

Queensland Health Clinical Research Fellowships

Round 8 – Frequently Asked Questions

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1. Eligibility

1.1. What is considered 'research'?

There is no one accepted definition of research. Research generally:

Addresses a gap in knowledge. It aims to create new knowledge and/or use existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings.

Produces generalisable or transferable knowledge. It produces findings that are applicable to or useful for other settings and includes plans for publication or knowledge translation.

Takes a systematic approach. It poses a clear research question or hypothesis, uses structured and reproducible methodology (e.g., study design, data collection, analysis), has ethical oversight and complies with research governance standards.

In Queensland Health, examples of research projects include:

- Developing a new training method, tool, or treatment pathway and testing it to generate evidence, insights or improve outcomes.
- Testing a proven model, tool, or evidence-based practice in a new setting to generate new insights that are transferable beyond that setting.
- Analysing a dataset to find new linkages or patterns in data.
- Exploring and analysing a dataset in a way that gives new information about a population.
- Exploring the experiences of patients to generate new insights towards better care.

1.2. I have applied for a permanent residency visa, but a decision has not been made on my application yet. Can I still apply for a Clinical Research Fellowship (CRF)?

At the time the Fellowship commences (upon execution of the Funding Agreement) and for the duration of the fellowship, Fellows must be employed by Queensland Health at a minimum of 0.2 FTE, including meeting relevant requirements for citizenship, residency or visa.

1.3. Does research undertaken during my PhD or Higher Degree by Research (HDR) count as research participation years?

The research undertaken during a PhD or HDR normally would not be considered as part of a research career. However, an individual case could be made if, for example, the applicant had a prior track record of previous clinical research and the research undertaken for their HDR was clinical and a continuation of this previous research or similar.

1.4. Would a PhD/HDR candidate be eligible for CRF R8?

PhD/HDR candidates can apply for CRF R8.

1.5. What is considered a salaried appointment with Queensland Health or another publicly funded healthcare facility?

A salaried appointment is defined as holding a payroll number with, and being paid directly by, Queensland Health or another publicly funded healthcare facility. Applicants who hold formal conjoint appointments between a Queensland Hospital and Health Service (HHS) and a Queensland research institution or university, including those where the academic partner is the employer, are eligible. Such applicants need to provide confirmation in the relevant HHS letter of support confirming the HHS's financial contribution to the conjoint appointment and the clinical elements of the role. This criterion must be met at the time of application and for the duration of the fellowship.

1.6. Why are research-only appointments excluded?

A primary objective of CRF is to increase clinician engagement in research and create additional research capacity within the clinical workforce. The funding is intended to directly address barriers to engaging with research faced by clinicians whose primary role is the delivery of healthcare and who have limited capacity to undertake research because of clinical service demands.

By comparison, staff appointed to research-only roles are already appointed specifically to conduct research, and do not face the challenge of balancing clinical duties with research activity.

1.7. Can part-time or temporary Queensland Health employees apply?

Yes. Applicants employed part-time or on fixed-term contracts are eligible, provided they hold a salaried appointment with Queensland Health (minimum 0.2 FTE) for the duration of the Fellowship. If your contract is due to expire within the Fellowship term, your letter of support should confirm the anticipated continuation of employment.

1.8. What are publicly funded healthcare facilities?

A publicly funded healthcare facility is a State-funded healthcare facility, providing public health care services, i.e., Hospital and Health Service facilities and Mater Hospital Brisbane.

1.9. What is meant by 'clinically related role'?

This is a role that could feasibly achieve the specific objectives of the CRF Program and meet the Selection Criteria described in the Queensland Health Clinical Research Fellowships Funding Guidelines. There are weightings assigned to the strength of the applicant's ability/potential to improve clinical practice, policy change and/or better health outcomes, and for the proposed research project to impact policy and practice. If the role can achieve these clinically related goals, then this should be demonstrated within the application.

1.10. I hold a joint appointment between a University and Queensland Health. Queensland Health pays a portion of my salary to the University, and then the University pays me. Am I eligible to apply?

