Metro South Health Research Support Scheme

2025 Funding Guidelines

Metro South SERTA Novice Researcher Grants - $25,000

Metro South SERTA Early Career Researcher Grants - $100,000

Metro South SERTA Project Grants - $125,000

Metro South SERTA Program Grants - $350,000

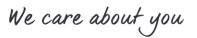Metro South SERTA Future Research Leader Fellowship - up to $300,000

Co-funded Collaboration Grants - $50,000

Funding Guidelines and Application information available at:
http://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/rss

Enquiries to:
Research Support Coordinator, Metro South Research
Email: MSH-RSS@health.qld.gov.au
Phone: 07 3443 8057

Metro South Health
Study, Education and Research Trust Account

PA Research Foundation

Griffith UNIVERSITY

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Queensland Government

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Contents

1. CONTEXT

Established in 2012, the purpose of the Metro South Health Research Support Scheme (MSH RSS) is to facilitate high quality health and medical research that benefits our community through an annual research funding program. Originally known as the PA Research Support Scheme, in recent years the scheme has broadened to include all Metro South Health facilities and services, and partner institutions. The Scheme is administered by the Metro South Health Research Office and funded by the Metro South Health Study, Education and Research Trust Account (SERTA), the PA Research Foundation, and our university partners.

The goals of the MSH RSS align with the Queensland Government objectives for the community and Queensland Department of Health strategic plans, underpinned by Metro South Health's objectives to provide equitable access to excellent care, deliver great value, lead by innovating and collaborating, and maintaining and developing an exceptional workforce. The following documents describe the principles that guide service delivery and research in Queensland's public health system, and can be used to inform your MSH RSS application:

- *Queensland Government's objectives for the community – updated 2021*
- *Department of Health Strategic Plan 2021-2025 – updated 2022*
- *My health, Queensland's future: Advancing health 2026*
- *Metro South Health Strategic Plan 2021-2025*
- *Metro South Health Research Strategy 2019-2024*

2. FUNDING PRINCIPLES

Metro South Health (MSH) is committed to the following principles for the MSH RSS:

- Achievement of a reasonable balance in the distribution of grants across all MSH facilities and services,
- Achievement of gender equity in the grants program,
- Development of first nations researchers and research that aims to improve health outcomes for first nations people,
- Support of high-quality research that meets the needs of our community,
- Maintenance of the highest levels of probity throughout the Scheme.

2.1 TARGET GROUPS/RESEARCH AREAS

MSH may identify target groups and research areas that enable special consideration for applicants and research that would support achievement of these funding principles.

For the 2025 RSS, MSH encourages applications in any grant category from the following:

- Applicants employed within, and for research primarily conducted at:
  - Community & Oral Health Services
  - Logan and Beaudesert Health Service
  - QEII Hospital
  - Bayside Health Service
  - Southern Queensland Centre of Excellence, Inala
- Female and non-binary applicants (principal investigators)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants
- Applicants with research that is focused on improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

3.   OBJECTIVES

The MSH RSS aims to facilitate high-quality research that translates research evidence into advancements in health and medical outcomes. The Scheme's objectives are:

3.1   DELIVER RESEARCH TRANSLATION

The RSS contributes to the translation of research evidence into positive impacts for the Hospital and Health Service and our patients, recognising the importance of health equity for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups represented in our diverse community.

The RSS aims to balance generating new knowledge and the uptake of research-based evidence, by encouraging applications in clinical and health services research, implementation science, and basic science.

3.2   PROMOTE PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

The RSS contributes to a strong research culture by supporting the equitable participation, progression, and retention of MSH researchers.

The RSS facilitates a pathway for novice and early-career researchers to develop research skills and a track record, in addition to Project, Program and Fellowship funding for established researchers to develop research teams and programs.

The RSS aims to prepare MSH researchers for success in external grant schemes.

3.3   STIMULATE RESEARCH COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

The RSS encourages collaborations within departments, across disciplines, sites and institutions, and consultation with consumers to enhance research practice and foster collaborative approaches to delivering health care solutions.

The RSS aims to build and develop partnerships with other Hospital and Health Services, research institutes, universities, and industry to leverage funding and strengthen research capacity.

