



2025 Research Grant Round Application Guidelines

Expressions of Interest open **9am 28 January 2025**
Expressions of Interest close **9am 10 March 2025**

Late applications will not be accepted

Please direct all queries to research@wesleyresearch.org.au

1. About Wesley Research Institute

Wesley Research Institute is the second oldest medical research institute in Queensland having proudly contributed to health and medical research for the past 30 years. As the UnitingCare research partner, our research extends across the UnitingCare network including Lifeline, Blue Care, and the four private hospitals (St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital, The Wesley Hospital, Buderim Private Hospital and St Stephen's Hospital (Hervey Bay)).

Wesley Research Institute predominately focuses on translational research and works closely with experienced doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals to deliver improved treatments, better diagnostics and enhanced care. Wesley Research Institute aims to make a real difference, and is committed to providing better health outcomes, real impact and quality of life for patients and their families, as well as building supportive communities.

2. About the 2025 Grant Round

2.1 Grant Round Purpose

The Wesley Research Institute 2025 Research Grant Round will continue the Institute's 30-year focus of supporting groundbreaking medical and health research. The purpose of the 2025 Research Grant Round is to support researchers affiliated with the UnitingCare hospital network by providing funds to launch innovative and impactful research in strategic areas of importance to the Institute and UnitingCare. The aim is to empower researchers who demonstrate the interest and potential for ongoing success in knowledge advancement and developing solutions to key challenges within identified medical and health domains. Through this support, Wesley Research Institute seeks to accelerate discovery, enhance expertise and promote leadership among the next generation of research pioneers across the UnitingCare hospital network.

2.2 Eligible Research

The Wesley Research Institute Research Grant Round is targeted towards research projects and activities that fall within the T2 to T5 phases of the translational research pathway (refer to Figure 1m below) – clinical studies, clinical trials, translation to clinical practice and translation to public health.

Clinical research that improves healthcare delivery and access to care within the T4 to T5 phases of the translational research pathway may be considered health services research projects. These research activities aim to improve the way healthcare is delivered, ensuring systems and processes are effective and efficient.

All research activities funded by Wesley Research Institute must focus on improving health outcomes for patients within the UnitingCare hospital network.

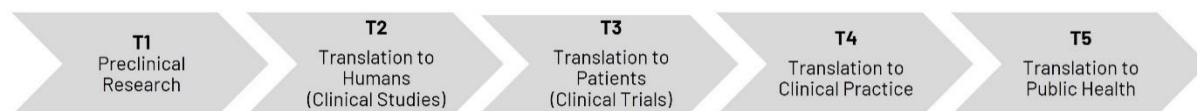


Figure 1: Translational Research Pathway.

2.3 Available Funding Opportunities

In the 2025 Research Grant Round, Wesley Research Institute will be accepting applications for projects with a budget request **between \$75,000 to \$150,000** for a **maximum duration of 2 years**. Projects must focus on at least one of the following **Strategic Areas** of importance:

- **Cancer;**
- **Cardiovascular and Critical Care;**
- **Infectious Disease and Immunology;**
- **Respiratory;**
- **Neurology and Mental Health;**
- **Surgical Outcomes and Perioperative Care;**
- **Obstetrics, Maternity and Gynaecology;**
- **Rehabilitation;**
- **Aging and Geriatric Medicine; and**
- **Orthopaedics.**

2.4 Wesley Research Institute Support

Wesley Research Institute has established a suite of research infrastructure led by qualified experts that can service and enhance proposed projects. All support options are available to applicants at a reduced cost and subject to availability. Support options include:

- **Biobank** – Collection, storage and distribution of tissue samples and associated clinical data for biomedical research.
- **Clinical Trials Centre** – Clinical trial support including access to research nurses, research assistants and administrative support.
- **Health Services Research** – Support with research methods such as implementation science, health economics, health service statistics, and consumer-led research. These methods are important for assessing the implementation context of a new intervention/device/drug/model of care, and for evaluating their clinical and economic effectiveness.
- **Queensland Spatial Biology Centre (QSBC)** – Access to cutting-edge spatial biology techniques dedicated to unlocking the secrets of individual cell interactions.
- **Statistical Support** – Access to advanced statistical support including developing a statistical analysis plan and conducting final data analyses.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to incorporate the use of these Wesley Research Institute services in their proposed projects where applicable. Please contact research@wesleyresearch.org.au if you require additional information regarding these services or to discuss support options. Wesley Research Institute staff will also discuss these services at the Primary Applicant Interview stage as described in Section 4.2.

