



MEDICAL RESEARCH FUTURE FUND (MRFF)

RAPID APPLIED RESEARCH TRANSLATION (RART) INITIATIVE ROUND 3 (2021)

Expression of Interest (EoI) Guidelines

Background

The Commonwealth MRFF provides grants to support health and medical research and innovation that improve the health and wellbeing of Australians. The Rapid Applied Research Translation Initiative (the RART Initiative) forms part of the MRFF, and specifically invests in research that encourages academic researchers and health service providers to collaborate **to improve health care delivery, services and systems sustainability**.

A new RART funding round (Round 3) will open on 4 March 2021 and close on 6 May 2021. The grant guidelines are available [here](#). The application submission guidelines are highly restrictive: eligible institutions must be incorporated and have an Australian Business Number (ABN); can only be a University, a Medical Research Institute, a corporate Commonwealth entity, or other corporation; and can only submit ONE application. In addition, any individual may be named as a Chief Investigator (CI) on only ONE application.

Two streams of funding are available based on the geographic location of the lead organisation: Stream 1 for organisations based in urban areas; and Stream 2 for organisations based in rural areas. A total maximum of \$27.5 million per stream is available in Round 3. The maximum individual grant amount is \$10 million. The grant period is 5 years however funding will be paid over Years 1-3.

Sydney Health Partners was accredited by the NHMRC in 2015 as a world leader in translating research into better health outcomes for our communities. Our partnership comprises the following organisations:

- Northern Sydney Local Health District
- Sydney Local Health District
- Western Sydney Local Health District
- Sydney Children's Hospital Network (at Westmead)
- The University of Sydney
- 10 affiliated medical research institutes (MRIs, see list [here](#))

These partners have agreed that Sydney Health Partners' Executive will manage an initial rapid Expression of Interest (EoI) process for RART Round 3 on their behalf to help identify a short-list of applications with the greatest potential for success. All persons affiliated with the above partner organisations who wish to submit a RART application MUST participate in this initial EoI process (described below).

Please note, the University of Sydney and eligible MRIs within our partnership can each submit a single full application only. Our health service organisations are NOT deemed "eligible institutions" for this RART opportunity but are important "partner organisations". The final decision about which full application is selected for submission by any one institution will be made by that institution and NOT Sydney Health Partners.

Purpose

The purpose of the MRFF RART Initiative Round 3 is to provide grants to support Australian medical research and medical innovation projects that:

- address a clearly defined gap in the **implementation** of best practice health care and health interventions to improve health outcomes;
- use existing knowledge to develop, test and implement new approaches for the translation of research findings into health care and health interventions that have potential for broader applicability; and
- involve all stakeholders relevant to the research and its translation in its conceptualisation, design and implementation, including health care consumers and providers.

In addition, the proposed project must contribute to one or more of the following MRFF Measures of Success as described in the MRFF Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Strategy [here](#):

- Increased focus of research on areas of unmet need
 - More Australians access clinical trials
 - New health technologies are embedded in health practice
 - New health interventions are embedded in health practice
 - *Research community has greater capacity and capability to undertake translational research
 - *Health professionals adopt best practices faster
 - *Community engages with and adopts new technologies and treatments
 - Increased commercialisation of health research outcomes
- * these measures are recognised as a shorter-term focus of the RART Initiative while the others are longer-term aspirations

The RART initiative thus focuses on the direct translation of research into practice, not research that may have the potential to be translated into practice sometime in the future, for example, basic science or laboratory-based translational research, piloting of a clinical trial design or other projects that are T1-T2 translational research. The level of available funding also encourages large-scale projects involving multiple partners, so collaborations involving other states and territories should be considered.

Expression of Interest

The partner organisations of Sydney Health Partners invite employees who are interested in the MRFF RART Round 3 funding opportunity to submit an EoI application using the [SHP MRFF RART Round 3 EoI Application Form](#). Please note, this application form includes elements that appear in the sample MRFF RART application form, to facilitate later preparation of a full application.

Applications should be completed using Arial 11pt and single line spacing. The questions in the application template should not be altered. Applications must be signed by the Chief Investigator A (see below).

