WCH Foundation
Bloom Research Program 2024

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

These guidelines are designed to assist prospective applicants in deciding whether to apply for a grant in the Women's & Children's Hospital Foundation (WCH Foundation) Bloom Research Program. It sets out the purpose of the WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program, eligibility criteria, the application process, details required in applications and the assessment process. **Prospective applicants are advised to read these guidelines thoroughly before applying.**

Contents

1 About the WCH Foundation

The WCH Foundation is an official charity of the Women's and Children's Hospital (WCH), and its associated Women's and Children's Health Network (WCHN). The WCH Foundation aims to improve the health and wellbeing of women, children and families under the care of WCHN by supporting health and medical research that ensures quality healthcare.

WCHN is one of ten health networks in South Australia and the leading provider of health services to women, children and families in South Australia. The WCHN includes the WCH, as well as state-wide paediatric services including the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and the Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS).

2 About the WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program

The WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program was established in 2023. The program supports large scale research projects with a broad scope to increase the impact of maternal and paediatric research in the state of South Australia. Research projects funded by the Bloom Research Program should:

- create new knowledge, and develop and test innovative ideas,
- improve health outcomes and/or promote health budget savings across the WCHN,
- promote research leadership within a field of expertise,
- involve collaboration between researchers across academia and the healthcare system,
- promote enhanced job security and career development,
- enable protected research time and
- lead to the translation of research findings into policy and practice.

Each year, the WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program directs funding toward Priority Research Areas (PRAs), to ensure that funding can make the greatest possible impact on the health and wellbeing of women, children and families under the care of the WCHN and across South Australia. The PRAs are determined through an analytical and consultative process, informed by objective data, policy, and stakeholder input.

3 Key information for the 2024 grant round

The 2024 Bloom Research Program grant round involves a few key changes compared to the previous round, as summarised below.

3.1 2024 Priority Research Areas (PRAs)

In 2024, the WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program will allocate grants to paediatric and maternal health and medical research projects aligning with the following PRAs:

Priority populations, including:
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples
- People experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage

Emerging technologies for the prevention, early intervention, treatment and management of health and medical conditions, including:
- Artificial intelligence and machine learning
- Genomics, embryoids and organoids, and stem cells
- Precision medicine

Innovative clinical or public health strategies for the prevention, early intervention, treatment and management of health and medical conditions, including:
- Medicines and devices
- Digitally enabled models of care

3.2   Grant funds and funding limits

The funding allocation for the 2024 WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program grant round is $4 million. The funding may be distributed across several projects, depending upon the applications received and the recommendations of the WCH Foundation [Research Grants Committee]. Applicants should consider the competitive nature of the program, the approximate total budget of the program and the PRAs when preparing an application.

A maximum of $2 million may be requested per project, over a maximum of five years. This funding limit applies to all project types, including non-clinical, pre-clinical, clinical research and health services research projects.

3.3   Application process

The application process involves three main stages, a Round Table event, an Expression of Interest (EOI) and full application stage. The Round Table event will be held BEFORE the EOI stage opens, to allow prospective applicants to form collaborative teams and to present their project ideas to a panel of stakeholders. Projects presented at the Round Table event may then be submitted as an EOI (see [Section 5.1] for further details and information regarding alternative arrangements for those unable to attend the Round Table event).

3.4   Key dates

Key dates for the 2024 Bloom Research Program grant round are as follows:

Date	Time*	Event
Monday, 5 February	9:00 am	Registrations for Round Table open
Sunday, 25 February	11:59 pm	Registrations for Round Table close
Wednesday, 13 March	9:00 am to 6:00 pm	Round Table event
Thursday, 14 March	9:00 am	EOI open (by invitation only following Round Table event)
Friday, 12 April	11:59 pm	EOI close
Friday, 10 May	9:00 am	Full applications open (shortlisted applicants by invitation only)
Sunday, 9 June	11:59 pm	Full applications close
Early to mid-July	N/A	Funding decision made

*all times are in ACDT/ACST

4   Eligibility criteria

4.1   Eligible applicants

Applications will be accepted from researchers (i.e. a person who is research-active, such as a research scientist or research clinician) working in a relevant field of paediatric and/or maternal health and medical research, who:
- hold a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) from a recognised institution, or have an equivalent combination of skills, training and/or experience,
- hold a paid appointment at an Administering Institution listed in [Section 4.3], and can provide evidence of employment,
- are an Australian citizen, New Zealand citizen or has permanent residency in Australia at the time of application, and
- do not hold a current, ongoing Bloom Research Program grant as Lead Chief Investigator (see [Section 5.4.4] for information about the number of grants that may be held).

