

# TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH GRANTS SCHEME

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS



Health

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# Call for Applications

NSW Health invites Local Health Districts (LHDs), Speciality Health Networks (SHNs) and the Ambulance Service of NSW to apply for funding under the Translational Research Grants Scheme (TRGS). These guidelines provide information about the TRGS, submission procedure, selection process, and reporting and evaluation requirements.

## Application and selection process

The process will include three stages:

1. Expressions of Interest
2. Proposal development
3. Full applications

## Submission of Applications

All applications must be completed using the TRGS forms available at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/ohmr/Pages/trgs.aspx>.

Expressions of Interest and Full Applications must be emailed to [TRGS@doh.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:TRGS@doh.health.nsw.gov.au).

Expressions of Interest and attachments must be received by **5pm 15 February, 2016**.

Full Applications and attachments must be received by **5pm 25 April, 2016**.

## Information sessions

Information sessions on the TRGS will be delivered via teleconference in January and February 2016. The information sessions will provide an opportunity to clarify the intent and scope of the scheme and to answer questions about the application process. Answers of common interest arising from the sessions will be posted as 'frequently asked questions' on the TRGS website.

Please register your interest and availability to dial into one of these sessions as soon as possible by emailing [TRGS@doh.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:TRGS@doh.health.nsw.gov.au).

TIME	DATE	GROUP
9.00 - 10.00	19 January	South Eastern Sydney LHD, St Vincent's Health Network, Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network, Sydney Children's Hospitals Network (Randwick and Westmead), Clinical Excellence Commission
9.00 - 10.00	22 January	Northern Sydney LHD, Central Coast LHD, Mid North Coast LHD, Hunter New England LHD, Northern NSW LHD
4.00 - 5.00	2 February	Sydney LHD, Western Sydney LHD, South Western Sydney LHD, Nepean Blue Mountains LHD, Ambulance Service of NSW
4.00 - 5.00	3 February	Far West LHD, Western NSW LHD, Murrumbidgee LHD, Southern NSW LHD, Illawarra Shoalhaven LHD
9.00 - 10.00	5 February	Additional information session for those unable to attend others

## Key dates

APPLICATION STAGE	ACTIVITY	DATE
Stage 1	Call for Expressions of Interest	7 January 2016
	Information sessions	19 January - 5 February 2016
	Expressions of Interest close	15 February 2016
	TRGS EOI Review Panel assessment	11 March 2016
	All applicants notified of outcome and invitations sent to progress to the next stages	18 March 2016
Stage 2	Proposal development	18 March - 25 April 2016
Stage 3	Full Applications close	25 April 2016
	TRGS Selection Panel assessment	May 2016
	All applicants notified of outcome	June 2016

Funding will be allocated to the Host Organisation effective from 1 July 2016.

For queries regarding the TRGS email: [TRGS@doh.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:TRGS@doh.health.nsw.gov.au). Answers of common interest will be posted as 'frequently asked questions' on the TRGS website. Please check the website regularly.

# Guidelines for Applicants

## Introduction

The Translational Research Grants Scheme (TRGS) is a new funding program of NSW Health.

Grants are available to staff within NSW Local Health Districts (LHDs), Ambulance Service of NSW and Specialty Health Networks (SHNs) including medical staff, nursing staff, allied health professionals and population health practitioners. Funding will be provided for research and evaluation projects that will translate into better patient outcomes, improve the delivery of health services and population health and wellbeing.

Applicants are encouraged to partner with other research organisations such as universities and medical research institutes. The research project must be led by an employee of a Host Organisation within the health system. The scheme is designed to accelerate the development of research capabilities and evidence translation within the NSW health system.

## Purpose and objectives

The objectives of the TRGS are to:

- Foster the generation of high quality research and evaluation that is directly relevant to clinical, health service and population health practice in NSW
- Support projects that have the potential to be translated into policy and practice
- Reduce the time from evidence generation to practice implementation
- Drive collaboration and practice change that improves health outcomes
- Enhance health and medical research capability within the NSW health system

## Details of funding

There will be two TRGS funding rounds with a total of \$21.95 million available over four years. A total of \$9.1 million is available in the first round, allocated over a two year period. In each funding round, grants ranging from \$50,000 to \$1 million will be provided to successful applicants for projects of one to two years' duration.

