1 Introduction

In line with the Queensland Government’s *Queensland Advancing Health Research 2026* strategy (Strategy), the Health Innovation, Investment and Research Office (HIIRO) supports and encourages health and medical research and its translation into better healthcare across the Queensland Health system. HIIRO also works to turn health and medical innovation into commercial opportunities, economic growth and knowledge-based jobs.

These Funding Rules describe the provision and distribution of funding for the Queensland Advancing Clinical Research Fellowships offered by the Department of Health (Department).

The Funding Rules will be supported by a Queensland Health Research Fellowship Funding Agreement Terms and Conditions (generic version 2018.3) (Agreement) between the Department and the successful administering organisation (Recipient).

These Funding Rules provide information for applicants who are considering applying for a Fellowship in Round 2.

2 Queensland Advancing Clinical Research Fellowships

The Queensland Advancing Clinical Research Fellowships (CRF) program delivers on a key commitment by Queensland Health in the Strategy, “to design, develop and fund new Fellowships programs with a clear focus on translation into clinical practice and improved health outcomes”.

The CRFs are intended to support Queensland Health clinician researchers undertake research linked to their practice. The program recognises that clinician researchers (including doctors, nurses, dentists, allied health practitioners and clinical scientists) are uniquely placed to identify clinical issues that can benefit from further research, lead patient focused research discoveries and facilitate improved patient care through research translation.

The objectives of the program are to:

1. Develop Queensland Health clinician researchers and support their research career progression, particularly toward securing competitive research funding from national agencies and other funding sources.

2. Support health and medical research projects that have real potential to lead to better health outcomes for Queenslanders.

3. Build collaborative linkages between Queensland Health and the wider Queensland health and medical research sector to support the translation of research discoveries into frontline healthcare.
Categories and available funding

The program includes four award categories to provide a pipeline of support for clinician researchers at various career stages. The following Fellowships are available in Round 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Maximum Award (GST exclusive)</th>
<th>Estimated number of awards for this round*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD Pathway</td>
<td>Enrolled/enrolling in a PhD#</td>
<td>Up to $150,000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Career</td>
<td>0-4 years post-PhD award#</td>
<td>Up to $300,000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Career</td>
<td>&gt;4 years -10 years post-PhD award#</td>
<td>Up to $400,000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced</td>
<td>&gt;10 years post-PhD award#</td>
<td>Up to $500,000</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Subject to funding and application quality.

# PhD or equivalent research higher degrees. For clarity, a master’s degree is not considered PhD or equivalent for the purposes of applying under the Queensland Advancing Clinical Research Fellowships (Round 2).

The minimum Fellowship duration is two years, up to a maximum duration of four years.

The level of active research participation by successful Fellow (the time a Fellow will spend on the Fellowship research project) is expected to be at least 30% Full Time Equivalent (FTE) averaged over the duration of the Fellowship.

Applicants should ensure their time commitments are sufficient to ensure the viability of the Fellowship.

The funds provided by the Fellowship may not cover the total cost of the research and it is the responsibility of the Fellow to ensure that sufficient funding is available to demonstrate the success of the project. This must be described in the application.

Research Topics & Priority Areas

Applicants may propose a research program in any clinical area which has a strong potential to be translated into better healthcare and health outcomes for Queenslanders, in alignment with the Queensland Health focus areas of:

- Keeping Queenslanders healthy
- Delivering what matters - promoting the right care in the right place and at the right time
- Health system sustainability
Eligibility

Prospective Fellows must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Hold a salaried appointment with Queensland Health or other publicly funded healthcare facility in a clinically related role (minimum 20% FTE) over the duration of the Fellowship. A salaried appointment is defined as holding a payroll number with, and being paid directly by, Queensland Health or other publicly funded healthcare facility.

- Must continue to be employed, reside and conduct research in Queensland for the duration of the Fellowship.

- Be an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia for the duration of the Fellowship.

- Be registered with the relevant professional registration board, or eligibility for membership/accreditation with a professional association.