4.2 Eligible projects

Projects will be deemed eligible if, at the EOI and full application stages, they:
- were presented at the Round Table event (see Section 5.1),
- address at least one of the 2024 PRAs,
- include at least one Chief Investigator (CI) in the leadership team who holds a paid appointment at a WCHN service, or who holds a paid appointment at one of the listed Administering Institutions with WCHN as their primary workplace,
- will lead to improvements (either directly or indirectly) in the health and wellbeing of women, children and families under the care of WCHN,
- address a need of WCHN, the objectives of the WCHN Strategic Plan and/or the WCHN Research Plan (see Appendix 1),
- propose a budget that adheres to the guidelines set out in Section 5.5,
- are not using philanthropic involvement to substitute a government responsibility, and
- spend 80% or more of the WCH Foundation funding within South Australia.

4.3 Administering Institutions

Applications must be submitted via one of the following Administering Institutions:
- Women's and Children's Health Network (WCHN)
- South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI)
- The University of Adelaide
- Flinders University
- University of South Australia
- Torrens University

Applicants must have prior approval from the Administering Institution at both the EOI and full application stages. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the relevant Administering Institution endorsement forms are uploaded to SmartyGrants before the closing date. The Administering Institution will ordinarily be the primary affiliation of the project lead, and where the largest proportion of funds are spent. The Administering Institution must also be able to commit and manage the time contribution of the project lead to the project.

Applications may involve multiple institutions. Each participating institution must nominate a CI and must be able to commit to providing the general facilities and supporting resources necessary for their contribution towards the project's conduct.

5 Application and assessment

The WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program application and assessment process involves three stages – a Round Table event, EOI and full application.

5.1 Stage 1: Round Table event

Prospective applicants should register to attend the Round Table event via SmartyGrants, a one-day event to be held in Adelaide. Registration requires an indication of the PRA(s) of interest, along with contact details, but does not require a project plan or proposal to be prepared in advance. The intention of the Round Table event is to:
- facilitate the development of collaborative proposals through round table discussions with other researchers interested in applying for funding, and
- allow researchers to present their project idea to an audience of stakeholders and receive feedback. Stakeholders in attendance may include consumers, WCH Foundation donors and representatives of the WCHN (including, but not limited to, Executive, Research Secretariat, and members of the Research Advisory Committee), WCH Foundation directors

and the independent WCH Foundation Research Grants Committee (a group of external expert reviewers).

Only projects presented at the Round Table event will be eligible to be submitted as an EOI at Stage 2. If a prospective applicant wishes to submit a Bloom Research Program application but cannot attend the Round Table event, they should contact the WCH Foundation Research Program Manager to discuss alternative options **prior** to the event.

As project ideas will be discussed with other prospective applicants and presented to stakeholders, those who are unwilling or unable to discuss their ideas in an open forum should not apply for the WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program.

Applicants may submit a request to the WCH Foundation Research Program Manager for attendance of up to two other prospective team members (in addition to the applicant). If these team members do not plan on leading an application, they do not need to register via SmartyGrants, and can simply request to attend via email. Approval of these requests will be at the discretion of the WCH Foundation Research Program Manager.

Please note that registration for the Round Table event via SmartyGrants does not constitute an obligation to present at the Round Table or submit an EOI. Applicants may opt out of presenting and applying for a Bloom Research Program grant at any time prior to, during or after the event.

