



Cancer Council WA

Postdoctoral Fellowship Guidelines to Applicants

Guidelines for applicants applying for postdoctoral fellowship
funding

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Closing Date for applications: 23-May 2022

1. Introduction

Cancer Council WA aims to minimize the effect of cancer on our community through research and education and by providing people affected by cancer with support to enhance their quality of life. A key objective of Cancer Council WA is to encourage and support a wide range of research activities into the causes, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of cancer.

Our Research Funding Program aims to support cancer researchers at each step of their career and development and retain world class cancer researchers in Western Australia.

Through a competitive application ranking process, Cancer Council WA's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program, provides funding for early career biomedical, clinical and health researchers who are considered to have the potential to make a significant contribution to the field of cancer research in Western Australia.

The Postdoctoral Fellowships offered by Cancer Council Western Australia are prestigious awards, are highly sought after and extremely competitive.

Cancer Council WA is calling for applications from qualified early career cancer researchers to apply for a Postdoctoral Fellowship commencing in 2023 in the fields of laboratory, clinical, health services, epidemiological, psychosocial or behavioural science.

2. Grant Description

The Postdoctoral Fellowship objectives are:

- To advance the quality and impact of cancer research in Western Australia through the provision of dedicated cancer research Postdoctoral Fellowships,
- To contribute to the career advancement and research productivity of Early Career cancer researchers working in a Higher Education Institution and/or Medical Research Institution,
- To promote partnerships and collaboration in conducting high quality cancer research in WA.

Cancer Council WA through the Research Grants Program will fund one new cancer research Postdoctoral Fellowship to commence in 2023 for an amount of up to \$75,000 a year for no more than three years, plus GST. Applications requesting sums in excess of \$225,000 will not be considered.

The Postdoctoral Fellowship is a full-time or part-time research appointment. Full-time fellows must spend at least 80% of their time on research activities related to cancer. Part-time fellows may spend between 50% and 70% of their time on research activities related to cancer. The award will be proportional to the fraction of time working in cancer research (e.g., 0.5 FTE spent on cancer research will be granted 50% of a Postdoctoral Fellowship). An extended time period of expenditure may be considered for part-time applications. There is scope for those

in clinical settings to negotiate a fractional research appointment for Postdoctoral Fellowships, to allow ongoing clinical activities to continue.

The main purpose of the award is to support the salary of a research fellow and associated on costs. This could constitute:

- full or part costs of a researcher's salary
- 'buy out' of teaching or clinical commitments
- travel costs or other legitimate costs to the researcher in undertaking research

Funds are not available through this process for building, motor vehicles, major equipment purchases, or funding salaries other than that of the applicant.

3. Eligibility

The Cancer Council WA Postdoctoral Fellowship can be applied to any legitimate area of cancer research. In circumstances where the applicant's main area of activity has not clearly been cancer-related, a case will need to be made providing evidence of a link with cancer.

Applications will be accepted from researchers working in, or affiliated with, publicly funded established Higher Education and/or Medical Research Institutions within Western Australia.

Applicants from within and outside of WA are eligible to apply; however, it is a condition of the grant that the applicant reside in WA for the duration of the Fellowship and that the majority of the research work (assessed as 75% or more) be conducted in or through legitimate Western Australian Higher Education and/or Medical Research Institutions.

Applicants must hold Australian citizenship, permanent residency or an appropriate visa to work in Australia. Applicants who do not hold Australian Citizenship or permanent residency must have their primary residence in Western Australia and be employed by a WA research institution for the duration of the fellowship, including holding a relevant visa. In the event that a successful applicant no longer complies with these requirements, Cancer Council WA reserves the right to cease payment of funding.

Applicants must be early career researchers as defined by the following Cancer Council WA criteria:

- A letter advising the PhD thesis was passed and is dated later than 30 June, 2017.
- Applicants to be full college fellows at the time of application, holding a certificate with an admission date later than 30 June, 2017 confirming the applicant is a 'Full College Fellow/s' i.e., FRACP, FRAPAL etc
- Candidates without a PhD (or equivalent) are eligible to apply if they have submitted their PhD or are within three months of handing in the final submission of their thesis at the time of the application deadline. You will need to make a strong case based on your track record (publications, previous awards, grants) and provide a statement from your supervisor supporting your claim of eligibility. An award would be conditional on the PhD being awarded in the year the fellowship is offered.

