

# Cancer Institute NSW

## Guidelines for the Fellowship Grant Schemes (Early Career Fellowships and Career Development Fellowships)

Version 1.4 | 30 March 2022

## Contents

1.	Overview .....	3
	1.1 Introduction	3
	1.2 The Cancer Institute NSW Research Programs	3
2.	Fellowship Schemes .....	4
	2.1 Purpose	4
	2.2 Fellowship Levels	4
	2.3 Fellowship Categories	4
	2.4 Funding Available	5
	2.5 Conditions of Funding	5
	2.5.4 Number of Applications .....	6
3.	Eligibility Criteria .....	6
	3.1 Located in NSW	6
	3.2 PhD Candidates (ECF only)	6
	3.3 Administering Institution Endorsement	7
	3.4 Supervisor Endorsement	7
4.	Assessment Criteria .....	7
	4.1 Stage One – Review of the Fellowship Summary	8
	4.2 Stage Two – Detailed review of the full application	8
5.	Selection Process .....	8
	5.1 Electronic submission	8
	5.2 Eligibility Assessment	9
	5.3 Independent Review Process	9
	5.4 Approval and notification process	9
6.	Post-award Administration .....	9
	6.1 Competitive Grants Agreement	9
	6.2 Use of funds	9
	6.3 Administering Institution Contacts Project Permissions	10
	6.4 Variations	10
	6.5 Acknowledgement and participation	10
	6.6 Enquiries	10

## Version History

Version history	Number	Date	Change description
	1.0	10 Jan 2018	First version that is not year dependent and combines the Early Career and Career Development fellowship schemes. Streamlined formatting, updated assessment criteria and clarified wording.
	1.1	11 Jun 2020	Clarification of Endorsement Letter requirements for LHDs (Section 3.3).
	1.2	28 Apr 2021	Revision of Conditions of Funding (section 2.5), Endorsement Letter requirements (section 3.3) and Assessment criteria (section 4.0). Addition of Administering Institution Contacts Project Permissions (section 6.3).
	1.3	11 Mar 2022	Revision of Purpose (section 2.1), Commencement Date (section 2.5.1) PhD Candidates (section 3.2), and Assessment criteria (section 4.1).
	1.4	30 Mar 2022	Addition of sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2, Revision of Multiple Cancer Institute NSW Fellowships (section 2.5.2)

## 1. Overview

### 1.1 Introduction

The Cancer Institute NSW (the Institute) is the NSW government's cancer control agency. The Institute is driving innovation in cancer care by working in partnership with leaders in the field to deliver the best cancer results for the people of NSW. Research will provide the evidence to drive rapid improvements in cancer prevention, treatment and subsequently survival and quality of life for cancer patients in NSW. The research supported by the Institute must be performance driven and deliver meaningful and significant outcomes.

### 1.2 The Cancer Institute NSW Research Programs

The Cancer Institute NSW is committed to pursuing and supporting excellence and innovation in cancer research as a key method to improve outcomes in NSW. Applications are considered against specific criteria for each program as well as adherence to the following principles:

- Consistency with the priorities for action in the NSW [Cancer Plan](#).
- Commitment to excellence and innovation.
- Commitment to rapid translation of research findings to clinical practice and policy.
- Focus on the importance of the outcomes of research.
- Supporting recruitment and development of excellent cancer researchers in NSW.
- Promoting, enhancing or complementing areas with existing outstanding research strengths in NSW including molecular or cell biology, cancer genetics, clinical research, psycho-oncology, population health, health systems research or addressing major cancer problems facing NSW.
- Promoting attainment of additional scientific depth by collaboration, co-location, amalgamation or research involving a number of research disciplines.
- Strengthening key research infrastructure, platforms, technologies and research expertise to increase the productivity of research.
- Supporting the development of links with key national or overseas research programs and industry.
- Developing the research culture within the NSW health system.
- Identifying the relevance of the research to NSW.
- Responding to National and State priorities and community opinions about research.

## 2. Fellowship Schemes

### 2.1 Purpose

The Cancer Institute NSW Fellowship Grant Schemes strengthen the State's position as a global leader in cancer research by investing in emerging cancer researchers. The Institute's three-year Fellowships are highly prestigious and competitive awards for researchers to build on their research capability and become leaders of their own research team. The Fellowships are open to Investigators engaged in any discipline of research relevant to cancer, undertaking the research at a research organisation located in NSW.