5.2   Stage 2: Expression of Interest (EOI)

Only applicants who presented a project at the Round Table event (or were granted an exception) will be invited to submit an EOI. The EOI form will be available via SmartyGrants from the day following the event for approximately four weeks.

The EOI application will include sections as follows:
- Administering Institution
- Participating institutions/organisations
- Project leadership team
- PRA alignment
- Project proposal
- Alignment with WCHN needs, strategic and research plan, and involvement of WCHN
- Approximate budget
- Approximate in-kind and voluntary contributions
- Administering Institution endorsement.

All EOI submissions received by the due date will be assessed for eligibility by the WCH Foundation Research Program Manager, and the WCHN Clinical Research Director or an equivalent, authorised WCHN representative, against the eligibility criteria described in Section 4.

Eligible applications will then be assessed by the WCH Foundation Research Grants Committee against the following criteria:
- Alignment with one or more of the PRAs
- Outcomes and outputs of the project will (or have the potential to) benefit the health and wellbeing of women, children and/or families, either directly or indirectly
- Demonstrates innovation through challenging or shifting current concepts, approaches, methodologies technologies or interventions
- Evidence of consumer and community engagement, particularly for projects focused on priority populations
- Project team involves diverse collaboration, with researchers at different career stages, from both academic institutions and health services

EOIs which are deemed eligible, and best meet the assessment criteria, will be shortlisted for invitation to submit a full application via SmartyGrants. The WCH Foundation reserves the right to invite some, all or none of the EOI applications.

5.3 Stage 3: Full application

Full application will be by invitation only, and must reflect the shortlisted EOI. Full applications will be due approximately one month after the invitation (see Section 3.5 for key dates). Any changes to the Administering Institution or leadership team must be communicated to the WCH Foundation Research Program Manager for consideration and approval at least two business days prior to the closing of full applications. Changes that will not be accepted are those that would deem the application ineligible as per Section 4, a change to the project lead, or a significant number of changes to the project team (as determined by the WCH Foundation Research Program Manager).

The full application includes the following sections:
- Project lead and Administering Institution details, including Administering Institution endorsement
- Participating institutions/organisations, including a letter of support where voluntary and/or in-kind contributions are being made
- Project leadership team details
- Project summary, including the PRA(s) being addressed, project title and a lay synopsis
- Project details, including background, significance, a project plan, research translation, commercialisation (optional), and a supporting document with timeline, tables and figures, and a reference list
- Budget details, including budget item justification and any voluntary and/or in-kind contributions

Applicants are expected to provide all necessary information to make evaluation possible via SmartyGrants but the WCH Foundation reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant(s) and/or the Administering Institution if required.

Full applications will be competitively and confidentially reviewed for scientific merit by the WCH Foundation Research Grants Committee, according to the following criteria:
- Quality - high-quality research into one or more of the WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program PRAs
- Significance - outcomes and outputs that benefit the health and wellbeing of women, children and families
- Innovation - challenging or shifting current concepts, approaches, methodologies, technologies or interventions
- Capability - appropriate capability and quality for the proposed project, and support of early and mid-career researcher development
- Collaboration - diverse collaborations which will increase the likelihood of translation and impact, including researchers and clinicians from academic institutions and health services and in-kind and voluntary contribution commitments.
- Consumer engagement – meaningful engagement of consumers (individuals, communities and/or organisations) at various stages of project (including conceptualisation, development and approval, data collection and management, analysis, report writing and dissemination of results)

Reviewers will also follow the NHMRC Relative to Opportunity Policy. Applications will be scored and ranked using the NHMRC scoring system, after which a recommendation for funding will be submitted to the WCH Foundation for consideration. There will be an appropriate threshold level of quality below which the Research Grants Committee reserves the right not to recommend all the funding be allocated by the WCH Foundation. Allocation of funds will be entirely at the discretion of the WCH Foundation. This decision is final and no further negotiations will be entered into. A

summary of reviewers' feedback will be provided to applicants following communication of the outcome.

