Vanguard Grant

Instructions to applicants

Closing date: 4 May 2016 – 5pm AEST

Please read these instructions carefully before completing the application form.

Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

The Heart Foundation: supporting life-saving research

The Heart Foundation is an independent, Australia-wide, not-for-profit health organisation, funded almost entirely by donations from the Australian public.

Our purpose is to reduce premature death and suffering from heart, stroke and blood vessel disease in Australia.

The Heart Foundation offers awards to fund research which is conducted primarily in Australia and is engaged in research related to cardiovascular health.

Application forms

Application forms and guidelines for all Heart Foundation research awards may be obtained from:

- Our website www.heartfoundation.org.au
- By email research@heartfoundation.org.au

All initial enquiries should be directed to the research office of your institution.

Vanguard Grant eligibility criteria and conditions

The purpose of the Vanguard Grant is to provide funding to test the feasibility of innovative concepts in clinical, public health and/or health services (including clinical service delivery) which may lead to larger, more rigorous studies in the future. Both pilot studies and ‘stand alone’ projects will be considered. These projects are expected to produce tangible outcomes with the potential to improve cardiovascular health.

A list of projects funded in 2015 can be found on the Heart Foundation website at: heartfoundation.org.au/news/heart-foundation-awards-more-than-14-million-in-research-funding.

Please note that projects other than the types funded in 2015 may be considered to be relevant for the purpose of the award.

Projects that exploit previously collected data may also be considered to be within the purpose of the Vanguard Grant as long as they meet the award’s other criteria.

This award will not fund basic research. Please note that basic clinical and biomedical research projects are very unlikely to address the purpose of a Vanguard Grant.

Throughout this document, the term ‘applicant’ is used to define the primary applicant in the application. The ‘applicant’ is the person whose details are entered into Q2 of the application form.
Relevance of applications to the purpose of the Vanguard Grant

The relevance of an application to the purpose of the Vanguard Grant will be assessed by the Peer Review Committee for this award following the application deadline and, if not accepted, the application will be excluded from further consideration.

The relevance of an application to the purpose of the Vanguard Grant will not be determined by the Research Program and cannot be assessed prior to the application deadline.

Number of applications in any one year

An applicant may only apply for up to two grants in any one year. Should an applicant make more than two applications, all of the applicants’ applications will be excluded from further consideration.

This provision applies only to the applicant and not to ‘Associate Investigators’. There is no limit to the number of applications on which an individual can appear as an Associate Investigator.

Number of awards in any one year

An applicant may only receive one Vanguard Grant on which they are the ‘applicant’ in any one year.

This provision applies only to the applicant and not to ‘Associate Investigators’.

Length of grant

Vanguard Grants are tenable for one year. Although awardees may request an extension in time if necessary, no additional funding will be provided.

Applicants should be aware that the ability to realistically complete the project described in the application within 12 months of commencement is one of the assessment criteria considered by the Peer Review Committee for this award.

Award value

The Vanguard Grant will provide up to $75,000 in project funding.

Payments will be made as a one off payment following the commencement of the award. Administering institutions will be required to submit a tax invoice (in accordance with the GST Act) to the Heart Foundation. The Heart Foundation operates on a calendar year basis and funds not invoiced within the calendar year will not be available after 31 December of that year, unless under special circumstances and approval is obtained in advance in writing from the National Research Program Manager.

The commencement date of the Vanguard Grant for payment purposes is the date on which work is commenced at the institution as specified in the funding agreement.

Timing

Successful applicants must commence their Heart Foundation Vanguard Grant on or before 1 July 2017, except where the Heart Foundation has granted special permission to do otherwise.

Special reporting requirements

In addition to providing a progress report following completion of the project, applicants will be required to provide a final ‘progress report’ one year following completion of the project.

Ethics clearance and other clearance requirements

All ethics approvals and clearances necessary to complete the project outlined in the application must be received by the Heart Foundation Research Program before funding will be released.

If all necessary clearances are not received before 1 July 2017 (the latest possible start date for a project), funding may be withdrawn.

Alterations to project

Awardees shall adhere to the approved project. Any significant alteration to a project shall be submitted in writing and in advance for approval by the National Research Program Manager.

