

New Investigator Grants 2024 Advice to Applicants

This document provides information about the application process, eligibility, and conditions of applying for The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) Foundation New Investigator Grants.

Further information can be obtained from Dr Megan Grace, Research Manager, by emailing Megan.Grace@tpchfoundation.org.au.

General information

1. TPCH Foundation New Investigator Grants have been developed to provide research training and funding to new researchers, who wish to undertake a small project to learn research skills and address a health need.
 - These grants are generously supported by funding from TPCH SERTA Committee, and our community donors.
 - TPCH Foundation are also pleased to continue to partner with the Cystic Fibrosis Research Group (Adult Cystic Fibrosis Centre, Thoracic Program, The Prince Charles Hospital, Metro North Health), who are offering up to three New Investigator Grants for Cystic Fibrosis focussed research applications. These will undergo the same assessment process (as described below), and successful applications will be administered according to the standard Foundation funding agreement.
2. New Investigator Grants are awarded for a research project that must be completed within 12 months, once ethical and governance requirements are completed.
3. The maximum amount that can be requested is \$12,000.
4. The grant may be used for salary support, to purchase consumables and/or other research-related expenses. It cannot be used to fund basic computer equipment, such as personal laptops.
5. TPCH Foundation New Investigator Grants are awarded to the applicant and are not transferrable.
6. Successful applicants must remain within or associated with their nominated research group for the duration of the grant. Any change in circumstances must be discussed with TPCH Foundation. The Foundation reserves the right to review the applicant's grant in view of these changes and terminate the funding if this is deemed appropriate.

Eligibility

1. A New Investigator is defined as an investigator who has not been awarded a peer-reviewed research project grant in their own name in the last five years.
 - TPCH Foundation reserves the right to make the final judgement as to whether the applicant is considered eligible. This will be informed by the applicant's grant history, publications, track record, qualifications, and conference presentations.
 - The Foundation does not consider scholarships or equipment grants to be research grants for this purpose.
 - In general, applicants that are prior to the conclusion of their PhD will qualify as a New Investigator but are then ineligible once the PhD has been awarded.
2. Applicants must nominate a suitable Mentor for their project (requirements listed below).
3. Applications will only be considered if the work is being undertaken at, or in significant association with, TPCH campus and/or a TPCH community-based service. However, it is not necessary for either the New Investigator or the Mentor to be employed by Queensland Health. Alignment to TPCH must be clearly shown, tenuous connections to TPCH will result in the application not being assessed further. Applicants who are unsure are encouraged to discuss their application with the Foundation's Research Manager prior to submission.
4. Any relevant Ethics approvals must be obtained prior to the commencement of the research project. Approval is not required prior to submitting your application. It is the successful applicant's responsibility to ensure Ethics approval is received in a timely manner.

Guidelines for application submission

1. Applications will only be accepted online through the Smarty Grants portal <https://tpchfoundation.smartygrants.com.au/> and must be submitted by 1pm on the due date. Late applications will not be accepted.
2. Applicants must nominate an administering institution, who will manage the funding. The applicant must have an appointment or affiliation with the administering institute.
3. The nominated administering institution must be notified prior to lodging the application and any relevant approvals obtained.
4. Applications addressing one or more of the Foundation's priority areas of heart, lung, mental health and ageing will be highly regarded. However, high-quality applications addressing other health issues relevant to the Foundation's mission to "help people live healthier for longer" will also be considered for funding.
5. The project should be described in the Research Plan, and clearly outline the aims and hypothesis, background/literature review, study design and methodology, and expected outcomes. Applicants are encouraged to ensure the research plan covers all these areas and gives enough detail for the reviewer to understand the need for the research, the methodology to be used and what the expected outcomes are.

6. The budget must clearly outline the intended use of the funds. When composing the budget, the following should be noted:
 - If wages are being requested for a student, it must be justified as to why financial support is required and any other financial support must be included e.g. PhD Scholarship.
 - If the budget includes costing for new staff or students, the applicant must speak to TPCH Research Business Manager about space requirements prior to application (TPCHResearchBusiness@health.qld.gov.au)
 - The budget must be appropriate and well justified. Applications where the budget and justifications are not deemed acceptable will not be assessed further.

7. Applications relevant to Cystic Fibrosis will automatically be considered for the additional grants funded by the Cystic Fibrosis Research Group. Those applications assessed under the Cystic Fibrosis stream **will not be disqualified** from consideration in the open round.

Expectations of the Mentor

To be eligible, the Mentor:

- Must have research qualifications i.e. PhD or equivalent
- Must have a proven research track record, with a minimum of two years' post-doctoral research experience
- Cannot mentor more than 3 New Investigators per grant round
- Must not have any outstanding TPCH Foundation Progress Reports

TPCH Foundation recognises the importance of good mentoring, to ensure the project is performed at the highest standard, in a timely manner, and that the applicant receives high quality research training. It is expected that the mentor supports the applicant in the preparation of their application and, if successful, during the entirety of the grant. The application includes the requirement for a mentor statement which forms part of the assessment. The mentor statement should convey the importance of the project, why the nominated mentor is important to the research, why the mentor has chosen to support the applicant, and how the mentor will ensure the applicant receives high quality research training. Applications deemed to have a lack of mentoring and having poorly written mentor statements will not be funded. It is the responsibility of both the applicant and mentor to ensure the application is well written.

Application assessment

The grant will be assessed by an independent research panel convened by TPCH Foundation. TPCH Foundation will review all applications for applicant and mentor eligibility, alignment to TPCH, and an appropriate and well justified budget. Applications that do not meet these requirements will not be assessed further.

Applications will be assessed on:

- Relevance of the project to TPCH, and the role of the New Investigator (20%)
- The research plan (50%), including:
 - Clearly stated aims and hypotheses
 - Significance
 - Study design
 - Expected outcomes
- Feasibility and project benefits (10%)
- An appropriate and well justified budget (10%)
- The mentor statement (10%)

Administering Institution

A New Investigator Grant may be administered through TPCH or a University. However, grant funds will remain with The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation and will not be transferred in full to another institution. Funds will only be transferred in arrears, and the invoice must break down the expenditure before payment will be made.

Obligations of awardees

It is a condition of the grant that recipients will include TPCH Foundation in any publicity surrounding the research. In addition, TPCH grant recipients will be expected to provide regular research updates and may be called upon to participate in promotional activities.

Grant recipients are also expected to disseminate their results through the normal scientific channels. The support of TPCH Foundation must be acknowledged in any publications, media or presentations arising from the research.

Reporting requirements

Grant recipients will be required to submit six-monthly progress reports, due in April and October each year. It is the responsibility of the grant holder to submit these in a timely manner. Failure to submit a progress report will render the applicant ineligible for future funding from TPCH Foundation.

Conditions of application

Applicants authorise The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation to make any enquiries it considers necessary in relation to the proposed research project.

Key Dates

New Investigator Grants open – 15 January 2024

New Investigator Grants close – 1 March 2024

Applicants notified of the outcome – May 2024