Where an application is awarded funding, the WCH Foundation will enter into a funding agreement with the nominated Administering Institution detailing appropriate management and administration requirements for the approved project. Each participating institution will be required to enter into a multi-institutional agreement in accordance with, and under the leadership of, the Administering Institution. Unless otherwise agreed, the project must commence within six months of receiving notification of the award. The project cannot commence before all relevant ethics approvals and collaborative agreements are in place and the funding agreement is fully executed.

In the case that none of the applications are considered worthy of funding, the WCH Foundation may close the round without awarding funding, or revisit the EOIs and issue further invitations to applicants.

5.4 Incomplete, false or misleading information

All information submitted to the WCH Foundation (including EOIs, full applications and reports) must be complete, current and accurate at the time of submission, and not contain false or misleading information.

Examples of false or misleading information include, but are not limited to, providing:
- dishonest statements regarding time commitments to the research for which support is being sought,
- incomplete or inaccurate facts regarding other sources of funding,
- inaccurate claims in publication records, or
- incomplete or misleading information of ethics and governance requirements or other factors that may impact the researcher's ability to commence the research project in a timely manner.

If the WCH Foundation believes that omissions or inclusion of misleading information were intentional, it may choose to exclude an application from assessment, withdraw funding, and/or refer the matter to the contracted Administering Institution.

6 Project leadership

The project leadership team must be able to demonstrate a track record relevant to the field of the application and provide a meaningful contribution and time commitment to the proposed project over its duration. Leadership team members will typically include:

Project lead / Lead Chief Investigator
Refers to the person submitting the EOI or full application (also termed applicant). At full application stage, the project lead is considered the lead Chief Investigator with primary responsibility in managing and reporting on a successful application.

Chief Investigator(s)
Investigators playing a major role in the project, with a substantial time commitment. Multiple Chief Investigators may be included where appropriate, depending upon the scale of the proposed project.

Associate Investigator(s)
Investigators playing a minor role in the project and/or with an intermittent/low time commitment should be included as Associate Investigators (AI). Associate Investigators may include consumers or people with lived experience, or currently enrolled HDR candidates contributing to the project.

6.1 Chief Investigator categories

One of the following categories is to be selected for each Investigator:

- Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Candidate
  - o Masters by Research and PhD candidates may not be included as a Chief Investigator, unless their thesis has been submitted and is under examination, or they are awaiting conferral at the time of application, otherwise they may be included as an Associate Investigator

- Postdoctoral Researcher
  - o Up to three years postdoctoral research experience from conferral of the PhD.
  - o Must be mentored by a senior researcher or enrolled in a mentoring program e.g. WCHN or university mentoring programs and research skills workshops

- Early-Career Researcher
  - o Three to five years postdoctoral research experience from conferral of the PhD.
  - o Must be mentored by a senior researcher or enrolled in a mentoring program e.g. WCHN or university mentoring programs and research skills workshops

- Mid-Career Researcher
  - o More than five years, and up to ten years postdoctoral research experience from conferral of the PhD, or equivalent research experience.

- Senior Researcher
  - o A senior researcher who has received national/international funding.
  - o More than ten years postdoctoral research experience from conferral of the PhD.
  - o Senior researchers are encouraged to include collaborations with and provide mentoring of Postdoctoral and Early and Mid-Career researchers.

Where an Investigator does not hold a PhD qualification, evidence of an equivalent combination of skills, training and/or experience in a relevant field must be provided during the application process.

6.2 Other requirements for the project leadership team

Investigators located outside South Australia, and/or whose only appointment with the organisations listed as an Administering Institution is by a non-salaried honorary, visiting or affiliate appointment, cannot be the Lead Chief Investigator, but may be listed as a Chief or Associate Investigator, or included as a member of a broader project team.

A Chief Investigator may only submit a maximum of one application as the Lead Chief Investigator, and applications will not be accepted from Chief Investigators who still hold current and ongoing WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program Grant(s) as lead Chief Investigator at the time of funding commencement. Chief Investigators can be involved in no more than two applications, e.g. Lead Chief Investigator on one application and Chief Investigator on another, or Chief Investigator (but not Lead Chief Investigator) on two applications. There are no restrictions on the number of investigators (Chief and Associate) per application. The WCH Foundation reserves the right to exclude from further consideration any applications than do not meet these requirements.