Changes of employment

The Heart Foundation Research Program must be notified immediately if the employment circumstances of an applicant change after application for a grant or during the tenure of a grant, particularly when the ability of the applicant to complete the funded project may be affected by the change in circumstances.
The notification will need to detail any financial and/or administrative implications for the applicant, and implications of the change on their ability to complete the project. The Research Program retains the right to review a Vanguard Grant in light of these changes. Pending this review, the Heart Foundation reserves the right to terminate a Vanguard Grant should this be deemed appropriate.

Application assessment

This award will be assessed by a Vanguard Grant Committee (VGC). The Committee will be made up of nine to twelve eminent cardiovascular researchers with broad research experience in areas including public health, health services and clinical service delivery.

The committee will be responsible for assessing:

- track record,
- how well the application addresses the purpose of the award,
- the potential of the project to produce tangible outcomes in cardiovascular health,
- the quality and feasibility of the research proposal.

The Heart Foundation Research Program will review applications for completeness and adherence to funding rules. Applications that are incomplete or do not conform to the funding rules will not be considered further. Correctly completed applications will be assessed by the VGC in a two stage Peer Review process which is described below.

Stage 1: Relevance to cardiovascular health

The VGC will rank all applications against each other based on how well the application addresses the purpose of the award and the potential of the project to produce tangible outcomes which may lead to improvements in cardiovascular health.

Please note that this assessment will be based **PRIMARILY on the one page ‘Executive Summary’** that forms part of the application.

It is expected that only the top 30%-50% (depending on the number of applications received) of applications will proceed to the next stage of assessment.

Feedback will not be provided to candidates who are unsuccessful at this stage (up to 70% of applications).

Stage 2: Detailed review

Each application which has progressed from stage 1 of the peer review process will undergo a detailed review by at least three VGC members who will assess:

- quality of the research proposal
- feasibility of the research proposal (incorporating an assessment of research environment, track record of the applicant and feasibility within budget)
- potential to lead to a successful full scale research proposal or to lead to significant improvements in cardiovascular health practices.

The VGC will then meet to rank all applications and to make final funding recommendations.

All applicants who proceed to full review will receive quantitative feedback following completion of the peer review process.

Completing the application

Applications must be completed using the pro-forma provided by the Heart Foundation and must be submitted in the same format as the pro-forma by email to research@heartfoundation.org.au as a single file in Microsoft Word format.

Multiple files, or files in other formats (such as PDF) will not be accepted. Hard copy (paper) applications will not be accepted.

Files should be named using the following convention Surname_2016_VG (e.g. Smith_2016_VG).

Please note that the pro-forma provided by the Heart Foundation limits the amount of content in some response boxes by character number. As a general guide, 100 characters is approximately one line.

An instruction video providing guidance on how to copy and paste illustrations to Question 12 (Research Plan and Figures) and electronic signatures can be viewed on the Heart Foundation website at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=yaXRZdp_7dI&feature=youtu.be

The Heart Foundation will not make requests for missing documentation or provide opportunities to amend incorrectly completed applications. Incomplete or incorrect applications missing such documentation will not be forwarded for peer review.

Q1. Project Title

The Simplified Project Title should be in lay terminology and be suitable for release to the media or for general publication. Please avoid the use of technical terms and abbreviations.

The scientific title should accurately describe the nature of the project being undertaken.
Q2. Applicant Details – ‘Other Details’
This section should only be used if the applicant is unable to provide correct details in the preceding part of this question, but should otherwise be left blank.

Q3. Administering Institution Details
These shall be the details of the proposed administering institution for the award. This must be an NHMRC Administering Institution and should be named exactly as in the Register of NHMRC Administering Institutions maintained by the NHMRC. This can be found at: nhmrc.gov.au/grants/admininst.htm.

Q5. Start Date
Successful applicants must commence their grant on or before 1 July 2017. The start date must be either; 1 January, 1 April or 1 July.

Q7. Associate Investigators
Up to three associate investigators may be included in an application if necessary.
Only those individuals who contribute to the project in an important way should be included as associate investigators.
Associate investigators are not required to sign the application, however, the Heart Foundation expects that applicants will make associate investigators aware of the application and will have sought their permission to include them on the application.

