



# Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics Foundation Grants Round 2— Funding Guidelines 2023

## 1 Introduction

The [Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics \(CGCPT\)](#) will develop new platform technologies that will enable the rapid development of therapeutics for pathogens of pandemic potential. In alignment with the [CGCPT Mission](#), the Foundation Grants will support projects which will ultimately develop novel therapeutics at far greater speed than current technologies allow.

The Foundation Grants will fund proposals that address the overall mission of the Centre including:

- Development of platform technologies that will develop therapeutics for pathogens of pandemic potential at speed
- Fundamental virology, bacteriology or immunology that will identify novel targets for therapeutics for pathogens of pandemic potential
- Development of small molecules that have activity across viral or relevant bacterial families e.g., small molecules that have activity against all sarbecoviruses, not just SARS-CoV-2
- Innovation in relation to enabling capabilities such as animal models, organoid systems, assay development, bioinformatics, genomics, biomarkers or other technical capabilities that are needed to support therapeutic development

The Centre is pathogen agnostic. All approaches should target a pathogen of pandemic potential and/or demonstrate that the approach can be rapidly adapted to a new pathogen. There are numerous lists of pathogens of pandemic potential developed by international agencies such as the WHO, NIH or CEPI.

The Foundation Grants will not fund:



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- High throughput drug screening or rational drug design that only targets a single pathogen and doesn't have the specific goal to achieve activity across a pathogen family
- Clinical trials of new therapeutics
- Purchase of equipment

The Foundation Grants will provide seed funding for the first three years of the Centre. This will be a one-off program open to internal and external investigators across two rounds. Applications for the first round have now closed. The second round will be open to investigators from organisations and institutions globally. Chief Investigators from the Doherty Institute, Royal Melbourne Hospital or the University of Melbourne are not eligible to apply for this round, but may be included as a Co-Investigator.

One of the goals of Round 2 is to initiate research relationships between the Centre and a broad range of research partners. Funding is available up to \$200,000 per year for up to 3 years.

Applicants for Round 2 are required to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) form, outlining their proposed project. These EOIs will be reviewed for alignment with the Centre mission, and for distribution across subject areas. The University will seek information which will confirm compliance with relevant regulatory and legislative requirements, and reserves the right to request additional information to support this compliance. Further information may be requested as it relates to compliance, subject to a more detailed review of the full scientific proposal. A shortlist of applicants will then be invited to submit a full proposal. After review of full proposals, successful applicants will be notified by June 2024.

## 2 Key Dates

- Expressions of Interest (EOI) open: Wednesday 25 October 2023
- EOI close: midnight AEDT, Wednesday 29 November 2023
- Invitation to submit full application issued: Monday 8 January 2024
- Full applications due: midnight AEDT, Monday 18 March 2024
- Outcomes: by June 2024



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## 3 Funding

- 3.1 Funding will be for projects requesting up to \$200,000 AUD per annum for a maximum of 3 years
- 3.2 There is no requirement for cash co-investment for proposals.
- 3.3 Items that directly support the research program may be funded, including:
- Personnel (including Chief Investigator (CI) salaries)
  - PhD stipends
  - Consumables
  - Travel
- 3.4 Funds will not be provided for the following purposes:
- Fees for students or for student loan liabilities (e.g. Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) or Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) liabilities)
  - Staff seeking funding for their own postgraduate studies
  - Costs not directly related to research or the project
  - Travel expenses that are not directly related to the project
  - To duplicate or supplement another current internal grant, external grant or research contract<sup>1</sup>
  - Purchase of equipment
  - Salaries for research collaborator(s). This does not include salaries for research support staff or technical support staff, which are allowable.
  - Article Processing Charges (APC - sometimes called open access fees) to make a work openly accessible where the chief investigator's institute already has an institutional subscription to the journal (hybrid journals).
  - Society membership fees

## 4 Eligibility

- 4.1 The grant program funds applications that support excellence in research projects that align with the CGCPT mission. Applications that are not primarily oriented towards research will not be considered.
- 4.2 Investigators from the University of Melbourne, The Doherty Institute or the Royal Melbourne Hospital are not eligible to apply as a chief investigator for this round, but may be listed on a proposal as a co-investigator.

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<sup>1</sup> Where funds provide a complementary activity to an existing research activity, pre-approval must be sought and approval will be based on whether the research is novel and able to stand alone, and if the Foundation Grant is additive.