The following limits apply to the number of current and ongoing WCH Foundation Bloom Research Grants that may be held at one time:
- One grant as Lead Chief Investigator
- Two as Chief Investigator (e.g. one as Lead Chief Investigator and one as Chief Investigator, or two as Chief Investigator)
- There are no limits to the number of grants held as Associate Investigator

If a Chief Investigator has any outstanding reports or funds not expended from a previous WCH Foundation Research Grant, these must be finalised prior to making an application for the current funding round. Failure to do so may make the applicant ineligible for funding.

7 Funding

Applications must be realistic in the amount of work that can be achieved in the time frame and within the budget requested. Funding guidelines shall generally be according to the current guidelines established by the National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC Direct Research Cost Guidelines) unless otherwise specified in these guidelines, or, where appropriate with respect to employment conditions, according to the South Australian Government or equivalent guidelines.

There is no minimum funding requirement, however the **maximum** funding for any individual project is $2m, over a maximum of five years. The WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program funding cannot be used to support organisational indirect costs, infrastructure levies, intellectual property and patent costs. See Table 1 for funding limits related to salary support and direct research costs.

Table 1: Salary support and direct research cost funding limits

	Max annual funding (per individual for salaries)[a]	Max funding period
PhD Scholarship stipend	$40,000	≤ 3.5 years
Postdoctoral Fellowship	$100,000	≤ 3 years
Early-Career Researcher	$150,000	≤ 5 years
Mid-Career Researcher	$180,000	≤ 5 years
Senior Researcher (max 0.2 FTE)	$100,000	≤ 5 years
Other project staff	No limit	≤ 5 years
Direct Research Costs[b]	$200,000	≤ 5 years
Travel to present results	$7,500 (max per grant)	≤ 5 years

a Maximum amounts for salaries are inclusive of on-costs.
b Direct research costs include those expenses that directly related to the conduct of the proposed project, and integral to achieving the objectives and outcomes.

7.1 Budget

Research applications *must include full budgetary details* on all consumables, maintenance, minor equipment and support staff requirements including statistical support and mentoring of Early-Career Researchers. Should the research project require statistical review, costings are to be included in the budget.

The WCH Foundation cannot provide funding for projects that have insufficient funding, personnel or other resources. Applicants are asked to provide details of other funding and infrastructure that will be available to them to ensure the project can be completed. Ideally, projects should leverage other forms of funding including grants, voluntary and in-kind contributions from collaborating research organisations encouraging maximum collaboration and impact. Additional funding from the applicant, collaborating partners and other sources (e.g. Research Block Grant and industry contributions), will be looked upon favourably during the review process and applications should include letters of support from the relevant organisations detailing the co-contribution amount and type (cash and/or in-kind).

The Research Grants Committee will make an assessment of the budget requested in terms of the level of support and items required to undertake the research, and may make recommendations for adjustment if considered appropriate.

7.2   Salary support

Salary support may be requested for investigators and/or other project staff (see Table 1 for salary support funding limits). Justification must be provided for all salary support requested. Salary support requests should include the base salary and statutory on-costs, such as leave accruals and the superannuation guarantee contribution. Such on-costs are limited to a maximum of 30% of the base salary request. Applicants must verify their Administering Institution and/or participating organisation's base salary scales and rate of on-costs before finalising budgets in the application form.

The salary of an investigator supported under a successful application will be subject to written confirmation from their employer that backfill resources will be made available to ensure the Chief Investigator is afforded the time required to conduct the WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program project. Project staff are to be appointed at standard award conditions, commensurate with experience, as determined by their Administering Institution and/or participating organisation.

7.3   Databases and registries

Databases and registries have merit but to be eligible for funding they need to be designed to answer a research question and aims / hypotheses must be presented. Funding for access to existing databases and registries may be eligible however the need must be well-justified.