Q8. Relevance to the Purpose of the Award
When completing this section, please refer to the purpose of the Vanguard Grant, which is:
‘to provide funding to test the feasibility of innovative concepts in clinical, public health and/or health services (including clinical service delivery) which may lead to larger, more rigorous studies in the future. These projects are expected to produce tangible outcomes with the potential to improve cardiovascular health’

Q9. Outcomes
If the project is ‘stand alone’ and is likely to have a tangible outcome that leads to improved cardiovascular health without any follow up studies, this should be made clear in this section.

If it is expected that project will provide evidence to help secure funding for more extensive studies, please indicate where this funding will be sought. Include the names of funding agencies and schemes (e.g. NHMRC Project Grants).

Q12. Research Plan and Figures
Please include a background section, which summarises previous work from the host department in this field and work by other investigators, which led up to the proposed research. Also include a detailed research plan and study design, with a clear description of the methods to be employed. Where the project involves an intervention, describe the rationale for the intervention and how it will be evaluated. Where applicable, include sample size and statistical power, sampling methods, main variables to be measured/examined, methods of data collections, analysis and evaluation. Please specify timelines and major time allocations.
This section is strictly limited to three pages in length, including all tables, all figures, and no more than 15 references.

Signatures
Contact details and signatures of the applicant, Head of Department and Research Administration Officer are required on the electronic copy of the application.
Electronic signatures are preferred.
If unable to complete the form with electronic signatures, the following procedure should be followed:
1. Complete details of signatories, leaving the signatures blank.
2. Print signature page.
3. Manually sign the signature page and scan it.
4. Delete the signature page from the application and replace with the signed scanned document. Please ensure that the unsigned signature page is deleted.

Application Check List

Correctly named word document
Please name your file using the following convention: Surname_2016_VG (e.g. Smith_2016_VG)

Check that the document includes:
Evidence of citizenship or permanent residency

Requirements:
Contact details and signatures of applicant, Head of Department & Research Administration Officer have been included on application

Emailed to research@heartfoundation.org.au from your institution’s Research Administration Office
General information
Subject to any special conditions specified for specific award types or at the time an award is awarded, these conditions shall apply to all Heart Foundation awardees and to the institution accepting the award.

The Heart Foundation may, from time to time, need to vary the conditions under which the award is made and may make the application of such variation prospective or retrospective.

Citizenship and residency requirements
At the time of application, applicants (Chief Investigator only) must be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, an Australian permanent resident or must have applied to become an Australian permanent resident. Evidence that Australian permanent residency has been granted will be required before an award can commence. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of the award.

Administering Institution
The research supported by the Heart Foundation award must be administered by an NHMRC Administering Institution. A Register of NHMRC Administering Institutions is maintained by the NHMRC and can be found at: nhmrc.gov.au/grants/admininst.htm

The Administering Institution (or its affiliate) shall provide the facilities and services necessary for the efficient conduct of research during the term of the award.

The Heart Foundation requires that all Administering Institutes will have appropriate policies and procedures in place to deal with any allegations of research misconduct that may arise.

Application requirements
Applications will only be accepted from the Research Office of an NHMRC Administering Institution.

It is the responsibility of the applicant and the Research Administration Officer to ensure that the application is complete and accurate.

Applications must be completed using the pro-forma provided by the Heart Foundation and must be submitted by email of no bigger than 10MB to research@heartfoundation.org.au as a single Microsoft Word file. Multiple files, or files in other formats (such as PDF) will not be accepted.

Hard copy (paper) applications will not be accepted.

Electronic applications must be submitted by the Research Office of the Administering Institution to the Heart Foundation Research Program in Melbourne by 5pm (AEST) on the due date. Applications that are late, or do not adhere to the instructions will not be considered further.

Administering Institution Research Offices will receive a list of applications received from that Institution within 10 days of the closing date for award applications. The Research Office should carefully check the list to ensure that all applications have been received.

Funding from the tobacco industry
The individuals, research groups or research institutions associated with a Heart Foundation grant or award shall not accept any money by way of research grants, consultancies or sponsorships from the tobacco industry or persons connected with the tobacco industry. This includes direct funding, as well as advertising, sponsorship, gifts or loan of goods or services, or funding by any other means.

Funding agreements
Institutions accepting an award will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the Heart Foundation that contains additional conditions to those in this document.

