



Australian Government

National Health and Medical Research Council

Capacity Building Grants for Population Health and Health Services Research

Program Framework

Call for Applications: 12 April 2008

Applications Close: 13 June 2008 Midnight EST

Contact for further information

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Capacity Building Grants for Population Health and Health Services Research

1. Objective

The objective of the Capacity Building Grants in Population Health and Health Services Research is to develop research capacity across the full range of population health and health services research. The scheme provides flexible support to build groups of excellent population health and/or health services researchers. The scheme will seek to strengthen and grow teams with an established basis and a record of undertaking innovative, significant and internationally competitive research.

The scheme will primarily provide support to (a) develop capacity within teams of researchers by bringing in new expertise and (b) increase workforce capacity by developing less experienced researchers to become research leaders (new independent researchers). It will be flexible to encourage the development of approaches to building capacity that best meet the needs of different teams. Applications that contribute to the growth of Indigenous health research capacity are encouraged.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Capacity Building Grants is to develop population health and/or health services research by strengthening teams of researchers that already have established research programs. It is therefore anticipated that the application will be submitted by a group of **Chief Investigators** who will normally be seeking funding to support other individuals (**Team Investigators**) to work within their group. Team Investigators might be individuals who are still establishing their careers; they might also be more senior researchers recruited on a full or part time basis to provide special skills to the group. Chief Investigators will not be eligible to seek funding for their own salaries through the Grant.

3. What the funds can be used for

The Capacity Building Grants may be used for a wide range of activities designed to build critical mass and develop new independent researchers. They might be used to:

- Develop collaborative linkages or for career development
- Increase the size or skills in a team
- Recruit new senior researchers (including from overseas)
- Foster more junior researchers to become independently competitive
- Enable the development of emerging areas that are important to population health and/or health services practice and policy but are currently very underdeveloped in Australia
- Further strengthen areas in which Australia has world-leading population health and/or health service research

Groups funded under the scheme will:

- Be undertaking research that is innovative, significant and internationally competitive
- Be undertaking research within the broad areas of public health, health services research and related fields
- Propose effective strategies for building capacity as appropriate to the focus area of the grant.

4. Funding

A total of up to \$18 million is available under this call for applications. Up to \$10 million may be allocated to grants with a focus on health services research and up to \$8 million may be allocated to grants with a focus on public health research and related fields.

The Grants will provide funds of up to \$2.5 million for five year grants, or pro rata. Applicants will normally be funded for up to a five-year period on a one-off basis.

The funds requested:

- Will be used primarily to provide support for Team Investigators
- Can be used for direct research costs however these must be detailed in the application and the applicant must demonstrate the contribution these costs will have on building capacity
- Will usually support individuals at the postdoctoral level or above
- May be used to support more senior researchers or to support PhD students provided that an adequate case is made.

Chief Investigators or Mentors are not eligible to seek funding for their own salaries through the grant. It is anticipated that the Team Investigators or individuals to be supported by the Grant will usually be named on the application. However, NHMRC will accept applications containing details on strategies to attract researchers and build capacity in the future.

5. Eligibility for other NHMRC Funding Schemes

Chief Investigators and Team Investigators holding Capacity Building Grants are eligible to apply for all other NHMRC funding schemes, depending on their specific criteria.

6. Selection Criteria for Capacity Building Grants:

Applicants for Capacity Building Grants will be assessed according to:

Criterion 1) Record of achievement of the Chief Investigators (40%)

The Chief Investigator's record of achievement in population health and/or health service research will encompass a broad spectrum of achievements, including but not limited to: publications in peer-reviewed journals, published books, and other relevant forms such as reports to government; invitations to present work nationally or internationally; IP

developments and commercialisation activities; attraction of funding (NHMRC, other Australian peer-reviewed, other Australian funding, international peer-reviewed funding, private sector funding); awards; demonstrable effects of previous research on health care practices or policy; postgraduate training and training, mentoring and team building at the post-doctoral level; and other research-related service achievements such as in research development, health or clinical policy or practice, and influential advice to health care authorities.

Where support is sought for Team Investigators, their record of achievement relative to opportunity and seniority will also be considered.

Criterion 2) Building capacity in population health and/or health services research (40%)

Applications will be assessed both in terms of the proposed building/consolidation of the research team and the significance of the potential impact on population health or health services research in Australia.

Applicants are encouraged to describe the effective strategies and innovative approaches to improving capacity; it is intended that the scheme be sufficiently flexible to ensure that teams can develop an approach that is most likely to be effective in their context.

A key component of the application will be a description of the anticipated outcomes from the grant and how they would be achieved. The anticipated outcomes will be assessed in terms of the extent to which they are likely to:

- Develop research capacity in areas of priority in Australia
- Increase numbers of new independent investigators
- Increase critical mass in the research team
- Increase the diversity and/or strength of population health and/or health services research in Australia

Criterion 3) Budget justification (20%)

Applicants will be assessed on the extent to which the proposal is achievable through the provision of skills, linkages, infrastructure, governance and milestones, as well as value for money in terms of justification for equipment, facilities, and links with key organisations. Applicants should also detail any other matters that will contribute to the success of the grant

7. Application and Assessment Processes

It is anticipated that a call for applications will be made annually for the next five years with initial grants commencing in 2009. The focus of the Capacity Building Grants for the 2008 call for applications is population health and/or health services research. Details of the application and selection processes are provided in the “Advice and Instructions to Applicants” which can be located at

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/funding/types/granttype/strategic/capbuild.htm>

The assessment process will include:

- Written reviews of the proposed capacity building and research program by external assessors.
- Assessment of applications that are relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research by an Indigenous Health Research Panel against the *Criteria for Health and Medical Research of Indigenous Australians*
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/funding/files/indighth.pdf> Applicants will be provided an opportunity to comment on these reviews.
- A short listing process by a Peer Review Panel.
- Interview of short-listed teams by a Peer Review Panel. The NHMRC will pay for two members of each research team to attend interviews.

8. Indicative Timeline

The following indicative timeframe is proposed:

Activity	Date
Application process opens	12 April 2008
Applications close	13 June 2008
Applications are short-listed	Mid July 2008
External Assessment	Mid July to end August 2008
Assessments to Applicants for comment	September 2008
Grant Review Panel Interviews	October 2008
Announcements	Early 2009

9. Reporting

Chief Investigators will be asked to provide an annual report against the milestones to assist in evaluating the scheme and their application of the funds awarded relative to the objectives of the scheme.

Chief Investigators will also be required to submit details of the Team Investigators supported under the Grant. NHMRC reserves the right to terminate grants that are not achieving their aims.