

# 2020 Project Grant Application Guidelines

---

## Table of Contents

Funding .....	2
Application Rules .....	2
Project Eligibility .....	2
Applicant Eligibility .....	3
Qualifications.....	3
Seniority.....	3
Employment and Location.....	3
Recipients of Other Awards.....	3
How to Apply .....	3
Stage one: Completing the Application Form .....	3
RAO Approval .....	4
Grant Proposal.....	4
Proposal Content.....	4
Proposal Length (character limit).....	5
Inclusion of Figures.....	5
Biographical Sketch .....	6
Claims of Career Disruption.....	6
How is your Claim of Career Disruption Used? .....	6
Eligible Disruptions .....	7
Application Review and Award.....	7
Application Outcomes and Award Acceptance .....	7
Terms and Conditions of Award .....	8
Grant Payment .....	8
Grant Acquittal .....	8
Extension Requests.....	8
Contact .....	8
Appendix.....	9

The Rebecca L. Cooper Medical Research Foundation (*"The Foundation"*) invites applications from Early-Career Researchers for Project Grants that will assist the recipient take ownership of a discreet research project as a stepping stone towards independence.

## Funding

The award provides \$50,000 per year for two years, commencing in 2020, for Direct Costs of Research (*"DCR"*). The Foundation adopts the National Health and Medical Research Council's (*"NHMRC"*) [Direct Costs of Research Guidelines](#).

Funding may not be used towards:

- Employment-related expenses for the recipient; or
- Institutional infrastructure levies including the normal overhead and operating expenses of the Institution.

## Application Rules

1. Applications open **2 August 2019** and close **5pm AEST, 31 August 2019**.
2. Late applications will not be accepted.
3. Difficulties using the [Online Application Portal](#) will not be accepted as a reason for late submission and therefore the Foundation must be notified of any issues that arise during the submission of an application by email. If possible, any problems will be corrected prior to the application deadline.
4. Applicants may only submit one application per year.
5. Only one investigator may be listed on the application.

## Project Eligibility

Proposals must be for a stand-alone project that can be entirely funded by the award. The proposed research must be carried out in Australia and aim to improve our understanding of a disease/condition in one the following areas of medical research:

1. Brain Sciences: Psychiatry or Neurology (excluding Dementias)
2. Endocrinology (excluding Diabetes)
3. Geriatrics (excluding Dementias)
4. Lung Disease (other than Cancer)
5. Rheumatology
6. Vision Sciences
7. Dermatology (excluding skin cancer)

Research that is basic or translational in nature will be considered equally. Research on public health matters is not eligible for funding.

## Applicant Eligibility

### Qualifications

To apply you must be qualified as a Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in a Medicine related field of Science. Qualifications including a MBBS or a Masters degree alone, will not be recognised.

### Seniority

To Apply:

1. You must be within 3-10 years of being awarded your doctoral degree on 1 January of the application year, unless career disruptions exist\*. This means that the date on the formal notice of award of your PhD/MD must fall within the date range 1 January 2009 and 31 December 2015, inclusive\*. Please note that the date of degree conferral is not to be used.
2. You must **not** have attained the title of Associate Professor or higher.

*\*You may apply if your seniority corrected for career disruptions is 3-10 years post-doctoral **AND** you qualified in the period 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2008.*

### Employment and Location

You must be employed by or affiliated with a credentialed Australian Research Institution and carry out the research activities described in the application within Australia.

Researchers employed on a part-time basis may accept the award on the assumption that their part-time work status will not impact on the successful completion of the proposed project.

### Recipients of Other Awards

You are **permitted** to apply for a Project Grant:

- If you have received Emerging Leadership Level 1 (EL1) funding under the NHMRC Investigator Grants scheme; or a corresponding level of award under another scheme.
- Where the outcome of an application for another source of funding is pending, on condition that you notify the Foundation in writing of any successful outcome(s).

You are **precluded** from applying for a Project Grant:

- If you have previously received the Al & Val Rosenstrauss Fellowship or a Project Grant from the Foundation.
- If you have received Emerging Leadership Level 2 (EL2) funding or above, under the NHMRC Investigator Grants scheme; or a corresponding level of award under another scheme.
- If you are Chief Investigator A (CIA) on a federally funded grant (includes current or completed grants awarded within Australian and internationally). CIB or below are permitted to apply.

## How to Apply

You must complete a two-stage application process. Please ensure you leave sufficient time to complete the two-stage application process by the application deadline.