TRGS funding may be used for costs associated with the research project and translation activities, but cannot be directed towards capital works, general maintenance costs, telephone/communication systems, basic office equipment such as desks and chairs, rent and the cost of utilities.

## Research and implementation partners

LHDs, SHNs and Ambulance Service of NSW will need to identify and engage relevant partners who are essential for the effective delivery of the research project and implementation of the outcomes. These partners may include consumers, internal cross-disciplinary partners or external organisations including universities, medical research institutes, NSW Health Pillars (Agency for Clinical Innovation, Clinical Excellence Commission, Health Education and Training Institute, Bureau of Health Information), the NSW Ministry of Health, other LHDs/SHNs/Ambulance Service of NSW, Research Hubs, non-government organisations, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and primary healthcare networks.

## Knowledge translation

The TRGS aims to generate high impact research and evaluation that is directly relevant to clinical, health service and population health practice in NSW and to ensure the translation of these findings into policy and practice. TRGS aims to support meaningful co-production of research and the early identification of activities that will move the findings along the translation continuum, including scaling up the findings across a system or to other settings.

Partner engagement should occur throughout the research project and follow through to knowledge translation, for example:

- 1. Prior to and during research** key policy and practice partners should be included in the development of the research question and participate in relevant stages of the process including translation activities such as:
  - a. Co-production of research
  - b. Presentations of findings
  - c. Publication of findings in policy- or practice-relevant formats
  - d. Steps required to change practice
- 2. At the completion of the research project** researchers and key partners in the Host Organisation will need to continue to follow through with planned translation activities. Applicants will need to consider how they will measure the success of their knowledge translation activities and the uptake of the research findings into practice, noting that the Chief Executive is required to certify that practice change will be implemented in the Host Organisation (see Section F in the Expression of Interest form).

Applicants may find the following useful in considering knowledge translation activities:

Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence. Milat AJ, Newson R, and King L. *Increasing the scale of population health interventions: A guide*. Evidence and Evaluation Guidance Series, Population and Public Health Division. Sydney: NSW Ministry of Health, 2014. <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/research/Pages/scalability-guide.aspx>

Ruppertsberg AI, Ward V, Ridout A, Foy R. The development and application of audit criteria for assessing knowledge exchange plans in health research grant applications. *Implementation Science* 2014;9:93. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/content/pdf/s13012-014-0093-0.pdf>

# Eligibility criteria

## Project criteria

1. The project must be conducted in NSW, within a Local Health District (LHD), Specialty Health Network (SHN), or the Ambulance Service of NSW.
2. The 'Host Organisation' for the project must be a LHD, SHN or the Ambulance Service of NSW (see criteria below for 'Host Organisation').
3. The projects should directly link to State or LHD/SHN/Ambulance Service of NSW strategic plans.
4. The project must consider the potential to implement the results of the research in policy and/or practice and to scale the project across settings, for example in other LHDs or State-wide.
5. The application must demonstrate engagement and consultation with relevant stakeholders (e.g. clinicians, consumers, health service administrators, researchers, patient groups, policy makers).
6. Applicants must provide a clear governance structure for the project, including confirmation that grant funds will be quarantined for the purposes of the specified research project (e.g. through a trust account or a dedicated cost centre).
7. Applicants must commit to reporting annually on research progress and expenditure.

## Host Organisation criteria

1. The Host Organisation must provide financial and/or in-kind support for the research/translation activities.
2. The Chief Executive must sign-off the grant application and agree that practice change will be implemented in the Host Organisation.



# Selection criteria

All applications for funding that meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed against the following selection criteria.

1. The extent to which the project addresses State and local strategic priorities. Investigators are encouraged to identify specific research questions that are a priority for the Host Organisation and where there is potential to apply the findings in policy or practice and/or scale up a successful intervention (15%).

