



Australian Government

National Health and Medical Research Council



Investigator Grants 2022 Outcomes Factsheet



Investigator Grants

- The Investigator Grant scheme is NHMRC’s largest funding scheme, with a 40% funding allocation from the Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA).
- The objective of the Investigator Grant scheme is to support the research program of outstanding investigators at all career stages. The scheme provides five-year funding security for high-performing researchers through salary and research support packages (RSPs).
- The grants provide researchers with flexibility to undertake innovative research that will lead to health and medical advances for all Australians.
- The 2022 Investigator Grant round is the fourth round for this scheme and funds grants commencing in January 2023.

Investigator Grant outcomes

- This year’s Investigator Grant funding allocation was \$375,637,948. This is less than in 2021 (\$399,632,537) when additional funds were available.
- 225 high-performing health and medical researchers from across the country will be funded from the 2022 round.
- The new Fellows represent a diversity in career stages, research disciplines, disease focus and locations where the research will be conducted.
- The funded rate is 15.9% and the mean budget is \$1,669,502.
- The grants range from \$327,575 to \$3.93 million in total over five years, with the total grant value calculated taking into account other concurrently held grants and applicant requests for salary.
- Gender equity was improved at the Leadership level through the application of structural priority funding at a higher level than in previous rounds.

Table 1. Statistics for applications received and awarded in 2022 (2021)

Total number of applications received	1,416 [#] (1,722 [^])
Number of grants awarded	225 (254)
Percentage of applications awarded grants	15.9% (14.8%)
Mean budget for awarded grants	\$1,669,502 (\$1,573,356)

[#]Seven applications were withdrawn or ruled ineligible

[^]Seventeen applications were withdrawn or ruled ineligible

Emerging Leadership and Leadership Fellows

Table 2. Statistics by leadership level - 2019 to 2022

Level	Year	Applications	Grants	Funded rate	Total value	Proportion of grants awarded	Proportion of funds awarded	Mean budget
Leadership Level 3 (L3)	2019	92	42	45.7%	\$93,241,988	17.1%	25.5%	\$2,220,047.33
	2020	92	45	48.9%	\$108,956,07	19.0%	29.6%	\$2,421,246.0
	2021	152	51	33.6%	\$134,724,314	20.1%	33.7%	\$2,641,653.72
	2022	150	41	27.3%	\$107,825,161	18.2%	28.7%	\$2,629,882.14
Leadership Level 2 (L2)	2019	195	40	20.5%	\$83,637,037	16.3%	22.9%	\$2,090,925.72
	2020	168	28	16.7%	\$59,636,418	11.8%	16.2%	\$2,129,874.58
	2021	226	28	12.4%	\$67,595,76	11.0%	16.9%	\$2,414,134.30
	2022	214	38	17.8%	\$95,731,362	16.9%	25.5%	\$2,519,246.36
Leadership Level 1 (L1)	2019	478	35	7.3%	\$77,514,114	14.2%	21.2%	\$2,214,689.84
	2020	459	42	9.2%	\$92,912,141	17.7%	25.3%	\$2,212,193.13
	2021	330	29	8.8%	\$65,225,945	11.4%	16.3%	\$2,249,170.79
	2022	265	27	10.2%	\$63,199,962	12.0%	16.8%	\$2,340,739.26
Emerging Leadership Level 2 (EL2)	2019	475	43	9.1%	\$59,770,10	17.5%	16.3%	\$1,390,002.45
	2020	391	39	10.0%	\$55,481,657	16.5%	15.1%	\$1,422,607.04
	2021	459	53	11.5%	\$75,429,951	20.9%	18.9%	\$1,423,206.05
	2022	349	40	11.5%	\$59,655,038	17.8%	15.9%	\$1,491,375.70
Emerging Leadership Level 1 (EL1)	2019	617	86	13.9%	\$51,710,109	35.0%	14.1%	\$601,281.25
	2020	670	83	12.4%	\$50,488,709	35.0%	13.7%	\$608,298.78
	2021	555	93	16.8%	\$56,656,569	36.6%	14.2%	\$609,210.38
	2022	438	79	18.0%	\$49,226,4341	35.1%	13.1%	\$623,119.368

Outcomes by years post-PhD (or equivalent) experience

- Forty-two percent (42% in 2021) of the new Emerging Leadership Fellows have 4 years or less post-PhD (or equivalent) experience.