- The employing Queensland Health Hospital and Health Service or other publicly funded healthcare facility must be named in the application as either the administering organisation or partner organisation.

- Must have in place a collaboration with a Queensland-based research organisation external to Queensland Health. A research organisation could include a Queensland university or medical research institute, not-for-profit entity and/or industry. A research organisation can assume the role of administering organisation or partner organisation in the application.

- **PhD pathway** - intention to enrol or currently enrolled in a research higher degree (PhD or equivalent*)

- **Early Career** – hold a research higher degree (PhD or equivalent*) and be up to 4 years post-award as at the closing date of the CRF round.

- **Mid Career** – hold a research higher degree (PhD or equivalent*) between >4 years-10 years post-award as at the closing date of the CRF round.

- **Experienced** – hold a research higher degree (PhD or equivalent*) >10 years post-award as at the closing date of the CRF round.

- An applicant can apply for or hold a CRF in one category only in any one round.

*For clarity, a master’s degree is not considered a PhD or equivalent for the purposes of applying under the Queensland Advancing Clinical Research Fellowships (Round 2).

The applicant and administering organisation must ensure the application meets all eligibility requirements. Departmental staff will not make eligibility rulings before an application is submitted.

The Department cannot advise applicants on whether participating organisations should assume the role of administering organisation or partner organisation. This should be decided between the applicant and the participating organisations.
An application may have more than one partner organisation.

**Supervisor**

PhD Pathway and Early Career applicants must nominate at least one research supervisor. A supervisor is a person who has significant experience and track record in the conduct of research relevant to the Fellow’s proposed research program. The supervisor must be based in Queensland and provide an active management and guidance role through all stages of the Fellowship.

**Funding Use**

Funding may be used for the following eligible project costs:

- Fellow salary costs, including standard on-costs (leave loading, superannuation contributions, worker’s compensation contributions and payroll tax). Where the funding is used for salary costs, the Fellow’s total salary (drawn from all sources) is not to exceed the salary the Fellow would have received in their substantive clinical position. That is, the Fellow cannot use Fellowship funds to pay for a stipend that increases their substantive clinical position salary.

- Salary costs for other dedicated Fellowship research/technical staff, including post-doctoral research staff.

- Project costs directly related to the proposed program of research including consumables.

- Travel costs, for the Fellow only, that are essential to the Fellowship as outlined in the application (excluding relocation) up to $5,000 in total. This includes economy class travel only, reasonable accommodation and per diem expenses, and conference registration in accordance with Queensland Health travel policies.

- Equipment costs directly related to the proposed program of research up to a total of $10,000 (including maintenance).

- Only eligible expenditure incurred on or after the commencement of the Fellowship can be claimed.

Items not eligible for funding include:

- Institutional on-costs above standard salary on-costs.

- Institutional overheads and operational costs, including general facility and accommodation related costs.

- Travel and conference attendance costs for dedicated Fellowship staff, other than the Fellow as outlined above.

- Costs associated with non-Fellowship projects/programs of the administering or partner organisations.

- Salary costs related to the non-Fellowship activities of the Fellow or other dedicated Fellowship staff.
• Costs associated with administrative support staff.
• Contract research for services that can be performed by the applicant or administering organisation.
• Computers and laptops, unless highly specialised and essential to the project.
• Publication costs.

**Funding Administration and Conditions**

• If successful, the Fellow must confirm an administering organisation ('the Recipient') to which the funding is paid.

• The Recipient must be a Queensland-based agency that has an Australian Business Number and is registered for GST. This includes Hospital and Health Services (HHSs), universities and research institutes. There can be only one Recipient for each Fellow.

• Successful Fellows must reside in Queensland for the duration of the Fellowship and Fellowship research must be conducted in Queensland.

• Fellowships are awarded to develop the careers of specific individuals, in line with program goals, and are not transferable.

• Applicants and successful Fellows may apply or hold other grants outside of this scheme. However, the other grants must not:
  o duplicate funding for the Fellowship research,
  o duplicate funding of the Fellow’s salary, or
  o impact the Fellow’s time commitment on the CRF research project.