4.   ADMINISTRATION OF THE MSH RESEARCH SUPPORT SCHEME

The MSH RSS is administered by the Metro South Health Research Office, in accordance with Metro South Health Research Management policy and procedures, which may be accessed at:

https://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/research/about-us/policies-and-procedures

5.   FUNDING BODIES

The MSH RSS is supported by the following funding bodies:

- **Metro South Health Study, Education, and Research Trust Account (SERTA)**
- **PA Research Foundation**
- **Griffith University Health Group (Griffith Health)**
- **Queensland University of Technology (QUT)**
- **The University of Queensland Centre for Health Services Research (UQ CHSR)**
- **The University of Queensland Faculty of Medicine (UQ FOM)**
- **The University of Queensland Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences (UQ HABS)**
- **The University of Queensland Institute for Molecular Bioscience (UQ IMB)**

The award of research funds is governed by the regulations associated with each funding body that decide the type and number of grants they support and the level of funding to be provided.

6. OVERVIEW OF 2025 MSH RSS GRANT CATEGORIES

6.1 METRO SOUTH SERTA FUNDED GRANTS

6.1.1 Novice Researcher Grants

Purpose: To encourage participation in research and the development of a research track record, under the guidance of a research supervisor. The supervisor must be an experienced researcher and be willing and have the capacity to provide expert guidance for the duration of the project. The supervisor may be a MSH employee or external to MSH if that facilitates access to the most appropriate expertise.

Applicant eligibility: MSH employees new to research. The applicant will have no previous experience as a principal investigator on a research project/grant.

Amount: up to $25,000.00

Time: up to two years from 1 January 2025

6.1.2 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Novice Researcher Grant

Purpose: To encourage participation in research and the development of a research track record, under the guidance of a research supervisor. The supervisor must be an experienced researcher and be willing and have the capacity to provide expert guidance for the duration of the project. The supervisor may be a MSH employee or external to MSH if that facilitates access to the most appropriate expertise.

Applicant eligibility: MSH employees who are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin and new to research. The applicant will have no previous experience as a principal investigator on a research project/grant.

Amount: up to $25,000.00

Time: up to two years from 1 January 2025

6.1.3 Early Career Researcher Grants

Purpose: To encourage applications from employees with an emerging track record of conducting and publishing research. The applicant must nominate a mentor who is an experienced researcher and be willing and have the capacity to provide expert guidance for the duration of the project. The mentor may be a MSH employee or external to MSH if that facilitates access to the most appropriate expertise.

Applicant eligibility: MSH employees. Applicants with a higher degree by research (HDR) will be within four (4) years of the award at the time of submitting an application. Applicants without a HDR are eligible to apply. However, where an applicant without a HDR is determined by the assessment panel to have a research track record equivalent to a HDR plus four years, they will not be considered eligible as an early career researcher.

Amount: up to $100,000

Time: up to two years from 1 January 2025

6.1.4 Project Grants

Purpose: To support a research project aligned with MSH RSS objectives. Research proposals demonstrating collaborations across departments, disciplines, sites, and with our university partners and consumers will be highly regarded. Within this category an additional targeted opportunity encourages applications for:

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research Project Grant** – The MSH RSS supports the *Metro South Health First Nations Health Equity Strategy 2022 - 2025* aimed at improving health service delivery and health and wellbeing outcomes for

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. One Project Grant will be available for a research project that focusses on improving the health and wellbeing of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The *NHMRC Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria* provides guidance for designing a proposal partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

It is highly desirable that, and special consideration will be given to applications that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement and capacity development through the research, including, but not limited to:

- o The project addresses key health and wellbeing priorities identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities,
- o Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community engagement in development of the research, and
- o Inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researcher/s and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumer/s on the research team.

Applicant eligibility: MSH employees

Amount: up to $125,000

Time: up to two years from 1 January 2025

6.1.5 Program Grants

Purpose: To sustain a substantial program of research aligned with MSH RSS objectives. Research proposals demonstrating collaborations across departments, disciplines, sites, and with our university partners and consumers will be highly regarded. The research team must include a HDR student or novice or early career researcher as a co-investigator, mentored by the principal investigator.

