



## Frequently Asked Questions

# Medical Research Future Fund 2022 Frontier Health and Medical Research Grant Opportunity

*This grant opportunity aims to support researchers to pursue big ideas to develop new products and interventions and implement these into clinical practice, benefiting consumers, clinicians, and the health system.*

### 1. Why is the 2022 Frontier Health and Medical Research grant opportunity different to the previous grant opportunity?

In December 2021, the Australian Government announced that the Frontier Health and Medical Research Initiative (the Initiative) would be redesigned through a consultative process led by the Department of Health and Aged Care. The 2022 Frontier Health and Medical Research grant opportunity reflects the outcomes of that consultation and redesign process.

### 2. How was the grant opportunity redesigned?

To support the redesign of the Frontier Health and Medical Research grant opportunity, the Department of Health and Aged Care undertook a national and international review of comparable programs as part of considering best practice approaches for supporting high risk-high reward research efforts. The Department also convened an independently facilitated roundtable with Australian academic and industry researchers working on emerging technologies to better understand the challenges they experience and the types of support that would assist them in their efforts.

### 3. What were the results of the consultation process?

The consultation resulted in:

- a refined grant opportunity focus to support earlier stage research with a 10-year time horizon for a program of research (called a

'moonshot') to reach the market (up from the previous 5-year time horizon)

- a reduced funding amount of a maximum \$25 million (down from \$50 million) per research program, as part of supporting earlier stage research
- a structured, stage-gated funding approach to fund programs of research incrementally
- a continuously open application process to give research teams flexibility to prepare and submit expressions of interest at a time that suits their research timelines
- a revised two-stage application process to minimise workloads for applicants and assessors, with an initial short expression of interest, and a second stage full application by invitation
- a revised assessment process to focus on impact, novelty and the strength of the research team in the first stage, and feasibility and implementation in the second stage.

### 4. What is a program of research?

A program of research is a series of linked projects that cumulatively address the objective and intended outcome of the grant opportunity, with the intention of achieving full implementation of the proposed technology in 10 years.

### 5. What is a moonshot?

A 'moonshot' is an ambitious, exploratory and ground-breaking program of research that utilises health technology to address a challenging

clinical problem, and thereby aims to develop a novel treatment for, or means of prevention of, a current or predictable future serious and incurable health condition. The program of research can propose to develop novel health technologies and/or re-purpose existing health technologies in a novel way.

## 6. What is meant by a stage-gated approach to funding?

A stage-gated approach has been incorporated into the funding mechanism to sequentially fund projects (length to be determined by the research team) within a larger program of research to allow:

- researchers to incrementally progress research at a pace that suits their programs of research
- an independent grant assessment committee to periodically review a program of research and determine if the program should continue to receive funding.

In addition, research activity milestones will be developed to monitor the progress of each project. Continued project funding will be dependent on meeting any agreed milestones and other grant conditions.

## 7. What key changes to the application and assessment process should applicants note?

Key changes for applicants to note include:

- The two-stage application process is comprised of an expression of interest stage and a full application stage.
- The grant opportunity will be continuously open for expressions of interest until the indicative close date of 31 March 2026.
- Assessments will be run twice per year.
- Expressions of interest of a maximum of 5 pages should outline a proposed program of research with a 10-year time horizon.
- Full applications are submitted by invitation only, for projects of up to 5 years under the program of research.
- Research teams can determine the length of each project (up to 5 years) to progress the research at a pace that suits their individual programs of research.
- Projects funded under this grant opportunity that make satisfactory progress against research activity milestones may be invited to submit subsequent full applications for additional projects under the program of

research. A new expression of interest will not be required.

- Programs of research can receive a maximum of \$25 million in funding.

You should read the 2022 Frontier Health and Medical Research grant opportunity guidelines for further information before applying.

