

PROCEDURE

Research Management - Metro South Health Research Support Scheme (RSS)

PR2017/120
Version No. 2.0

PURPOSE

To achieve Metro South Health's Research Management Values as outlined in the Research Management Policy, the Metro South Hospital and Health Service ('Metro South Health') is committed to the highest standards and practices in the management, administration and use of the Metro South Health Research Support Scheme (RSS). This procedure identifies consistent, transparent and equitable standards and practices in the allocation, use and process for providing research funds as a component of the annual Metro South Health RSS.

OUTCOME

Adherence to this procedure will ensure all research conducted within Metro South Health or in collaboration with external entities/organisations, is of the highest ethical and scientific standard and is compliant with relevant legislation, standards and guidelines.

This procedure applies to:

- all Metro South Health employees who apply for research funds as part of the Metro South Health RSS
- all Metro South Health employees, including Principal Investigators, researchers and research student supervisors, who are awarded research funds as part of the Metro South Health RSS
- all personnel involved in management of the Metro South Health RSS.

Failure to comply with this procedure may amount to research misconduct on the part of the responsible individual. This procedure must be read in conjunction with other Metro South Health Research Management procedures.

KEY PRINCIPLES

The following key principles guide the Metro South Health RSS process.

- The Metro South Health RSS aligns with the [Queensland Government's objectives for the community](#) and priorities for health service delivery, as well as Metro South Health Strategic Plan.
- The Metro South Health RSS is a joint initiative funded by the Metro South Health Study, Education and Research Trust Account (SERTA) and any other sponsoring/funding entities/organisations who wish to participate in the scheme.
- The administration of research funds derived from the Metro South Health RSS is one of the Centres for Health Research's major activities.
- The Metro South Health RSS awards excellence in research that translates research discoveries into health and medical outcomes.
- Metro South Health SERTA grants are only accessible to employees of Metro South Health.
- The Metro South Health RSS's objectives are to support:

- research translation
- research innovation
- research capacity building and collaboration.
- In addition to building capacity by funding specific research activities, the Metro South Health RSS process is designed to provide Metro South Health employees with valuable experience in participating in a competitive process. It is envisaged that this experience can then be applied to other external research grant schemes, improving the capability of staff in securing external research grants.
- The aim of this procedure is to outline key processes and internal controls in place to provide effective governance and a reporting framework for the management of Metro South Health research funds as part of the Metro South Health RSS.
- Metro South Health aims to establish an effective framework to assist in streamlining funding guidelines and application forms with the aim of; reducing work for researchers, providing clearer instructions to reviewers, assisting in scoring and assessment of applications and facilitating the collection of data that demonstrates the benefits of the Metro South Health RSS.

LEGISLATION OR OTHER AUTHORITY

Legislation

- *Financial Accountability Act 2009 (Qld)*
- *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 (Qld)*
- *Hospitals Foundations Act 1982 (Qld)*
- *Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)*
- *Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982 (Qld)*

Regulations and standards

- Financial Accountability Regulation 2009 (Qld)
- Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009 (Qld)
- Hospital and Health Boards Regulation 2012 (Qld)
- Hospitals Foundation Regulation 2015 (Qld)
- Information Privacy Regulation 2009
- Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Regulation 2007 (Qld)

Statements, papers and guidelines

- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC): [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2007\)](#)
- [Queensland Government objectives for the community](#)
- Queensland Health: [My health, Queensland's future: Advancing health 2026 \(Advancing health 2026\)](#)

Metro South Health policies, procedures, manuals and frameworks

- [Metro South Health Strategic Plan](#)
- [Metro South Health - SERTA Committee Business Rules](#)
- [Finance Management Practice Manual \(FMPPM\)](#)
- [Research Integrity Procedure \(2018/176\)](#)
- [Risk Management Policy \(PL2013/06\)](#)
- [Integrated Risk Management Framework](#)
- [Risk Assessment Tool](#)

RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Management

Ensure collaborative, harmonised, clear and detailed publicly available policies and procedures are in place to ensure compliance with legislation, audit and financial management requirements for the Metro South Health RSS.

Metro South Health Research Committee

Establish Metro South Health RSS research funding categories and review reports that are provided by the Principal Investigators, researchers and/or research student supervisors.

Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office

Facilitate the Metro South Health RSS process and ensure compliance with rules and related processes. Provide appropriate advice and support to Metro South Health Principal Investigators, researchers and/or research student supervisors, to enable adherence to all relevant Metro South Health policies and procedures when conducting research.