A salaried appointment is defined as holding a payroll number with, and being paid directly by, Queensland Health or another publicly funded healthcare facility. Applicants who hold formal conjoint appointments between a Queensland HHS and a Queensland research institution or university, including those where the academic partner is the employer, are eligible. Such applicants need to provide confirmation, in the relevant HHS letter of support, confirming the HHS's financial contribution to the conjoint appointment and the clinical elements of the role. This criterion must be met at the time of application and for the duration of the Fellowship.

1.11. Does my employing Queensland Health HHS (or other publicly funded healthcare facility) have to be included as a participating organisation?

Yes, your employing HHS (or other publicly funded healthcare facility) must be either the Administering Organisation or partner organisation and support the application.

1.12. Should I put my employing Queensland Health HHS (or other publicly funded healthcare facility) down as my Administering Organisation, or should they be a partner organisation?

The Department cannot advise on whether participating organisations should assume the role of Administering Organisation or partner organisation. Please have discussions directly with your participating organisations to determine the best arrangements for your application and circumstances.

1.13. What are examples of Queensland-based research organisations?

These are research organisations external to Queensland Health and can include Queensland universities or medical research institutes, not-for-profit entities and/or industry partners. A research organisation can act as an Administering Organisation **or** partner organisation. A university that is incorporated interstate but has a campus in Queensland is not considered a Queensland-based research organisation for the purposes of the CRF Program.

1.14. Can I have more than one partner organisation and must they all be based in Queensland?

Yes, you can have more than one partner organisation. While not all partner organisations must be based in Queensland, we ask that applicants consider the objectives of the CRF Program when choosing partners.

1.15. Can two investigators from the same team submit separate Fellowship applications for the same project idea?

Yes. Multiple applications may relate to similar or shared projects, but each Fellowship application must clearly define the applicant's individual role and objectives. Only one Fellowship can be awarded per applicant.

1.16. If my primary workplace is a metro HHS that covers rural satellite sites, do I qualify for the rural weighting?

Only clinicians employed by and based within a regional, rural or remote HHS are eligible for the weighting.

1.17. If I have applied for the Clinical Research Capability Building Grant, can I also apply for a CRF Round 8 Fellowship?

Yes. Applicants may apply for one CRF and one Capability Building Grant in this round, provided the applications are for distinct purposes (i.e., one supports an individual fellowship and the other supports research capacity building) and there is no duplication of funding proposed. Applicants may also apply for both grants for the same or similar purposes; however, if both applications are successful, funding will only be awarded for one.

1.18. Who can I make queries to about my eligibility?

Please discuss your eligibility with the research office or equivalent at your Administering Organisation. The Administering Organisation can contact the Department on your behalf to clarify aspects of the Funding Guidelines.

2. Conditions of funding

2.1. How does 'active research participation of 0.2FTE' differ from the appointment requirement of 0.2FTE?

The 0.2FTE appointment is the minimum salaried appointment that an applicant must hold at Queensland Health or another publicly funded healthcare facility to be eligible to apply. 'Active research participation' refers to the time a Fellow will spend on the Fellowship research project, rather than on non-Fellowship commitments. The expectation is that the level of active research participation by recipients is at least 0.2FTE over the duration of the Fellowship. Please note that the Department cannot advise how this should be arranged between applicant and employer/Administering Organisation.

2.2. I currently hold a fellowship/grant and want to finish it first before I start the CRF R8. Is this ok?

The Fellowship must commence by 30 June 2027. If you anticipate being unable to commence the Fellowship by this date (considering your current contractual obligations with another funder), you may need to instead consider applying for a future round.

2.3. I have applied for funding elsewhere for the same project. What if both applications are successful?

Applicants and successful Fellows may apply for or hold other grants outside of the CRF. However, other grants must not:

- duplicate funding for the Fellowship research (the CRF project must be significantly different from other funded research being undertaken by the Fellow during the duration of the Fellowship)
- duplicate funding for the Fellow's salary (the Fellowship will not pay the salary of a Fellow when the Fellow's salary is being drawn from another source), or
- impact the Fellow's time commitment on the CRF research project (a Fellow must commit a minimum of 0.2FTE to the Fellowship research (averaged over the Fellowship duration) and progress the research in line with the agreed Milestones).

