



# Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship Scheme-specific Funding Rules

The following sections provide additional information about the Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship (the Fellowship) scheme including scheme-specific objectives, critical dates, assessment criteria, eligibility rules and funding details, and must be read in conjunction with the following supporting documents:

- > the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2017*, which set out the rules, objectives and other considerations relevant to NHMRC funding
- > the *Guide to NHMRC Peer Review 2017*, incorporating the *Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship scheme-specific Peer Review Guidelines*, which outlines the overarching principles and obligations under which the NHMRC peer review process operates
- > the *NHMRC Advice and Instructions to Applicants 2017*, incorporating the scheme-specific Advice and Instructions to Applicants, which provide guidance to assist researchers and Administering Institutions with preparing and submitting applications
- > the *NHMRC Funding Agreement*, which sets out the terms and conditions of funding between the NHMRC and Administering Institutions.

It is recommended that you read the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2017*, before reading these scheme-specific rules.

## 1. About the scheme

### 1.1 Description

The Australian Government announced as part of the 2014 Budget an additional \$200 million over five years to boost Australia's dementia research capacity.

The purpose of the Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowships Scheme is to expand leadership in dementia research, by supporting mid-career researchers to transition to leadership positions.

Successful Fellows will be required to participate in activities of the NHMRC National Institute for Dementia Research (NNIDR), which provides a platform for strategically expanding dementia research in Australia, ensures better integration with international research and forms a focus for rapid translation of evidence into policy and practice.

### 1.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of the initiative are to:

- > expand capacity for dementia research and for evidence-based policy development in Australian health systems
- > enable investigators to establish and support themselves as independent, self-directed researchers
- > encourage the translation of research outcomes into practice
- > bridge the gap between research and industry
- > provide a means for Australian researchers working overseas to return to Australia to continue their career development.

Subject to the receipt of competitive applications, applications in each of the following five areas under the dementia priority framework will be funded:

- > Prevention
- > Assessment and diagnosis
- > Intervention and treatment
- > Living with dementia

> Care.

Applicants nominate the area that best fits their research proposal, although the NHMRC appreciates that there is often overlap.

The NHMRC also encourages applicants to consider research areas in their application which strengthen dementia research leadership in Australia in the following areas:

- > Health economics
- > Health policy
- > Implementation science
- > Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research
- > Clinical, Nursing and Allied Health research.

## 1.3 Who should apply?

Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowships are open to researchers who have a sustained track record of significant, peer-reviewed, quality research outputs as judged relative to opportunity.

Applicants are expected to demonstrate that they are:

- > developing international competitiveness
- > developing a capacity for original independent research
- > developing research leadership skills
- > establishing themselves as independent, self-directed health and medical researchers in a research program or as part of a research team.

## 2. Critical dates

Applicants applying for a Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship for funding commencing in 2017 should note the following critical dates:

23 November 2016	Scheme opens
18 January 2017	Minimum data due in Research Grants Management System
8 February 2017	Applications close in Research Grants Management System
* July 2017	Anticipated notification of outcomes to applicants

*\* Dates are indicative and subject to change*

Minimum data must be entered in Research Grants Management System by 5:00pm (AEDT) on the specified due date to allow the NHMRC to commence sourcing suitable assessors. Applications that fail to satisfy this requirement will not be accepted. Applicants are also reminded to complete the recommended fields below with correct information. Using placeholder text such as “text”, “synopsis” or “xx” etc. is not acceptable as minimum data.

Minimum data for the Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship scheme consist of the following:

- > General: Specifically, Administering Institution, Application Title, Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Research and Synopsis
- > A-RC: Research Classification
- > B-AI: Application Information: Priority theme addressed by the application.

Please note: **Failure to meet this deadline will result in the application not proceeding** (see section 10.7 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2017 for further information).

Research Administration Officers (RAO) are **not** required to certify applications for the purpose of minimum data; applications should only be certified once complete and ready for submission (see section 10.4 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2017 and section 6 of the NHMRC Advice and Instructions to Applicants 2017).

Completed applications must be submitted to the NHMRC in Research Grants Management System by 5.00pm (AEDT) on the specified closing date. Late applications will not be accepted.

Application outcomes are announced when peer review processes are finalised and Ministerial approvals are obtained. Refer to sections 11.4 and

## 3. Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed against the Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship assessment criteria listed below:

1. Research output and potential for further career development in dementia research (50%)
2. Research leadership (25%)
3. Vision for the next four years and career development strategy, taking into account the aims of the Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship scheme and quality of the research environment (25%)

Applications are assessed relative to opportunity, taking into consideration any career disruptions (*see section 6.2 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2017*).

The Category Descriptors at Attachment A are used as a guide by the Grant Review Panels (GRPs) to assist with scoring an application against each of the assessment criteria.

Peer reviewers are identified and appointed by NHMRC according to the *Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship Scheme-Specific Peer Review Guidelines*. All applications will undergo rigorous, high quality peer review in accordance with the *NHMRC Principles of Peer Review*. Therefore, applicants can expect that any matter relevant to the assessment criteria will be considered in the review of their application. Issues not relevant to the assessment criteria will not be considered during the peer review process.