Table 3. Statistics by years post-PhD (or equivalent) experience – 2019 to 2022

Level	Year	No PhD		0-2 years		>2-7 years		>7-10 years		>10 years		Total	
		Grants	Funded rate	Grants	Funded rate	Grants	Funded rate	Grants	Funded rate	Grants	Funded rate	Grants	Funded rate
L3	2019	0	0.0%	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	42	46.7%	42	45.7%
	2020	1	50.0%	0	n/a	0	0.0%	0	n/a	44	49.4%	45	48.9%
	2021	0	0.0%	0	n/a	1	100%	0	n/a	50	33.3%	51	33.6%
	2022	0	0.0%	0	n/a	1	100%	0	n/a	40	27.0%	41	27.3%
L2	2019	2	100%	0	n/a	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	37	19.9%	40	20.5%
	2020	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	n/a	0	0.0%	28	17.1%	28	16.7%
	2021	0	n/a	0	n/a	2	100%	1	100%	25	11.2%	28	12.4%
	2022	0	0.0%	0	n/a	0	0.0%	0	n/a	38	17.9%	38	17.8%
L1	2019	0	0.0%	0	n/a	1	20.0%	3	18.8%	31	6.8%	35	7.3%
	2020	0	0.0%	0	n/a	0	0.0%	3	27.3%	39	8.8%	42	9.2%
	2021	0	n/a	0	n/a	1	10.0%	7	28.0%	21	7.1%	29	8.8%
	2022	0	n/a	0	n/a	2	40.0%	4	20.0%	21	8.8%	27	10.2%
EL2	2019	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	19	9.8%	19	8.9%	5	8.6%	43	9.1%
	2020	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	19	10.9%	13	8.1%	6	12.0%	39	10.0%
	2021	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	21	12.7%	29	12.7%	3	4.8%	53	11.5%
	2022	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14	11.9%	22	12.4%	4	8.5%	40	11.5%
EL1	2019	6	14.6%	32	15.5%	36	11.9%	10	17.9%	2	18.2%	86	13.9%
	2020	3	10.0%	31	18.3%	35	10.4%	14	12.0%	0	0.0%	83	12.4%
	2021	4	13.3%	33	23.4%	52	15.6%	4	9.3%	0	0.0%	93	16.8%
	2022	5	29.4%	23	19.8%	45	17.0%	6	16.7%	0	0.0%	79	18.0%

Outcomes by Broad Research Area

- NHMRC is committed to supporting a broad range of research from discovery science through to clinical research (including clinical trials), health services and public health research.
- Of grants awarded, 36.9% were for Basic Science research and 39.6% were for Clinical Medicine and Science research.
- Clinical Medicine and Science grants received the largest funding allocation, followed closely by Basic Science.

Table 4. Statistics by Broad Research Area – 2019 to 2022

Broad Research Area	Year	Applications	Grants	Funded rate	Proportion of grants awarded	Total value	Mean budget	Proportion of funds awarded
Basic Science research	2019	805	95	11.8%	38.6%	\$137,175,847	\$1,443,956	37.5%
	2020	690	71	10.3%	30.0%	\$124,347,696	\$1,751,376	33.8%
	2021	630	87	13.8%	34.3%	\$155,915,598	\$1,792,133	39.0%
	2022	489	83	17.0%	36.9%	\$141,568,799	\$1,705,648	37.7%
Clinical Medicine and Science research	2019	593	89	15.0%	36.2%	\$149,136,432	\$1,675,690	40.8%
	2020	600	100	16.7%	42.2%	\$154,395,383	\$1,543,954	42.0%
	2021	577	98	17.0%	38.6%	\$157,838,020	\$1,610,592	39.5%
	2022	493	89	18.1%	39.6%	\$154,943,160	\$1,740,934	41.2%
Health Services research	2019	194	20	10.3%	8.1%	\$23,962,685	\$1,198,134	6.5%
	2020	189	20	10.6%	8.4%	\$27,076,237	\$1,353,812	7.4%
	2021	196	16	8.2%	6.3%	\$16,684,710	\$1,042,794	4.2%
	2022	136	10	7.4%	4.4%	\$12,707,620	\$1,270,762	3.4%
Public Health research	2019	265	42	15.8%	17.1%	\$55,598,493	\$1,323,774	15.2%
	2020	301	46	15.3%	19.4%	\$61,655,829	\$1,340,344	16.8%
	2021	319	53	16.6%	20.9%	\$69,194,209	\$1,305,551	17.3%
	2022	298	43	14.4%	19.1%	\$66,418,370	\$1,544,613	17.7%
Total	2019	1857	246	13.2%	100%	\$365,873,457	\$1,487,290	100%
	2020	1780	237	13.3%	100%	\$367,475,145	\$1,550,528	100%
	2021	1722	254	14.8%	100%	\$399,632,537	\$1,573,356	100%
	2022	1416	225	15.9%	100%	\$375,637,948	\$1,669,502	100%

Funded rates by gender

- The proportion of female applicants decreased at most levels compared with the previous funding round, and still declined progressively with seniority (as in 2021) from 54.4% (58.8% in 2021) at Emerging Leadership Level 1 to 24.2% (21.1% in 2021) at Leadership Level 3.
- Women received 52.9% of grants and 49.1% of the total funding.