• The Department may liaise with other funding agencies to discuss any funding duplication.

• Please note, where the applicant is a currently funded Department of Health Fellow, any CRF application must describe a new research proposal that is significantly different from the research undertaken as part of the currently funded Department of Health Fellowship.

• Fellowships are non-renewable and must be completed within the 2-4 year duration period. No additional funds will be provided by the Department.

• Costs incurred before the Fellowship commences will not be reimbursed.

• Ethics and governance approvals must be in place within 3 months of the agreement being signed. If these timeframes are not met, the Department has the right to withdraw the offer.

• Fellowships are to support a discrete project but which may be a component of a larger study.

• The successful Fellow must take the lead role in conducting and progressing the Fellowship research.
3 Application process

It is the administering organisation and the proposed Fellow's responsibility to read and familiarise themselves with these Funding Rules and all other documents referred to within these Funding Rules.

Applicants must download and complete the CRF Fellowships Application Form (Round 2) and the Funding Agreement Application Declaration page. Please submit these documents to HIIRO_Fellowships@health.qld.gov.au before 12pm noon AEST, 13 March 2020.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Word limits must be adhered to. Where there is no response to a question, please indicate 'not applicable'.

The application must be submitted using the naming convention Surname_Firstname_CRF.pdf as a single, consolidated PDF file in the following order:

- Application form
- A reference list (if required)
- Letters of support
- Funding Agreement Declaration page

A reference list may be included at the end of the application form.

The application form must be submitted in its original form. Applicants are not permitted to edit the underlying template of the application form (unless where indicated).

The application cannot be revised after submission. However, applicants must advise the Department of any changes that are likely to affect eligibility.

Applicants may withdraw an application at any time by notifying the Department in writing at HIIRO_Fellowships@health.qld.gov.au.

All costs and expenses incurred by applicants in any way associated with the preparation and submission of an application will be borne entirely and exclusively by the applicant.

No applicant will be entitled to claim compensation or loss from the Department for any matter arising out of the application process, including but not limited to, any failure by the Department to comply with the Funding Rules.

The Department will not provide advice to applicants or administering organisations on the competitiveness of an application at any stage during the application and assessment stages.

Letters of support

The application must include letters of support from the administering organisation and partner organisation/s. The applicant's employing Health and Hospital Service (HHS) must be either the administering or a partner organisation.

Each letter of support (maximum 2 pages per letter) must include:
• Details of the clinical and/or research strengths of the organisation, and the alignment of the proposed Fellowship and Fellowship research activities with these strengths.

• Support for the Fellowship, including any cash and in-kind commitments.

• Letters from HHSs (whether acting as administering organisation or partner organisation) must also confirm the Fellow’s current employment arrangements and the Fellow’s proposed employment arrangements for the duration of the Fellowship, having considered any clinical service delivery implications.

• Each letter must be formatted on organisational letterhead and signed by the relevant person with appropriate authority to support the application and any commitments. For a HHS, the letter should be signed by the Chief Executive or other appropriately authorised delegate. Please note: The Department cannot provide advice on who has authority to sign – please liaise directly with your administering and partner organisation/s for advice.

The letter/s of support should be attached at the back of the application. Failure to comply with the letter of support requirements will make an application ineligible.

4 Assessment process

The applications will be assessed by Department staff for completeness and eligibility. The Department has the right to remove applications that are incomplete, ineligible, not in keeping with the CRF Round 2 Funding Rules or clearly non-competitive, and to provide preliminary advice to the independent review panel.

Exclusion of applications may take place at any time during the selection process, including under the following circumstances:

• the application contravenes or is inconsistent with the CRF Round 2 Funding Rules and associated documentation
• the application was not submitted through HIIRO_Fellowships@health.qld.gov.au
• the application includes any false or misleading information
• the application is incomplete or late
• if the applicant attempts to give or offer any inducement, gift or reward, which could in any way influence the Department’s actions in relation to an application.
• If the applicant, or a person on their behalf, attempts to contact members of the independent review panel in relation to the assessment of their application or the peer review process.

