



## **NSW Cardiovascular Research Network**



**NSW CVRN – Rural, Regional, Remote Project Grant**

## NSW CVRN – RURAL, REGIONAL, REMOTE PROJECT GRANT

The NSW Cardiovascular Research Network (**NSW CVRN**) is funded by the NSW Ministry of Health and NSW universities and research institutes (**Umbrella Organisations**). The NSW CVRN is supported and hosted by the National Heart Foundation of Australia (**Heart Foundation**). The NSW CVRN Rural, Regional, Remote (RRR – as defined below) Project Grant provides funding to support RRR-led cardiovascular research projects. The scheme is aimed at building or enhancing the track records of RRR researchers to increase opportunities for future funding success, supporting early and mid-career researchers (EMCRs) and encouraging cross-institutional collaboration.

The Heart Foundation, on behalf of the NSW CVRN, may award up to 2 grants of a total combined value of \$70,000 (excluding GST) to up to 2 successful applicants for a 12-month period. The NSW CVRN management team reserves the right to make changes to the grant terms and conditions at their discretion. The awarding of grants is contingent upon applicants meeting all specified criteria as outlined in the application guidelines. The review committee reserves the right to decline any and all applications that do not fully meet these criteria.

### 1. Eligibility

To be eligible to receive this grant, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- The applicant will be considered Chief Investigator A (CIA) on the proposed project.
- The CIA must be a member of the NSW CVRN and employed at a NSW CVRN Umbrella Organisation for the duration of the grant (see Appendix). *The NSW CVRN is offering a free 2-year trial membership period to RRR-based universities and institutions that are not currently NSW CVRN Umbrella Organisations.*
- At least 80% of the project team must reside in NSW.
- The CIA and at least 50% of the project team must work and undertake research in a RRR location within NSW as defined below.
- The research project must be conducted in a RRR location and the funding must be predominantly spent in a RRR location.
- The research project can investigate any aspect of cardiovascular disease, and related diseases including stroke, diabetes and kidney disease.
- At least 50% of the project team must be early to mid-career researchers (up to 10 years post PhD, excluding career disruptions).
- The CIA must be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, an Australian permanent resident or have applied for Australian permanent residency at the time of application.
- CIA will take intellectual leadership of the project, manage the research and will be the contact person for NSW CVRN correspondence. All other named Investigators are responsible for ensuring that the project is undertaken and completed in the manner specified.
- A person must not be named as a Chief Investigator (CI) on more than one application (i.e., a person may be named as a CI on a maximum of one application). If a CI is named on more than one application, both applications will be considered ineligible.

## 2. RRR Location

For the purpose of this grant, an RRR location is defined as a location in NSW with a [Modified Monash \(MM\) classification](#) of MM3 or above. The exception to this definition is Albury, which has a MM2 classification – applicants living and working in Albury are welcome to apply and research projects being conducted in Albury are eligible, provided they meet the eligibility criteria outlined in section 1 above. Please refer to [this map for MM classifications](#).

## 3. Use of Funding

- Funding can be used for any activity justified to advance cardiovascular research, including but not limited to kick-start project funding, pilot studies, personnel, co-design, or minor equipment.
- Funding must be spent in the 12 months from the start date of the grant.
- For clinical trials, the NSW CVRN will help facilitate access to additional support provided through the [R3 clinical trial enabling program](#).

As a guide only, the possible uses of the funding may include (but are not limited to):

- **Clinical trials** – delivered directly to RRR communities. Applicants planning on using the grant for clinical trial activities are expected to engage the [R3 clinical trial enabling program](#) and align with the objectives and principles of this program.
- **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.
- **Travel** - to conduct clinical trials, pilot studies, or consultation essential to the project. 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, consumer travel, venue hire, printing, and catering. Payments should align with the [NSW Health Consumer, carer and community member remuneration guidelines](#).
- **Minor equipment** - specialised and essential to activities outlined.
- **Professional services** - such as biostatistics, health economics, and specialist data analysis.
- **Journal publication fees.**

## 4. Excluded Expenditure Items

The grant funding cannot be used for the following purposes:

- Salary for the applicant or co-applicants.
- Conference attendance and associated travel.
- Non-project-related activities, such as entertainment and personal expenses.
- Administrative, employment, or overhead costs that are not directly attributable to the project.
- Indirect costs such as facility, regulatory, legal, compliance, or financial expenses not integral to the proposal.
- Stipends or support for undergraduate or postgraduate students.
- Duplicate research or proposed activities previously or currently being funded.