Researchers who have relevant research experience but do not have a PhD and/or are not a full college fellow will have their eligibility assessed on a case-by-case basis. If you have any questions regarding your eligibility please contact us on 9388 4328 or CancerCouncilWA.Research@cancerwa.asn.au.

Extensions to the 5-year limit apply for **career disruptions**. Career disruption includes pregnancy; major illness; and carer responsibilities including parental leave. This is guided by the NHMRC Relative to Opportunity policy, Appendix B in the Investigator Grants 2021 Guidelines: www.mq.edu.au/research/research-funding-and-grant-opportunities/fellowship-

Applications may involve a single institution, or two or more acting in collaboration. In the second instance, one of the institutions must be specified as the lead institution which will receive the grant and administer the Fellowship.

The applicant should be supported by funding from an additional agency or have existing research grant funding. There is no minimum contribution from external (institutional or other granting body) sources.

Previous recipients of a Cancer Council WA Postdoctoral Fellowship are ineligible to apply.

The Tobacco and Other Industries

The Cancer Council will not provide a research grant to any researcher who is an applicant for or is in receipt of funds from:

- I. Companies or other entities receiving money or revenues from the tobacco industry or having arrangements or dealings with the tobacco industry in which may actually, potentially or perceivably compromise tobacco control initiatives. This includes:
 - a) Tobacco manufacturers or wholesalers, and their subsidiaries or other entities within that group of companies,
 - b) Entities or individuals whose sole or principal business is the retailing of tobacco products,
 - c) Other entities identified to have links of a commercial, strategic or public nature with tobacco manufacturers or wholesalers
- II. Companies or other entities involved in manufacturing, distribution, promotion or sale of any other product or service known to cause cancer or to increase cancer risk (including, but not limited to, solaria, asbestos, alcohol, environmental carcinogens, sugared beverages, and other energy dense nutrient poor foods).

Cancer Council WA will terminate its support for a research project if the above provisions relating to support from these industries are breached or it believes that the integrity of the research is threatened by influence from tobacco or other interests.

Researchers in receipt of funds from other organisations in conflict with the prevention of cancer will be examined closely to determine if a conflict of interest exists.

4. Application Process

A full application is invited from all interested candidates. Applications are to be submitted through the Cancer Council WA's online portal. Access to the portal will be provided closer to the Fellowship opening date (20-April, 2022).

Before sending your application, please ensure all sections have been completed as specified, including the required signatures in the certification section. A guide to completing your application online is available [here](#).

Please note that applicants need not include GST in their final budgets as total grant funding is exclusive of GST.

Timetable

Stage	Date
Advertising and promotion commence	11 March 2022
Deadline for submission of Application	23 May 2022
Short listing of candidates for interview	15 July 2022
Week in which interviews are likely to be conducted	15-19 August 2022

5. Guidance on completing the Application

The application should describe the achievements of the applicant and the program of research to be undertaken during the Postdoctoral Fellowship. Failure to address all of the following criteria in a fully detailed submission may result in the application being rejected on the grounds of insufficient information.

The Individual

- a) Publications – including quality in terms of significance of contribution to the relevant field of research, standing of journals in which papers are published and relative contribution of the applicant to the publication (e.g., first author publications will be given greater weight).
- b) Current and previous grants – nature of involvement in any successful grants.
- c) Other Fellowship applications – it is required that applicants identify if they have made a recent application (within the past 12 months) for a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship from any other source. Applicants are asked to provide information on the current status of any such application.
- d) Peer recognition – e.g., acceptances to speak at national or international meetings.
- e) Prizes and awards: applicants may list any previous research prizes or awards (other than program / project grants) they have been awarded to support their research career.
- f) Research translation – the contribution of the applicant to advancing cancer control (for example through clinical impact and application of their research, public health activities and influence in public policy practice or related advocacy or commercialisation of research findings).
- g) Collaborations – local, national and international across research institutions and disciplines
- h) Research training – level of contribution to supervision of students.
- i) Professional and community activity – contribution to professional associations, community bodies such as Cancer Council and other relevant activities.
- j) Capacity building – future contribution to the development of cancer research in WA.
- k) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – see Appendix 1 for guidance.