A list of fellowships previously funded by the Cancer Institute NSW is available online under [previous grants funded](#).

### 2.2 Fellowship Levels

The Fellowships include the following two schemes, outlined below, which are both designed to encourage the very best researchers to choose cancer as their selected field of research. Successful applicants will conduct team-based research to develop expertise in cancer research and may also work with more senior colleagues in developing their research career.

Fellows may apply for whichever Fellowship scheme they consider themselves eligible for but must obtain Supervisor and Administering Institution letters of support confirming their eligibility for the nominated scheme.

#### 2.2.1 Early Career Fellowship (<5 years post-doctoral)

The Cancer Institute NSW Early Career Fellowships (ECF) are intended to develop and support researchers who have no more than a total of five years post-doctoral experience at the time of application and can demonstrate an emerging track record of research output, ability and potential as a future cancer research leader.

#### 2.2.2 Career Development Fellowship (5-10 years post-doctoral)

The Cancer Institute NSW Career Development Fellowships (CDF) are intended to develop and support researchers with at least five years and no more than 10 years post-doctoral experience at the time of application and can demonstrate an established track record of research achievement and potential as a future cancer research leader.

### 2.3 Fellowship Categories

Under both schemes potential fellows can fit one of two categories; a Category 1 full-time cancer researcher or a Category 2 clinician researcher (where at least 60% of their time is spent on research). Confirmation that the clinical work is funded by the employer must be provided. Salary funding for Category 2 clinician researchers will be adjusted pro rata on the basis of their dedicated research time.

## 2.4 Funding Available

### 2.4.1 Early Career Fellowship

Each fellow will be awarded funds of up to \$200,000 (ex-GST) per annum (\$100,000 for salary and \$100,000 for project costs) for a period of three years, up to the total of \$600,000 per fellowship. On-costs (covering payroll tax, workers' compensation, employers' superannuation and long service leave) associated with salaries are capped at a maximum of 21% for Local Health Districts and 29% for all other Administering Institutions.

### 2.4.2 Career Development Fellowship

Each fellow will be awarded funds of up to \$225,000 (ex-GST) per annum (\$125,000 for salary and \$100,000 for project costs) for a period of three years, up to the total of \$675,000 per fellowship. On-costs (covering payroll tax, workers' compensation, employers' superannuation and long service leave) associated with salaries are capped at a maximum of 21% for Local Health Districts and 29% for all other Administering Institutions.

## 2.5 Conditions of Funding

### 2.5.1 Commencement Date

Successful applicants must commence the grant between 1 January 2023 and 1 June 2023. *Amendment to this start date will be considered only in extenuating circumstances.*

### 2.5.2 Multiple Cancer Institute NSW fellowships

Individuals may only hold one Cancer Institute NSW fellowship at a time. A current Institute Fellow will only be eligible to apply if their current fellowship is scheduled (according to the executed agreement or subsequent executed variations) to be completed by 31 December of the year of application.

Current or past recipients of an Institute Fellowship may only apply for half of the salary component of subsequent fellowships and no research project costs (up to a maximum of \$50,000 per annum for Early Career Fellowships and up to a maximum of \$62,5000 per annum for Career Development Fellowships). Only those awarded an Institute Fellowship for the first time will receive research project costs. Fellows are encouraged to apply for increasingly senior fellowships over time, such as from an Early Career Fellowship to a Career Development Fellowship. Fellows may only receive a maximum of two Cancer Institute NSW fellowships.

### 2.5.3 Concurrent external grant(s)

The Fellowship may not be held concurrently with other significant research salary support, for example, an NHMRC grant, or a research grant which specifically provides

salary support for the applicant. Additional funding for clinical sessions (e.g. part-time clinical appointment) is permitted.

Applicants who receive other significant research salary support, will only be eligible to apply for a fellowship if the salary component of the other grant ends prior to the proposed commencement date of the Cancer Institute NSW fellowship. The commencement date of the Cancer Institute NSW fellowship cannot be deferred past 1 June 2023 due to holding a concurrent external fellowship.

