



The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation TPCH Collaborative Seed Grant Guidelines 2026

This document provides information about the application process, eligibility, and conditions to apply for The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) Collaborative Seed Grant, through TPCH Foundation. Further information can be obtained from the Foundation's Research Manager, Dr Rebekah Engel (research@tpchfoundation.org.au).

Program Objectives

Collaborative Seed Grants have been designed to promote research collaboration across TPCH departments/services. Key objectives are to:

- Encourage collaboration between clinicians, scientists and academics that underpins research excellence and facilitates research capacity building across The Prince Charles Hospital.
- Enable projects addressing clinical research questions that require multi-disciplinary expertise.
- Expedite translation of research outcomes into patient and community benefits.
- Foster the potential for ongoing collaborative research and funding opportunities. However, in recognition that one-off projects can also be of high value, ongoing collaboration is not considered essential.

Grant Details

1. Applications will only be accepted online through <https://tpchfoundation.smartygrants.com.au/> and must be **submitted by 1pm on the due date**. Late applications will not be accepted.
2. The maximum amount that can be requested is \$50,000.
3. Grants are provided for up to 2 years. Extensions must be approved by TPCH Foundation.
4. All ethics and governance approvals must be obtained prior to the commencement of the research.
5. Projects must involve at least two TPCH departments/services and must address a clinical need relevant to TPCH.
6. One lead Chief Investigator (CI) from each collaborating department/service must be named. Other investigators are to be listed as Associate Investigators (AI).
7. The CI team must remain within or associated with TPCH. Any changes to circumstances must be discussed with TPCH Foundation. TPCH Foundation reserves the right to review the grant, and to terminate it if deemed appropriate.
8. 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.
9. Funding may be used for any direct research expense, such as salary costs (including on-costs), consumables or other reasonable research requirements. Equipment must be specific to, and deemed essential for the needs of the research activity. The Administering Institution must meet all service and repair costs for the equipment funded. Publication costs up to \$2,000 are allowed but must be fully justified within the application. Open access publication cost justification must include why the applicant is not able to publish in a relevant journal with which their affiliated University has a Read and Publish agreement.

10. The grant cannot be used to fund equipment for personal use, conference costs, or institutional overheads.
11. Signatures must be obtained from all Chief Investigators, and the Heads of Department for each collaborating department.
12. Applicants are required to nominate an administering institution. Any relevant departmental or institutional approvals must be obtained prior to lodging the application.

Eligibility

1. Applications will only be considered if the work is being undertaken at TPCH Campus.
2. CIs are required to be employed by Metro North Health and Hospital Service, or a partner organisation/academic institute that has a direct affiliation with a TPCH-based research group (this requirement does not apply to AIs). The focus is on supporting research that is taking place at TPCH, and all investigators must demonstrate active involvement in the project. Any applicants undertaking research at a Metro North facility who are not employed by Metro North Health must obtain approval permission as an External Researcher prior to starting their project ([External Researchers 006903 | Safety and Quality | Metro North HHS \(health.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/external-researchers-006903-safety-and-quality-metro-north-hhs)).
3. Applications must involve considerable and new (not existing) collaboration that leverages diverse expertise between at least two departments/services at TPCH. A new collaboration is defined as:
 - No evidence of collaboration between CIs in the last 5 years (e.g. co-funding, joint publications/abstracts) in the proposed area of research, and either:
 - New methodologies or instrumentation that at least one of the collaborating departments/ services has not previously used and will directly benefit from, or
 - A new area of research that at least one of the collaborating departments/services has not engaged in and will directly benefit from.
4. Applicants who have outstanding TPCH Foundation progress reports are not eligible to apply. Applications will be considered ineligible and not assessed further if a nominated CI has outstanding progress reports.

Assessment

TPCH Collaborative Grants will be assessed by an appropriately qualified panel convened by TPCH Foundation.

The application process will be completed in two stages:

1. **Expression of Interest (EoI).** EoI submissions will be assessed against the criteria below. The highest-ranked applicants (indicatively 4–6) will be invited to submit a full application.
 - Eligibility – applicants meet all eligibility requirements outlined in the Guidelines.
 - Alignment to program objectives - the proposed project clearly aligns with the aims of the program.
 - Collaborative approach - clear evidence that the proposed collaboration is essential to achieving the study aims.
 - Meaningful contribution - evidence that each participating department or service will make a substantive and well-defined contribution to the project.
2. **Full Application.** Invited applicants will be required to submit a full project proposal. Collaborative Grants will not be assessed on individual track record. However, applicants must clearly demonstrate that the proposed team has the appropriate expertise, capability, and access to resources to successfully deliver the research.

Assessment Criteria

- **Study Methods (40%)**

- Appropriateness and robustness of the study design
- Potential clinical impact, including a clear plan for translation or implementation
- **Collaboration (30%)**
 - Quality and extent of the proposed collaboration
 - The investigative team's collaborative potential
 - Extent to which the project addresses a multidisciplinary research question of importance to one or more of the collaborating departments or services
 - Evidence of research capacity building and workforce development through the collaborative partnership
- **Significance and Alignment to TPCH (10%)**
 - Anticipated knowledge gain and overall significance of the proposed research
 - Relevance of the project to TPCH
- **Feasibility and Budget (20%)**
 - Feasibility of the proposed project and the research team's capacity to deliver the research as described
 - Appropriateness and justification of the proposed budget

Administering Institution

Grant funds will remain with TPCH Foundation and be paid in arrears by tax invoice to the nominated administering institution. Grant funds will not be transferred in full to another institution.

Obligations of awardees

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

The ability of TPCH Foundation to support research is dependent on our ability to engage with potential donors. It is a condition of accepting the grant that recipients will include TPCH Foundation in any publicity surrounding the research. TPCH Foundation grant recipients will be expected to provide regular research updates and may be called upon to participate in promotional activities.

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 holders to submit these in a timely manner. Failure to submit a progress report will result in the CIs being ineligible for future funding from TPCH Foundation.

Key Dates

EOIs open	28 January 2026
EOIs close	16 February 2026
Full applications open	2 March 2026
Full applications close	3 April 2026
Applicants notified of outcome	June 2026