Principal Investigators, researchers and/or research student supervisors

- Ensure appropriate development and review of research funding applications for the Metro South Health RSS.
- Read eligibility rules and guidelines and ensure that research funds are submitted in accordance with Metro South Health requirements.
- Consult with the relevant Business Manager/Finance Officer and/or Cost Centre Manager to develop application form budgets.
- Obtain appropriate statistical and other advice relevant to the application form.
- Obtain all required authorisation prior to submission of application forms.

Business Managers/Financial Officers and/or Cost Centre Managers

Responsible for ensuring research budgets are developed with appropriate rigour and for providing costs associated with the identified research resources. Business Managers/Financial Officers and/or Cost Centre Managers are also responsible for:

- establishing or identifying a cost centre from which Metro South Health RSS research funds will be managed
- supporting and advising researchers in the establishment of positions, procurement of equipment and consumables, and other activities associated with the research funds application
- preparing and issuing invoices for research funds in accordance with Metro South Health RSS requirements
- monitoring and reporting on research expenditure relative to available research funds and informing Principal Investigators and/or Department Heads when appropriate.

Metro South Health employees

Are required to be aware of and comply with this procedure when participating in the Metro South Health RSS.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Attachments

Attachment 1 - [Application](#)

Forms

[Grant Request Form \(GAF1\)](#)

[Final Report Template \(GAF2\)](#)

DEFINITIONS

See the [Metro South Health Research Management Glossary](#)

PROCEDURE - Metro South Health Research Support Scheme (RSS)

PREPARING THE METRO SOUTH HEALTH RSS

STEP 1: Metro South Health RSS application planning

The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office will undertake appropriate planning to prepare the Metro South Health RSS with the aim to maximise value for the public, Metro South Health and those who submit applications for research funding as part of the scheme.

In planning for the upcoming year, the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office must:

- give consideration of lessons learnt from previous Metro South Health RSS research funding rounds
- take into account direction and feedback from the Metro South Health Chair, Research, Metro South Health Research Committee and other relevant stakeholders and groups
- liaise with the Metro South Health SERTA Committee when required
- identify appropriate internal and external funding sources to support research funds in Metro South Health
- identify resources required to manage the application, assessment, award and ongoing maintenance of the Metro South Health RSS research funds
- give due consideration to ensuring the probity of the process - this may include (but is not limited to) the engagement of a Probity Advisor.

STEP 2: Confirmation of Metro South Health RSS funds

The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office must obtain appropriate delegate approval for the allocation of funds to the Metro South Health RSS. Available funds from relevant funding sources will only be considered and subsequently confirmed when obtained in writing.

STEP 3: Development of Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines

The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office must review and develop Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines on an annual basis. When developing the funding guidelines provisions contained within this procedure must be considered. Annual funding guidelines must include research fund categories, proposed number of research funds and updates to research funding arrangements for that particular year as approved by the Metro South Health Research Committee.

The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office must develop annual Metro South Health RSS research fund categories in consultation with the Metro South Health Chair, Research.

STEP 4: Endorsement and approval of Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines

Final research fund categories must be endorsed by the Metro South Health Research Committee. Any changes to Metro South Health RSS research funding arrangements must be endorsed by the Metro South Health Research Committee and require the approval of the following, prior to implementation:

- SERTA funds — the Chair of the Metro South Health SERTA Committee.
- PA Research Foundation funds — PA Research Foundation CEO or Board Chair (when required).
- Other sponsoring/funding entities/organisations — nominated delegate in accordance with funding agreements.

The final Metro South Health RSS Funding Guidelines must be endorsed by Metro South Health Research Committee and published on the Metro South Health Research [website](#).

STEP 5: Conflicts of interest in the endorsement and approval of Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines

If any person believes they may have a conflict of interest in relation to endorsement and approval of research funds as part of the Metro South Health RSS, that conflict must be declared and managed in accordance with relevant Metro South Health policy and procedures.

Please see [Research Integrity Procedure \(2018/176\)](#) for more information.

STEP 6: Publish relevant Metro South Health RSS information

All information pertaining to the annual Metro South Health RSS must be easily accessible to potential applicants and published on the Metro South Health Research [website](#).

The website must include details regarding the Metro South Health RSS funding guideline, research funding categories, funding period and application process and be updated when required or when the funding and/or application period is closed.