The applicant must notify the Cancer Institute NSW of any external fellowships or research grants which specifically provides salary support for the applicant at application or immediately following award of grant. If a Cancer Institute NSW Fellow receives another external fellowship or research grant during the three-year funding period, they must notify the Institute immediately.

#### **2.5.4 Number of Applications**

An applicant can only submit one Cancer Institute NSW fellowship application for each annual grant round. Applicants are strongly encouraged to have an Open Researcher and Contributor ID ([ORCID](#)) identifier, and to enter this onto their profile on the Grants Management System (GMS). The ORCID will allow the GMS to pre-populate key information from the applicant's profile such as name, position, institution, qualifications, employment history and publications.

#### **2.5.5 Reporting Requirement**

Fellows must provide an annual progress report and final report for the grant using the provided [report templates](#). Applicants acknowledge that these progress reports may be used by the Institute for grant scheme auditing or evaluation purposes. The Institute will not provide funding if satisfactory progress reports are not submitted.

### **3. Eligibility Criteria**

#### **3.1 Located in NSW**

Applicants must be located at a university, hospital or major research institution located within NSW (may be located at more than one institution). This may differ from the Administering Institution which must also be located in NSW. The research must be conducted in NSW.

#### **3.2 PhD Candidates (ECF only)**

PhD candidates are eligible to apply for the Early Career Fellowship provided their thesis submission is completed before the grant submission close date. The PhD must be passed (not conferred) by 31 October 2022. Evidence that the PhD has been passed must be provided by the Administering Institution when accepting the Fellowship.

### 3.3 Administering Institution Endorsement

Applications must nominate a single Administering Institution who will be responsible for the management of the grant and will enter into a Competitive Grants Agreement. The Administering Institution must have in place policies and procedures for the administration of public funds; for the management of Intellectual Property; and for proper conduct of research in relation to ethics. Additionally, the Administering Institution must have good scientific practice, and will provide appropriate infrastructure to allow the research supported by the grant to be undertaken.

The Administering Institution and their nominated institutional contact must be registered with the Cancer Institute NSW. Refer to the list of [Registered Administering Institutions](#) and the [Administering Institution Contact Registration Form](#).

At the time of grant application submission, an Endorsement Letter from the Administering Institution Contact on institutional letterhead must be included. *[Please note that in the case of Local Health Districts, the Endorsement Letter must be signed off by the Director of the Cancer Service].* This letter must confirm the following:

- The application is endorsed by the Administering Institution;
- The proposed commencement date of the grant;
- The pass date of PhD;
- The level (ECF or CDF) and category (full-time cancer researcher or clinician researcher) of fellowship is appropriate;
- The Fellow, if not an Australian citizen or permanent resident, has the requisite work visa in place at the time of accepting the successful grant;
- The Fellow will remain employed in NSW for the duration of the funding period;
- The Fellow has met all reporting requirements for current or previously funded Institute grants;
- The Fellow will complete any previously awarded Cancer Institute NSW Fellowships by 31 December;
- The Fellow has not submitted any other ECF or CDF applications this grant round; and
- Any other information relevant for the application (refer to section 2).

\* Please use [Endorsement Letter Template – Fellowship Application](#)- available on the Institute's website.

### 3.4 Supervisor Endorsement

The application must include a letter from the Fellow's proposed Supervisor. The letter should include details (but not limited to) on the working relationship and research history between the individuals, the applicant's cancer research career highlights and aspired goals.

## 4. Assessment Criteria

The initial assessment of the application will be based on the Fellowship Summary which will be reviewed by at least two Grants Review Committee members. All summaries will

be assessed using the criteria detailed below in section 4.1 (Stage One). A review of the fellowship summaries will be used to shortlist applications which will then be reviewed in full as is detailed below in section 4.2 (Stage Two).

#### **4.1 Stage One – Review of the Fellowship Summary**

The fellowship summary will be used to assess the feasibility, significance and impact of the proposal, and the applicant's track record and research support.

#### **4.2 Stage Two – Detailed review of the full application**

##### **4.2.1 Scientific Quality (25%)**

The excellence of the research proposal, based on the rationale, design, and methodology. The feasibility of successfully delivering the proposed research outcomes in the timeframe, including identification of key milestones and success indicators to monitor the research progress.

##### **4.2.1 Significance (25%)**

The anticipated value-add and impact of the proposed research to cancer research in NSW. The potential for this proposed research to bring innovative and/or novel approaches to cancer research.