2.4. My supervisor is located interstate. Is this an issue?

Given the objectives of the CRF program, and the active management and guidance role that is expected of a nominated supervisor, the primary supervisor must be based in Queensland. However, additional/secondary nominated supervisors can be based outside of Queensland.

3. Funding use

3.1. Can I use the funding for salary to cover additional hours worked on the research project beyond the FTE I am employed for?

Yes, provided that your total Queensland Health full-time equivalent (FTE), including any Fellowship-funded component, does not exceed 1.0 FTE. The salary rate used must also not exceed the rate you receive in your substantive clinical position.

3.2. Can Fellowship funds be used to employ a research assistant?

Yes, salary support for dedicated research or technical staff is permitted, provided the Fellow remains actively engaged in research for at least 0.2 FTE.

3.3. Does the \$8,000 (\$10,000 for regional, rural & remote researchers) travel expense limit mean I can request up to \$8,000/\$10,000 per annum or in total?

This means this can be requested in total across the Fellowship duration (not per year).

3.4. Can I request travel costs for my research team, or for collaborators to travel to visit me?

No. Travel costs can be requested for the Fellow only and must be essential to the project (except for the mentorship supplement).

3.5. Can projects that have already commenced be supported?

Yes. Projects already underway may be funded where, the Fellowship adds value to the project, such as enabling continued or expanded work and there is no duplication of existing funding.

4. Mentorship supplement

4.1 What are the features of a successful mentorship?

A mentoring relationship is between a more experienced researcher and a researcher early in their career. The Mentor may be the researcher's supervisor, or another nominated person with the relevant experience to provide mentoring support. Key functions of the mentoring relationship are the provision of:

- Personal and career development – in the form of a responsive, supportive professional relationship, active career guidance, critical reflection, review of progress toward goals, and realisation of professional aspirations.
- Skills development – building research competencies through education and tutoring, academic and professional support, and role modelling.
- Networking - in the form of sponsorship, through public acknowledgement, facilitation of connections and advocacy for the mentee.

4.2 Can the mentorship supplement be used for project costs, such as supporting the salary of my project team?

No. The supplement funding must directly support the goals of the proposed mentorship for the benefit of the eligible researcher's research capability and career. Eligible researchers and their chosen mentor should work together to develop a mentorship agreement suited to their needs.

4.3 Can a prospective mentor also apply for a Fellowship at a different career stage?

Yes. Mentors may submit their own Fellowship application in a relevant career category.

4.4 Is the mentorship supplement limited to rural applicants?

No. It is open to all eligible applicants; however, it is strongly encouraged for those from regional, rural, or remote HHSs where mentorship opportunities may be more limited.

4.5 Does my mentor have to be an academic?

No. Mentors can be from clinical, academic, or research leadership backgrounds. What matters is their ability to strengthen your research capability and foster your research career development.

4.6 Can the mentorship supplement support professional development separate from my project?

Yes. The supplement can fund activities that strengthen your research capability (e.g., structured mentoring, shadowing, workshops, collaborative placements), even if these are distinct from your project.

4.7 How can I ensure my application for a mentorship supplement is competitive?

Clearly demonstrate a strong focus on building and strengthening the mentor-mentee relationship. Provide clear links between the proposed mentorship activities and short-term professional development goals and longer-term career progression.

5. Application process

5.1. How do I decide which research career category to apply for?

Applicants should review the *Categories and specific funding intent* table (under 2.2 Categories and grant amount) in the Funding Guidelines.

Career stage is made up of a combination of factors, including research experience, level of research independence, research outputs, success in attracting funding and leadership and supervision responsibilities, which need to be considered in the context of career interruptions or non-traditional pathways, and overall record relative to opportunity. Career stage is not primarily determined by specific years or qualifications (e.g. PhD).

You are likely suitable for Novice (provided you are employed at a regional, rural or remote HHS) if you have little or no formal research experience, need structured training and mentoring and have very little or no research track record.

You are likely suitable for Emerging if you are new to research, **still need support with research processes, may be beginning** contributing to projects and outputs, and if you still rely on mentoring and structured support.

You are likely suitable for Early Career if you are establishing yourself as an independent researcher, have a developing track record, are strengthening collaborations and developing funding success and have led projects or are beginning to supervise others.