7.4   Equipment and travel

Funds should be spent to directly support the research project. Applications to support funds for major equipment items and infrastructure, and indirect costs will not be considered. Individual minor equipment items (>$5,000 each) may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Travel for attendance and presentation of research at a conference may be requested up to $7,500/year. Further travel expenses may be considered on a case-by-case basis, and only where the travel is directly related to achieving the research objectives of the project. Telephone and computer costs cannot be funded unless justified to be directly related to the grant.

7.5   Duplication of funding

The WCH Foundation is seeking to fund projects which do not duplicate or substantially overlap with existing projects or pending proposals. This is to prevent any conflict or "double dipping" to fund the same or similar research. Research which builds upon previous proof of concept or pilot studies are acceptable. The WCH Foundation will not fund people or projects that form part of the core activity of another funded grant.

Where funding is being sought from another organisation for the same/similar project, an application may only be made to the WCH Foundation where the applicant can provide evidence that their alternate application has been unsuccessful.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the WCH Foundation when receiving funding from another organisation for the same/similar project. Failure to do so will result in ineligibility to apply for WCH Foundation funding for a period of five years and repayment of WCH Foundation grant funds.

If other funding (e.g. NHMRC, philanthropic, industry collaboration etc.) is successfully obtained for a project that is funded by the WCH Foundation, then WCH Foundation funding will be withdrawn and may be reallocated to another fundable project as appropriate.

8   Ethics and governance

Research proposals cannot be undertaken until they receive all relevant ethics and governance approvals from the appropriate Research Ethics/Biosafety Committee(s), the Research Governance Officer of WCHN and any institution where any work is to occur. The WCH Foundation must be notified of the approvals within 6 months of project commencement otherwise funding may be withdrawn.

It is the responsibility of the applicant of the successful proposal to provide copies of all relevant ethics and governance approvals to the WCH Foundation Research Program Manager. Evidence of approval provided must reflect the title and proposal indicated on the successful application. No major variation to the research protocol will be accepted, without WCH Foundation approval, and in accordance with the relevant funding agreement.

9   Reporting and publicity

The applicant is responsible for reporting, and agrees to provide regular reports on the progress of the research through SmartyGrants. The timing and frequency of reporting requirements will be set out in the funding agreement. Progress will be monitored by the WCH Foundation Research Program Manager against agreed milestones and deliverables, including the **achievement**, **awareness** and **impact** of the research during the period of award (see Table 2).

Table 2: WCH Foundation Bloom Research Program progress reporting criteria

Area	Indicator	Measurement
Achievement	Objectives	Number of milestones achieved
		Percentage of grant achievement
	Budget	Percentage of expenditure against the budget
		Percentage of expenditure against timelines
	Conduct	All ethics approvals are in place
Awareness	Publications	Number and quality of peer reviewed publications
		Number of clinical guidelines
	Presentations	Number of presentations at academic conferences
		Number of presentations and workshops to consumers
	Media	Social media interest
		Number of media releases and media appearances
	WCH Foundation events	Number of presentations at research events
		Number of meetings with/presentations to donors
Impact	Healthcare practice	Evidence of health translation and uptake of research findings and outcomes at the WCHN
		Evidence of impact on patients under the care of the WCHN and outside South Australia
		Evidence of impact on health policy
		Number of clinicians and/or researchers attracted to the WCHN attributable to the research
	Future research	Follow on research
		Additional funding attributable to the research
		Number of student HDR awards attributable to the research

These reporting requirements will need to include what the research has accomplished to date and reconfirm its direction. The WCH Foundation reserves the right to discontinue funding should it deem that the research conducted does not comply with the proposal submitted and the assessment criteria. Evaluation on the research project's success on completion is also required to assess its quality and verify its completion.