3. Eligibility Criteria

3.1 Applicant Requirements

Applications submitted in the 2025 Research Grant Round are subject to the following requirements:

- The Primary Applicant must be **staff** or a **healthcare professional (e.g., doctor, nurse, pharmacist, physiotherapist, allied health, support services etc.)** who works within the UnitingCare hospital network (St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital, The Wesley Hospital, Buderim Private Hospital and St Stephen's Hospital (Hervey Bay)).
- The Primary Applicant must have fulfilled all obligations from any previous Wesley Research Institute awards or grants, including submission of required progress/final and financial reports.
- At least 50% of the research activity must occur within the UnitingCare hospital network.
- Only **one** application per Primary Applicant will be accepted.

- Employees or appointees of Wesley Research Institute are not eligible to apply.
- The Primary Applicant must ensure that their line manager supports the application as applicable.
- The Primary Applicant must be able to obtain a Letter of Support from the Head of Department of the UnitingCare Hospital facility/facilities at which the research will be conducted.
- The Primary Applicant must ensure Good Clinical Practice (GCP) training has been completed within the previous 2 years prior to the commencement of the project.
- The Primary Applicant must be willing to obtain an honorary affiliation with Wesley Research Institute before the commencement of the project.
- The Primary Applicant must be the project leader and will be responsible for the successful completion of the research project.

3.2 Ineligible Expenses

Funding must **not** be requested for any of the following items:

- Infrastructure (such as capital works, general maintenance costs, office telephone systems);
- Basic office equipment, rent, utilities, etc.;
- Retrospective funding;
- Recurrent administrative costs; and
- Institutional overheads.

Please refer to **Appendix C** for a list of eligible budget items.

4. Application Process

4.1 Expression of Interest

Wesley Research Institute requests applicants for the 2025 Research Grant Round to submit an initial Expression of Interest to be considered for this opportunity. This will include a breakdown of the Primary Applicant's career to date along with an initial overview of the proposed project.

Expressions of Interest open for submissions on **9am 28 January 2025** and close **9am 10 March 2025**.

Please read the following guidelines and instructions carefully before completing an Expression of Interest.

- Expressions of Interest must be submitted online via <https://wesleyresearch.smartygrants.com.au/2025>.
- Applicants can delegate application submission to support staff with a SmartyGrants account.
- Applicants can return to SmartyGrants at any time to view their application. Please note your application cannot be changed once it has been submitted.
- **Word limits apply** in the application form as specified. SmartyGrants will allow applicants to enter additional words above the word limit, however the application cannot be submitted until the word limit is complied with.
- Applications that are submitted after the closing date, or do not adhere to the instructions, will not be considered. Hard copy (paper) applications or Word documents submitted via email **will not be accepted**.
- Supporting documentation for the Expression of Interest must be uploaded using the following example naming convention:
SmartyGrants Reference Number_Primary Applicant Surname_CV
- Receipt of a submitted application is acknowledged by confirmation email from SmartyGrants.

4.2 Primary Applicant Interviews

Following the closing date for Expressions of Interest, Wesley Research Institute staff will request an introductory meeting with **selected** Primary Applicants to discuss their applications. This will provide an opportunity for Wesley Research Institute to obtain additional information on the Primary Applicant, including their current work and future research ambitions, as well as the proposed project. Staff may also provide feedback on the application and discuss potential Wesley Research Institute support options as applicable to the proposed project.