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- 4.3 There is no limit to the number of proposals an investigator may be named on, but an investigator can only be the chief investigator on one proposal.
- 4.4 The CGCPT is committed to promoting equity in research. Proposals should include a diverse research team, including balanced gender representation.

## 5 Proposal Completeness

- 5.1 Applicants must complete and submit their application via the [Smarty Grants online application form](#) by the advertised closing date.
- 5.2 Expressions of Interest (EOI) must be submitted by midnight AEDT Wednesday 29 November 2023 . Expressions of Interest must include the name and home institution of the chief investigator, the name and home institution(s) of co-investigator(s), a project title and brief summary of the proposed project.
- 5.3 Applicants who fail to complete the EOI stage of the application process by the deadline will not be considered. Late EOI applications will not be accepted.
- 5.4 Expressions of Interest will be reviewed for alignment with the Center's Mission, and to ensure distribution across research areas. A shortlist of EOIs will be invited to submit full proposals. Invitations to submit full proposals will be issued by Monday 8 January, 2024. Full proposals will be due by midnight AEDT, Monday March 18, 2024.
- 5.5 Host Institute certification is required on a separate page and must be uploaded as a PDF into the final online application. Signatures may be handwritten, approved digital signatures, or image files used with explicit permission of the signatory.
- 5.6 Any attachments provided must adhere to formatting/page limit requirements.
- 5.7 Applications cannot be submitted after the advertised closing dates; late applications will not be accepted. The full application must be submitted by midnight AEDT, Monday March 18.
- 5.8 Incomplete applications and/or failure to comply with the eligibility criteria may render an application ineligible.



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## 6 Selection Criteria and Assessment

- 6.1 Applications will be assessed by a panel of independent assessors under the oversight and broad direction of the Interim Scientific Advisory Board of the CGCPT, against the following criteria:
- Scientific quality (35%)
  - Innovation (25%)
  - Alignment with CGCPT Mission (20%)
  - Feasibility (20%)
- 6.2 Detailed selection criteria are available in the scoring rubric, which can be accessed via [the program website](#).

## 7 Conditions of Award

- 7.1 Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the University of Melbourne, via the Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics. The conditions in the agreement cover research contract areas including acknowledgment, intellectual property, global access, humanitarian license, commitment to develop intellectual property generated, and reporting requirements. Please refer to the Funding Conditions document for more information.
- 7.2 CIs will be required to establish a Multi-Institutional Agreement with Co-Investigators listed on CGCPT funded projects. This agreement must include the guidelines attached to the primary funding agreement, as outlined above and below.
- 7.3 The CI is responsible for the project, for its concept, the strategic decisions called for in its pursuit and for the communication of the results.
- 7.4 The CI will be the contact person for all administrative matters to do with the project.
- 7.5 The CI must ensure that the research is conducted in accordance with all regulatory requirements of their home institution and/or Australian legal requirements (whichever is more stringent). This includes compliance with the Code of Conduct for Research (or equivalent) and policies on human research ethics, animal experimentation ethics, requirements of the Office of Gene Technology Regulator (or equivalent), health and safety, intellectual property, export control regulations



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and sanction restrictions. No project may proceed unless the appropriate ethical or other required clearances have been obtained.

- 7.6 Appropriate acknowledgement of the Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics support when communicating research outcomes is required.
- 7.7 The project should commence from 1 June 2024, and no later than 31 December 2024.
- 7.8 The CI is responsible for ensuring that the expenditure of the grant aligns with the budget presented in the funding application and is consistent at all times with the nature and aims of the project and objectives of the scheme.
- 7.9 The CI must provide quarterly progress reports throughout the life of the project to demonstrate that contractually agreed funding and research milestones have been completed.
- 7.10 The CI is required to participate in the CGCPT annual symposium each year.
- 7.11 The CI must report to CGCPT any additional funds the project receives (e.g grants from other funding bodies), or any publications generated that are related to the project, for the life of the project. Note this requirement extends beyond the duration of the funding period. This information is a reporting requirement of the CGCPT, and is used solely for the purpose of measuring ongoing impact of CGCPT funding. No funds from other funding sources will be appropriated by the CGCPT from awardees for this purpose.
- 7.12 Publications generated from CGCPT funded projects must be made available to CGCPT.
- 7.13 The CGCPT reserves the right to collect additional information from applicants for the purposes of review.
- 7.14 Summaries of projects funded may be published.