



NSW Cardiovascular Research Network



NSW CVRN
Career Advancement Grant 2026

NSW CVRN – CAREER ADVANCEMENT GRANT 2026

The NSW Cardiovascular Research Network (**NSW CVRN**) is funded by the NSW Ministry of Health and NSW universities and research institutes (**Member Organisations**). The NSW CVRN is supported and hosted by the National Heart Foundation of Australia (**Heart Foundation**). The NSW CVRN Career Advancement Grant provides funding to support Early-Mid Career Researchers (EMCRs) who are returning to research after a significant leave of absence and will subsidise activities to build the capacity and capability of these researchers and enhance their career track records. The scheme is aimed at increasing the competitiveness of these EMCRs when applying for future research grant funding.

The Heart Foundation, on behalf of the NSW CVRN, will award 1 grant valued at \$25,000 as a one-off grant for a 12-month period. The CVRN management team reserves the right to make changes to the grant terms and conditions at their discretion.

1. Eligibility

To be eligible to receive this award, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Up to 10 years post-PhD (excluding career disruptions – see below) and below Associate Professor level;
- A member of the CVRN and employed at a NSW CVRN Member Organisation (see Appendix) for the duration of the grant;
- Valid visa/residency status for the duration of the grant;
- A cardiovascular researcher investigating any aspect of cardiovascular disease, including stroke, diabetes, and kidney disease; and
- Not previously received a Career Advancement Grant from the NSW CVRN.

2. Leave of absence

In line with NHMRC grant guidelines, a career disruption is defined as a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work, due to:

- pregnancy;
- major illness/injury; and/or
- carer responsibilities.

A period of career disruption is defined as:

- a continuous absence from work for 90 calendar days or more; and/or
- continuous, long-term, part-time employment (with defined %FTE) due to circumstances classified as career disruption, with the absence amounting to a total of 90 calendar days or more. For example, an applicant who is employed at 0.8 FTE due to childcare responsibilities would need to continue this for at least 450 calendar days to achieve a career disruption of 90 calendar days.

3. Evidence of leave of absence

Evidence required includes documentation for carer leave, maternity or parental leave, or sick leave, confirming the amount of time, dates, and reason for leave approved via human resource departments.

4. Application

Applications may be submitted within 6 months prior to, during, or in the 24 months following a leave of absence, by the closing date for this funding round. Applications must include a letter of support from your supervisor outlining their support for the proposed funding and your capacity to undertake the research/training outlined.

Only one application can be made per funding round.

5. Use of Funding

The grant funding may be used for any activity justified to significantly contribute to and advance the recipient's career and career track record. The grant must be expended within 12 months of award regardless of the recipient's FTE.

As a guide only, the possible uses of the funding include:

- **Pilot studies** - to contribute additional data to a grant application or manuscript. Excludes indirect research costs.
- **Personnel** - salary contributions to engage a Research Assistant for technical and/or administrative assistance for grant/manuscript preparation or progressing a project, such as data analysis and data collection. The salary level must match the roles and responsibilities of the position, and the percentage of time requested must reflect the time required for the activities outlined. This must be justified in the application.
- **Course fees** - to attend a specialist course aimed at grant/manuscript preparation or data analysis.
- **Travel** - to conduct pilot studies, receive training, or engage partners to build collaborations (including sponsorship of a collaborator) essential to the development of a grant application. Travel is limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation (equivalent to economy class fares) and these costs must be included in the application's budget.
- **Consumer and Community Consultation** - related costs, including payments to participants, venue hire, printing, and catering.
- **Minor Equipment** - specialised and essential to activities outlined.
- **Professional Services** - such as biostatistics, health economics, and specialist data analysis.
- **Journal Publication Fees.**

6. Excluded Expenditure Items

The grant funding cannot be used to pay the indirect costs of research, including organisational overheads and administrative costs that benefit and support research. Funding may not be used to duplicate research or proposed activities previously or currently being funded.

7. Exclusion of Overlapping Funding

To ensure everyone has a fair chance to receive our support, the NSW CVRN aims to avoid overlapping funding in our research grants and awards. This means we ask applicants not to include costs in their application that are already covered or will be covered by another grant or award. This includes:

- **Personnel Costs** - salary or stipend payments for personnel funded by another source.
- **Project Costs** - expenses directly related to the research project funded by another grant or award.
- **Travel Costs** - travel expenses funded by another grant or award.

Please make sure to declare all current and pending funding sources in your application. This helps us to ensure that our funds are distributed as fairly as possible. If we find any undisclosed information, it might lead to the rejection of the application or withdrawal of funding.