It is expected interviews will be held in the period March–April 2025 and will be in-person or via Teams. Wesley Research Institute staff will try to accommodate the schedules of Primary Applicants where possible. Interviews will be mandatory and failure to attend will result in removal of the application for further consideration.

4.3 Full Applications

Selected applicants will be required to submit a Full Application providing additional details relating to the proposed project. Further information for this stage will be provided to the selected applicants at this stage of the process.

It is expected that Full Applications will be due for submission in **May 2025**, although this is subject to change at Wesley Research Institute's discretion. Applicants who fail to submit a Full Application by the advertised due date will be removed for further consideration.

5. Submitting an Expression of Interest

Please read the following guidelines and instructions carefully before completing an Expression of Interest via SmartyGrants at <https://wesleyresearch.smartygrants.com.au/2025>.

Page 1 – Application Instructions

Confirm that the Primary Applicant and project complies with the eligibility criteria specified. If the response is “no”, the application should not be submitted.

Page 2 – Primary Applicant Details

Section	Guidance
Primary Applicant Details	Provide details as requested for the Primary Applicant .
Research Career (Primary Applicant)	<p>Provide details of the Primary Applicant's contributions and key achievements within health and medical research to date. This may include details and outcomes of current and past projects, overview of research publication record, impacts on health and medical policy or practice and/or other relevant research achievements.</p> <p>Outline the future research ambitions and goals of the Primary Applicant. This should include details of what they wish to achieve and how they will seek to achieve it. Successful Primary Applicants should be striving for ongoing research contributions and involvement beyond the proposed project.</p>
Career Disruptions (Primary Applicant)	Provide a summary of eligible career disruptions that are relevant to the Primary Applicant's research track record (if applicable). Provide the type of career disruption, the impact it may have had on your research outputs and achievements and the duration of the disruption. Refer to Appendix B for information regarding eligible career disruptions.

Curriculum Vitae (Primary Applicant)	<p>Attach a brief Curriculum Vitae for the Primary Applicant (<u>maximum two pages</u>). This should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualifications; • Employment, appointments and/or other positions held; • Research outputs, including publications list/summary, patents and/or clinical guidelines; • Student supervision/mentoring (if applicable); • Clinical training/workshops (as lead/participant); and • Other relevant research career achievements not described elsewhere in the Expression of Interest.
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Page 3 – Project Overview

Section	Guidance
Project Titles	Provide a project title, in both plain English and scientific terms.
Strategic Area	Select the Wesley Research Institute Strategic Area in which <u>the majority</u> of the proposed project will be undertaken.
Project Synopsis	Summarise the project in plain English and describe the impact the research will have on patients and/or the respective health and medical research field.
Research Plan	<p>Briefly provide details as requested relating to the proposed project. This covers methodology and analyses, access, research locations, project duration and total budget requested.</p> <p>Additional details relating to the Research Plan will be requested in the Full Application stage for those applications that progress to this stage.</p>
Research Team	Provide requested details of the research team (excluding the Primary Applicant) who will collectively conduct the research. A maximum of 10 team members may be listed.

Wesley Research Institute Support	<p>Indicate what support options available from the Wesley Research Institute that the project team wish to access for the proposed project. Consider the skills and expertise of the research team and any gaps that may exist in delivering the proposed research. Support available includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biobank – Collection, storage and distribution of tissue samples and associated clinical data for biomedical research. • Clinical Trials Centre – Clinical trial support including access to research nurses, research assistants and administrative support. • Health Services Research – Support with research methods such as implementation science, health economics, health service statistics, and consumer-led research. These methods are important for assessing the implementation context of a new intervention/device/drug/model of care, and for evaluating their clinical and economic effectiveness. • Queensland Spatial Biology Centre (QSBC) – Access to cutting-edge spatial biology techniques dedicated to unlocking the secrets of individual cell interactions. • Statistical Support – Access to advanced statistical support including developing a statistical analysis plan and conducting final data analyses. <p>Details including availability and costs of these services will be discussed with the Primary Applicant during the Primary Applicant Interview stage for those applications that progress to this stage.</p>
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Page 4 – Privacy Policy and Award Terms

The Primary Applicant must confirm that they have read and understood the Privacy Statement and Award Terms and Conditions in **Appendix D**.