STEP 7: Invitations

The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office is responsible for coordinating the annual Metro South Health RSS application and assessment process and will ensure invitations to apply for Metro South Health RSS research funds are sent to Metro South Health researchers and partner institutions. The Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines will be accessible through the invitation (eg as a link to the Metro South Health Research [website](#)).

STEP 8: Development of assessment process

The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office must develop the Metro South Health RSS assessment process in consultation with the Metro South Health Chair, Research. The final assessment process must be endorsed by the Metro South Health Research Committee and documented as part of the Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines for the relevant year. If any person believes they may have a conflict of interest in relation to endorsement and approval of the assessment process as part of the Metro South Health RSS, that conflict must be declared and detailed prior to confirmation.

STEP 9: Metro South Health RSS awards event

The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office must organise and promote the Metro South Health RSS awards event in consultation with the Metro South Health Media and Communications Team, Metro South Health Chair, Research and Metro South Health Research Committee.

APPLYING FOR THE METRO SOUTH HEALTH RSS

STEP 1: Prepare Metro South Health RSS application form

Metro South Health employees may receive an invitation and/or review information contained on the Metro South Health Research [website](#) regarding the annual Metro South Health RSS. Potential applicants must review the Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines prior to preparing a research funds application. Researchers are encouraged to [consult](#) with the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office after the decision to prepare a application form is initiated via email or phone.

STEP 2: Conflicts of interest

If any person believes they may have a conflict of interest in relation to a application form, the conflict must be declared and detailed prior to submission of application form documentation.

If a potential conflict of interest is identified, the Principal Investigator, researcher and/or research student supervisor must escalate approval of the application form documents to a relevant line manager or delegate. Please see [Research Integrity Procedure \(2018/176\)](#) for more information.

STEP 3: Submit the Metro South Health RSS application form

Principal Investigators, researchers and research student supervisors must submit the Metro South Health RSS application form in accordance with instructions provided within the Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines.

METRO SOUTH HEALTH RSS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

STEP 1: Receipt of application forms

Upon receipt of a Metro South Health RSS application form the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office will register the application and record it by research fund category. Acknowledgement of receipt will be sent to the Metro South Health Principal Investigator, researcher and/or research student supervisor who submitted the application.

STEP 2: Assessment of Metro South Health RSS application forms

The assessment of Metro South Health RSS application forms will be in accordance with provisions outlined within the Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines for that year.

Assessment and ranking of Metro South Health RSS applications will be undertaken by the Metro South Health RSS Sub-Committee, which reports to the Metro South Health Research Committee. Please see [Compliance Framework Procedure \(PR2017/112\)](#) for more information.

The Metro South Health RSS Sub-Committee will be chaired by an independent Chair. The Metro South Health RSS Sub-Committee will give due consideration to ensuring the probity of the process - this may include (but is not limited to) the engagement of a Probity Advisor. Please see [Research Integrity Procedure \(2018/176\)](#) for more information.

STEP 3: Conflicts of interest in assessment of application forms

The identification and management of perceived, potential and actual conflicts of interest will be in accordance with [Research Integrity Procedure \(2018/176\)](#).

If the Metro South Health Chair, Research, the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office, a member of the Metro South Health Research Committee or a nominated assessor believes they may have a Conflict of interest in relation to any aspect of the Metro South Health RSS, or in relation to a particular application, that conflict must be declared and detailed prior to any consideration of applications. Please see [Research Integrity Procedure \(2018/176\)](#) for more information.

Conflict of interest in this context may include a connection to an applicant or application which could bias the assessment of that application. The authorisation of an application as part of a member's administrative responsibility would not necessarily constitute a conflict.

In the event of a Conflict of interest a member/assessor will be required to absent themselves from consideration of relevant applications or grant categories. If necessary an alternate member/assessor will be nominated.

STEP 4: Recommendations for funding and confirmation of research funds

Responsibility for confirming and approving research fund recipients' rests with the delegate of the relevant funding group. Relevant delegates responsible for reviewing the recommendations of funding and confirmation of research funds are:

- SERTA funds — the Chair of the Metro South Health SERTA Committee.
- PA Research Foundation funds — PA Research Foundation Chief Executive Officer (CEO) (when required).
- Other sponsoring/funding entities/organisations — nominated delegate in accordance with funding agreements.

At the conclusion of the Metro South Health RSS assessment process, recommendations will be made to the delegate/s of the relevant funding group by nominated assessors. The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office will coordinate the recommendation process, confirmation and approval process on behalf of Metro South Health.