##### **4.2.3 Track Record (25%)**

Demonstration of relevant professional qualifications, skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research. The depth of research experience, with focus in the proposed area of cancer research. The quality of the research outputs and their impact and reach. The ability to attract and secure research projects, grants, awards, leveraged funding (Institutional support and other), relative to opportunity.

##### **4.2.4 Potential (25%)**

The clarity of the career objectives for the next three years and how these will be achieved and supported by the Supervisor, including a skills development plan. The leadership quality and the ability to promote the advancement of cancer research via teaching and professional contributions.

## **5. Selection Process**

### **5.1 Electronic submission**

Applications must be submitted via the Institute's [Grants Management System](#) by **1pm** of the [due date](#), unless otherwise stated. It is the responsibility of the applicant and the Administering Institution Contact to ensure that the application is complete and accurate prior to submission.

## 5.2 Eligibility Assessment

Submitted applications will be reviewed to ensure they adhere to all eligibility requirements including the provision of appropriate endorsement letters from the Administering Institution and Supervisor.

## 5.3 Independent Review Process

The Institute utilises an independent Grants Review Committee composed of external members. The Grants Review Committee adheres to the Cancer Institute NSW policies to ensure for the privacy and confidentiality of applications. Applications may be reviewed by additional independent assessors if required. The Institute requires its Grants Review Committee members and any additional independent assessors to declare any conflicts of interest. The member(s) will withdraw from reviewing individual applications where such conflict exists.

The Grants Review Committee will score and rank applications based on an assessment of merit against the stated assessment criteria. The Grants Review Committee will put forward recommendations for awarding of the grant to the Chief Executive Officer/Chief Cancer Officer of the Cancer Institute NSW for consideration.

## 5.4 Approval and notification process

The Cancer Institute NSW's Board will consider all recommendations for funding by the Grants Review Committee and approve funding for the grants to be awarded based on merit. Once the Cancer Institute NSW's Board has approved the awarding of the grant, all applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome.

## 6. Post-award Administration

### 6.1 Competitive Grants Agreement

If the application is successful, the Administering Institution and the Institute will enter into a [Competitive Grants Agreement](#). All parties must accept the terms of the Competitive Grants Agreement and the Administering Institution must sign the Agreement before payments are made. The Administering Institution will have 20 business days from the date that the *finalised* Agreement is sent to return the partially executed copy to the Institute. The offer may lapse if the partially executed Agreement is not returned within this time. Under certain circumstances, the Institute may extend this period.

It is recommended that all parties familiarise themselves with the Institute's Competitive Grants Agreement prior to submission of an Application.

### 6.2 Use of funds

Funds awarded will be adjusted, if necessary, accordingly as detailed in the Conditions of Funding (section 2.5) and must be used for the purposes stated in the application approved by the Institute. Funds awarded cannot be used for any purposes associated

with basic (e.g. desk, stationery, phone etc.) or overhead infrastructure costs (i.e. institutional overheads of administrative levies). Funds should not be used to support research conducted outside of NSW.

### **6.3 Administering Institution Contacts Project Permissions**

For the purpose of reporting requirements, the nominated Administering Institution Contact and Financial Officer will have the ability to view the approved project and action project milestones via the GMS. Progress and final report milestones must be written by the Fellow and signed off and submitted by the nominated Administering Institution Contact. Administering Institution Financial Officers will submit invoices, acquittals and financial reports via the GMS of behalf of the Fellow.

### **6.4 Variations**

Any requests for variation to a grant (such as time extensions, changes of scope, changes of investigators, etc) need to be submitted via the Administering Institution Contact to the Institute using the [variation forms](#). A variation can only be processed within the funding period of the existing Competitive Grants Agreement. Approval of a variation request is at the Institute's discretion.

### **6.5 Acknowledgement and participation**

Fellows are required to acknowledge the Institute's funding, please refer to the [Funding Acknowledgment Guide](#). Fellows(s) may be required to be available for media interviews, briefings related to the grant, participate in and present at forum(s) at the request of the Institute.

### **6.6 Enquiries**

Enquiries can be directed to the Grants Team at [CINSW-Grants@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:CINSW-Grants@health.nsw.gov.au).