Applicant eligibility: MSH employees

Amount: up to $350,000

Time: up to three years from 1 January 2025

6.1.6 MSH Future Research Leader Fellowship

Purpose: The MSH RSS is committed to the development of a culture of excellence in research and fostering and retaining the next generation of research leaders within MSH. The Fellowship aims to support the development of the applicant in leading translational research in the organisation. The Fellowship will facilitate protected research time to accelerate knowledge translation within their field and add weight to their track record. The applicant will be required to commit a minimum 0.2 FTE to Fellowship activities, while maintaining a clinical role with MSH. The applicant will have demonstrated research experience, a positive trajectory of research skills development, and attributes that enable their recognition as an emerging exemplary researcher. It is highly desirable that the applicant has demonstrated leadership qualities and a commitment to the organisation through their service. The application must include a signed statement of support from their head of department.

Applicant eligibility: MSH employees. The applicant must have been employed by MSH for the last 12 months and have an ongoing appointment for the proposed term of the Fellowship. The applicant is ineligible if they have already been named CIA on a MRFF, NHMRC or ARC grant, or subsequently accepts an offer from the MRFF, NHMRC or ARC in relation to a grant application submitted in 2024.

Amount: up to $300,000

Time: a minimum of two and up to three years from 1 January 2025

6.2 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR METRO SOUTH SERTA FUNDED GRANTS

6.2.1 Applicant eligibility

    i.   The applicant is the principal investigator.

    ii.   MSH SERTA Operational Rules require the applicant to be a MSH employee at the time of applying and for the duration of the grant.

    iii.   Honorary appointees are not eligible to be the applicant.

    iv.   Conjoint appointees are not eligible to be the applicant if their sole employment contract is with a university partner – even in cases where MSH pays the university for part of the conjoint appointee's salary. Conjoint appointees may still benefit from the RSS as an eligible co-investigator.

    v.   Previous recipients of an RSS grant are ineligible to apply if the related study does not have ethics and governance approvals, including a fully executed research agreement if required.

    vi.   Previous recipients of an RSS grant are ineligible to apply if they have an overdue or incomplete RSS Final Report.

    vii.   It is the responsibility of the applicant to understand the implications of applying for or accepting RSS funding in respect to any other related arrangement in which they are named, for example HDR program rules or Funding Agreement terms and conditions.

6.2.2 Research team eligibility

Eligible co-investigators and associate investigators can be:

    i.   MSH employees with a MSH appointment for the duration of the grant,

    ii.   an employee of a MSH partner university or research institute based on a MSH campus, with an appointment for the duration of the grant,

    iii.   employees of other Hospital and Health Services, research institutes, universities, and organisations relevant to the conduct of the proposed research.

6.2.3 Other eligibility criteria

    i.   The majority of the proposed research activity must take place on a MSH campus, facility or service.

    ii.   The proposed research activities must not be concurrently funded by any other organisation.

    iii.   The research should align with RSS objectives, demonstrating cross-disciplinary collaborations (for example, across medical, allied health, nursing, basic/clinical research professions), multi-site collaborations and collaborations with our academic partners.

    iv.   A maximum of two RSS **Project Grants** may be held concurrently by the applicant, as the principal investigator. Applicants already holding multiple RSS Project Grants are eligible to apply for an additional RSS Project Grant in the final year (including any approved extensions) of an existing Project Grant, and only if a successful application and offer of a 2025 RSS Project Grant would result in their holding no more than two Project Grants at 1 January 2025.

    v.   Recipients of RSS **Program Grant** funding from a previous year cannot apply for an additional Program Grant until the final year (including any approved extensions) of the existing Program Grant.

vi. For an **Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Health Research Project Grant,** the research focus must specifically relate to improving the health and wellbeing of the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.

6.3 CO-FUNDED COLLABORATION GRANTS

MSH SERTA is partnering with Griffith University Health Group, QUT, UQ Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences, UQ Institute for Molecular Bioscience, UQ Faculty of Medicine and UQ Centre for Health Services Research to co-fund small grants valued at up to $50K each for expenditure over two years.

