHMRC Partnership grant, the Department is able to partner with applicants through the RTP program.

The RTP program will be administered by the Research Development Unit (RDU), Clinical Services and Research, Department of Health. Queries regarding the application process should be directed to the RDU by email or telephone: (08) 9222 4053.

This program has the support of the Western Australian Health Translation Network (WAHTN) in promoting research excellence and translation in WA.

2. Eligibility and Scope
Applications in the areas of clinical research, health services research and public health research are encouraged, as are multi-disciplinary and cross-institution collaborations.

\(^1\)For the purposes of this program “WA Health” refers to all agencies that are under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Health, and is defined as the “WA Health System” in the Health Services Act 2016.
Short-term research projects of up to 24 months duration are eligible for the program. This timeframe must include the obtaining of governance approvals and report writing.

Projects should address relevant contemporary challenges faced by WA Health and may involve undertaking new research, proof-of-concept and/or pilot-studies. Where possible, the research should be linked to WA Health priorities, the WA Health Strategic Intent, and various WA reform initiatives.

Projects need to demonstrate the potential and possible pathway(s) to translation and implementation of research findings into improved health policy and practice. However, it should be noted that funding of the wider implementation of successful research findings is beyond the scope of the program.

Projects must investigate or evaluate efficiencies and cost savings that can be achieved for healthcare provided by WA Health, while maintaining and/or improving patient outcomes. An outline of the potential for cost-savings and/or improved efficiencies to WA Health must be provided in the first-stage (Expression of Interest) and a comprehensive economic analysis plan must be included in the second-stage (Full Application) of the application process.

The source of economic expertise must be identified; this may be provided by a business manager, health economist, research team member with health economic expertise or equivalent. Preferably, the grant application should be written in conjunction with this person.

Projects that are solely quality assurance, clinical audit (including chart review), needs analysis or literature review are not eligible.

Applications can be made by an individual researcher or team led by a Coordinating Principal Investigator (CPI), at an appropriate administering institution in WA.

The CPI may apply for more than one Department of Health research grant. In the event that similar proposals are selected for funding the Department will liaise with the CPI(s) to discuss the situation.

**The Coordinating Principal Investigator must:**

(a) Be an Australian citizen or permanent resident in Australia (pending residency applications must be finalised at time of award);

(b) Hold a postgraduate research degree or professional qualification in a health-related field or clinical science; and

(c) Continue to be employed in the nominated administering institution for the period of the project or grant.

3. **Funding**

**Grant Monies**

Projects may be awarded up to $270,000 (GST exclusive). Funding may be awarded to an individual researcher or to a research team led by a CPI, at an appropriate administering institution in WA.
A project may receive additional funds from other sources to meet budget requirements. Additionally, a project can be part of a larger research program or application to an external funding body provided the project has its own discrete objectives and these can be completed within the 24 month period. In both cases, it must be clearly outlined how the RTP grant will contribute to the project’s outcomes. The RDU should be advised if either of these situations apply.

Funding will normally be awarded to the administering institution where the CPI is primarily employed to undertake research activities. However, where funding is to be distributed to a research team across different universities or institutions, special financial arrangements may be negotiated.

Grants above $50,000 will be released in two instalments. The first instalment will be subject to relevant approvals (see section 6) having been provided to the RDU by the research team. The final instalment will be subject to satisfactory progress being achieved against the project milestones, demonstrated in a Progress Report.

Funding is only made available for the scope of research described in the research plan. The Department of Health is not obliged to underwrite any recurrent or capital costs beyond the research phase of the project.

It is intended that funds will be spent in WA only. An exception may be considered in the case where specific research expertise or equipment is required and is not available in WA. When this situation occurs, adequate justification must be provided.

Funds shall revert to, or be recoverable by the Department in instances where:
- The project is terminated by the RDU as a result of insufficient progress being made at the time of the Progress Report;
- Funds are not fully spent at the conclusion of the project, unless an extension has been agreed to by the RDU; or
- Funds are used for purposes other than those for which they were awarded.

Grants are offered subject to the availability of funds, which could be varied in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

**Funding for the Employment of Research Personnel**
The grant may be used to fund personnel working on the research project. Funds allocated towards staffing should be outlined in the proposed budget. Applicants should indicate whether the position to be funded is i) a new position; or ii) an existing position (filled or to be filled). The timeframe required for the creation and filling of positions should be factored into the research activities timeline.