The Institution

- l) Institutional resources – outline the additional resources available to undertake the program of research, the contribution from external sponsor(s) or other sources of funding - including details of any funding offered, any 'in-kind' support, and any other (collaborative) activities to be carried out in support of the research. Include a summary of all input from the host institution including any buildings, laboratory space, related staff salaries, technical support, travel costs, equipment, maintenance, consumables etc. offered in support of the research in addition to any cash offers.

- m) Institutions can use their own internal funds (for example from a university, company, endowments, government agency) to top up the contribution to the Postdoctoral Fellowship from external sponsors. There is no minimum contribution from external (institutional or other granting body) sources. The Cancer Council WA award may be decreased pro-rata if the applicant has been awarded salary support from another source.
- n) Cancer Council Western Australia will expect all expenditure to be completed within three years of the commencement date. Applicants expecting expenditure to take place over a longer time period (e.g., where other funding sources are drawn upon) can specify the requested grant duration and must justify this in the case for support.

The Program of Research

- o) Outline the major areas of research to be pursued under the Postdoctoral Fellowship, including what grants will be sought, what publications are anticipated and what other outputs are likely to be produced.
- p) Applicants must clearly demonstrate the specific and measurable cancer control/cancer research impact that would be achieved by the proposed Fellowship.
- q) Multidisciplinary applications spanning research other than that specifically related to cancer may be considered if the majority of the research relates to cancer control.
- r) Provide curriculum vitae of the supervisor of no more than one page.
- s) Complete the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) table, outlining 6-10 KPIs you aim to achieve over the duration of the Fellowship (more guidance can be found in Appendix 1.)

Community Review

- t) The Community Review section of the application is very important and will form part of the assessment of your application so please read the **Guidance on community review criteria document which is available on the website.**

6. Selection Criteria

The applications are sent to our Postdoctoral Research Grants Advisory Subcommittee for external peer review. The subcommittee consists of c.7 WA cancer researchers and up to 4 community representatives who have a personal connection to cancer. As with most of our funding opportunities there is a scientific assessment (criteria below) and a community assessment, with a scoring allocation of 70:30 respectively.

For more information on our committee, please visit our website.

It should be noted that:

- a) Applications falling outside of Cancer Council WA's remit will be rejected. Negotiations will not be entered into.
- b) Cancer Council WA sometime receives funds for research to which a donor has attached a specific priority, including but not limited to; tumour type and disadvantaged groups. In any application round, we reserve the right to award these funds to additional applications that fit the specified priority and have been assessed and deemed fundable by the Committee.

Cancer Council WA has the right to make the final decision over which research it funds. This may include making no award or awarding part of the total funding pool.

Scientific Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- a) Strategic relevance (20%): innovation and originality (4%); impact on cancer (4%); relevance to cancer control in WA (4%); current contributions to the research environment in WA (4%); and collaboration (4%).
- b) Scientific quality (30%): research design (20%); and feasibility (10%).
- c) Career development (20%): capacity building in the areas of: independence and team building, mentoring and training, developing new collaborations / partnerships, peer review contributions to grant schemes and journal publications, community engagement activities associated with health research, practice or policy; and depth, breadth, ambition and achievability of the KPIs.
- d) Track record, relative to opportunity¹ (20%) and
- e) Supervisor (10%)

Community Assessment Criteria

- f) The following criteria will be assessed: plain language summary; research outcomes and the extent of potential benefit (impact); and pathway for realising the benefit (translation); equity; and community / consumer engagement.
- g) How this criteria is addressed is very important and can have a significant impact on application rankings. For information on the Community Review Criteria refer to the Guidance on community review criteria.

Interview

- h) The Postdoctoral Research Grants Advisory Subcommittee may invite applicants to attend an interview process to further examine the proposals under consideration. During the assessment process, we may seek input from third parties if deemed necessary.