The aim is to encourage new research collaborations or strengthen existing collaborations between researchers, clinicians, scientists, and academics from the participating organisations. The research activity can be conducted across locations however must demonstrate strong ties to MSH strategic objectives, RSS objectives and potential to translate into benefits for patients, the Health Service, and the community.

Griffith University Health Group, QUT, UQ Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences, UQ Institute for Molecular Bioscience and UQ Faculty of Medicine will each fund up to two grants with MSH SERTA. UQ Centre for Health Services Research will fund one grant with MSH SERTA.

6.4 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR CO-FUNDED COLLABORATION GRANTS

6.4.1 **Applicant eligibility**

i. The applicant must be a MSH employee at the time of applying and for the duration of the grant.

ii. Honorary appointees are not eligible to be the applicant.

iii. Conjoint appointees are not eligible to be the applicant if their sole employment contract is with a university partner – even in cases where MSH pays the university for part of the conjoint appointee's salary.

6.4.2 **Research team eligibility**

i. The research project must be co-led by a co-investigator (CI) with a paid appointment at Griffith Health, QUT, UQ Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences, UQ Faculty of Medicine, UQ Centre for Health Services Research or UQ Institute for Molecular Bioscience.

ii. The CI must secure approval from their institution via the Certification form on page 19 of this document.

6.4.3 **Partner contributions**

i. Each partner contributes $25K cash, matched by MSH SERTA per grant.

6.5 PA RESEARCH FOUNDATION FUNDING

The focus for the PA Research Foundation in 2025 is to support new and upcoming clinician researchers employed by Metro South Health.

Following the evaluation of eligible applications submitted to the 2025 MSH RSS, the Foundation will have the opportunity to review and select fundable applications that are most-aligned with the Foundations focus and research priorities. An unspecified number of Foundation-funded grants will be available for research led by novice or early-career clinician researchers submitted to the 2025 MSH RSS in any category.

The Foundation will consider clinically led, significantly innovative, translational projects with multidisciplinary and/or multi-institutional collaborations, that have a vision beyond the initial application. The research must be conducted on the PA Hospital campus, must be led by a novice or early clinician researcher, and must address the Foundation's research priorities of prostate cancer, breast cancer, skin cancer, other cancer, or other health research.

The intent of PA Research Foundation funding is to initiate new projects and develop ideas that deviate from established lines of investigation. Applications considered most favourably by the Foundation will demonstrate the potential for breaking new theoretical ground and/or challenge existing understandings, systems, paradigms, or assumptions and/or opening up entirely new lines of investigation to help prevent, improve early diagnosis of, and treat health conditions in the community. The project may be used to develop new methods, technology, techniques, systems and applications as long as it has the potential to result in new knowledge of significant impact and ultimately improve the delivery of better health care. Although this mechanism allows for an element of risk, all projects must have a sound rationale.

7. FUNDING AMOUNTS, DURATION, INDICATIVE NUMBER OF GRANTS OFFERED

Grant type	$ value (up to)	Funding period (up to)	Indicative # grants offered
Novice Researcher Grant	25K	2 years	7
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Novice Researcher Grant	25K	2 years	1
Early Career Researcher Grant	100K	2 years	3
Project Grant	125K	2 years	9
Program Grant	350K	3 years	1
MSH Future Research Leader Fellowship	300K	3 years	1
Co-funded Collaboration Grant	50K	2 years	11

8. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

8.1 APPLICATION TIMEFRAME

The 2025 MSH RSS opens Monday 3 June 2024 and closes at 3pm Monday 29 July 2024.

8.2 APPLICATION FORM

Applications for 2025 MSH RSS grants, including PA Research Foundation Awards, must be prepared using *SmartyGrants* at: *http://metrosouth.smartygrants.com.au/*.

Applicants must be a registered *SmartyGrants* user. The principal investigator can delegate completion of the application to another person.

8.2.1 Research proposal

A research proposal of no more than 8 pages* including references and with the following headings and format must be uploaded as part of your *SmartyGrants* application:

Headings:
- Applicant name
- Project title
- Background
- Aims/Objectives
- Hypothesis
- Methodology
- Data management and analysis plan
- Milestones at 6 months, and yearly, up to 5 years
- Expected outcomes
- References.