Funding will not be provided for the salary of the Coordinating Principal Investigator and Principal Investigators. However, in exceptional circumstances, the panel may consider requests where funding for these salaries is crucial to the success of the project.
In cases where new positions are to be created in WA Health to undertake the project, an outline of the process and approximate time-frame required is provided below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WA Health Employment Process for New Positions and Indicative Time-frames</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Request to Business Manager and Chief Executive approval</td>
<td>Proof of funding required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of JDF and 'position creation' request</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodgement and classification of position by Health Support Services</td>
<td>1-3 months $^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of position by Health Support Services</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment process</td>
<td>2-3 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^2$ For new positions, 3 months should be factored into the timeline. This may be quicker if the position is straightforward and requires minimal classification assessment, or may be longer if complexities are involved.

For WA Health applicants, advice regarding creating JDFs and JDF templates can be obtained by contacting Health Support Services.

4. Consumer and community involvement

There is increasing recognition of the benefits of involving community members, including health care consumers in the research process. Effective consumer involvement can ensure research is relevant to the WA community and improve the uptake of findings.

In line with the NHMRC's definition, consumers may include patients and potential patients, carers and people who use health care services. They should not be other researchers, clinicians or participants.

Community and consumer involvement can include any kind of two-way interaction between community members and researchers that is specific to the project that represents the consumer's perspective. It may include:

- Provision of input to strategic priority setting and direction, topic refinement, research design and proposed methods;
- Participation in project advisory committees, recruiting participants, linking hard-to-reach populations;
- Production of newsletters that chart the research progress and writing of plain English summaries;
- Conducting reviews of participant information sheets and consent forms.

5. **Selection and Assessment**

Funding for RTPs will be awarded on merit in open competition, based on a two-stage process of evaluation and selection.

Applications that are short-listed in the first-stage review will be invited to submit a full project proposal for the second-stage review. A Full Application form will be forwarded to those applicants. Assessment shall be conducted by a panel comprising of:

- Senior Department of Health staff;
- Appropriately experienced researchers, academics and clinicians;
- Health economists; and
- Health consumer representative(s).

The composition of the panel may change from year to year according to need and circumstance, and may not include all of the above groups. Conflicts of interest that may arise will be treated in accordance with the WA Health [Managing Conflict of Interest Policy and Guidelines](#).

The RDU reserves the right to request further information from applicants at any stage of the review process e.g. in the event where the panel assesses an application to be of particular benefit to WA Health but requires further clarification before a final decision is made.

For those projects selected following the second-stage review, the Department reserves the right to negotiate (i) lower amounts than requested, and (ii) modifications to research plans.

The criteria for assessing Expressions of Interest (first-stage) proposals are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-stage Assessment Criteria (Expression of Interest)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significance to WA Health, focusing on areas of contemporary relevance, consumer and research need and overview of the research design</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for cost-savings and/or improved efficiencies to WA Health, whilst maintaining and/or improving patient care</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for translation and implementation of research findings into policy and practice including appropriate research-policy-practice partnerships</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The criteria for assessing full (second-stage) project proposals are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Second-stage Assessment Criteria (Full Application)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the research plan in addressing an issue of significance to WA Health, including objective measurement of outcomes and achievable timeline</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic analysis, based on provision of a comprehensive plan, including relevant units of measure and predicted benefits and cost-savings to WA Health, in estimated dollar amounts</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation / novelty of project, and/or potential to contribute to future funding proposals to external bodies, such as the NHMRC</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of strategy for the translation of research findings into policy, practice and service delivery</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrated engagement and collaboration, especially with consumers, service and policy providers, health service management, other research users and stakeholders</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity of the Investigator(s) to conduct the project, based on individual expertise and experience, and the collective gain of the assembled team to the project</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification of budget</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6. Approvals and Agreements

Research Governance

All relevant research governance approvals must be obtained and provided to the RDU before the commencement of a funded project.

Research Governance approvals required include:

1) Research Ethics Committee approval, from each participating institution’s ethics committee.

   NB: For WA Health sites involved in the project, ethics approval must come from the corresponding WA Health Service Provider’s Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) for that site.

Depending on the type of research, additional HREC approvals may be required. These may be from the:

   a) Department of Health WA HREC (for use of health data collections and data linkage);
   b) Coronial Ethics Committee WA (for access to coronial data, samples or information);
   c) WA Aboriginal Health Ethics Committee.
2) Research Governance authorisation (also known as site specific authorisation) from each site involved in the research. This includes all sites providing data, samples, information or participants for the project.