7. Obligations of Postdoctoral Fellow & Administering Institution

Administering Institution

- a) There will be only one Administering Institution for each awarded grant.
- b) Cancer Council WA will make payments to the Administering Institution nominated by the successful application. Payments are made within the terms and conditions specified in the grant offer, and in which the Administering Institution will be held responsible for the proper administration and expenditure of the grant and for ensuring that all reports required by the Cancer Council WA are provided on time.
- c) The Administering Institution also guarantees that the infrastructure necessary to support the research will be available and will undertake to meet from other than the grant funds all infrastructure costs pertaining to the work supported by the grant. Its explicit support for and commitment to the application is therefore essential before any application can be considered.

¹ Circumstances considered under “relative to opportunity” include: amount of time spent as an active researcher; career disruption (see Eligibility); available resources, including situations where research is being conducted in remote or isolated communities; building relationships of trust with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities over long periods and subsequent impact on track record and productivity; clinical, administrative or teaching workload; relocation of an applicant and their research laboratory or clinical practice setting or other similar circumstances that impact upon research productivity; for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants, community obligations including ‘sorry business’; the typical performance of researchers in the research field in question; research outputs and productivity noting time spent employed in other sectors, e.g., there might be a reduction in publications when employed in sectors such as industry or having carer responsibilities (that do not come under career disruption, p 2).

This is guided by the NHMRC Relative to Opportunity policy, Appendix B in the Investigator Grants 2021 Guidelines: www.mq.edu.au/research/research-funding-and-grant-opportunities/fellowship-and-grant-opportunities/nhmrc/nhmrc-investigator-grants/Investigator-Grants-2021-Guidelines-v2.0.pdf

Publicity and Acknowledgment

The ability of Cancer Council WA to fund research is dependent entirely on its ability to raise money through public donation. Public awareness of the Cancer Council's role in funding research, particularly successful research, is therefore crucial.

- d) Where a media release or conference is planned, it is the responsibility of both the fellow and the institution's media office to give Cancer Council WA adequate notice of the release or organisation of the conference, and to accommodate reasonable requests for the Cancer Council WA's participation in the publicity.
- e) In addition, researchers may be called on to participate in Cancer Council WA's promotional initiatives such as presentations to major donors, the preparation of promotional materials and providing a verbal presentation at research events organized by Cancer Council WA.
- f) Cancer Council WA will invite successful applicants to attend our annual Research Awards Lunch where they will be awarded a Certificate of Achievement recognising their success in this research grant round. This event will provide an opportunity to showcase leading researchers and to create a forum where researchers and donors can meet. We ask that the recipient of the Fellowship ensures they are available to attend this event.
- g) Cancer Council WA will publish plain language summary information provided by the successful applicant in section C of their application at the lunch and on the Cancer Council WA website, please note that information may be shared on social media platforms.
- h) Cancer Council WA may also, at its own initiative, ask investigators to participate in release of details of their research to the media. Sensitivities relating to pre-publication release will be respected in such circumstances.

Publications arising from the funding

- i) Cancer Council WA encourages the publication of results and the dissemination of other information from the research we fund. Such publications would occur through the normal acceptable scientific channels and there should always be an acknowledgment that Cancer Council WA funding has been provided with the following footnote included: "[name of Research Scholar or Fellow] was supported by a Cancer Council WA Postdoctoral Research Fellowship". A copy of the published paper should also be forwarded to us.

Reporting Obligations

- j) In fulfilment of the conditions of an award, successful applicants must provide proof of progress in their research program. They are therefore expected to submit written reports in each of the three years of the operation of the Postdoctoral Fellowship. Reports should be prepared against the claims made in the detailed application, with continued funding for the subsequent years of the fellowship being contingent upon a satisfactory report being received by the end of November (or a timeframe negotiated subject to start date) of each year. Additional brief supplementary reports will be required 12 months and 5 years after submission of the end of project report. All reporting templates, including the progress-extensions request template, can be found on our website.

Intellectual Property Policy

- k) In the event of any discovery with a potential for commercial exploitation that arises as a result of research supported by Cancer Council WA funds, the Applicant is bound by the conditions of the award to notify the Cancer Council WA accordingly. Award Intellectual Property will be owned by and immediately vest upon the administering institution, or with whoever they assign it to. The Applicant agrees to disclose in confidence to the Cancer Council WA, any inventions or discoveries that arise in the course of the research.