The funding agreement will be prepared by the Heart Foundation and its content is not open to negotiation. Although the funding agreement may change slightly from year to year, some indicative examples of current Heart Foundation funding agreements can be found on the Heart Foundation website at: heartfoundation.org.au/research/apply-for-funding/how-to-apply
Obligations of awardees

Acknowledgement in publications and presentations

Awardees are expected to make the results of their research available through the usual scientific channels. The support of the Heart Foundation must be acknowledged in any publications or media publicity arising from research supported by the Heart Foundation. E.g.:

"[Title] [Surname] was supported by a Fellowship ([Award Reference No.]) from the National Heart Foundation of Australia."

Or

'This work was supported by a (Award Name) ([Award Reference No.]) from the National Heart Foundation of Australia'

One copy of any reprints or published paper shall be sent to the Heart Foundation Research Program.

Media coverage of the research

The ability of the Heart Foundation to fund research is dependent on its ability to raise money through public donation. Public awareness of the Heart Foundation’s role in funding research, particularly successful research, is therefore crucial. For this reason, receipt of a Heart Foundation Award places an obligation on the awardees and their institutions to involve the Heart Foundation in any publicity surrounding the research.

High impact publications or key presentations at national or international conferences are excellent topics of interest for the media. We ask that you contact the Research Program in advance of publications going to press or conference presentations occurring.

Where a media release is planned, it is the responsibility of both the awardee and the institution to give the Heart Foundation Research Program notice in advance of the release or organisation of the conference, and to accommodate reasonable requests for the Heart Foundation's participation in the publicity. In addition, awardees may be called on to participate in the Heart Foundation’s promotional initiatives, such as presentations to major donors or the preparation of promotional materials.

Assistance at Heart Foundation special events

The Heart Foundation may call upon awardees to provide assistance, where appropriate, with publicity and other special events. This could include presentations at donor functions, fundraising events and health and medical professional conferences, or other public relations activities such as being interviewed or featured in Heart Foundation media promotions.

Availability of awardees as expert assessors

The increasing complexity and broadening of knowledge about cardiovascular health requires the maintenance of a large national panel of assessors. For this reason, there is an expectation that awardees be willing to be available to review applications.
Reporting requirements

Progress reports
By 31 March each year, awardees shall email to the Heart Foundation a summary of research progress as at 31 December of the preceding year. Failure to provide this report will jeopardise future funding, including further funding of the award in progress. Payments will be withheld until a progress report is received. If no end-of-award report is received, the Heart Foundation may decline applications for future awards.

Progress reports must be provided on the Heart Foundation pro-forma which may be downloaded from the Heart Foundation website at: heartfoundation.org.au/research/manage-my-funding.

Financial acquittals
By 31 March each year, an authorised officer of the administering institution shall email to the Heart Foundation an annual financial acquittal for each award as at 31 December of the preceding year.

Failure to provide this financial acquittal may jeopardise future funding, including further funding of the award in progress. Payments will be withheld until the financial acquittal is received. If no end-of-award financial acquittal is received, the Heart Foundation may decline applications for future awards.

Financial acquittals must be provided on the Heart Foundation pro-forma which may be downloaded from the Heart Foundation website at: heartfoundation.org.au/research/manage-my-funding.

Conduct of research and clearance requirements

Safe-guarding the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in research, and maintaining high standards for the humane treatment and welfare of animals used during the tenure of a Heart Foundation award is the responsibility of the awardee and of the institution in which the award is tenable.

Research funded by the Heart Foundation shall be conducted in accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007).

Ethics clearances required for the award, as outlined in the funding application, must be obtained and maintained for the duration of the project and copies of these clearances shall be provided to the Heart Foundation within 30 days of approval, or as requested.

Privacy legislation

Individuals, investigators or research institutions associated with Heart Foundation awards shall abide by the current NHMRC Guidelines issued pursuant to Section 95 of the Privacy Act 1988.

All applications will be treated confidentially and will only be viewed by assessors, the review committees and Heart Foundation Research Program staff.

The Heart Foundation acknowledges that some applications may have commercial outcomes and that in some instances commercially sensitive information may not be included in a funding application to protect the Intellectual Property (IP) of the project. However, applications must include sufficient information pertaining to the scientific rationale and principles underpinning the research for it to be vigorously peer-reviewed and assessed. As all applications are kept Commercial-In-Confidence and the Heart Foundation adheres to the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, which protects any IP in the application, the provision of sufficient detail for peer review will not jeopardise their commercialisation potential.