3) Depending on the research being conducted, additional approvals may be required. These will need to be submitted with the application for research governance authorisation and may include approvals from:
   - Animal Ethics Committees;
   - Data Custodians;
   - The Office of the Gene Technology Regulator;
   - Institutional Bio-safety Committee;
   - NHMRC Embryo Research Licensing Committee;
   - NHMRC Human Genetics Advisory Committee;
   - Radiation Safety Officer (i.e. Dosimetry Report);
   - Radiological Council;
   - Reproductive Technology Council; and/or
   - Therapeutic Goods Administration.

**Data Linkage**

A request for linked data from the ‘WA Data Linkage System’ requires the research team to demonstrate adequate expertise to analyse the requested data. Where linked data is required, [Data Linkage Western Australia](#) should be contacted to obtain both i) a preliminary quote; and ii) an estimate of time required to obtain the data. All requests should state that the data request is associated with the RTP funding program which requires the research to be completed within a 24 month period.

The preliminary quote should be included in the proposed project’s budget and the time-estimate built into the project’s milestones against the timeline.

**Intellectual Property**

Intellectual Property (IP) that arises out of the project will generally vest in the CPI’s administering institution with an appropriate IP access agreement for other research team members’ organisations.

When a research team involves more than one institution and includes a member from the WA public health system, then the IP agreement must be authorised by the relevant WA Health entity and the administering institution.

The IP agreement must be finalised within two months after the first instalment of the grant is received by the administering institution.

Information regarding accessing IP templates is available from the RDU upon request.
7. Reporting

The CPI will be responsible for coordinating the project and ensuring its timely execution. The CPI will also be responsible for meeting reporting requirements over the duration of the project and at its conclusion. Projects must be concluded within a 24 month period which includes the obtaining of ethics and governance approvals, employment of research staff, data collection and analysis and submission of the final report.

A member of the RDU will be assigned to each project, and will liaise with the CPI to assist with the receipt of payments, reporting and other operational issues as they arise. RDU liaison officers will provide researchers with the relevant reporting templates as required.

Progress Report
A report outlining the progress against the milestones listed in the research plan is required mid-project and prior to the second instalment of funds being released. The Department reserves the right to terminate and/or withdraw funding for a project where insufficient progress has been made.

Final Report
A final report detailing the project’s outcomes is to be submitted to the RDU at the project’s conclusion. Failure to submit a final report at this time may render all investigators on the grant application ineligible for further research funding from the RDU until the grant report is received.

Financial Acquittal Statement
An acquittal statement outlining the expenditure of funds must be submitted to the RDU at the project’s conclusion. Acquittal statements must be certified by an authorised finance officer at the administering institution.

Reporting due dates will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progress Report</td>
<td>Monday, 3 December 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Report</td>
<td>Monday, 2 December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Acquittal</td>
<td>Monday, 2 December 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Acknowledgment

The Department will publicly announce the recipients of this grant round and requests that all other parties withhold announcement/media coverage until after the RDU advises its announcement has occurred. Full acknowledgment of the Department of Health’s funding for the research must be made as opportunities arise in publications, conference presentations, public discussion, press statements etc.

9. Complaints

Applicants who feel that their interests have been adversely affected by a decision made by the Department of Health may lodge a complaint. Complaints can only be
considered when they refer to the administrative process and not to the actual outcome of a particular decision. Complaints must be submitted in writing to:

Manager, Office of the Chief Medical Officer
Department of Health
PO Box 8172
Perth Business Centre
PERTH WA 6849

10. Confidentiality
Lay summaries and researcher statements provided on project applications or reports may be used for publicity purposes as stated on the relevant templates.

All other information provided in project applications and reports will be maintained confidentially by the Department and the selection panel. If requests are received by the Department to make public any aspect of funded projects, the authorisation of the CPI will be sought.

Applicants should be aware that the Department is subject to the Western Australian Freedom of Information Act 1992. This provides a general right of access to records held by State Government agencies. In addition, information pertaining to the receipt of State Government financial assistance is tabled in the Parliament of Western Australia.

11. Publications
Researchers are requested to forward copies of publications resulting from the funded project to the RDU. In order to maximise knowledge exchange researchers are asked to consider the NHMRC’s policy on the dissemination of research findings.

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

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