## 5. 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 applicants must not 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.

You must 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 become aware of any undisclosed information, it may lead to the rejection of the application or withdrawal of funding.

## 6. Assessment Criteria and Review

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

- Activities most likely to address priority areas in cardiovascular disease research in RRR locations, including but not limited to 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 project will provide health benefits to NSW.
- The project is viewed by the reviewers as a strong contender for future larger grant schemes.
- The project demonstrates collaboration with other researchers and/or research institutions (these could be RRR and/or metropolitan based).
- 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.

## 7. Application process

Applications will be accepted via an online application form. Applicants will be required to submit the following documentation:

- Project Summary (1,000 words max – template to be provided) describing:
  - How you intend to use the RRR Project Grant, including a clear description of activities to be funded by the grant.
  - How these activities will address priority areas of cardiovascular research in RRR communities and provide health benefits to NSW.
  - How you will ensure the funds are spent in the proposed RRR location.
  - Any outcomes you anticipate from the funding (e.g. including publications, grant applications, collaborations, etc).
- Project Team Summary including a table outlining the name, position, organisation, postcode, role and FTE of each research project Chief Investigator (CI) and a summary of each CI's role in the project (300 words max).
- Project Team Capability and Capacity Statement, summarising the team's skills, knowledge and experience relevant to the project (500 words max) (template to be provided).
- CV of the CIA (up to 4 pages).
- Letter of support from head of department/faculty or authorised representative of the Administering Organisation.
- Budget (template to be provided) and, if relevant, quotations.

## 8. Key dates

Applications open:	November 2024
Applications close:	5pm (AEDT), Monday 3 March 2025
Review period:	March 2025
Notification:	Late March/early April 2025

## 9. Funding provisions

- Funding will be provided to the Administering Organisation (**AO**) of the applicant.
- The AO must be a NSW CVRN Umbrella Organisation as outlined in Appendix (The NSW CVRN is offering a free 2-year trial membership period to RRR-based universities and institutions not currently NSW CVRN Umbrella Organisations).
- 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. Funding from the tobacco industry**

The individuals, research groups or research institutions associated with a NSW CVRN grant or award must not accept any money by way of research grants, consultancies or sponsorships from the tobacco industry or persons connected or associated 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.

Tobacco industry means any organisation or individual involved in the growth, preparation for sale, sale, shipping, advertising and distribution of tobacco and tobacco-related products, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, loose tobacco, and e-cigarettes.

## **11. 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.

## **12. Publicising, acknowledgements, and publication**

The NSW CVRN will announce the recipients and publicise the grant program, the successful projects and health outcomes. Acknowledgement of the NSW CVRN's support must be included in publications, conference presentations, public discussions, and media statements (including social media posts).

## **13. Privacy principles and compliance**

In accordance with the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Cth), all individuals, investigators, or research institutions associated with all Heart Foundation grants must comply with relevant privacy laws and guidelines. This includes the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the Australian Privacy Principles, and adherence to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Guidelines under section 95 of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth). This ensures the protection of personal information in the conduct of medical and health research, balancing privacy with the public interest in significant medical research.

## 14. 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 online [Application Form](#) and submit the required documentation to [cvrn@heartfoundation.org.au](mailto:cvrn@heartfoundation.org.au) by **5pm AEDT, Monday 3 March 2025**.
- Please note only one application per applicant will be accepted.
- For more information see Appendix for FAQs or please contact **Alison Ainsworth (02 9219 2401)**, [cvrn@heartfoundation.org.au](mailto:cvrn@heartfoundation.org.au)

## Appendix:

### 2024 NSW CVRN Umbrella Organisations

- The University of Sydney
- Hunter Medical Research Institute and the University of Newcastle
- UNSW Sydney
- University of Technology, Sydney
- Heart Research Institute
- Centenary Institute
- Garvan Institute of Medical Research
- The George Institute for Global Health
- Western Sydney University
- Sax Institute
- The Baird Institute
- Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute
- University of Wollongong
- Macquarie University
- University of New England
- Southern Cross University

## 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.

*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 be a CI on more than one grant application?*

- No – a person must not be named as a Chief Investigator (CI) on more than one application (i.e., a person may be named as a CI on a maximum of one application). If a CI is named on more than one application, both applications will be considered ineligible.

*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 NSW 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 NSW CVRN to cover additional costs if my project is partially funded by another grant?*

- Yes, you can use NSW 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.