STEP 5: Conflicts of interest in the confirmation of research funds

If any person believes they may have a Conflict of interest in relation to confirmation of research funds as part of the Metro South Health RSS, that conflict must be declared and detailed prior to confirmation. Conflict of interest in this context may include a connection to an applicant or application which could influence confirmation. In the event of a Conflict of interest a member may be required to escalate confirmation to an appropriate delegate. Please see [Research Integrity Procedure \(2018/176\)](#) for more information.

STEP 6: Notification of confirmed Metro South Health RSS research fund recipients

The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office will facilitate the notification of confirmed Metro South Health RSS research fund recipients. Each confirmed research fund recipient will be provided with a notification of award, conditions of award, acceptance of award document and a formal letter of award.

STEP 7: Metro South Health RSS awards event

Metro South Health RSS research fund recipients and applicants will be invited to and are encouraged to attend the annual Metro South Health RSS awards event coordinated by the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office.

STEP 8: Acceptance of a Metro South Health RSS research fund

In addition to attending the awards event (if able), research fund recipients must formally confirm acceptance of the Metro South Health RSS research fund by the date prescribed in the notification of award. Failure to confirm acceptance of the research fund by the prescribed date, may result in withdrawal or reassignment of research funds. An inability to confirm compliance with research fund requirements may result in withdrawal or reassignment of research funds.

STEP 9: Notification to relevant funding groups

At the conclusion of the Metro South Health RSS assessment process the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office must provide relevant Metro South Health RSS funding groups with:

- a list of Metro South Health RSS research fund recipients who have accepted the research fund terms and compliance requirements
- the projected amount to be allocated, by year, to each research fund recipient.

MANAGEMENT AND USE OF METRO SOUTH HEALTH RSS RESEARCH FUNDS

STEP 1: Setting up the Metro South Health RSS research funds

Particular requirements relevant to the Metro South Health RSS research fund will be detailed in the letter of offer, conditions of award and other supporting documents provided by the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office. Recipients of research funds from the Metro South Health SERTA should be particularly aware of specific restrictions relevant to expenditure of Trust Funds and discuss with their departmental/divisional Business Manager/Finance Officer and/or Cost Centre Manager. The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office will provide advice if clarification is required.

STEP 2: Use of Metro South Health RSS research funds

Principal Investigators and researchers must request access to Metro South Health RSS research funds through the process appropriate for their research fund approval.

- Metro South Health SERTA Research Funds — a Grant Payment Request Form must be prepared.
- PA Research Foundation Research Funds — an invoice must be raised.

Business Managers/Finance Officers and/or Cost Centre Managers are able to provide assistance in this process.

STEP 3: Requests for variations/amendments, suspension or termination

Variations/amendments

Variations and/or amendments to awarded Metro South Health RSS research funds must be requested in writing and must be submitted to the Metro South Health Chair, Research through the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office.

Research fund recipients who wish to make any variations and/or amendments to a research project must write to the Metro South Health Chair, Research detailing and justifying the changes requested and submit via [email](#).

Research fund recipients who wish to apply for an extension of time must also write to the Metro South Health Chair, Research and submit via [email](#) and provide a summary of work to date, a proposed new completion date, details and justification of the requested change and a revised timeline.

Approval of any variation and/or amendment will be at the discretion of the Metro South Health Chair, Research and the delegate of the funding group.

Suspension

Metro South Health RSS research funds may be suspended in the event that ill health or other adverse circumstances prevent the research funds recipient from making progress on the research project, or in the event that the research funds recipient has failed to comply with a condition of the research fund. Researchers must contact the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office to request a suspension of the research fund in writing via [email](#).

Approval of any suspension will be at the discretion of the Metro South Health Chair, Research and the delegate of the funding group.

Termination

A Metro South Health RSS research fund may be terminated by Metro South Health if:

- There is evidence that the terms and conditions of the research fund have not been met.
- Circumstances have changed so that it is no longer possible for the objectives of the research project to be realised.

If termination is deemed appropriate, the Metro South Health RSS research funds must be formally terminated by the delegate of the funding group:

- Metro South Health SERTA funds — the Chair of the Metro South Health SERTA Committee.
- PA Research Foundation funds — PA Research Foundation CEO.
- Other sponsoring/funding entities/organisations — nominated delegate in accordance with funding agreements.

Metro South Health Principal Investigators, researchers and/or research student supervisors will be notified formally in writing if the Metro South Health RSS research fund has been terminated by the relevant delegate.

