



Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship

A salary supporting fellowship for South Australian early-career cardiovascular researchers

Background

The Heart Foundation has established the South Australian Cardiovascular Research Fund (The Fund) committing up to \$300,000 per year for 10 years to support South Australian Cardiovascular Research Network (SA CVRN). A key component of The Fund is the **Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship**. These fellowships will support Early-Career Researchers (ECRs) after PhD completion, to build capacity and capability to enhance career track record and competitiveness for future grant opportunities.

Funding and support

The fellowship supports salary of \$86,000 per year for up to 2 years (total package of \$172,000 per fellowship), either at full time or part time equivalent. Two fellowships will be available per year.

Fellows are expected to apply for a nationally competitive fellowship or research grant scheme during the funding period. If a fellow is successful in securing a nationally competitive fellowship or research grant that supports salary, the Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship will end.

Eligibility

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

- Must be an SA CVRN member and involved in cardiovascular research
- Must be residing in South Australia
- Must be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, an Australian permanent resident, or have applied for Australian permanent residency at the time of the application closing date.
- Applicants must be no more than two (2) years post-PhD (excluding career disruptions) at the application closing date.
- For the purposes of eligibility assessment, the PhD pass date is the date of the letter advising that the PhD was passed. It is not the conferral date.
- Applicants who have passed their PhD but have not yet had it formally conferred may apply; however, formal conferral of the PhD must occur prior to commencement of the Fellowship.
- Must have the support of a supervisor or research team who will guarantee access to space and resources and provide guidance for the duration of their Kick Start Fellowship.
- Must have endorsement from the Research Office of the host South Australian University.
- Must not accept funds from the tobacco industry (refer to Heart Foundation Funding [Guidelines](#)) or be affiliated with the promotion of tobacco products.

Specific considerations

The conditions of the award include:

- Applicants can apply for the Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship concurrently with a National Heart Foundation funding opportunity.
- Applicants may apply to undertake the Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship part time, however, cannot be less than 0.6 FTE.
- Paid work, such as private practice and routine clinical or administrative duties and teaching, are not supported by the fellowship. If such activities are required to be undertaken, the fellow must apply for appropriate FTE exclusive of these activities.
- Fellows are not entitled to concurrently receive salary support funding from another fellowship or grant. If they do so they must immediately notify the Heart Foundation SA CVRN Lead and acknowledge that their Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship will immediately come to an end and they will no longer be entitled to salary payment under the fellowship.
- The Heart Foundation SA CVRN Lead is to be notified immediately if the Fellow's employment circumstances change during the tenure of the Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship, particularly when the ability of the Fellow to undertake the Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship's planned activities may be impacted by the change in circumstances. The notification should detail any financial and/or administrative implications for the Fellow, and implications of the change to their ability to undertake the roles and responsibilities associated with the Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship.
- The Fellow must submit a progress report and an end of fellowship report against original objectives including outcomes and external funding success.
- If the Fellow achieves success in postgraduate research funding or fellowship, the Heart Foundation Cardiovascular Kick Start Fellowship will come to an end.

Application

The application must be submitted via the [Heart Foundation Grants Management Portal](#) by 5:00pm ACST 20 May 2026. Awards will be announced 5 July 2026 to start 1 August 2026.

Applicants must adhere to the following procedure:

- Visit the Heart Foundation [Grant Management Portal](#) to start an application for the Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship. The program overview has all the key information including an application template.
- Ensure an up-to-date [ORCID account](#) to populate Applicant and Track Record

sections of the application.

- Invite a supervisor or team leader to provide a Letter of Reference. Their details are entered in the system, and they are automatically invited to complete this section.
- Complete editable sections of the application, template provided in the Program Overview.
- Submit the application for endorsement to the university's Research Office. This is a step within the Grants Management Portal.
- Notification of endorsement is provided via email from the Grants Management Portal. The applicant is responsible for ensuring endorsement is received before the closing date, as late entries are not permitted unless pre-approved by the SA CVRN Lead.

Application assessment

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of peer reviewers selected by the Heart Foundation. The panel will provide their funding recommendations to an Advisory Committee. Application decisions are at the Heart Foundation's sole discretion.

Reviewers will consider all aspects of applications against the criteria, including whether an applicant's research productivity and contributions are consistent with the opportunities available to them at their career stage.

Applications will be reviewed against the following criteria:

- Track Record (20%)
- Quality and feasibility of fellowship plan (30%)
- Significance and potential impact on research and career trajectory (50%)

Key dates

Application open:	1 April 2026
Application close:	5:00pm ACST 20 May 2026
Review Period:	June 2026
Notification:	5 July 2026
Funding commences:	1 August 2026

Funding provisions

The fellowship will be administered by the recipient's university, which will be responsible for employment status, oncosts, and fellowship disbursement. The university must ensure that the terms and conditions of the Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship are met. This includes securing funds to support the final 6 months' salary of the 24-month fellowship. The Heart Foundation upon paying the fellowship funds to the university will have no further responsibility with respect to payment.

Reporting

Fellows are required to submit three key reports during and after the fellowship period. A Progress Report detailing activities undertaken against expected objectives within the 12-month time period. At the end of the fellowship period (24 months), a Final Report is required, summarising the overall outcomes and accomplishments over the entire fellowship period. Additionally, an Impact Report is requested six months after the completion of the fellowship, highlighting the long-term effects and benefits of the Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship on the fellow's career and the broader community.

All reporting is requested and completed within the Heart Foundation Grants Management Portal, with due dates 3 months after the report time period.

Publicising, acknowledgements, and publication

The Heart Foundation will announce the recipients. Acknowledgement of the SA CVRN and Heart Foundation's support must be included in all publications, presentations, public discussions and announcements, advertising materials, research reports, social media, media statements or any other material associated to work undertaken with the Heart Foundation South Australian Kick Start Fellowship.

Evaluation

All applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, will 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