You are likely suitable for Mid-Career if you **lead independent projects, are building a profile and research impact**, have secured competitive funding and publish consistently, and supervise others and contribute to research leadership.

For the mid-career category, the application needs to very clearly demonstrate the value and impact of the funding for the applicant's continued career progression. Preference will be given to applicants for whom the funding will have the highest impact.

CRF intends to support career progression towards competitive research funding. Researchers who have significant and/or Category 1 (Australian competitive grant research income) funding success, an established national or international profile and/or lead a significant, established and ongoing program of research work may be considered to be beyond the scope of this category.

5.2. Could you advise who my authorised delegate is at my Administering Organisation and what they need to sign?

Unfortunately, the Department can't advise who the authorised delegate is at your Administering Organisation. However, the Administering Organisation's research office or equivalent should be able to assist you. The authorised delegate must sign the Administering Organisation Certification in the application form. They must have the authority to do so on behalf of the Administering Organisation.

5.3. Can I include a list of references as part of my application?

Yes, a reference list can be included as an attachment to the application in the publication list attachment section.

6. Assessment process

- 6.1. I'm employed by a regional HHS but based out of a rural or remote health facility. Am I eligible for the additional 15% weighting for rural & remote researchers?

Yes, researchers working in a rural or remote health facility ([Map of rural and remote health facilities | Queensland Health](#)) are eligible for the additional 15% weighting for rural or remote researchers.

7. Outcomes and commencement

- 7.1. When will outcomes of this round be announced?

We anticipate outcomes will be communicated in April/May 2027.

- 7.2. My application was unsuccessful. Am I able to request feedback?

Feedback can be provided to applicants who request this in writing from the Department. The written request must be received within three months of applicants being advised of their outcomes.

- 7.3. If I am notified my CRF application is successful, what are the next steps?

You can commence your project once a fully executed Queensland Health Research Fellowship Funding Agreement is in place. Shortly after issuing your award letter, our office will contact your Administering Organisation's research office or equivalent to reconfirm the proposed project budget and milestones. Our office will then finalise the Agreement and will ask for the Agreement Schedules to be checked.

Once the Schedules are confirmed by the Administering Organisation as being correct, Departmental execution will be arranged, followed by execution by the Administering Organisation and the Fellow. The Agreement will then be considered fully executed, and the project can commence.

Advice: We strongly recommend you begin preparing and submitting your ethics and governance application as soon as you are notified of your success. You do not need to wait for the Funding Agreement to be signed to start these processes. This can help ensure your project is ready to commence promptly once the Agreement is executed.

- 7.4. When can I start my Fellowship?

The Fellowship commences once the Fellowship Funding Agreement is fully executed. The Fellowship research activities and expenditure cannot commence before this date. However, please initiate your ethics and governance preparation and submission as soon as you are notified of your success. Please note that it is anticipated that the outcomes will be communicated in April/May 2027. In the weeks after the announcement, the Department will work with successful Fellows and Administering Organisations to confirm Schedules and fully execute the Agreement. It is anticipated that the agreements will be fully executed before 30 June 2027. If you anticipate being unable to commence the project at this time, you may need to reconsider applying in this round.

- 7.5. What deliverables will be required once I start my project?

Please refer to your executed Agreement for the full list of project deliverables and reporting requirements.

You must meet project deliverables by the deadlines specified in the executed Agreement. You will be required to provide annual Progress Reports and a Final Report. The Progress Reports require details about the progress of your project and whether milestones have been met. Financial reporting and provision of a financial statement by the Administering Organisation's finance department is also a key component of the reporting process. Payment instalments will be made by the Department to the

Administering Organisation once completed and signed reports are received and deemed acceptable by the Department.

7.6. Can I make a change to my project after I've started?

Changes are only allowed in exceptional circumstances. If you anticipate a change to your project (such as timeframe, funding use, scope, or Administration Organisation), you must advise the research office (or equivalent) at your Administering Organisation and submit details in writing to the Department. Where necessary, changes will be formalised through a variation, effective once signed by both the Department and the Administering Organisation. Delays in advising the Department may result in suspension or termination of your Fellowship.