Eol applicants and partners

Members of the research team must be listed on the Eol application form as Chief Investigators (CIs). A person may be named as a Chief Investigator (CI) on ONE application only. CIs may include early and mid-career researchers and health professionals. A Chief Investigator A (CIA) must be nominated from one of the partner organisations of Sydney Health Partners who will take the lead role for the project.

Chief Investigators may include members of several expert groups in health and medical research, for example, universities, medical research institutes, hospitals, primary care networks, community-based health services, and consumers and their representative groups.

The MRFF RART Guidelines also indicate that ***applicants are encouraged to seek strategic partnerships with organisations whose decisions and actions affect Australians' health, health policy and health care delivery***. Organisations which would normally not be able to directly access MRFF funding are "highly valued as partners". ***Partnerships with the Local Health Districts within Sydney Health Partners are especially important in this regard***. Partner organisations may also include federal, state, territory and local government; the private health sector; non-government organisations and charities; community organisations; and professional groups.

Use of funds

The MRFF RART Round 3 Grant [Guidelines](#) provide a list of eligible and ineligible expenses (see Appendices A and B).

Eligible expenses include employment of personnel; development/installation of research equipment (Note: total equipment budget cannot exceed \$80,000); and other direct research costs (e.g., staff training, financial auditing of project expenditure, insurances specifically required to cover the grant activity).

Ineligible expenses include communications costs (mobiles, telephone calls); capital works; general maintenance costs; conference attendance and associated travel (except in pre-approved circumstances where the research outputs of the activity are presented); travel or overseas costs that exceed 10% of total project costs (except where otherwise approved); and institutional overheads and administrative costs.

Assessment criteria for Eol applications

The Eol applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

Project impact (40%)

- will the project address a priority area/unmet need identified by health services and/or patients/consumers?
- will the project support the rapid adoption of new treatments/technologies by health services, the community and/or other end-users?
- will this project make a direct difference to improving health care delivery, services and/or health systems sustainability?
- are there health service delivery partners engaged to support implementation of study findings into practice?
- will the new treatments/technologies have broader applicability?

- will the project contribute to other existing initiatives?
- how will the changes resulting from this project be sustained beyond the life of the grant?
- does this proposal represent value for money?

Project methodology (30%)

- is there enough information about the project methodology?
- does it appear feasible for the proposed funding and time, and in the presence of COVID?
- is there evidence of appropriate engagement of all stakeholders?
- is the proposed research translation plan likely to be successfully implemented?
- are there appropriate governance structures to support the project?
- have major risks/barriers been adequately identified?

Collaboration (30%)

- is there an appropriate, multi-disciplinary team with relevant skills and experience?
- is there evidence of previous successful collaboration among team members for a project of this scale?
- how will the research team build capacity among junior team members and others involved in the project?
- is there evidence of planned engagement and involvement of all stakeholders relevant to the research and its translation during conceptualisation, development and planned implementation of the project?

Timetable

Thursday 21 January 9am AEST	Eol applications open via the Sydney Health Partners website.
Monday 15 February 5pm AEST	Eol applications close Eligible and complete Eol applications must be submitted by 5pm AEST on the closing date. Late applications will not be accepted. Eol applications should be submitted as one consolidated file via email to: sydneyhealthpartners.snrprojectofficer@sydney.edu.au File name convention: Please label the application using the following format: SHP_RART_Eol_CIA Surname.pdf e.g. SHP_RART_Eol_Brown-Smith.pdf
Week beginning 22 February	Panel meets to review Eol applications
Tuesday 2 March	Outcomes of Eol applications notified to CIAs
Thursday 4 March	MRFF RART Round 3 opens (full application forms made available)
Thursday 6 May	Deadline for full application submission to MRFF

Eol assessment process

Applications will initially undergo an administrative review against the eligibility criteria outlined above and for completeness. Any application that does not fulfil those criteria or is missing information will not proceed further for review.

All eligible applications will proceed to assessment by a panel appointed by the SHP Board.

The Chief Investigator A of all EoI applications will be informed of the assessment outcome via email. Unsuccessful applicants will not receive specific information about the ranking, content or quality of the application as assessed by the panel. Members of Sydney Health Partners' Executive will liaise with successful applicants about progressing to full application.

Enquiries can be directed to: sydneyhealthpartners.snrprojectofficer@sydney.edu.au