STEP 4: Reporting

Reporting requirements, including research progress acquittal, for Metro South Health RSS research funds will be detailed in the Notification of Award and associated documents. Please see [Research Funding, Budgets and Infrastructure Support Procedure \(PR2017/121\)](#) for more information.

The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office are responsible for accepting, reviewing and archiving Metro South Health RSS progress reports and outcome letters.

STEP 5: Non-compliant reports

Any progress reports submitted as part of the Metro South Health RSS deemed to be non-compliant with relevant research fund requirements will be returned to the Principal Investigator and/or research fund recipient, with details of the reason for non-compliance, and a request to rectify the report. The Principal Investigator and/or research fund recipient may rectify the report, or provide grounds to support the acceptance of the report as 'deemed to comply'.

If the perceived report non-compliance issues are not addressed to the satisfaction of the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office, the Principal Investigator and/or research fund recipient will be informed and the matter escalated to:

- the Metro South Health Chair, Research for matters relating to the scientific aspects of the report and/or
- the Director, Research Development for matters relating to financial or operational aspects of the report.

The Metro South Health Chair, Research and/or the Director, Research Development may accept the report, or refer the non-compliance issue to the Metro South Health Research Committee for consideration. The Principal Investigator and/or research fund recipient will be informed in either event by the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office. The Metro South Health Research Committee may recommend the report be accepted or recommend the issue be referred to the Principal Investigator and/or research fund recipient's line manager to be addressed as a performance issue. Please see [Research Complaints and Misconduct Procedure \(PR2017/124\)](#) for more information.

STEP 6: Research fund closure

At the conclusion of the annual Metro South Health RSS research fund period or completion of the research or termination of the research fund for any other reason, the Principal Investigator and/or research fund recipient must complete the required [Final Report Template \(GAF2\)](#) and forward to the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office via [email](#) by the due date.

Upon receipt the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office will review the submitted final report and provide to the Metro South Health Chair, Research with a recommendation for approval or revision.

The Metro South Health Chair, Research will review the final report and may decide to approve, request further revision or refer to the Metro South Health Research Committee as noted in [Step 5](#) above. The Principal Investigator and/or research fund recipient will be advised of the decision reached and any additional requirements by the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office.

Failure to submit a final report will be reported to the Principal Investigator's and/or research fund recipient's line manager and may disadvantage the Principal Investigator and/or research fund recipient in future Metro South Health RSS application forms. The Business Manager/Finance Officer and/or Cost Centre Manager will transfer unused research funds to the relevant funding body. The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office will inform the delegate of the funding group of the closure of the Metro South Health RSS research fund.

PROCEDURE DETAILS

Procedure Number

PR2017/120

Procedure Name

Metro South Health Research Management -
Metro South Health Research Support Scheme
(RSS) Procedure

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ATTACHMENT 1 - Application

1.0 Metro South Health RSS

Metro South Health RSS has consistently supported high quality research since it was established in 2012. The Metro South Health RSS was initially formed by consolidation of research funding from the Princess Alexandra Hospital Private Practice Trust Fund and the PA Research Foundation. Following the establishment of the Metro South Hospital and Health Service in 2012, as well as the Metro South Health SERTA in 2014, the RSS was broadened to include all Metro South Health facilities and services, as well as partner institutions. The Metro South Health RSS is administered by the Centres for Health Research, Metro South Health. The Metro South Health RSS supports [Queensland Government's objectives for the community](#). The [Metro South Health Strategic Plan](#) outlines key focus areas which also are reflective of the Metro South Health RSS's purpose.

1.1 Objectives

The Metro South Health RSS's objectives are to support:

1. Research translation by enabling the translation of the highest quality research evidence into health care policy and clinical practice.
2. Research innovation by supporting the development of the highest quality new knowledge in health research within Metro South Health and partners.
3. Research capacity building and collaboration by maintaining and building the highest quality research capacity and collaborations within Metro South Health. This is supported through the development of:
 - a. cross-disciplinary and multi-site research collaborations within Metro South Health
 - b. inter-institutional collaborations with Metro South Health academic partners
 - c. the highest quality Metro South Health early and mid-career researchers, so that they establish themselves as independent, self-directed researchers.

2.0 Metro South Health RSS funds

The Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office must obtain appropriate delegate approval for the allocation of funds to the Metro South Health RSS. The total funds value for the year (based on the value of each research fund and the number of research funds) will be developed in consultation with the Metro South Health Chair, Research and endorsed by Metro South Health Research Committee.