Ongoing operation of the Postdoctoral Fellowship

- l) If for any reason a successful Postdoctoral recipient is unable to complete the full three years of the Postdoctoral Fellowship they and the Administering Institution have the responsibility to inform Cancer Council WA. The specific circumstances will be assessed and a recommendation made as to how the Postdoctoral Fellowship will be managed from that point.
- m) Failure to inform the Cancer Council WA of significant changes in circumstances relating to the operation of the Postdoctoral Fellowship will result in withdrawal of the Postdoctoral Fellowship and consideration given to the future relationship between Cancer Council WA and the Administering Institution.

8. Matters not otherwise addressed

For matters relating to process and policy not covered in detail in this guide to applicants the Cancer Council WA Postdoctoral Research Grants Advisory Subcommittee will use the policies and processes applied by the National Health and Medical Research Council as a reference point. The prime objective remains to operate a fair and open process which seeks to allocate the funds in a way consistent with the values of Cancer Council WA so as to allocate donors' funds in the most effective manner in pursuing the mission, goals and strategies of Cancer Council WA.

9. Further information

Queries about the completion of the Postdoctoral Fellowship process should be addressed to:

Naomi Offler
Research Development Officer
Cancer Prevention and Research
Cancer Council Western Australia
Level 1, 420 Bagot Road, SUBIACO WA 6008
Phone: (08) 9338 4328
Email: CancerCouncilWA.research@cancerwa.asn.au
www.cancerwa.asn.au

Appendix 1: Research Outcome Categories for Development of Fellowship Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Notes:

- This is intended as a “menu” of possible outcomes to use a starting point to develop appropriate KPIs for an individual fellowship.
- We generally expect 6-10 KPIs for each fellowship.
- There is no requirement to have KPIs for all 6 categories and commonly fellowship KPIs are most likely to come from categories 1-3; however, we encourage you to consider if there are any appropriate KPIs from categories 4-6.
- KPIs should be specific, measurable and include a timeframe, e.g., to publish 6 papers a year in high quality journals; to obtain \$200,000 of project funding by the end of the Fellowship to conduct research into x; to set up a consumer panel in the first year to provide input into the development of our research design, participation information sheets and consent forms; to have our recommendations adopted as a policy platform by at least one of the major political parties by the end of the fellowship; my recommendations for changes to the process for treating x will have been adopted by at least one of the major Perth cancer hospitals by the end of the Fellowship.
- KPIs should be stretching but achievable. This will be assessed as part of the selection process.

1. Knowledge production	2. Research capacity	3. Dissemination & engagement	4. Informing decision making & development	5. Behaviour changes / adoption	6. Final outcomes (health & economic)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of journal articles & citation rates • No & type of conference presentations • Other publications e.g., books & chapters, research reports, editorials • Patents granted • Awards received (& other recognition) • Other research outputs e.g., research databases, research models, non-traditional outputs 	<p>Personnel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New skills developed / techniques mastered • Training attended • Career progression during / after fellowship • New collaborations formed &/or existing collaborations maintained / expanded • Involvement with research networks • Supervision of research staff / students <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of new grant applications developed (& scores where possible) • Amount & type of further funding gained • Access to new / enhanced research tools, platforms, equipment, facilities <p>Future Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of new research studies / ideas • Improvements to research methods &/or development of new research methods • Improved capacity to use existing research knowledge from elsewhere <p>Academic Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New responsibilities taken on e.g., committee or board memberships, editorial and review activities, teaching (NB must be additional to what was in place at the start of the fellowship) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations to non-academic audiences • Media stories • Articles in newsletters etc. • Lab tours • School visits • Consumer involvement (no involved, how involved, impact on research) • Industry / government partnerships 	<p>Decision Making / Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved info bases for decision making • Changes to policies (new/revised) • Changes to processes (new/revised) • Changes to guidelines • New / improved public health campaigns <p>Product Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of new pharmaceuticals or therapeutic techniques • Clinical trials undertaken • Spin-out companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of new policies / practices by health practitioners • Use of new pharmaceuticals & therapeutic techniques • Behaviour changes by patients and the public • Disinvestment in ineffective or redundant treatments or services • Improvements to services 	<p>Health Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less people get sick (reduced morbidity) • Better outcomes for those who get sick • Improved equity • Improved quality of care <p>Economic Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased efficiency • Cost savings • Income from commercialisation