## 8. How much funding is available for this grant opportunity?

- This grant opportunity has up to \$400 million of funding available over 9 years from 2023-24.
- The maximum amount available for a single grant is \$25 million.
- The maximum cumulative amount available for each program of research is \$25 million.

## 9. Why has the maximum grant amount been reduced?

The grant amount was reduced from \$50 million (in previous rounds) to \$25 million in response to feedback from the consultation process. Feedback was that a smaller quantum of support would be effective and appropriate for investments in earlier stage research, with a revised focus on preparing technologies for private investment.

## 10. Why is funding no longer provided at stage one to support development of a research plan for consideration at stage two like the previous grant opportunity?

Advice from stakeholders indicated that funding is not necessary for research teams to develop applications for funding. In addition, the application requirements have been reduced with the introduction of an expressions of interest stage.

## 11. When can I submit my full application?

Full applications may be submitted by invitation only, following assessment of an expression of interest by the independent grant assessment committee.

## 12. Can I submit a full application for a 10-year grant?

- The maximum grant period that can be applied for in a single full application is 5 years.
- Projects that progress well may be invited to submit subsequent full applications for

additional projects under the program of research.

- The maximum overall investment from the MRFF in a single 10-year program of research is \$25 million.

### 13. How long will this grant opportunity be open?

- Submissions for expressions of interest will be accepted at any time while the grant opportunity remains open.
- It is expected that expressions of interest will close on 31 March 2026.
- The last grants will be awarded by 30 June 2027.

### 14. If my project is successful, and I have requested less than \$25 million, can I apply for further funding?

Yes, you can apply for further funding, if you are invited to submit a subsequent full application for funding an additional project under the program of research. If your program of research has already been awarded \$25 million under the grant opportunity, you will not be invited to apply for further funding.

### 15. Can Chief Investigators be on more than one expression of interest or full application?

No. A person must not be named as a Chief Investigator (CI) on more than one active expression of interest and/or full application being considered for funding under this grant opportunity. If a CI is named on more than one active expression of interest and/or full application, all will be considered ineligible. An active expression of interest or application is one submitted and currently under assessment or awaiting outcome.

### 16. Have the assessment criteria changed as part of the redesign of the grant opportunity?

Yes. The 2022 Frontier Health and Medical Research grant opportunity includes revised assessment criteria:

Expressions of interest will be assessed against:

- Criterion 1 - Vision and novelty (50%)
- Criterion 2 - Team capability (50%)

Full applications will be assessed against:

- Criterion 3 - Project impact (40%)
- Criterion 4 - Project methodology (30%)

Criterion 5 - Capacity, capability and resources to deliver the project (30%)  
Criterion 6 - Overall value and risk of the project (non-weighted).

### 17. At what stage of the research process can I apply for funding under this grant opportunity?

Applicants can propose projects to commence research at any stage in the research pipeline from proof-of-concept, with the intention of achieving full implementation of the proposed technology in 10 years.

### 18. Do applicants need to provide evidence of strategic partnerships?

Yes. Partnerships and co-investment are encouraged to maximise impact of investment, demonstrate a feasible path to translation through interest from relevant organisations, provide opportunities for more mature sites/agencies to build the capacity of emerging sites/agencies, reduce duplication of activities, and reduce potential respondent administrative burden on participating communities.

### 19. Can an individual receive MRFF funding for a project that currently receives funding from other sources?

A grant cannot be provided to you if you currently receive funding from another source for the same purpose.

### *Important information when submitting an expression of interest*

### 20. What do I need to do to submit an expression of interest?

An expression of interest can be submitted at any time at [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au) while the grant opportunity remains open. The grant opportunity will be continuously open for expressions of interest until the indicative close date of 31 March 2026. Please refer to the [Sample application form](#) for further information.

### 21. How do I submit a full application?

If you submit an expression of interest and following assessment you are invited to submit a full application, you will receive instructions on how to submit a full application online.

### 22. Need more information?

For more information, visit [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au) or call 13 28 46.