Formatting:
- Maximum 8 pages incl references
- Arial font 10
- Line spacing 1.5
- Top, bottom, left and right page margins 2cm

*The Research Proposal document can be any number of pages, but no more than 8 pages.

8.2.2 Certification

The certification form on page 18 of these Funding Guidelines, must be uploaded as part of your *SmartyGrants* application:

- The Head of Department (HoD) is required to sign the certification page. <u>Allow sufficient time to gain the HoD signature, or escalation of the signature if the HoD is involved in the research.</u>

- For a **Novice Researcher Grant** application, the Researcher Supervisor is also required to sign the certification form on page 18.

- For a **Co-funded Collaboration Grant** application, the CI from the partner university must submit the certification form on page 19 to their Research Office for signature.

8.2.3 Submission of application

Applications must be submitted via the MSH *SmartyGrants* site:
https://metrosouth.smartygrants.com.au/

- no later than 3pm on Monday 29 July 2024
- late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances
- hand delivered applications will not be accepted
- email applications will not be accepted

8.3 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

8.3.1 Applicants seeking to participate in the MSH RSS must comply with these Funding Guidelines, instructions in the application, and with MSH policies and procedures located at: *http://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/rss* and *https://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/research/about-us/policies-and-procedures*

8.3.2 Applicants must be the Principal Investigator.

8.3.3 Applicants may apply for more than one category of funding however applications must not be for the same project (identified through similar aims, research teams and/or activities).

Identical research proposals submitted to multiple categories of funding will be deemed ineligible.

8.3.4 Applicants may submit a maximum of two applications per category.

8.3.5 The MSH Research Grants Committee strongly discourages the practice of experienced researchers making multiple applications in the names of dependent researchers.

8.3.6 When preparing the research proposal, applicants must adhere to the formatting requirements specified in the application form. This includes number of pages, headings, font size/type, line spacing and page margins. Research proposals that do not comply with formatting requirements may be withdrawn from assessment.

8.3.7 All details in the application must be current and accurate at the time of submission.

8.3.8 All applications will be assessed for completeness and eligibility prior to review.

8.3.9 The RSS Sub-Committee may, at its discretion, remove applications that are determined to be incomplete, ineligible, or not consistent with the guidelines.

8.3.10 Once submitted, the application will be considered final, and no changes will be permitted without the prior written consent of the RSS Sub-Committee.

8.4 BUDGET PREPARATION

8.4.1 The applicant should consult with their Business Manager to build an appropriate budget, particularly for the calculation of salaries and on-costs.

8.4.2 A budget template tool is available on the Metro South Research website.

8.4.3 Funding may only be applied to the activities and budget described in the submitted application.

8.5 ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE

8.5.1 Eligible budget items are those that are essential and directly related to conducting the research activities proposed in the application within the grant period. For example, salary or back-fill including standard on-costs for project staff, consumables and services required specifically for the activities described in the application, minor equipment dedicated and essential to the specific project, specialised software or computers, conference and publication costs.

8.5.2 Ineligible budget items include overheads, maintenance and levies for equipment, items that are for the purpose of day-to-day operations of the organisation, major clinical equipment that would otherwise be procured through an operational budget.

8.5.3 For a **MSH Future Research Leader Fellowship** funding must be applied to the applicant's salary or back-fill of the applicant, at a minimum 0.2 FTE for the duration of the grant. Additionally, Fellowship funding can be used for research assistant salary and/or eligible project consumables and/or eligible equipment. The total funding including salaries and non-labour expenditure is up to $300K.

8.5.4 MSH SERTA funding cannot be applied to HDR scholarship stipends.

8.6 CLINICAL TRIALS

8.6.1 Where a MSH-sponsored clinical trial is proposed, the applicant must ensure adequate resources are available to enable sponsor responsibilities, including trial monitoring costs where applicable. See *Research Management - Clinical Trials Guideline*.

9. EVALUATION PLAN

Grant applications will be evaluated by the RSS Sub-Committee, for the purpose of recommending fundable grant applications to the funding bodies. The RSS Sub-Committee is comprised of members of the Metro South Research Grants Committee, facility Research Committee's, Metro South Research Council, Metro South clinicians and researchers, and researchers from our partner institutions and other organisations.