Table 5. Statistics by gender - 2019 to 2022

Level	Year	Female CIA				Male CIA				CIA gender other*			
		Applications	Grants	Funded rate	Total value	Applications	Grants	Funded rate	Total value	Applications	Grants	Funded rate	Total value
L3	2019	17	5	29.4%	\$11,261,273	75	37	49.3%	\$81,980,715	0	0	n/a	\$0
	2020	19	8	42.1%	\$19,858,084	73	37	50.7%	\$89,097,988	0	0	n/a	\$0
	2021	32	13	40.6%	\$34,412,422	120	38	31.7%	\$100,311,919	0	0	n/a	\$0
	2022	36	15	41.7%	\$37,837,718	113	26	23.0%	\$69,987,449	1	0	0.0%	\$0
L2	2019	60	13	21.7%	\$27,387,942	134	27	20.1%	\$56,249,089	1	0	0.0%	\$0
	2020	53	12	22.6%	\$25,886,467	115	16	13.9%	\$33,750,018	0	0	n/a	\$0
	2021	91	12	13.2%	\$29,874,550	134	16	11.9%	\$37,721,212	1	0	0.0%	\$0
	2022	79	21	26.6%	\$51,069,290	135	17	12.6%	\$44,662,071	0	0	n/a	\$0
L1	2019	194	15	7.7%	\$30,083,242	284	20	7.0%	\$47,430,901	0	0	n/a	\$0
	2020	188	22	11.7%	\$46,974,397	270	20	7.4%	\$45,937,717	1	0	0.0%	\$0
	2021	155	10	6.5%	\$20,811,995	175	19	10.9%	\$44,413,957	0	0	n/a	\$0
	2022	127	15	11.8%	\$34,960,455	137	12	8.8%	\$28,239,505	1	0	0.0%	\$0
EL2	2019	245	21	8.6%	\$28,468,535	227	22	9.7%	\$31,301,570	3	0	0.0%	\$0
	2020	215	18	8.4%	\$25,407,406	176	21	11.9%	\$30,074,269	0	0	n/a	\$0
	2021	248	27	10.9%	\$39,050,580	209	26	12.4%	\$36,379,338	2	0	0.0%	\$0
	2022	181	21	11.6%	\$30,922,513	167	19	11.4%	\$28,732,517	1	0	0.0%	\$0

Level	Year	Female CIA				Male CIA				CIA gender other*			
		Applications	Grants	Funded rate	Total value	Applications	Grants	Funded rate	Total value	Applications	Grants	Funded rate	Total value
EL1	2019	340	43	12.6%	\$26,194,982	271	42	15.5%	\$24,875,458	6	1	16.7%	\$639,750
	2020	359	46	12.8%	\$27,766,975	300	37	12.3%	\$22,721,824	11	0	0.0%	\$0
	2021	324	48	14.8%	\$29,685,112	227	44	19.4%	\$26,320,712	4	1	25.0%	\$650,740
	2022	241	47	19.5%	\$29,704,390	194	30	15.5%	\$18,211,741	3	2	66.7%	\$1,310,300
Total	2019	856	97	11.3%	\$123,395,974	991	148	14.9%	\$241,837,733	10	1	10.0%	\$639,750
	2020	834	106	12.7%	\$145,893,329	934	131	14.0%	\$221,581,816	12	0	0.0%	\$0
	2021	850	110	12.9%	\$153,834,659	865	143	16.5%	\$245,147,138	7	1	14.3%	\$650,740
	2022	664	119	17.9%	\$184,494,366	746	104	13.9%	\$189,833,282	6	2	33.3%	\$1,310,300

*Includes those who did not state their gender or declared it as Indeterminate/Intersex.

Impact of structural priority funding on funded rates by gender

- NHMRC has identified research led by women as an area of need and, as in previous years, has funded additional applications led by female CIAs using structural priority (SP) funding.
- Unlike previous years, no SP funding was needed at Emerging Leadership Level 1 and only a small amount at Emerging Leadership 2 to achieve gender equity targets.
- SP funding was increased from about 8% to 20% of the Leadership budget to reduce the gender gap in the number of grants and total funding for Leadership Fellows.

