



Queensland Sexual Health Research Fund Grant Guidelines

Introduction

On behalf of Queensland's Department of Health, ASHM invites applications from suitable organisations to apply for funding to assist in improving the delivery of sexual health services and support implementation of the [Queensland Sexual Health Strategy 2016-21 and its associated action plans](#).

Who can apply?

Organisations and researchers are invited to submit proposals that seek to address the drivers for, and barriers to, achieving optimal sexual health for all Queenslanders. Proposals must demonstrate partnership arrangements with relevant service providers in a range of sectors including health, education and social services. The nature of these partnership arrangements must be made clear in the application, and evidence of partnership arrangements may be required. Whilst research partnerships with academia are valuable, they are not mandatory.

Funding amounts

Approximately \$500,000 is available for disbursement through the Fund for Round Four. Consideration will be given to grants of up to \$100,000 (including GST) as well as smaller-scale grants.

Background

The Queensland Sexual Health Strategy 2016-2021

The *Queensland Sexual Health Strategy* was developed by the Queensland Department of Health, in collaboration and consultation with stakeholders, to improve the sexual and reproductive health of Queenslanders. These stakeholders included health consumers, other government departments, and community organisations.

Drawing on action plans addressing HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander's relation to Sexually Transmissible Infections, the Strategy provides an overarching framework for a holistic approach to sexual health.

More information about the Sexual Health Strategy 2016-2021 and its associated action plans can be found on the [Queensland Department of Health's website](#).

Formation of the Sexual Health Research Fund

The Department of Health committed \$1,065,000 over three financial years to provide seed funding for translational research that will improve the delivery of sexual health services in Queensland. Approximately \$500,000 is available for disbursement through the Fund for Round Four.

The Research Sub-Committee of the Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee (SHMAC) has been appointed to set the research priorities each year, and then assess and recommend applications for funding.

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Strategies and Priorities

The Research Sub-Committee will assess and recommend applications for translational research which align with the priorities of the [Strategy and associated action plans](#). The Strategy and associated action plans focus on increasing prevention and reducing transmission of HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and other STIs, as well as increasing voluntary testing, increasing awareness and reducing stigma, and improving treatment and monitoring methods. It is also a priority to reduce the disparity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-Indigenous Australians.

The priorities for the fourth round of grants are:

- Research on barriers to sexual health prevention measures, screening activities, and early interventions in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, particularly in North Queensland.
- Feasibility and/or acceptability research into periodic presumptive population-based treatment of asymptomatic and symptomatic STIs among young sexually active people as a model of prevention and treatment service delivery.
 - Research is to focus on communities where there may be poor access to healthcare and/or there is acknowledged to be high risk and high probability of infection.
 - Proposals should clearly identify and address key components of this model of care, such as potential service provider partnerships and risk mitigation strategies.
- Research exploring drivers around blood-borne virus and STI disease burden experienced by older people, with particular foci on Hep B, Hep C, HIV and infectious syphilis.
 - Research may investigate sector knowledge levels, sexual health literacy levels, engagement with testing/treatment, and knowledge and utilisation of prevention measures, with a view to informing prevention approaches and improvements to models of care.
- Underpinning research exploring determinants of health and behavioural norms which may be contributing to the presence and spread of the current syphilis epidemic, to further inform prevention approaches.
- Research in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse populations with separate foci on refugee populations and migrant populations more generally. Research may target the following areas:
 - Country of birth-specific epidemiological data on STIs to inform sexual health promotion/prevention programs
 - Effective sexual health service models
 - Qualitative research and further analysis of existing data
 - Effective approaches to reduce stigma around sexual health within Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities, including peer-led and/or community-led interventions

Proposals will only be progressed in full for consideration by the Research Sub-Committee if

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they align with one of the above priorities.

Innovative research proposals in alignment with the Sexual Health Strategy are encouraged. Topics that do not meet the priorities may be submitted. The project title and a summary of these applications will be submitted to the Research Sub-Committee who may exercise their discretion to view the application in its entirety.

Eligibility

Eligible organisations

Eligible organisations must be an organisation with established legal status (e.g. under Corporations Law, Health Services Act, Trustee Act).

Partnerships

Applicants must demonstrate partnership arrangements with relevant service providers in a range of sectors including health, education and social services, and outline the nature of these arrangements. This is to ensure that the research results are tested in, and can be translated into, services delivered in Queensland and will result in improved sexual health outcomes in Queensland.

Whilst research partnerships with academia are valuable, they are not mandatory. Non-government organisations are encouraged to partner with experienced researchers/research institutes to encourage capacity building within their own organisations.

Interstate partnerships are allowed, provided that the primary fund holder is based in Queensland, and the research is primarily conducted in Queensland.

