

Programme Grants - advice to applicants

Purpose

These grants are intended to support a programme of research undertaken by a multidisciplinary team based in New Zealand. International collaboration is encouraged and team members can be based overseas as long as this leads to building capability in New Zealand.

Scope

- A grant of up to five years based around a research hypothesis or hypotheses
- The outcomes must increase our understanding of the causes, diagnosis, prevention or treatment of diseases and disorders of the nervous system
- A collaborative team that includes early career researchers and more established academics, clinicians and/or scientists, and industry or community partnerships were appropriate
- The lead Principal Investigator may be early, mid-career or senior, as long as the team contains all the expertise required, and sufficient support for early career lead investigators is clearly demonstrated
- Involves an educational aspect (i.e., student or trainee involvement, teaching, engaging with end-users or community groups)
- Partnership with Māori (Māori consultation or participation, Māori team members, alignment with Māori research principles and ethics, significance to Māori health)

Who can apply?

- Post-doctoral researchers, clinicians, academics

What can be funded?

- Salaries for post-doctoral researchers
- Salaries for named investigators not otherwise excluded
- Salaries for research assistants and technicians
- Salaries for administration and support staff
- Working expenses, including publication costs
- Equipment
- Travel for conferences and training courses directly related to the programme, this should be included in the programme budget

What will not be funded?

- Institutional overheads (see Funding Intent)
- Salaries for those whose salary is funded by their institution

Important Dates

- EOI deadline – 1 November 2024
- EOI results announced – 17 February 2025
- Full application deadline – 12 May 2025
- Referee feedback released – 21 July 2025
- Referee rebuttals due – 4 August 2025
- Interviews will be held in late August 2025
- Results announced 22 September 2025

Maximum value

- \$1,000,000

Process

- Applicants submit a two-page expression of interest (EOI), focusing on what they plan to do, how it fits with the funding criteria and what impact it will have. A full budget is not required at this stage
- Download an application form at <https://neurological.org.nz/research/funding-opportunities>
- Complete the application form, including signatures from your host institution. The Neurological Foundation will only accept applications sent by the host institution's research office
- If more than ten applications are received, EOIs may be triaged through pre-scoring. Any applications that are not deemed to fit the purpose of the available funding will also be triaged out at this stage. The Foundation will provide feedback to those that are unsuccessful at the EOI stage
- For applicants invited to submit a full application, the deadline will be three months after the announcement of the EOI outcome. The full application will require a budget and supporting documentation
- The budget requested should be in NZD. The Neurological Foundation will not award more than is requested in the budget and does not fund institutional overheads. Only actual costs for ACC and superannuation should be included in salary associated costs
- Supporting documentation:
 - NZ Standard CVs for all named investigators, including research assistants and subcontractors, using the template available at <https://neurological.org.nz/apply-for-funding/>
 - Partial funding and ethics approval letters, as required
 - Quotes for items of equipment or subcontracts, and letters of support for collaborations, should be attached at the end of the research proposal
- Full applications will receive up to four external reviews, which will be made available to applicants prior to interviews. Applicants will be invited to provide rebuttals to referee comments. If the average of the referee scores is *Satisfactory* or less, applications may be triaged at this stage after the committee review the referee reviews and applicant rebuttals
- The committee will interview remaining applicants via videoconference. Up to three of the investigators may be involved in the interview, and at least one of the principal investigators must be present. Each interview will be strictly half an hour. Questions will be structured around the written application, scoring criteria and points raised by external referees. Applicants will also be given time to ask questions of the committee
- The committee will make funding recommendations to the National Council of the Foundation. The final decision will be made by the Council.
- Successful applicants will be informed of the conditions of the grant and asked for their formal acceptance of the research contract

Funding Intent

The Neurological Foundation is a registered charity funded fully through charitable donations for research and education. Institutional overheads are indirect costs that cannot be attributed to a particular grant, and therefore do not align with our purpose. The funding is intended to support a

programme of work where the host institution agrees to provide the necessary infrastructure and services. It is not intended to support a programme of work that requires overheads.

Scoring criteria:

1. **Alignment of purpose** (fits with Foundation purpose and intent of funding offered)
2. **Programme/platform quality** (comprehensive and appropriate aims and objectives, potential to lead to advances in the field)
3. **Calibre of team** (calibre of CV in relation to years of research experience, previous grants, skills cover all required expertise)
4. **Collaboration** (collaboration nationally and internationally, involvement of early career researchers, industry and scientific/clinical input where required)
5. **Research environment** (calibre of institution, level of support for applicants, access to all resources required)
6. **Educational outcomes** (student or trainee involvement, teaching, engaging with patients or community groups)

Partnership with Māori

A reciprocal and respectful partnership with Māori is a responsibility under Te Tiriti o Waitangi that allows Māori to assume tino rangatiratanga over their health needs and aspirations and enhance the health and wellbeing of the people of Aotearoa under the Pae Ora Act (2022).

The New Zealand Health Research Prioritisation Framework states that *“An optimal relationship between health researchers and Māori will be a real partnership that extends beyond the timeframe of any one research project or single instance of consultation. Research is likely to be improved if it is recognised that iwi, hapū, whānau, and other Māori communities can make an important contribution to health research and improving health outcomes for Māori and, therefore, for all New Zealanders”*.

Developing partnerships with Māori through consultation and collaboration, application of kaupapa Māori approaches to research and ethics and aligning outcomes to meet health needs and aspirations as determined by Māori will lead to more equitable health outcomes and opportunities for the people of Aotearoa. Recognition of your partnership with Māori should be visible throughout the scoring criteria.