8. Assessment Criteria and Review

Applications will be reviewed by the NSW CVRN Executive Committee. Funding will be allocated to the applications that score the highest against the selection criteria (maximum of 2 grants), including:

- activities most likely to address priority areas in cardiovascular disease research, including prevention of cardiovascular disease, early detection and management of cardiovascular disease risk, treatment and management of people with cardiovascular disease, and improving heart health equity;
- the impact of activities and outcomes on career trajectory; and
- suitability of your budget to complete the activities proposed.

The NSW CVRN Executive Committee will not provide feedback or comments on their review of the applications. The decision reached by the NSW CVRN Executive Committee will be final.

A two-stage review may be required if there are multiple conflicts of interest in the decisions of the review panel or if there are a large number of applications. If this is the case, the Executive Committee may shortlist, and an external review panel (possibly with researchers beyond NSW) will review the shortlist and make the final recommendations for funding.

9. Funding provisions

- Funding will be provided to the Administering Organisation (AO) of the applicant.
- The AO must be a NSW CVRN Member Organisation.
- The AO will be responsible for administering the funds and overseeing expenditure on endorsed activities.
- All relevant ethics and institutional governance requirements for the project must be granted prior to the release of the funds to the applicant.
- Any funds not released to the applicant due to a failure to comply with these conditions must be returned to the Heart Foundation.
- Funding must be spent within 12 months from the start date of the grant agreement.

10. Reporting

A final report and financial acquittal will be required to be submitted to the NSW CVRN at the completion of this grant, using a template provided by the NSW CVRN. The final report will outline how the funding was used to advance the applicant's career track record and detail outcomes achieved from this funding.

11. Publicising, acknowledgements, and publication

The NSW CVRN will announce the recipients. Acknowledgement of the NSW CVRN's support must be included in publications, conference presentations, public discussions, and media statements.

12. Evaluation

All applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, may be invited to provide feedback and contribute to the evaluation of this funding program. The purpose of this evaluation is aimed to ensure equity is achieved through fairness and accessibility of the scheme and to identify areas of improvement in the application process to make it more efficient and user-friendly.

TO APPLY:

- Complete the [Application Form](#) and return with the required attachments and signatures to cvrn@heartfoundation.org.au by **5pm AEST, 31st August 2026**.
- Please note only one application per applicant will be accepted.
- For more information see Appendix for FAQs or please contact **Dr Shamona Eaves (0488679403)**, or cvrn@heartfoundation.org.au

Appendix:

2026 NSW CVRN Member Organisations

- The University of Sydney
- Hunter Medical Research Institute / the University of Newcastle
- University of New South Wales, Sydney
- University of Technology, Sydney
- Heart Research Institute
- Centenary Institute
- The Garvan Institute
- The George Institute for Global Health
- Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute
- University of Wollongong
- Macquarie University
- University of New England
- Charles Sturt University
- Southern Cross University

2026 NSW CVRN Affiliate Organisations

- Western Sydney University
- The Baird Institute
- Sax Institute

FAQs

What happens if the funding is not spent within 12 months?

- Unspent funds must be returned to the Heart Foundation on behalf of the NSW CVRN.

If I have been funded for conference/course travel and registration by a Professional Development Award this year, am I eligible to include costs for travel and/or registration to attend another conference/course in this application?

- No. Conference travel and registration will only be funded once across all NSW CVRN schemes in a calendar year.

Can the funding be used to pay for part of an activity/equipment/personnel etc?

- Yes – however, you must provide supporting evidence of financial support for the balance.

Can I defer/change the start date of the funding if awarded?

- Any changes to the conditions of the grant will be considered by the CVRN management team. However, all funding must be expended within the 12-month period post award of the grant.

What is overlapping funding, and why is it not allowed?

- Overlapping funding refers to the practice of claiming the same costs from multiple funding sources. The CVRN prohibits this to ensure that funds are distributed fairly and that each project receives adequate support without overlapping funding.

Can I apply for a grant if I have already received funding for part of my project from another source?

- Yes, you can apply for a grant, but you must clearly outline which parts of the project are already funded and ensure that you are not requesting funding for those same costs in your application to the CVRN.

How should I declare other sources of funding in my application?

- You should include a detailed list of all current and pending funding sources in your application, specifying the amount, purpose, and duration of each grant or award.

What happens if I fail to disclose other funding sources in my application?

- Failure to disclose other funding sources may result in the rejection of your application or the withdrawal of any awarded funds.

Can I use funds from the CVRN to cover additional costs if my project is partially funded by another grant?

- Yes, you can use CVRN award funds to cover additional costs not covered by another grant, provided that you clearly specify these additional costs in your application and ensure there is no overlap with other funding sources.