In framing applications against the assessment criteria, applicants should closely consider how the proposal will address each aspect of the criteria. Consumer perspectives will also be considered when assessing applications against Criterion 3 of the assessment criteria.

Applicants are encouraged to consider the benefits of actively engaging consumers in their proposed research, by referring to the *Statement on Consumer and Community Participation in Health and Medical Research* (the Statement on Participation) when finalising their proposal.

### 3.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Additional Criteria

All applications that are accepted to relate to the improvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health must also address the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria section 6.3 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2017*.

Any applications that have applied to be considered for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health relevance which do not meet the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria* will be assessed as a standard Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship application.

## 4. Eligibility

NHMRC staff will **not** make eligibility rulings prior to an application being submitted. It is up to the applicant, in consultation with their RAO, to judge whether or not their application will be suitable.

Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowships have eligibility criteria additional to those identified in section 7 of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2017*. Applications will be excluded from consideration if eligibility requirements are not met or if NHMRC requirements have not been followed (*see section 10.7 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2017*).

### 4.1 Qualifications

#### 4.1.1 Length of post-doctoral experience

Applicants for a Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship will normally\* be at least seven years and must be less than 12 years (as at 31 March in the year of application) from the date that their Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) thesis was passed (not date of degree conferral), unless career disruptions exist. Applicants must include evidence of the PhD thesis pass date in their application.

\*Note: Applicants with less than seven years post-doctoral experience who consider they can demonstrate excellent claims against the assessment criteria are welcome to apply.

For Fellowship eligibility, the career disruption must involve:

- › a continuous absence from work for 28 calendar days or more; and/or
- › continuous, long-term, part-time employment (with defined % full time equivalent (FTE) due to circumstances classified as career disruption, with the absence amounting to a total of 28 calendar days or more. For example, an applicant who is employed at 0.8 FTE due to childcare responsibilities would need to continue this for at least 140 calendar days to achieve a career disruption of 28 calendar days.

The only documents that will be accepted as evidence for career disruption are medical certificates and letters from an applicant's employer

summarising the duration (including start date, end date, % FTE) and type of leave taken and/or part-time employment (e.g. maternity leave, sick leave).

Further information on the circumstances that may constitute a career disruption can be found under *section 6.2.1* of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2017*. An example of acceptable career disruption evidence is provided on the NHMRC website.

### 4.1.2 Equivalent research qualification or experience

Applicants who do not hold a PhD but can demonstrate an equivalent research qualification or experience may also be eligible to apply. This is a qualification or experience equivalent to the level 10 criteria of the Australian Qualifications Framework Second Edition January 2013.

Eligibility restrictions in terms of time elapsed since the qualification or relevant research experience was obtained as stated in section 4.1.1 above still apply.

## 4.2 Other requirements

Applicants must only apply for one Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship per application round.

Applicants are ineligible to apply if they have previously held any of the following:

- > ARC (Australian Research Council) Australian Laureate Fellowships
- > ARC Future Fellowships
- > NHMRC-ARC Dementia Research Development Fellowships
- > NHMRC Career Development Fellowship Level 2
- > NHMRC Research Fellowships
- > NHMRC Practitioner Fellowships.

Fellows will be required to participate in consumer outreach activities, during their four year Fellowship program.

## 4.3 Citizenship

For information on citizenship, refer to *section 7.4* of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2017*.

**Note:** Applicants who are not Australian Citizens (as indicated in Pro-PD: Personal Details of their Profile in RGMS) must indicate their Permanent Resident of Australia status in the same section, otherwise the application will be ineligible.

## 4.4 Time Commitment

### 4.4.1 Full-time Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowships

These are intended to provide support for Fellows who are employed at 1.0 FTE to engage in research. Full-time Fellows are expected to devote a minimum of 80% of this time (i.e. 0.8 FTE) to achieving the outcomes of the Fellowship.

The remaining 0.2 FTE may be spent on activities directly related to research under the Fellowship, including commercial activities, policy development or public health activities. Fellows cannot use this time to engage in financial, administrative, or managerial activity beyond that which directly relates to their own research.

### 4.4.2 Professional Part-time Fellowship Option

Professional part-time Fellowships are available for 50-90% of a full-time position with the value of the award adjusted pro-rata. Applications for professional part-time Fellowships must be justified in professional terms, i.e. applicants must plan to combine their professional activities with their research and be able to demonstrate an interface between the two, and must include a letter of support from their employer.

These Fellowships are intended to be held part-time for the four year duration of the Fellowship; however, Fellows may seek to convert from part-time to full-time (refer to *NHMRC's Grantee Variations Policy* and associated *advice page*). When the part-time option is taken, the combined time spent on research and on the associated professional activity, must equate to at least 1.0 FTE. For the research component, 80% of that time must be devoted to achieving the outcomes of the Fellowship, e.g. if the research component is 0.5 FTE, then 0.4 FTE (i.e. 80% of the research component) must be directed towards research. The remaining 20% of the research component may be spent on activities directly related to research under the Fellowship. Fellows cannot use this time to engage in financial, administrative, or managerial activity beyond that which directly relates to their own research.