Neurological Foundation purpose

The Foundation will accept applications that align with our purpose and with the intent of the funding offered.

Our purpose statement:

1. *Arrange for, promote, foster, develop and assist the study of and acquisition, dissemination and application of knowledge and information concerning:*
 - a) *the causes, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diseases and disorders of the nervous system, and*
 - b) *the education of members of the public in relation to matters concerning the causes, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diseases and disorders of the nervous system and caregiving arrangements in respect of those persons who suffer from such diseases and disorders*
2. *Encourage, stimulate and aid research and investigation into the causes and treatment of diseases and disorders of the nervous system*

3. Encourage, arrange and assist students, medical practitioners, scientists, welfare works and others from New Zealand and overseas to undertake research in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diseases and disorders of the nervous system into the care and rehabilitation of patients suffering from such diseases and to train them in methods of research in the fields of medical and social science.

Programme Grant Terms and Conditions

A. Research Contract

1. The host institution will administer the grant.
2. If ethics approval or additional funding is required before commencing the programme, the start date should be postponed accordingly. Salaries and stipends may commence before ethics approval or additional funding are obtained if there is host institution approval for this, however these are expected to be finalised within six months of the start date.
3. The institution's research programme may be rapidly evolving and the details of the research programme may change after the grant is awarded. If the contractual details of the grant change, or there is a change to the approved research, a variation request will need to be submitted to the Foundation.
4. If the research deviates significantly from the approved programme, without the approval of the Foundation, the Foundation reserves the right to recover any costs incurred.

B. Grant Dates

1. The grant will have a specific start date and end date.
2. When a grant is offered, the start date should be specified in the acceptance form, and should be within 6 months of the grant offer. If a later start date is required, contact the Foundation at research@neurological.org.nz.
3. If grant dates require changing once a grant is accepted, a variation request will need to be submitted to the Foundation.

C. Grant Budget

1. The Foundation will pay upon invoice for costs incurred. If prepayment is required, contact the Foundation at research@neurological.org.nz. Invoices should be sent to admin@neurological.org.nz.
2. The award is in NZD and the Foundation will not award more than is requested in the budget. At the time a grant offer is made, the Foundation may offer less than requested, and require an updated budget, timeline and/or objectives to match the funding offered.
3. If the Foundation disputes an invoice, partial or full payment of that invoice may be withheld until the dispute is satisfactorily resolved.
4. Claims for working expenses should conform as far as possible to the timetable set out in the application. If reallocation of budget items is required, a variation request will need to be submitted to the Foundation.
5. Final invoices must be submitted to the Foundation within 6 months of the grant end date. Claims for any expenses incurred after the termination of the grant will not be met.
6. For Doctoral Scholarships, the Foundation will meet the cost of University fees, but not student services fees. The minimum stipend level is the amount normally provided by the host institution for scholarships. The maximum stipend level is the amount offered for Neurological

Foundation scholarships. Neurological Foundation stipends are similar to the living wage (take home pay). Annual increases should be included in the budget.

7. The Foundation will only approve economy class airfares.
8. Publication costs should not include Open Access Fees covered by the host institution's [CAUL agreement](#)

D. Salaries

1. The Foundation will only be responsible for salaries within the range stated in the application and will not pay institutional overheads or salaries for staff whose salary is funded by their institution. Only actual costs for ACC and superannuation should be included in salary associated costs, not standardised rates.
2. Salaries may progress by the normal steps on the scale nominated provided that they remain within the range stated.
3. The Foundation should be notified of changes in personnel through a variation request.
4. If a salaried investigator obtains a permanent position during the term of the grant, a variation request will need to be submitted to the Foundation, and the budget will be adjusted accordingly.
5. The Host Institution must inform the Foundation of the date at which each salary commences. The salary will continue only for the duration of the grant. Leave must be taken within this period. The Foundation will not fund leave unclaimed when the grant ends.
6. Appointees must be made aware of the conditions of the grant, that their salary depends on the continuation of the programme, that it is limited to its duration, and that it will cease if for any reason the project is terminated.

E. Equipment

1. Quotations for major equipment must be confirmed before placing the order, and if there is more than 5% variation the Foundation needs to be consulted before proceeding.

F. Grant Reports

1. Grant reports are submitted using the Foundation templates. If a supporter is directly sponsoring the programme, the report should include a personal thank you to that supporter.
2. As the Foundation does not have access to paid publications, publication pdfs should be attached to reports or emailed to research@neurological.org.nz.
3. Annual progress reports are required on the anniversary of the start date. A final report is due 12 months after the grant ends.

G. Public relations

1. The grant holder will endeavour to meet reasonable requests from the Foundation to engage with donors and participate in publicity and promotional events from time to time. Such requests will not compromise the academic integrity or freedom of the appointee.
2. The Neurological Foundation's ability to fund research is entirely based on public support which demands active fundraising by the Foundation. The grant holder and their representative institution will ensure to publicly acknowledge the funding support from the Foundation in all presentations, publications, external communications and public relations activities. It is acknowledged that the grant holder and institution do not hold editorial control and cannot be held responsible for this acknowledgement not appearing in print in a third-party publication or

media outlet. Requests for logos and templates, and copies of relevant press releases should be sent to marketing@neurological.org.nz.

If you have any queries please contact the Foundation at research@neurological.org.nz.