Note that requirements for the evidence of partnerships will be increased in this Round, with an outline of the role of individual parties to be agreed by all parties in a provided template. The Research Sub-Committee or the Fund Administrator may contact parties independently from the Principal Investigator to confirm partnerships are as described.

Applications

Applications must use the Application Form provided and must not exceed twenty (20) pages (10-page application form + 10-page CV + Appendices). Applications in excess of the specified page limits will be returned to the applicant for editing. Please maintain formatting and do not increase margins on the Application Form. References will not be included in the page count.

All sections of the application and provided appendices must be completed to be eligible for progression to the Research Sub-Committee.

Funding Criteria

Commonwealth funding alignment

Funding will not be provided for proposed activities that are currently eligible for funding through other Commonwealth Government sources.

Activities that are not considered to be in scope

The following activities are ineligible for funding under this project:

- Professional service activities which are currently funded through the Medicare Benefits Scheme (MBS) and/or the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)
- Activities which duplicate those funded under other government initiatives

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- Leasing or purchase of vehicles
- Depreciation of expenses
- Activities already undertaken or expenses already incurred
- Items of capital equipment valued greater than \$3000
- Items of capital not directly related to research outcomes
- Payment of consultancy services
- Board fees
- The Principal Investigator's salary

The above list is indicative and is not intended to be exhaustive. Other items may be added to this list at the discretion of the Research Sub Committee.

Intellectual Property

Ownership of Intellectual Property (IP)

All Project IP generated under this Project will be legally and beneficially owned by the Administering Institution.

In the event that the Administering Institution elects to commercialise or otherwise exploit the Project IP, the Administering Institution must:

- a) promptly notify the State; and
- b) meet (in person or via telephone or videoconference) and negotiate in good faith with the State as to the allocation of proceeds of that commercialisation.

ASHM's access to Project IP

The Administering Institution will grant to the State and to ASHM a worldwide, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty free, non-exclusive licence (including a right to sublicense) to use, communicate, reproduce, publish, adapt and modify the Project IP.

Existing Material

The grant recipient grants to the State and ASHM a worldwide, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty free, non-exclusive licence to use Existing Material contributed to the funded research project to the extent that the Project IP is reliant upon the Existing Material for the State's and ASHM's use.

The grant recipient represents and warrants that:

- a) to the best of the grant recipient's knowledge (without having to make any additional enquiries) the use of the Project IP and any Existing Material contributed to a funded research project will not infringe the Intellectual Property Rights of any third party;
- b) the grant recipient is not aware of any allegation that the use of the Project IP or any Existing Material infringes the Intellectual Property Rights of any third party; and
- c) except with the prior written approval of the ASHM, who must seek the prior written approval of the State, the grant recipient will not assign, encumber or otherwise deal with or exploit the Existing Material in a manner that would prohibit or reduce use of that Existing Material in the funded research project.
- d) the Existing Material in a manner that would prohibit or reduce use of that Existing Material in the funded research project.

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Student work on Project

In relation to any student undertaking work on the funded research project:

- a) copyright in a student's thesis will belong to the student;
- b) any restrictions on the right of a student to publish his/her thesis will only be such as are reasonably necessary in the circumstances and at all times in accordance with the enrolling institutions policies and procedures;
- c) the right of a student to have any thesis examined must not be inhibited; and
- d) it is acceptable to require each examiner of the thesis to provide appropriate acknowledgements of confidentiality as between the enrolling institute and the examiner to protect any Confidential Information, including any Project IP.

Completing the application

Complete all sections of the [linked application form](#). All submissions will be reviewed by the Research Sub-Committee of the SHMAC.

Application submission closing time is 5:00pm (AEST) on Friday April 15, 2022.

Completed application forms and CV of the Principal Investigator or Program Manager must be submitted by email to the administrator at SHRF@ashm.org.au with the subject heading: Sexual Health Research Fund Grant Proposal – (Surname of Principal Investigator/Program Manager). Applications that do not meet the criteria will be returned to the applicant for action to meet the requirements. ASHM will work with successful applicants to develop a research contract.

For applications which are submitted prior to the end date, please allow 1 week to receive feedback from ASHM. ASHM will be closed for the Christmas period from 20th December 2021 to 7th January 2022, resuming operations on 10th January 2022.

Evaluation criteria

Assessment of submissions will be based on the following:

- **Alignment with the Strategy** and priorities outlined in this document
- **Study design/methodology** quality and innovation
- **Expected outcomes of the project**, benefits and translation to practice
- **Capacity to complete the project and demonstrated experience** of study team members
- **Budget/value for money**

Indicative Timeline

An indicative timeline is outlined below. ASHM reserves the right to modify these timeframes.

| Activity | Date |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Applications open | November 15 2021 |
| Applications close | April 15 2022 |
| Approval of successful submissions | By June 3 2022 |
| Funding awarded | By end of June 2022 |

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Contacts

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