

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

Research Program Policies & Guidelines

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Introduction

Allocation of PCFA research funds is guided by a clear strategic focus and a set of specific research priorities, based on identified needs of Australian men with prostate cancer, their partners and their families.

The goal of PCFA research program is to create and promote the uptake of knowledge that will improve the lives of Australian men with prostate cancer, their partners and their families.

In fulfilling its goal, the program provides a logical, consistent and transparent framework for the submission, review and selection of the best research applications for funding.

Funding Process

PCFA will have an annual call for applications (unless specified otherwise), addressing one or more of the following priority research areas:

1. Application of precision approaches to therapies across the prostate cancer continuum, including hormone sensitive prostate cancer
2. Research (basic, translational, epidemiological) that capitalises on existing repositories of biological samples and clinical data from men with prostate cancer
3. Better understanding the impact of prostate cancer on men's lives and improving the quality of life of men diagnosed with prostate cancer, their partners and their families
4. Better understanding the basis of, and approaches to address disparities in, prostate cancer outcomes based on ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and location
5. Bringing precision approaches to survivorship strategies (e.g. exercise, nutrition, mental and psychosocial supports)

Application Process

Application Forms

All applications must be made on the appropriate form provided by PCFA. Application forms can be found <https://pcfa.org.au/research/apply-for-funding>

Completed forms, along with all other required documentation, must be submitted electronically by the advertised closing date.

Ethics and other required approvals

When relevant approvals and licenses are available at the time of application, copies

should be forwarded to PCFA.

Awarded funds will only be released upon provision of relevant ethics approval and approval of other licenses.

Withdrawal of Applications

Applicants may withdraw an application at any time through their Administering Institution's Research Office.

Incomplete, false or misleading applications

Once submitted to PCFA, the application will be considered final and no changes will be accepted. The application is the prime source of information available for assessment. As such it must contain all the information necessary for assessment of the project and the investigators without the need for further written or oral explanation, or reference to additional documentation, including the Internet. All details in the application, particularly all information about all active research grants and all current grant applications must be current at the time of application.

Tobacco

PCFA will not award a research grant to any researcher who:

- is an applicant for, or is in receipt of funds from, the tobacco industry or organisations deemed by PCFA to be associated with the tobacco industry, regardless of whether the funds are received directly, through collaborators or by other means (for example, the Smoking and Health Research Foundation of Australia is deemed to be associated with the tobacco industry)
- is employed in a research institute or Organisation or, in the case of universities, faculties or schools that allow applications or receive funds from the tobacco industry, whatever the use of those funds may be
- is employed in a University that accepts funds from the tobacco industry for health-related research or services, wherever in the University that research may be done, or those services supported.
- PCFA will terminate its support for a research project if the above provisions relating to support from the tobacco industry are breached or it believes that the integrity of the research is threatened by influence from tobacco interests.

Review and Selection Process

Initial Review of Applications

PCFA reviews all submitted applications and reserves the right to remove any applications that are clearly non-competitive or ineligible from further consideration in the peer review process. Exclusion of ineligible applications may take place at any time during the selection process under the following circumstances:

- the application is inconsistent with the objectives of PCFA
- the application contravenes or is inconsistent with PCFA Research Program Policies and the relevant guides for the completion of application forms
- the application does not address the selection criteria and/or the application includes incomplete or misleading information
- the application does not adhere to the guidelines for the relevant grant category.

Peer Review

Applications will be assessed as detailed in the Guide for Applicants and, depending on the specific funding call, may include the following phases:

Phase 1 – At least two and up to three External Expert Assessors will review and score each application using the Key Evaluation Criteria outlined in the Guide for Applicants pertaining to each funding call. External Experts may include individual members of PCFA's Research Advisory Committee (RAC)

Phase 2 – Shortlisted applicants may undergo a brief online interview with the RAC, from which the top-ranked applicants will be selected.

Phase 3 - Expert Assessor evaluations are ratified by PCFA's RAC and ranked. **Phase 4** - RAC makes recommendations to PCFA's National Board on the ranked submissions to be funded based on available funds. The final decision on which Award applications are funded is made by the Board.

Governance

From a governance perspective, all research funding by PCFA sits under the umbrella of the Research Advisory Committee, with final approval for financial decisions obtained from Finance and Operations Committee and the National Board. The Research Advisory Committee is responsible for advising on the strategic direction for the research

program.