An assessment panel for each grant category will be formed from the membership of the RSS Sub-Committee. Members of the RSS Sub-Committee are assigned to the panel in which they have declared they are without a substantive conflict of interest. Conflict of interest is managed in consultation with an independent Probity Advisor and according to the Metro South *Research Excellence - Research Integrity work instruction* and *Research Management – MSH Research Support Scheme work instruction*.

Each panel will have a designated panel lead. Panel leads will act as spokesperson on behalf of their panel at the Grants Recommendation Meeting.

Applicants should understand that members of the RSS Sub-Committee bring broad and specialist knowledge to the assessment of health and medical research grant applications, however your application may not be assessed by an expert in your exact field.

9.1 EXTERNAL EXPERTS

Applicants have the option to provide the contact details of up to three external experts, all of whom must be acknowledged experts in the field of work proposed (i.e., publication track record and PhD or equivalent research experience). Should additional expert opinion be required during the evaluation period a panel lead may engage an expert selected by the panel or engage the applicant's nominated external expert. The expert will only be asked specific questions raised by the panel and will not be asked to score the application. **Nominating an external expert is optional**, however if nominating an expert/s the applicant must contact the expert prior to submitting the application to confirm the expert's availability and willingness to be contacted by the RSS. Complete contact details of all experts must be provided.

Nominated experts must be independent of all members of the investigative team, external to MSH and the university school/research institutes of all named investigators, and without conflict of interest. Each external expert will need to complete a confidentiality and conflict of interest declaration form prior to receiving any applications. To that end, the applicant should:

i. avoid nomination of experts with whom any of the investigative team have a personal relationship (including but not limited to those of family, friends and associates with whom the investigator would socialise outside a work context) or who are employed by the same organisation as any of the investigators that appear on the application, or with whom a supervisory/subordinate work relationship has existed.

ii. avoid nomination of experts with whom investigators have current or previous (within the past five years) collaborations on research, grant applications, publications or cooperative agreements. If the applicant wishes to nominate an expert with whom they have collaborated in the past 5 years they must contact the MSH-RSS@health.qld.gov.au or 3443 8057 and ask for consideration of their nominated expert, giving reasons why they should be included.

iii. declare to their line manager and to the Executive Director, Metro South Research any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to the experts they nominate on the application.

iv.   ask co-investigators and associate investigators to review the experts nominated on the application and declare to any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to the reviewers.

9.2   INITIAL ASSESSMENT FOR COMPLETENESS AND ELIGIBILITY

9.2.1   Following the submission deadline, an initial administrative assessment of completeness and eligibility is undertaken by the Research Support Scheme administrative coordinator. An application may be considered incomplete or ineligible to progress to evaluation in circumstances including, but not limited to the following:

- The Research proposal document is over 8 pages and/or does not use the required headings,
- Certification pages are unsigned or not uploaded.

10.   EVALUATION CRITERIA AND WEIGHTING

10.1   EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications are assessed by panel members, against five evaluation criteria:

Evaluation criteria	What is the RSS looking for in an application?
1. Research quality and design	- A Research proposal document that is cohesive, with clearly stated aims, methodology and proposed outcomes. - A sound rationale for conducting the research, relevant to MSHHS. - Evidence that the proposed research is original or has a point of difference from existing knowledge. - Study design and methodology that support the aims and proposed outcomes. - Where relevant, evidence of consultation with a Biostatistician. - Sample size and analysis plan appropriate for meaningful outcomes. - Evidence that the project be completed in the timeframe. - Novice researchers will be assessed on sound project idea, methodology and good understanding of the research area, as well as the nominated research supervisor's suitability to support the applicant.
2. Significance to Metro South community	- The extent to which the proposed research addresses a clinical need, evidence gap, or issue of importance to the Health Service. - The extent to which the proposed research will have impact on burden of disease and deliver meaningful outcomes for the community. - The extent to which the proposed research considers health equity for disadvantaged groups. - The extent to which the proposed research aligns with the RSS funding principles, target groups/research areas, objectives, and intents contained in the individual grant category descriptions at Sections 6.1, 6.3 and 6.5.