Privacy Statement:

Personal Information is being, or has been collected, by Wesley Research Institute to facilitate provision of services related to research and grant opportunities to you and/or to keep you informed about Wesley Research Institute related activities. Wesley Research Institute respects your privacy and embrace the principles contained in the Privacy Act.

A copy of the Wesley Research Institute Privacy Policy is available at wesleyresearch.org.au/privacy-policy.

Reviewing and Submitting an Expression of Interest

The last page of the application opens a review screen that includes all of the application pages collated onto a single page. An error message at the top of the review page indicates that some changes to the application are required before submission – these will be highlighted in red on the application form and the applicant will be directed to the relevant section/s of the application. The applicant should study the content for accuracy at this point as changes cannot be made following submission.

6. Assessment of Grant Applications

6.1 Assessment Process

All Full Applications will undergo a peer review process, where applications are scored against the below assessment criteria. The highest-ranked applications will be considered for funding in the 2025 Research Grant Round.

6.2 Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

Primary Applicant (40% of total assessment rating)

- The Primary Applicant possesses the expertise, experience and capability to lead the proposed project, as indicated by their track record and taking into account any eligible Career Disruptions.
- The Primary Applicant demonstrates the intent, ambition and capacity for ongoing success in their research career.

Research Project (40% of total assessment rating)

- The objectives/hypotheses of the proposed project are well supported by an existing evidence-base (i.e. preliminary data, clinical studies, information in the literature).
- The proposal has well-defined, achievable goals/objectives, key milestones and deliverables.
- The strategy, methodology, and analyses defined in the proposed project are well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project.
- The proposed project aligns with at least one Strategic Area of Wesley Research Institute and demonstrates the potential to achieve significant positive outcomes in the specified area(s).
- The proposed project aligns with the translational research pathway and provides an acceptable translation plan to demonstrate how improved patient outcomes can be achieved.
- The listed research team collectively possess the qualifications, skills and experience that can achieve the project objectives on time and within budget.
- The research team has demonstrated access to allocated research time, facilities, equipment, patients, stakeholders, staff/volunteers, etc. as required to complete the proposed project.

Project Budget (20% of total assessment rating)

- All budget items, including staff salaries and consumables are clear and well justified.
- The budget is sufficient for the proposed project and represents value for money.

7. Awarding Funds

Applications approved for funding will be sent a Letter of Offer and Funding Agreement for execution. It is a condition of funding that all required approvals and clearances are obtained prior to project commencement and an honorary appointment with Wesley Research Institute has been formalised.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation of Approved Projects