Confidentiality

Information contained in applications is regarded as in-confidence unless otherwise stated and will be received and treated as in-confidence by PCFA. It is the responsibility of all PCFA Research Advisory Committee members, and persons assisting this Committee, not to disclose to any person's confidential information to which they become privy as a result of the exercise of their responsibilities to PCFA. Information comprising the names of successful grant applicants and their administering institutions, together with the title of the research project and the funding awarded, are published in PCFA's Annual Report and are available through PCFA's website. PCFA may also release information about the areas of research of the grant and a brief description of the grant provided by the applicant in response to the question on the application form designated as Lay Summary.

Privacy

Documents containing personal information are handled and protected in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act 1988, which sets standards for the collection, storage, use and disclosure of, and access to, personal information. Personal information is disclosed only with permission of the individual to whom it relates or where the Act allows.

Outcome of Application

PCFA will advise applicants directly of the outcome of the application as early as possible following approval by the Research Advisory Committee and PCFA National Board. Outcomes of the funding round and starting date for any awarded grant will be announced on PCFA's website.

PCFA will publish the following information on its website for all successful grants:

- Application ID#
- Chief Investigator
- Administering Institution
- Type of Grant

- Title of Project
- Lay summary
- The Chief Investigator's photograph and biography
- Any news regarding the progress of the project

Conditions of Funding

Successful applicants funded by PCFA must fully comply with the following conditions:

- Successful candidates must accept their awards within 21 working days of notification. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of the offer.
- Acknowledgment of the funder's support in all publications and presentations that result from the funded research. Wording for the acknowledgement will be provided in the letter of offer to successful applicants.
- Immediate notification to PCFA of all publications resulting from this award when they are accepted for publication.
- Submit to PCFA written report/s as specified in the Reporting Schedule detailed in the Guide for Applicants that include a list of all presentations and publication resulting in whole or in part from this award.

It is expected that following the funding period, awardees will continue to contribute to the ongoing success of the funding program by participating in surveys and providing data or reports that will aid program evaluation.

Marketing of PCFA funded research

PCFA raises awareness of the outcomes of funded research through press releases, its quarterly newsletter, appeals, web-based media channels, radio and television appearances. Therefore, from time to time, PCFA may request the permission of awardees to use an outline of the project, its progress to date, a profile of members of the research team and/or relevant images. Dissemination of knowledge and other activities showcasing this research assists us to raise funds so that we can support more research in the future. It is, therefore, a condition of funding that each awardee notifies PCFA's Research office at least one week in advance about any communication, press release and publication or other major scientific discovery which make mention of PCFA as funder of the work.

Administration of grants

Offers will be made by PCFA to the Chief Investigator and copied to the nominated Research Officer at the Administering Institution. The Chief Investigator is responsible for organising and managing the research collaboration and reporting to PCFA however all correspondence must be sent from the Research Office at the Administering Institution.

The signed Certification Page, submitted at the time of the original grant application, is considered a binding agreement in which the applicant and the Administering Institution agree to abide by the policies of PCFA's Research Program.

Deferral

It is expected that awarded grants will commence on the start date indicated on the original application form. However, if this will not be possible, requests for a deferral of the start date must be provided in a letter addressed to **PCFA Research** within 21 working days of notification of a successful application, and sent to research@pcfa.org.au.

The letter must be on the letterhead of the Administering Institution and signed by either the Chief Investigator or an authorised representative from the Institution's Research Office. The letter should outline the reason/s for requesting a deferral and propose a new start date for the project.

Deferral requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Please be aware that any approval for revision of the start date may also include amendment of the payment schedule and/or the reporting schedule.

Payments

Payment of funds will be made to the Administering Institution, in response to an invoice, as detailed in the Payment Schedule in the Guide for Applicants. Funds should be used for the general purposes documented in the application and approved under PCFA's Research Program.

In the event that reporting requirements are not met, PCFA will suspend payment of further instalments of any current grant until all of the appropriate reporting documents have been received and assessed as satisfactory.

Extensions

In the event that a project cannot be completed within the grant period, an extension may be granted. Requests for an extension of the completion date must be provided in a

letter addressed to **PCFA Research** and sent to research@pcfa.org.au.

The letter must be on the letterhead of the Administering Institution and signed by either the Chief Investigator or an authorised representative from the Institution's Research Office. The letter should explain in detail the reason/s for the requiring an extension and propose a revised completion date for the project.

Extension requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Please be aware that any approval for revision of the completion date may also include amendment of the payment schedule and/or the reporting schedule.