3. Clinical impact	• The extent to which the proposed research will contribute to advancements in knowledge that will inform clinical practice or health policy. • The extent to which the proposed research has potential to deliver solutions that have a positive impact for patient care and/or health service delivery. • Where relevant, evidence of an implementation and evaluation plan. • For basic science projects, articulation of a translation pathway.
4. Collaborative Strength and Capacity building	• Evidence of individual team members expertise and contribution to their field of research. • The extent to which there is a diversity of research skills and experience through meaningful collaborations across disciplines and with partners. • Clear description of an active role and responsibility for each team member. • The potential for the collaboration to build research capacity and strengthen the research profile of MSH. • Evidence of engagement and consultation with relevant stakeholders, including consumer partners as appropriate. • For a Fellowship, the description of how the applicant's experience, skills, attributes as an emerging exemplary researcher, leadership qualities and commitment to the organisation will contribute to research collaboration and capacity building for MSH. • For Program Grants, the description of how the inclusion of a novice, early career, or HDR student will contribute to research capacity and capability building for MSH.
5. Budget and feasibility	• Budget items that are reasonable, appropriate, and justified. • Evidence of adequate consideration to resources required to complete the project. • Evidence of adequate consideration of possible difficulties and possible solutions. • Evidence of adequate consultation with a head of department and business manager. • Represents value for investment.

10.2 WEIGHTING

The evaluation criteria are weighted as follows:

Grant type	1 Research quality and design	2 Significance to MSH community	3 Clinical impact	4 Collaborative strength and Capacity building	5 Budget and feasibility
Novice Researcher	40%	15%	5%	25%	15%

Early Career Researcher	40%	15%	5%	25%	15%
Project Grants	35%	20%	15%	20%	10%
Program Grants	35%	20%	15%	20%	10%
Fellowship	25%	20%	15%	30%	10%
Co-funded Collaboration Grants	35%	20%	10%	25%	10%

10.3 SCORING

Each of the evaluation criteria will be scored by panel members on a scale of 1 to 7, where:

1 = No evidence
2 = Unsatisfactory
3 = Fair
4 = Good
5 = Very Good
6 = Excellent
7 = Outstanding by national standards

Panel members complete this process online, via *SmartyGrants*. A final weighted score is calculated, reflecting the relative strength of the application in terms of how well it addresses and meets the evaluation criteria.

11. RANKING AND RECOMMENDATION

Applications in each category are ranked in preliminary order, determined by the panels' averaged weighted score, and provided to the panel for review.

11.1 PANEL MODERATION MEETING

Each panel will meet to discuss the outcomes of their assessments. The panel may determine a ranking of applications that is not based solely on initial assessment scores, acknowledging that in addressing disparate scores panel members may agree to alter their scores based on discussions in the moderation meeting. Panel leads may request an additional assessment of an application if panel member's scores are markedly disparate.

All applications will be determined to be fundable or otherwise. The panel may, at its discretion, determine an application is not for funding if alignment with RSS objectives and evaluation criteria has not been demonstrated or compliance with RSS Funding Guidelines has not been met.

Following moderation, the PA Research Foundation Board will identify assessed applications most suited to Foundation funding.

11.2 GRANT RECOMMENDATION MEETING

The RSS Sub-Committee will meet at a Grants Recommendation Meeting in October 2024, overseen by a Chairperson external to MSH who is without conflict of interest.

Assessment and moderation information will be presented by the Panel Lead or nominee for each category of grants with input from members of the RSS Sub-Committee for the purpose of deciding the final ranking of applications.

If multiple applications in any grant category obtain equal scores, the RSS Sub-Committee will determine a ranking and order of merit, based on assessment by members present.

Final ranking and recommendations for awarding of grants may include, but is not limited to, consideration of:

- RSS Funding Principles and Target groups/research areas
- Alignment of the application with RSS objectives.
- RSS evaluation criteria
- Reviewer scores and Panel moderation comments
- Applicants' previous performance in relation to previous RSS grants.
- Applicant's compliance with previous RSS grant conditions.

To be clear, the final ranking and recommendations for awarding of grants might differ from the ranking based solely on scores derived from assessment against the evaluation criteria.