### 4.4.3 Personal Part-time Fellowship Option

There are also occasions when researchers who wish to maintain a research career are unable to do so because their capacity to engage in full-time employment is limited due to pregnancy, major illness or carer responsibilities including parental leave.

In these circumstances, researchers in each of the priority areas, including those whose Fellowships are already taken on a professional part-time basis (under section 4.4.2, above), are able to receive part-time support to allow them to divide their time between their personal situations and part-time research. Researchers may select this option at the time of application or convert to it during the course of a Fellowship. Under this part-time option, a brief justification must be provided. The non-Fellowship time is intended to be dedicated to serving the needs of a Fellow's personal circumstances, and cannot be spent on other paid employment, research, teaching or administrative roles, or clinical or practitioner responsibilities. The only exception is for Fellows who already hold a Fellowship on a part-time basis as described in section 4.4.2.

Fellows must devote at least 80% of their part-time commitment to achieving the outcomes of the Fellowship, e.g. if a part-time Fellowship is held at 0.5 FTE, at least 80% (i.e. 0.4 FTE) of that time should be devoted to research. The remaining 20% of the research component may be spent on activities directly related to research under the Fellowship, including clinical responsibilities, commercial activities, policy development or public health activities. Fellows cannot use this time to engage in financial, administrative, or managerial activity beyond that which directly relates to their own research.

These part-time options are available for 50-90% of a full-time position.

Payments will be adjusted to the appropriate part-time rate and the funding period will be extended accordingly.

## 5. Funding

### 5.1 Level and Duration of Funding

Fellowship salary packages are awarded as listed on the NHMRC website. Pro-rata amounts apply for part-time researchers.

The package includes salary and all salary on-costs (including payroll tax, workers compensation, superannuation, long service leave etc.).

The package will apply for the four year duration of the Fellowship. With the exception of annual indexation, no additional funding will be provided.

Research project funding up to \$250,000 is provided to support the Fellow. Applicants are advised to clearly justify the requested budget paying particular attention to any research cost(s) which may be specific to this field of research and needed for their application.

Advice on making a budget proposal is available in the *NHMRC Budget Guidelines for Research Support Grants*, and *NHMRC Direct Research Cost Guidelines* (DRCs).

### 5.2 Other Salary or Research Funding Sources

Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellows are not able to personally receive salary from a comparable government funded grant, full-time salaried academic position, or other full-time position in conjunction with their NHMRC Fellowship. NHMRC Fellows must inform NHMRC if such situations arise during the course of the Fellowship. However, Fellows are permitted to receive additional "top-up" funding from their employing institution.

When applying for a Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship, applicants must declare the source, duration and levels of funding already held for salary and/or research in the particular area of the application, including all NHMRC funding, in order to ensure funding is not duplicated by the Australian Government.

## 6. Assessment process

For further information on the peer review process, see the *Guide to NHMRC Peer Review 2017* and *scheme-specific Peer Review Guidelines*.

## 7. Grant administration

Administrative obligations and processes specific to Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellows are outlined below. Unless otherwise stated, these are in addition to the general requirements set out in the *NHMRC Funding Agreement*, section 12 of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2017* and the NHMRC website.

### 7.1 Acceptance and Commencement of a Fellowship

Successful applicants must accept an offer of award of a Fellowship by the nominated acceptance date. Fellows who have accepted an offer of an award, are expected to start the Research Activity by the Schedule's Commencement Date. Approval for more than a four month delay in the

Commencement Date will only be given under exceptional circumstances.

## 7.2 Variations

If an applicant's employment circumstances and/or Administering Institution change following submission of an application for a Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowship or during the course of a current Fellowship, e.g. change of employer or additional employment responsibilities being undertaken, NHMRC is to be notified immediately.

Requests to vary the terms of this Fellowship should be made to NHMRC via the RGMS Grantee Variation portal. For information on grant variation eligibility requirements, see the scheme-specific funding rules and *NHMRC's Grantee Variations Policy*. Fellows should consult the NHMRC website and contact the RAO at their Administering Institution if they require additional information.

## 7.3 Parental Leave

Parental leave is paid in accordance with the arrangements applicable at the Fellow's Administering Institution, up to a limit of 12 weeks per instance of parental leave. Leave taken beyond the 12 weeks is permitted, but is not paid by NHMRC. The institution may, however, continue payments under its Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. If the Fellow wishes to take parental leave, they will need to suspend their Fellowship (refer to section 12.6 of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2017* and the *NHMRC Grantee Variation's Policy*).

Parental leave required under state and territory legislation will be managed separately by the Administering Institution.

## 7.4 Reporting

The requirements for financial and scientific reporting are as described in section 12.7 of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2017*.

Successful applicants must be willing to provide additional reporting on their research during the term of the grant, at the close of a grant or at any time subsequently at the reasonable request of the NNIDR. This may be in the form of a detailed written report for inclusion on the NHMRC website or involvement in a conference/symposium as determined by the NNIDR at any time during or after the conclusion of a grant.

## 8. Attachments

› Attachment A: Boosting Dementia Research Leadership Fellowships Category Descriptors (PDF, 126KB)

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