The following priority research themes will be considered favourably:

- Aboriginal health
- Cardiovascular disease
- Childhood overweight and obesity
- Dementia
- Diabetes
- Drugs and alcohol
- Mental health
- Quality end of life care
- Transition from childhood to adult services

2. The extent to which the project will generate new and relevant evidence for policy and/or practice; and likely impact of the results of the project on disease prevention, patient care or health service delivery (35%).
3. Strength, rigour and appropriateness of the research design (20%)<sup>1</sup>
4. Ability of the research team to carry out the proposed project in the timeframe (10%)
5. The extent to which the project supports research translation, including (20%):
  - 5.1 Identification of essential partners who will contribute to the research project and translation. Applicants should provide evidence of partnerships and consultation in the development of the proposal, including clear links to the stakeholders that will likely implement the outcomes from the research.
  - 5.2 Ongoing engagement with relevant stakeholders (e.g. with other researchers, clinicians, consumers, policy makers and the community) to disseminate and determine relevance of new knowledge as it emerges.
  - 5.3 Proposed activities for research translation and knowledge exchange.
  - 5.4 Consideration of sustainability and scalability, including an economic evaluation or costing component.

## Out of scope

This grant scheme is targeted at supporting practice-based research and evaluation projects. The types of research listed below have alternative funding sources and so will be out of scope for this grants scheme.

1. Basic science research.
2. Pharmaceutical-sponsored clinical trials.
3. Projects with a primary focus on cancer. Funding in this area is provided by the Cancer Institute NSW and includes the Translational Program Grants.

<sup>1</sup> Projects with fundamental flaws in the methods will not progress through to the Full Application stage or be funded.

# Application and selection process

## Stage 1: Expressions of Interest

The Chief Investigator (applicant) will submit an Expression of Interest that has been approved by the Chief Executive of the Host Organisation.

Expressions of Interest will be assessed by the TRGS EOI Review Panel against both eligibility and selection criteria. Expressions of Interest must meet all eligibility criteria. The TRGS EOI Review Panel may contact applicants in order to clarify or confirm information contained in the Expression of Interest.

All applicants will be informed as to whether they have been selected to progress to Stages 2 and 3. Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback about their Expression of Interest. The TRGS EOI Review Panel's decision is final.

## Stage 2: Proposal development

Stage 2 is a participatory feedback process. This stage is intended to enhance the quality of research proposals, ensure that proposals are consistent with the objectives of the TRGS, capitalise on potential synergies between projects and build research and translation capability.

In this stage, applicants will be provided with advice on possible partners and specialist expertise to improve the rigour of the research proposal and the associated translation activities. For example, where applicants from two or more LHDs submit similar proposals and there may be benefits of working together, the TRGS EOI Review Panel may recommend a meeting of relevant applicants. A sub-committee will facilitate engagement with relevant collaborators to further develop the proposal, based on the recommendations of the TRGS EOI Review Panel.

All Stage 2 participants will be invited to submit a Full Application. Development of the Full Application is the responsibility of the research team. Participation in Stage 2 of the process is not a guarantee of success at the Full Application stage.

## Stage 3: Full Applications

Successful Chief Investigators will submit a Full Application approved by the Chief Executive of the Host Organisation.

The TRGS Selection Panel will rank these applications according to the weighted selection criteria. The TRGS Selection Panel may contact applicants in order to clarify or confirm information contained in the application. The TRGS Selection Panel will determine the successful applicants and Chief Executives will be advised accordingly.

The TRGS EOI Review Panel and TRGS Selection Panel will be Chaired by the Chief Health Officer and Deputy Secretary Population and Public Health, NSW Ministry of Health. Advice may be sought from the sub-committee, NSW Health Pillars, relevant program areas within the NSW Ministry of Health and other experts during the assessment process.

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## Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants will enter into a funding agreement with NSW Health which sets out obligations including that the applicants provide an annual progress report on research and translation activity. Funding for the subsequent year will be made available only when the organisation has provided a report showing satisfactory progress.

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## TRGS evaluation

The Translational Research Grants Scheme will be evaluated to ensure it meets its objectives. This evaluation will be done in collaboration with the Host Organisations.

TRGS recipients may be asked to meet with staff from the Ministry of Health from time to time during the funding period. Meetings with recipients will facilitate feedback and inform future directions for the TRGS.