If approved funds cannot be fully allocated in any one category, the RSS Sub-Committee may recommend reapportioning of funds to another grant category.

The RSS Sub-Committee may consider the need to balance the recommendations for funding in line with the RSS Funding Principles.

At the conclusion of the Grants Recommendation Meeting the recommendations of the RSS Sub-Committee will be provided to the relevant delegate of each funding body for approval.

12. AWARDING OF GRANTS

Recommendations for funding will be considered by the relevant delegate of each funding body, who make the final decision on the award of grants. The funding bodies and their delegates may, at their sole discretion, choose to award grants on the basis of the recommendations received, or not.

Award of grants will be via a letter of offer, accompanied by grant conditions. Prospective grant recipients will be required to accept the offer and conditions in writing by the date identified in the grant letter of offer.

The grant can only be applied to the activities and budget described in the submitted application.

12.1 SECOND ROUND OFFERS

If an offer of funding is declined, unallocated funds may be used to enable an offer of funding to the next application identified as meritorious (in any category) by the RSS Sub-Committee.

12.2 FEEDBACK AND ISSUES/DISPUTES

Feedback on MSH RSS processes or outcomes should be directed to the Research Support Coordinator at MSH-RSS@health.qld.gov.au in the first instance. Issues and concerns will be managed in consultation with an independent Probity Advisor.

13. POST-AWARD REPORTING

13.1 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

An Annual HREC/RGO Progress Report must be submitted to the approving HREC as a condition of accepting an RSS grant. If the approving HREC is Metro South, the Annual Progress Report is submitted via ERM by 30 April each year.

13.2 FINAL REPORT

A Final Report will be required within 4 months of the end date of the grant. A Final Report template will be sent via your SmartyGrants account.

14. POST-AWARD VARIATIONS

Requests to extend the end date of the grant or vary the budget at any time during the grant period must be submitted in writing to MSH-RSS@health.qld.gov.au for approval by the Executive Director, Metro South Research.

> **A breach of any of these requirements may result in an application being deemed ineligible and withdrawal from the assessment process.**

15. CERTIFICATION

This page must be signed by an appropriate delegate for the Applicant (PI) and uploaded as part of the online application.

Applicant (PI) name:
Project title:

15.1 CERTIFICATION BY APPLICANT'S HEAD OF DEPARTMENT/DIVISION

I certify that:

- **I am not the applicant, or an investigator named on this application.** Note: *if the Head of Department is named in the application, they cannot provide certification, and the signature must be escalated to the next appropriate delegate (eg. Divisional Chair or ED).*

- **I have been provided with details of this grant application,** including the proposed activities, resources and arrangements, and having considered the implications for service delivery I am prepared to have the project carried out in my Department/Division.

Name of Head of Department/Division (print):
Position title:
MSH site:
Signature:
Date: DD/MM/YEAR

15.2 CERTIFICATION BY RESEARCH SUPERVISOR (Novice Researcher applications only)

I certify that:

- I have been provided with details of the proposed research and I am willing and have the capacity to supervise and provide expert guidance to the applicant for the duration of the project.

- I understand the requirements of supervision as detailed in the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and *Supervision A guide supporting the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and commit to providing supervision in accordance with these documents.

Name of Research Supervisor (print):
MSH site/university/organisation:
Position title:
Signature:
Date: DD/MM/YEAR

16. CERTIFICATION – CO-FUNDED COLLABORATION GRANTS

This page must be signed by the appropriate delegate at Griffith University Health Group, QUT, UQ FOM, UQ HABS, UQ IMB or UQ CHSR for the CI and uploaded as part of the online application.

CI name (print):	
CI organisation:	
CI position:	
Project title:	

16.1 CERTIFICATION BY UNIVERSITY AUTHORISED DELEGATE

I certify that:
- The CI named above has an appointment with this organisation and meets the other eligibility criteria.
- I have been provided with details of the proposed research, consider it appropriate to the aims and objectives of the funding program.
- I am not the applicant, or an investigator named on this application.
- Should this application be successful I acknowledge our organisation has agreed to co-fund this grant.

Authorised delegate name (print):	
Organisation:	
Position title:	
Signature:	
Date: DD/MM/YEAR	