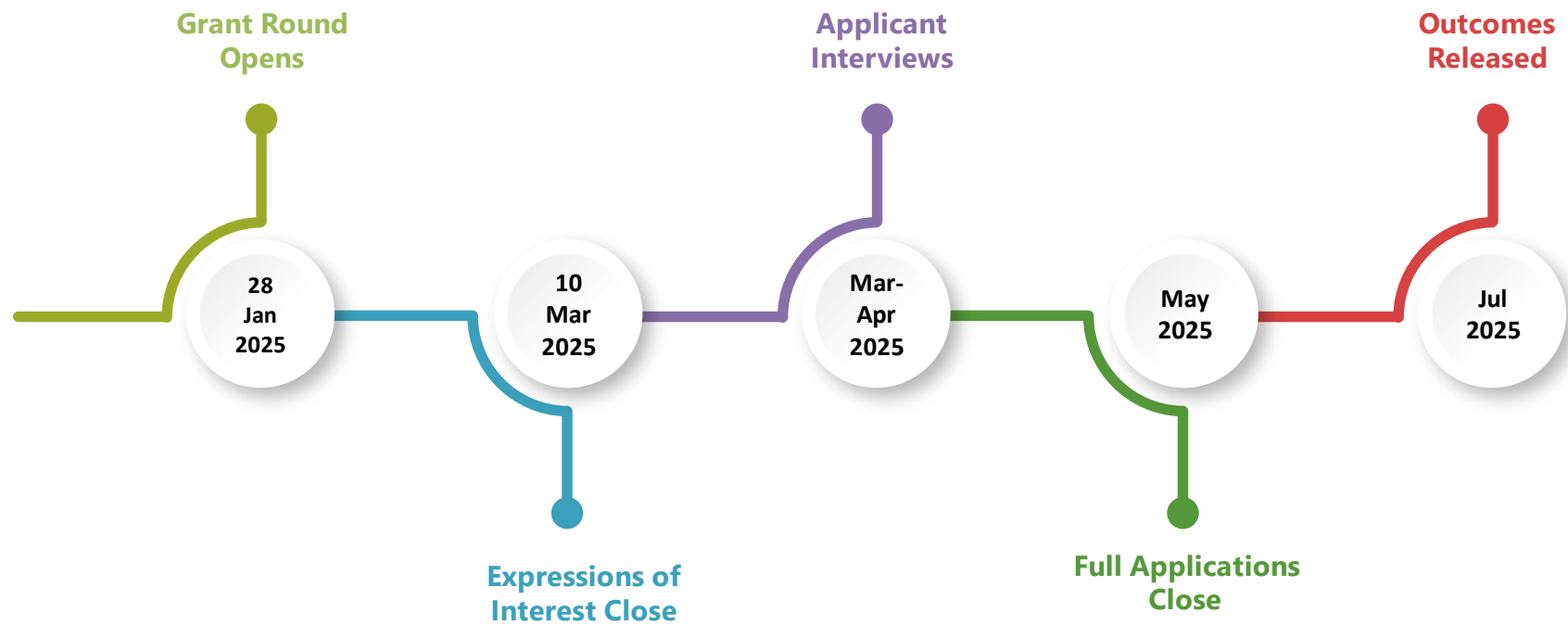
Wesley Research Institute has a strong focus on the translational impact of research and utilises the *Performance, Outputs, Engagement and Translational Impact (POET)* framework as a measurement tool.

The POET framework enables objective monitoring and evaluation of research funded by Wesley Research Institute in accordance with defined performance indicators for each criterion. **Appendix E** provides greater detail about the POET framework and associated performance indicators.

Wesley Research Institute requires progress reporting to be completed at defined time points during the funding period. An annual review of the research project will be conducted by Wesley Research Institute which reserves the right to discontinue funding should it deem that the research conducted does not

comply with the submitted proposal and/or the assessment criteria. A final report will be required to evaluate the research project's successful completion against the POET framework.

Appendix A – Key Dates: 2025 Research Grant Round



*** All dates subject to change at the discretion of Wesley Research Institute**

Appendix B – Glossary of Terms

Career Disruption involves a prolonged interruption to the Primary Applicant's capacity to work, due to:

- Parental leave;
- Major illness/injury;
- Carer responsibilities; or
- Study leave (i.e., PhD, MPhil, Higher Degree etc).

Interruptions must involve either a continuous absence from work for periods of 28 calendar days or more and/or a long-term partial return to work (with the absence amounting to a total of 28 calendar days or more) that has been formalised with the Primary Applicant's employer.

Eligibility Criteria means the statements of the standards that applicants must meet in order for their grant application to be reviewed.

Equipment means any non-consumable item or group of items of tangible property purchased in whole or in part with grant funding.

Expression of Interest means the initial stage of the application process as described in Section 5.

Funding Agreement means the legal instrument of financial assistance between Wesley Research Institute and the Recipient.

Primary Applicant means the person responsible for the conduct and reporting of the proposed research. The Primary Applicant has ultimate responsibility over all aspects of the research grant and reporting.