### Stage one: Completing the Application Form

1. Create a user account for the [Online Application Portal](#), if you do not have an existing user account.

2. Log in to your account and select “Apply for Project Grant”.
3. Complete all five-sections of the application form by following the prompts. Should you wish to complete the application form in multiple sittings, you may save your submission as a draft and return to edit it later. There is a “Save Draft” button located at the bottom of each screen.



4. Seek feedback on your application from your RAO prior to submitting it for RAO approval. You may generate a draft copy of your application using the “Print Draft Application” button at the end of the form.

Print Draft Application

5. Submit your completed application form for RAO Approval using the “Submit for RAO Approval” button located at the end of the form. Please note that an application may not be amended once it is submitted for RAO approval.

Submit For RAO Approval

6. Confirm that your application is listed in your *Submitted Applications* with the status “pending RAO approval”. If this item does not appear in your Submitted Applications list, this would indicate that the application was not successfully submitted for approval.

## RAO Approval

The RAO listed on your application will receive an email requesting confirmation that the Administering Institution accepts terms of the grant as stipulated in the Application Guidelines as well as the Foundation’s general [Terms & Conditions](#).

If the RAO agrees, your application is finalised and you will receive an email confirming receipt of your application.

If the RAO does not agree, your application will be declined and you will be sent an email advising that your application has not been approved by the RAO.

If you do not receive either of these two emails, this would indicate that the RAO has not actioned the approval step.

## Grant Proposal

Step four of the application form requires you to prepare a Grant Proposal in accordance with the requirements outlined below.

## Proposal Content

Your proposal should have the following headings in bold. Some suggested content is included as dot points below each heading.

### **Background**

- Is there any preliminary data that has led to the present proposal?

### **Research Proposal**

- Detail the experimental design, specific aims and timeline of your project.

### **Significance and Outcomes**

- What are the predicted outcomes?
- How will the research benefit the world we live in?

### **Salary Costs**

- How will your salary costs be covered for the two-year funding period?

Do not include links to a webpage, a reference list, appendices, or quotes for the cost of acquisition of any items included in the proposal.

Proposal should be written in language that is understandable to an informed reader who may not have an in-depth knowledge of your area of research or research methodologies. This does not mean that the content should be oversimplified to the point where details of the rigour of the research methodology are lost.

### **Proposal Length (character limit)**

The character limit for your grant proposal is as follows and will vary according to the size of the figure you choose to include:

- No figure – 8400 characters, including spaces.
- With small figure – 7400 characters, including spaces
- With medium figure – 7100 characters, including spaces
- With large figure – 6730 characters, including spaces

### **Inclusion of Figures**

You may include a maximum of one figure in your grant proposal. The figure may contain tabulated information, images and diagrams and must be submitted as a jpg, jpeg, png or gif file. The figure size must comply with one of the three options below:

1. Small figure (230 x 331 pixels, width x height)
2. Medium figure (431 x 280 pixels, width x height)
3. Large figure (639 x 241 pixels, width x height)

Please refer to the Appendix for a sample of each image size.

Information included as an image must be legible. The experience of the Foundation is that if the information in the figure is judged unreadable by the Scientific Advisory Committee (“SAC”), this will severely affect the likelihood of the proposal being judged competitive for funding. Please be aware that colour and definition may be lost if the image is printed.

## Biographical Sketch

Step five of the application form requires you to provide:

1. a list of your positions and honours held in the past five years, beginning with current;
2. a list of your education and training beginning with baccalaureate or other initial professional education (include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable);
3. a Personal Statement briefly describing why your experience and qualifications make you particularly well-suited for your role in the project that is the subject of the application (max. 1200 characters, including spaces);
4. a brief bibliography summarising how many papers you have published and how many times they have been cited. Provide a summary of your top five publications that includes the number of cites, the journal impact factor and the journal rank in field. A link to your Google Scholar page, if public, could be included. (max. 1200 characters, including spaces);
5. details of current grant funding and research support;
6. details of your proposed mentor and brief details of their expertise (max. 300 characters, including spaces); and
7. a letter of support from your nominated mentor in PDF format.

## Claims of Career Disruption

Should you wish to submit a Claim of Career Disruption, you must complete the relevant subsection in step two of the application form. You will be asked to provide:

1. A Statement of Impact briefly describing the impact of interruption(s) on your research output/productivity (max. 900 characters including spaces).
2. Details of each interruption:
  - a. Disruption Type (pregnancy, major illness/injury, carer's responsibilities).
  - b. Full Time Equivalent ("*FTE*") worked during the interruption period.