Applications will be assessed under a competitive, merit-based process against selection criteria by an independent review panel, which will provide recommendations on Fellowship award recipients to the Department. However, the Department of Health has absolute discretion in making the final decision on awarding recipients.

If an applicant’s circumstances change after submission of an application for a Fellowship, the Recipient must notify the Department immediately.
The Department will advise each applicant in writing of the outcome of their application. No information will be released verbally.

The outcomes are final. The Department will not enter into any oral or written correspondence about selection decisions.

**Selection criteria**

The following selection criteria will guide the assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection Criteria</th>
<th>PhD pathway</th>
<th>Early Career, Mid Career and Experienced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Applicant Track Record and Potential</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• research outputs (publications, grants, invited speaker, awards and prizes, patents, supervision and mentoring),</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• clinical/health impact of research (contributions to improved clinical practice, policy change and/or better health outcomes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical research career vision and development plans for next four years</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Research Project and Plan</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The innovation, quality and feasibility of the proposed research project</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for the Fellowship project to impact policy and practice for better health outcomes for Queenslanders</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Early Career, Mid Career and Experienced awards, cash or in-kind contributions to the Fellowship from the administering or other partner organisation/s will be highly regarded.

**Career disruption**

A career disruption is considered to be a prolonged interruption to an applicant’s capacity to work due to pregnancy and childbirth, major illness and carer responsibilities (including parental leave). The period of career disruption may be used to determine eligibility and to allow for inclusion of additional track record information for assessment of an application by the review panel. Where relevant, applicants should nominate periods where their career has been disrupted over the last five years for a period of 90 days or more, and provide a brief explanation of the reason in their application.

**Relative to opportunity**

Applications will be assessed within the framework of ‘relative to opportunity’ where significant academic, clinical responsibilities or industry work placements have impacted on the applicant’s ability to conduct research over the last five years.
Confidentiality and privacy

The Department will use supplied information for the purpose of assessing Fellowship applications. All information provided during the application process is received and accepted by the Department in confidence, subject to any applicable statutory exception.

Information comprising the names of successful Recipients and Fellows, funding awarded, project title, project description and area of research may be made publicly available by the Department.

Details of unsuccessful applicants will remain confidential. Documents held by the Queensland Government are subject to the Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld) and will be retained as required under the Public Records Act 2002 (Qld).

5 Contractual Arrangements

The Recipient and the Department do not enter into a binding legal relationship unless and until a subsequent Agreement is executed between the Department and the Recipient.

The Fellowship is offered in accordance with the conditions specified in the Agreement, which is an agreement between the Recipient and the Department.

In signing the Agreement, all parties agree to the conditions contained in the Agreement and Schedules, including that research complies with relevant laws, guidelines and statements.

Dissemination and Publicity

Successful Fellows must acknowledge the Queensland Government's funding in all relevant published material, media releases and public statements.

Successful Fellows should actively promote their research, provide broad Fellowship information if required, and attend media/promotion events if requested.

It is expected that the Fellow will make time available during the Fellowship to publicly present their research findings or other outputs to audiences including the Department, the Queensland public health system and external researchers.

Successful recipients must not make any public announcement or advertisement in any medium in relation to the application process or outcome without the prior written approval from the Department.

6 Further information

Further information or specific queries regarding the CRF that aren't covered in this document or the Frequently Asked Questions document should be directed, via the administering organisation (Recipient), to:

Health Innovation, Investment and Research Office (HIIRO)
Office of the Director-General
Department of Health
Phone +61 (0) 7 3708 5089
Email HIIRO_Fellowships@health.qld.gov.au

Please direct all queries regarding eligibility to your administering organisation for advice as the Department of Health is unable to provide eligibility rulings to applicants prior to the submission deadline. Research Offices or equivalent may contact the Department for clarification of the Funding Rules on behalf of applicants.