Recipient means the entity that receives a Wesley Research Institute Research Grant and is responsible for the completion and reporting of the research stipulated in the corresponding application as per the Funding Agreement.

SmartyGrants is the online grants management system used by Wesley Research Institute to manage the entire project grant cycle from application to evaluation.

Appendix C – Budget Examples

Acceptable funding requests:

Direct Costs	Description
Primary Applicant salary	Wesley Research Institute will consider direct salary funding (including on-costs) for the Primary Applicant, subject to details of clinical backfill arrangements, approved by their direct line manager. The Primary Applicant must retain at least 0.5 FTE clinical load. The proposed salary budget must not exceed 80% of the total requested grant amount.
Other personnel salary	Personnel specifically employed for conducting the project, e.g., research nurse, research assistant, etc. Hourly rates of pay are to be determined from the relevant Award Rates of pay for administrative and technical support. On-costs are to be listed separately.
Consumables	E.g., investigational drug, blood collection tubes, syringes, etc.
Diagnostic tests and interventions	E.g., MRI/PET/CT scans, blood tests, doctor's time to conduct the test or intervention
Pharmacy fees	Fees for dispensing, storage, destruction, etc. of an investigational product
Equipment	Equipment must be justified for the proposed study to achieve its objectives. Equipment costs must not exceed 50% of the total requested grant amount.
Software	Software specifically required for the conduct of the project, e.g., the use of a database.
Licenses for outcome measures	Required for the access and use of outcome measures during the project.
Publication Costs	Costs associated with journal fees.
Participant travel reimbursement	Reimbursement or payment incentive to research participants (e.g., parking), as long as payment is ethically acceptable (see the NHMRC document 'Using the National Statement I: Payments to participants in research, particularly clinical trials').
Travel for research staff	Funding for travel is only available if it is an integral part of the project, i.e., data collection, multi-site collaborations. The mode of travel must be indicated.

Appendix D – Award Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions apply to the conduct and approval of the research project:

1. The Primary Applicant certifies that all the information given in this application is correct, and accepts the funding decision by Wesley Research Institute as final.
2. A Funding Agreement will be prepared by Wesley Research Institute for successful applications. The Funding Agreement outlines all conditions of the Award.
3. The Primary Applicant must obtain an honorary affiliation with Wesley Research Institute prior to the commencement of the project.
4. Ethical and governance approvals will be sought from the UnitingCare Health Human Research Ethics Committee and any additional ethics committees, and followed, in conducting the research. Initial funding will be contingent on all ethics and governance approvals being obtained. Continued funding will be contingent on all ethics and governance approvals being adhered to.
5. At agreed milestones and upon completion of the research project, the Recipient shall provide a progress report and/or presentation to Wesley Research Institute, in a format as prescribed by Wesley Research Institute, regarding the conduct of the research, and the results and findings.
6. A brief summary of the project, including results, will be published on the Wesley Research Institute website.
7. Awardees must be available on occasion during the project to present the findings of their project to an audience at, or external to, Wesley Research Institute. This may include presentations at donor functions, fundraising events, or other public relations activities such as being interviewed or featured in Wesley Research Institute media promotions.
8. The research project will be conducted as described in the proposal submitted for review, unless Wesley Research Institute is advised otherwise in advance in writing, and approves the changes.
9. The research project must be completed within the time specified in the Funding Agreement from the date of execution of the Funding Agreement, unless a no-cost extension request is submitted to Wesley Research Institute in writing prior to the end of this term, and the request is approved.
10. An extension can be requested a maximum of one time and must not exceed a delay of more than 12 months in total. Wesley Research Institute reserves all right in the termination of funding if this is exceeded, to ensure that it continues to meet its overall research vision and the institute's funders' expectations.
11. Periodic review of the research project will be conducted by Wesley Research Institute, which reserves the right to terminate funding should the research outcomes fail to meet the assessment and evaluation criteria.

Appendix E – Monitoring and Evaluation POET Framework

