



# New Independent Researcher Infrastructure Support (NIRIS) Awards 2018

## GUIDELINES AND CONDITIONS

### 1. Introduction

The New Independent Researcher Infrastructure Support (NIRIS) Awards were established in 2001 to assist outstanding new independent health and medical researchers in Western Australia (WA). To date, the State Government has awarded \$1,415,000 across 126 researchers.

The purpose of the awards is to recognise these researchers and provide funding to help them meet the infrastructure costs associated with their research programs. This supports them in their research activities in WA and assists them to develop their independent careers.

This round provides NIRIS Awards of up to \$15,000 each (excluding GST) towards research infrastructure costs during the twelve months from 1 June 2018 to 31 May 2019.

### 2. Eligibility

2.1 The emphasis of the scheme is to provide research infrastructure support for outstanding new independent health and medical researchers in WA.

The term “new” refers to a maximum of eight years’ research experience.

2.2 Applicants must have:

- a) been awarded a Doctorate or other equivalent tertiary qualification within the preceding eight years (or equivalent, taking into account career interruptions), preferably in a health and medical research related field;
- b) been an active independent researcher over a maximum period of eight years (full time or equivalent, taking into account part time and/or career interruptions);
- c) a demonstrated reputation as an outstanding independent researcher, through various achievements, including principal or first authorship of high quality publications, Chief or Principal Investigator on research grants, invited conference presentations, patents, prizes and awards within the past eight years (full time or equivalent, taking into account part time and/or career interruptions);
- d) sufficient tenure at a WA institution to expend the NIRIS Award in support of their health and medical research in WA;

- e) Chief or Principal Investigator status on a current health or medical research grant, where the grant is nationally or internationally openly competitive and scientific peer-review is performed at a national or international level;

Funding sources deemed to meet this requirement are listed in the Medical and Health Research Infrastructure Fund (MHRIF) / Guidelines and Conditions / Appendix A: [http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/J\\_M/Medical-and-Health-Research-Infrastructure-Fund](http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/J_M/Medical-and-Health-Research-Infrastructure-Fund).

Where a funding source is not listed, it is incumbent on the researcher to provide supporting documentation. To assist this process the MHRIF Application Form *Section 10 – Funding Source Assessment* should be used.

The following grants are not eligible for the purposes of this clause:

- grants from WA Department of Health funded programs such as the Clinician Research Fellowships, Collaborative Cancer Grant Scheme, Neurotrauma Research Program, Registrar Research Fellowships, [SHRAC] Research Translation Projects, Targeted Research Fund, Telethon-Perth Children’s Hospital Research Fund and FutureHealth WA initiatives;
  - grants for quality assurance, clinical audit, needs analysis or literature review; and
  - grants for equipment, travel, infrastructure or training/education.
- f) not received any previous grants under the Medical and Health Research Infrastructure Fund (MHRIF) or NIRIS Award schemes;
- g) Australian citizenship or hold Australian permanent residency; and
- h) a position that is not a full professorial position.

### **3. Funding Allocation**

NIRIS Awards of up to \$15,000 each (excluding GST) will be awarded to outstanding new independent health and medical researchers in WA. Awards provided to the administering institution will include an additional provision for GST, where applicable.

### **4. Applicant Selection**

- 4.1 Selection of successful applicants will be based on assessment against the eligibility criteria (*Section 2*) and competitive merit.
- 4.2 Applications will be reviewed by a panel including at least two assessors representing the State’s health and medical research community. Conflicts of interest will be managed in accordance with the [Managing Conflict of Interest Policy and Guidelines](#).
- 4.3 The decision of the Department of Health will be final with no process of appeal.

## 5. Definition of Infrastructure

Health and medical research infrastructure is usually defined as an institution's resources essential for supporting quality projects or programs in a particular field, including indirect costs associated with particular projects or programs, but excluding direct costs, which should be covered by research grants.

### 5.1 Infrastructure costs include the following items:

- animal holding and breeding facilities;
- cleaning and maintenance;
- common services - telephone, fax, copying, postage, stationery, printing, computer network, accounts system;
- computers;
- lighting and power;
- minor capital works;
- provisional patents;
- rates and charges;
- research equipment;
- research library;
- salaries of research support and administrative support staff (including salary on-costs<sup>1</sup>) to provide general support for activity in a given area, rather than to work for a specific research project;
- travel costs not directly related to individual research projects;
- vehicle running costs; and
- workshops.

### 5.2 The following items are **not** regarded as infrastructure costs:

- meals/beverages/catering not directly related to research conferences and seminars;
- postgraduate research student stipend;
- project management costs;
- salaries and salary on-costs<sup>1</sup> of staff supporting research at the institutional level (including Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Research Grant Officer, Director of an Institute);
- salaries and salary on-costs<sup>1</sup> of teaching and research staff (including the cost of 'buying time' to free such staff to do more research); and
- travel costs directly related to individual projects (including fares, accommodation and travel allowances).

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<sup>1</sup> Salary on-costs include payroll tax, superannuation, leave loading, workers' compensation and insurance, and shift allowance/penalty payments.

## 6. Conditions of Award

- 6.1 The NIRIS Award must be spent in support of the recipient's health or medical research in WA and in accordance with *Section 5 Definition of Infrastructure*.
- 6.2 If, prior to the NIRIS Award being fully expended, there are changes to the information provided in the NIRIS application, such as the researcher leaves the administering institution, the Research Development Unit must be notified immediately.
- 6.3 The NIRIS Award expenditure is subject to the *Financial Management Act 2006 (WA)*, and may be subject to audit by the Office of the Auditor General or their representative and/or the Department of Health.
- 6.4 Recipients must provide a self-assessment report on outcomes associated with the NIRIS Award by 30 June 2019. Guidelines and the report template will be provided prior to the due date.
- 6.5 An audited financial acquittal statement for the period 1 June 2018 to 31 May 2019 must be submitted by 30 June 2019. Guidelines and the report template will be provided prior to the due date.
- 6.6 The recipient must endeavour to spend all of the NIRIS Award within the twelve month period for which it has been allocated. If this is not possible an audited financial acquittal statement must also be provided for each subsequent twelve month period in which funds are expended. Where relevant, acquittal statements will include the amount of any unspent funds, reasons for the carry over, and an estimation of when funds will be expended.



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