The Chief Investigator will agree to:
- undertake the research as proposed,
- report any unexpected delays or changes to the research plan in a timely manner,
- complete progress reports, annual reports and an annual financial statement (detailing expenditure) and a *final report* and *financial statement* upon completion of the project as set out in the relevant funding agreement,
- ensure all research work receiving funding from the WCH Foundation is acknowledged explicitly in any presentations or publications arising from the research and submit copies of publications to the WCH Foundation,
- ensure all research is conducted in accordance with the WCHN Code of Conduct for Research, the SA Health Ethics and Governance policy (2017) and other relevant documents such as Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007 and updated 2018); National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007 and updated 2018); Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (2013) and National Framework of Ethical Principles in Gene Technology (2012),
- ensure the WCH Foundation is consulted regarding any potential media opportunities relating to the project prior to public release,
- provide updates at intervals agreed upon in consultation with the WCH Foundation about their funded project for the promotion of their research, including a lay summary for use by the WCH Foundation/WCHN to promote the research outcomes, and
- attend WCH Foundation donor and Bloom Research Program events and participate in media opportunities organised by the WCH Foundation from time to time.

10 Using SmartyGrants

Only electronic applications will be accepted at each application stage and must be submitted via the [SmartyGrants](#) platform as follows:
- Applicants must first create an account with SmartyGrants. Your account details are used for the purpose of completing your application form and for ongoing communications from the WCH Foundation relevant to the Research Grants Program.
- You can return to SmartyGrants at any time to view your application. Please note your application cannot be changed once it has been submitted.
- Please save your application regularly.
- All questions are to be answered or marked 'not applicable'. Do not leave any sections blank.
- Applicants must adhere strictly to word limits in each part of the application form.
- The application must contain all the information necessary for assessment of the project without the need for explanation or reference to further documentation, including reference to internet sources.
- Unless otherwise specified in the application form, all uploaded files should be provided in PDF format. File names should include a short description of the item followed by the applicant's first initial and family name, for example "Transcript G Brown.pdf".
- The application portal will be open until the specified date and time in [Section 3.5](#) and late applications will **NOT** be accepted.
- Upon submission, applicants will receive a confirmation of receipt of the application by email. If the email is not received (after checking junk/spam folders), applicants should assume that the submission has not been received and re-attempt submission.

Due to incompatibility issues, please **do not use Internet Explorer** with SmartyGrants.

APPENDIX 1 – WCHN Strategic and Research Plans

[WCHN Strategy 2026: Realising Potential, Creating Together](#)

The WCHN strategy titled "Strategy 2026: Realising Potential, Creating Together" outlines four key priorities to ensure that the Network becomes a leading healthcare provider for women, children and families.

1. Improved health and wellbeing of families and communities
Deliver prevention and early intervention initiatives in partnership with consumers, government and non-government agencies by prioritising areas where intervention is most likely to lead to improvements in health and wellbeing.
2. Meaningful gains in Aboriginal health and wellbeing
Provide holistic support for Aboriginal communities to improve their health and wellbeing by prioritising and responding to the needs of Aboriginal people accessing healthcare.
3. Provide leading healthcare for women, babies, children and young people
Continuously improve our clinical care to ensure we deliver the right care and services in partnership with consumers and their families by providing sustainable healthcare that meets or exceeds the benchmarks set by recognised leaders in healthcare for women, babies, children and young people.
4. Create one health network
Act as one statewide health network with our consumers to improve health outcomes by providing integrated and seamless statewide health services across diverse communities, including other states, giving our consumers the ability to access, navigate and receive appropriate health services in a timely manner.

[WCHN Research Strategy 2023-2027](#)

Vision: To be a nationally and internationally leading and respected research organisation for women, babies, children, young people and their families where our research outcomes are efficiently translated into better health.

Mission: To improve the health and wellbeing of families and communities, by providing integrated care supported by disease prevention, innovation, research and a strong evidence base.

Research Values and Guiding Principles: Our research values acknowledge the WCHN values of Compassion, Respect, Equity, Accountability, Together for Excellence. CREATE. Together.

Strategic Priorities:
1. Enhance our research culture by further embedding research excellence into clinical care, disease prevention and health service delivery
2. Further develop existing research strengths, partnerships and collaborations
3. Support capacity building for emerging research groups and future research leaders
4. Collaborate with consumers at every phase in the research cycle to achieve our vision and mission
5. Focus on future health needs, research innovations and technological advances