Workdays/week	FTE
0	0
1	0.2
2	0.4
3	0.6
4	0.8

- c. Commencement and end dates of the disruption period.
- d. Brief disruption details.
- e. Supporting evidence in PDF format. Only medical certificates and letters from your employer summarising the duration, % FTE and type of leave taken, will be accepted as evidence.

## How is your Claim of Career Disruption Used?

- Your Statement of Impact will be shared with reviewers and considered in the review of your track record.

- Claims of Career Disruption will be used to determine eligibility who qualified in the period 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2008, who would otherwise not be eligible to apply if seniority was not adjusted.

## Eligible Disruptions

The Foundation uses the NHMRC's definition of Career Disruptions which are prolonged interruptions to an applicant's capacity to work due to pregnancy, major illness/injury and/or carer responsibilities.

Claimed interruptions must:

1. involve either a continuous absence from work for periods of more than 27 calendar days and/or a long-term partial return to work that has been formalised with the applicant's employer; and
2. **not** exceed a total of three years.

Claims for Career Disruption will be reviewed by the Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee and the Executive Officer of the Foundation. If these claims are judged invalid, the applicant will be informed and the application disqualified.

## Application Review and Award

Applications are reviewed by three members of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) who have expertise in the field of research in which the application is submitted. Funding decisions are made by the Foundation's directors at a meeting to be held in December of the application year.

Applications are assessed with respect to three weighted criteria:

1. **Significance and/or Innovation (40%)** – Assesses the impact of the proposed research on knowledge or treatment approaches in the nominated field of research; and/or how innovative the research is in concept or approach.
2. **Feasibility (40%)** – Assesses the likelihood that the applicant will achieve what they are setting out to do and will depend on:
  - the research design
  - the applicant's capabilities and experience
  - selection of a mentor with appropriate capabilities and experience to help the researcher achieve success
3. **Track Record (20%)** – Assesses the applicant's experience, knowledge, achievements and productivity to date, with respect to its relevance for the proposed research.

## Application Outcomes and Award Acceptance

An outcome notification will be emailed to you and your nominated RAO in February of the funding year.

Feedback is not provided to applicants and the Foundation will not enter into discussions concerning the outcome of individual applications.

Should you be successful in your application, you will be required to complete a Grant Acceptance Form that may be accessed via the [Online Application Portal](#).

Applicants who **accept** the award:

- are automatically included in the Foundation's reviewer pool and may be called upon to participate on future Scientific Advisory Committees; and
- may not apply for future rounds of the Project Grant scheme.

## **Terms and Conditions of Award**

Any breach of these Application Guidelines or the [Terms and Conditions](#) published on the Foundation's website will result in automatic disqualification for the award.

## **Grant Payment**

The award will be paid in two instalments of \$50,000 (exclusive of GST) on 1 April of each funding year. GST is not payable on the grant.

Grants are paid by EFT to the Administering Institution listed in the grant application for the use proposed by the applicant. The grant is awarded on the condition that infrastructure levies are not deducted by the Administering Institution.

If the grant recipient moves to another institution, authorisation from the Foundation must be sought to transfer the grant to the new institution.

## **Grant Acquittal**

An acquittal must be submitted to the Foundation via the Online Application Portal no later than 30 September of the year following the two-year granting period. If an acquittal is not submitted in a timely matter, new applications for funding from the non-compliant Institution may not be accepted. The acquittal must include:

- confirmation that the funds were used for the purpose specified in the grant proposal;
- confirmation that no infrastructure levies were deducted from the grant funds;
- a financial statement attesting to the full expenditure of the granted sum;
- a one-page lay description of research results and a relevant photo for inclusion on the Foundation's website; and
- copies of any publications that acknowledge the Foundation's contribution to the research.

## **Extension Requests**

Funds must be expended by 30 September of the year following the two-year granting period. Extension requests will not be granted. Any funds that remain unspent after this deadline must be returned to the Foundation.

## **Contact**

Enquiries regarding the application process may be sent to [grants@cooperfoundation.org.au](mailto:grants@cooperfoundation.org.au).

# Appendix

SMALL IMAGE



MEDIUM IMAGE



LARGE IMAGE