Intellectual Property rights and commercialisation

1. Any Intellectual Property arising from a Research Project shall vest with the Administering Institution.
2. The Administering Institution shall promptly notify PCFA of any such Intellectual Property as soon as is reasonably practicable after it arises.
3. Subject to points 1 and 2 above, the Administering Institution shall be responsible for the protection, management, exploitation and commercialisation, of any such Intellectual Property. To the extent that the Administering Institution does not, within a reasonable time after it arises, protect such Intellectual Property, PCFA shall have a right, exercisable in its sole discretion, to protect and exploit such Intellectual Property.
4. With respect to actions in connection with the protection, management, exploitation or commercialisation of Intellectual Property, the Administering Institution undertakes to consider whether such protection, management, exploitation or commercialisation is the most appropriate means of achieving benefit to men with prostate cancer.
5. The Administering Institution must inform PCFA before commercially exploiting any Intellectual Property.

Reporting

Knowledge Translation

Knowledge translation is about raising knowledge users' awareness of research findings and facilitating the use of those findings. With knowledge translation being an emerging field, there is a need to build capacity not only in developing research proposals with a

knowledge translation approach but also in assessing those proposals for scientific merit and potential impact. PCFA has adopted:

1. **Integrated KT or IKT**, which requires that knowledge users be members of the research team and participate in many stages of the research process. IKT requires researchers and knowledge users to develop partnerships and engage in a collaborative process with the overarching goal being the co-production of knowledge, its exchange and its translation into action. By integrating knowledge users at every stage, KT becomes embedded into the process and researchers minimise the possibilities of unanticipated barriers that may occur when attempting to act upon results with stakeholders.
2. **End-of-grant KT**, which requires applicants to submit a plan for how they will translate their findings when the research is completed.

In addition, the applicants are required to articulate their knowledge sharing/dissemination plan to demonstrate that the results achieved are relevant and useful to end users.

Scientific and Financial Reports

Scientific and financial reports will be required as specified in the Reporting Schedule detailed in the Guide for Applicants.

PCFA Scientific Report Forms are available on the website at <https://pcfa.org.au/research/apply-for-funding>. Alternatively, the forms can be requested from research@pcfa.org.au.

These reports include (but are not limited to):

- Completion and submission of PCFA Scientific Progress Report Form.
- An internally-audited financial report from the Administering Institution against the approved Grant budget (i.e. financial reports must be certified and signed by a senior accountant at the Administering Institute). All expenditure reported should be in accordance with the budget requested in the application.
- Justification for funds unspent, to be carried over or returned. Carry-over of funds remaining up to 25% of the grant budget must be justified; funds remaining over 25% will automatically revert to PCFA.
- In the case of unspent funds, a letter is required from the Principal Investigator (PI), on letterhead from the institute where the PI is based, which justifies the

reasons for having unspent funds and requests approval to carry these finds forward into the following year. This letter must be provided with the reports.

PCFA will suspend payment of further instalments of any current grant until the appropriate reports have been received and assessed as satisfactory. Where an institution fails to submit satisfactory reports, as required, the Research Advisory Committee may terminate funding and determine that all or part of the funding must be repaid. In this case, PCFA may withhold the remainder of the institution's payments under the scheme for the current year or initiate recovery of funding.

Final Scientific and Financial Reports

If specified in the Reporting Schedule detailed in the Guide for Applicants. A final scientific report and financial acquittal may be required three months after the completion of the grant. The final report should contain the same information as the annual report. Funds remaining up to 25% of the final year's funding may be carried over for up to 6 months, with justification. The final grant payment, which shall represent 2% of the total funds available, will be payable when the final report is approved.

Post-Completions Scientific Reports

If specified in the Reporting Schedule detailed in the Guide for Applicants. A post-completion scientific report may be required 18 months after the completion of the grant. A financial report is not required.

Acknowledgement of Support

Research carried out on awards funded by PCFA must be acknowledged as being supported by PCFA's Research Program. This includes any publication or presentation resulting from the research. Researchers are required to notify PCFA in advance of any publication or presentation and researchers must provide PCFA with an electronic copy of any such publication. PCFA would also appreciate a .pdf file of any posters presented (or an A4 or A3 hard copy if a .pdf is not available). Grant recipients may be asked to participate in media or other publicity events relevant to the Research Program.

PCFA should be acknowledged in all publications. In the event that the award is funded from more than one source, PCFA will provide details of the co-funder and the acknowledgment terms in the official letter of offer.

Note: In the event that the grant holder fails to appropriately acknowledge all funders in

any publications related to the funded work, PCFA will automatically and permanently stop further payments for the grant. In order to avoid inadvertent penalties, please be careful not to report to the research office via interim scientific progress and/or final scientific progress reports publications that are not related to research funded by PCFA's Research Program

Further information

Enquiries may be addressed to:

PCFA Research

E research@pcfa.org.au