Table 6. Statistics for SP funded grants by gender of the CIA - 2019 to 2022^^

Level	Year	Female CIA		Male CIA	
		Grants excluding SP funded grants (funded rate)	Total grants funded (funded rate)	Grants excluding SP funded grants (funded rate)	Total grants funded (funded rate)
L3	2019	4 (23.5%)	5 (29.4%)	37 (49.3%)	37 (49.3%)
	2020	6 (31.6%)	8 (42.1%)	37 (50.7%)	37 (50.7%)
	2021	11 (34.4%)	13 (40.6%)	38 (31.7%)	38 (31.7%)
	2022	10 (27.8%)	15 (41.7%)	26 (23.0%)	26 (23.0%)
L2	2019	11 (18.3%)	13 (21.7%)	27 (20.1%)	27 (20.1%)
	2020	9 (17.0%)	12 (22.6%)	16 (13.9%)	16 (13.9%)
	2021	9 (9.9%)	12 (13.2%)	15 (11.2%)	16 (11.9%)
	2022	9 (11.4%)	21 (26.6%)	17 (12.6%)	17 (12.6%)
L1	2019	10 (5.2%)	15 (7.7%)	20 (7.0%)	20 (7.0%)
	2020	17 (9.0%)	22 (11.7%)	19 (7.0%)	20 (7.4%)
	2021	5 (3.2%)	10 (6.5%)	19 (10.9%)	19 (10.9%)
	2022	7 (5.5%)	15 (11.8%)	12 (8.8%)	12 (8.8%)

Level	Year	Female CIA		Male CIA	
		Grants excluding SP funded grants (funded rate)	Total grants funded (funded rate)	Grants excluding SP funded grants (funded rate)	Total grants funded (funded rate)
EL2	2019	14 (5.7%)	21 (8.6%)	21 (9.3%)	22 (9.7%)
	2020	14 (6.5%)	18 (8.4%)	20 (11.4%)	21 (11.9%)
	2021	20 (8.1%)	27 (10.9%)	25 (12%)	26 (12.4%)
	2022	17 (9.4%)	21 (11.6%)	18 (10.8%)	19 (11.4%)
EL1	2019	37 (10.9%)	43 (12.6%)	41 (15.1%)	42 (15.5%)
	2020	39 (10.9%)	46 (12.8%)	35 (11.7%)	37 (12.3%)
	2021	37 (11.4%)	48 (14.8%)	44 (19.4%)	44 (19.4%)
	2022	46 (19.1%)	47 (19.5%)	29 (14.9%)	30 (15.5%)
Total	2019	76 (8.9%)	97 (11.3%)	146 (14.7%)	148 (14.9%)
	2020	85 (10.2%)	106 (12.7%)	127 (13.6%)	131 (14.0%)
	2021	82 (9.6%)	110 (12.9%)	141 (16.3%)	143 (16.5%)
	2022	89 (13.4%)	119 (17.9%)	102 (13.7%)	104 (13.9%)

^Excludes four grants from applicants who did not state their gender or declared it as Indeterminate/Intersex.

-Some SP grants were awarded because they met other structural priorities (Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander CIA, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research or Health Services Research).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research and researchers

- NHMRC is committed to allocating at least 5% of the MREA each year to research directed at improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Applications that address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health represent 4.4% of grants awarded and 4.7% of the Investigator Grant MREA allocation.
- Applications from researchers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent represent 1.3% of grants awarded and 0.8% of the Investigator Grant MREA allocation.

Table 7. Statistics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island health research and researchers – 2019 to 2022

Indigenous identified/ Indigenous focused	Year	Applications	Grants	Funded rate	Proportion of funds awarded	Total value
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focused research	2019	66	15	22.7%	5.3%	\$19,370,843
	2020	63	9	14.3%	2.8%	\$10,465,716
	2021	53	9	17.0%	3.1%	\$12,271,467
	2022	55	10	18.2%	4.7%	\$17,685,226
Researchers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent	2019	11	7	63.6%	2.3%	\$8,545,900
	2020	7	4	57.1%	1.2%	\$4,356,577
	2021	7	6	85.7%	1.7%	\$6,835,601
	2022	5	3	60.0%	0.8%	\$2,877,556
Applications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focused research led by researchers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent	2019	9	5	55.6%	1.6%	\$5,949,861
	2020	4	3	75.0%	0.6%	\$2,193,357
	2021	5	5	100%	1.3%	\$5,335,601
	2022	4	3	75.0%	0.8%	\$2,877,556



In conclusion

- This cohort of 225 Emerging Leadership and Leadership Fellows now have five years of funding certainty, including a research support package.
- Gender equity in funding outcomes was improved through the use of structural priority funding for Leadership Fellows but a gap remains. A combination of approaches will be implemented to improve gender equity for the 2023 Investigator Grant round.
- NHMRC will continue to monitor the outcomes of its grant program to determine whether it is meeting the stated objectives.