Additional costs associated with managing the application, assessment, award and ongoing maintenance of the Metro South Health RSS research funds must be identified including:

- payment for an assessment committee Chair
- probity advice
- advertising
- miscellaneous expenses for an assessment committee (catering)
- awards ceremony expenses (venue, equipment, food and materials).

On the basis of the total funds value and additional costs, a request for funds will be made to the appropriate delegate:

- SERTA funds — the Chair of the Metro South Health SERTA Committee.
- PA Research Foundation funds — PA Research Foundation CEO.
- Other sponsoring/funding entities/organisations — nominated delegate in accordance with funding agreements.

Available funds from each source will only be considered to be confirmed when obtained in writing.

2.1 Research funds

Access to research funds is transacted between the funding body (SERTA or PA Research Foundation) and the Business Unit/Department/Division in which the grant recipient is employed. Recipients are responsible for initiating award payments.

Transfer of funds cannot occur without provision of a signed [Grants Payment Request Form \(GAF1\)](#). Financial transactions are the responsibility of Business Managers and/or Cost Centre Managers. Further details are provided in the [Research Funding, Budgets and Infrastructure Support Procedure \(PR2017/121\)](#).

2.2 Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines

The Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines outlines key information relevant to governance and operational requirements of the Metro South Health RSS. It is made available to all Metro South Health researchers and applicants and details key information such as:

- Metro South Health RSS methodology
- eligibility and exclusion criteria
- application process
- key dates and milestones;
- process for submitting a application form
- relevant contact details
- application requirements including supporting documents, evidence and budget
- research fund categories
- explanation of the assessment and evaluation process
- Metro South Health Research Committee decision-making criteria and weighting.

2.3 Criteria for the approval of funding

The approval of funding for research funds will be subject to the following criteria:

1. Proposals must be project-specific.
2. Applications must contain a detailed budget justification in line with the budget proposal (ie money cannot be spent on unspecified or unrelated items).
3. Research funds will be available for the period of the offer, with any unspent monies to be returned to the relevant funding body. Alternatively, the research fund end date may be extended when possible if written in the funding rules.

The awarded funds must only be spent on the research described in the funding application therefore it is not permissible to transfer research funds to another research project unless approval for this has been provided by the relevant Metro South Health RSS delegate.

2.4 Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Metro South Health must ensure that GST is; consistently treated for research fund income received, paid to external parties and adequate supporting documentation is maintained in relation to salary and wages costs.

3.0 Metro South Health RSS research fund categories

The Metro South Health RSS may provide research funds in a range of categories, as approved by the funding bodies and documented in the funding guidelines for the relevant year. Research fund categories may be updated or changed on an annual basis. Researchers must refer to the Metro South Health RSS funding guidelines for current information for that particular year.

3.1 Metro South Health RSS application forms

Metro South Health RSS research funds are competitive and therefore it is in the best interest of the applicant to prepare a quality submission. Applications must not exceed the stipulated page or word limits and must be precise.

4.0 Metro South Health RSS evaluation plan

The Metro South Health RSS evaluation plan outlines key information relevant to governance of the assessment and evaluation process. It is made available to Metro South Health Research Committee members and nominated assessors when they are sent application forms. It outlines the research fund assessment criteria, weighting and assessment process.

4.1 Metro South Health RSS research fund assessment criteria

The Metro South Health RSS assessment is based on a number of criteria, the application of which is varied dependent on the category of research fund. Research fund assessment criteria are documented in the funding guidelines for the relevant year may be updated or changed on an annual basis. Assessors must refer to the evaluation plan for current information for that year.

4.2 Assessment criteria weighting by Metro South Health RSS research fund category

Each of the assessment criteria will be scored by the review panels as documented in the funding guidelines for the relevant year.

4.3 Special considerations

Overall, consideration will be given to early career researchers whereby track records will be assessed relative to opportunity. Similarly, preference will be given to applicants demonstrating convincing ways in which their future research can be supported via external sources of funds on an ongoing basis. At the margin, priority will be given to research projects that do not involve conference travel as a major expense item.

5.0 Metro South Health RSS awards event

A Metro South Health RSS awards event is coordinated on an annual basis by the Metro South Health Research Support Coordinator and Grants Administration Office. Metro South Health employees will be notified of the details pertaining to this event through Metro South Health communication and email channels.