

RESEARCH ENDOWMENT FUND
GUIDELINES 2023
for funding commencing in 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Research Endowment Fund (REF) is an annual competitive financial grant round to support research activity of high quality across the St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) (SVHM) campuses.

The REF and the REF Committee are guided by the SVHM Director of Research and managed by its Research Facilitation Unit. Further information on the Research Directorate is available via <https://svhm.org.au/home/research>

These guidelines provide instructions and information to assist researchers who are considering submitting a REF Application in 2023, for research project funding commencing in 2024.

2. FUNDING CRITERIA

The REF aims to raise the profile of research by supporting projects that have a clinical application, or potential clinical significance and, in particular, research collaborations.

Funding applications are assessed by the REF Committee, and ranked in order of merit against the following REF funding criteria:

- i. Development of areas of research need (e.g. clinical significance) and align with the SVHM research strategy;
- ii. Seeding of pilot projects with the potential to form larger external grant applications, where the PI or co-PI must hold a SVHM clinical appointment (honorary included);
- iii. Joint venture projects lead by Hospital Departments, with campus Institutes and /or University Departments (the PI or co-PI must hold a SVHM clinical appointment (honorary included));
- iv. Quality of the project and its value to the Hospital including its relevance to the development of clinical services;
- v. Provision of assistance to new and early-career researchers to facilitate the development of their research skills to the hospital; and
- vi. Broadly collaborative and multi-disciplinary projects are strongly encouraged.
 - Cross-discipline and cross-clinical areas of collaborative research is strongly encouraged, in line with St Vincent's Research Strategy.

Applicants are encouraged to keep these funding criteria in mind when they are developing their REF application.

3. REF COMMITTEE

The REF Committee will use panels of referees from Hospital and campus staff, who will review applications according to the above REF Funding Criteria on a competitive basis, to make recommendations to the CEO on the allocation of funds.

The REF Committee comprises of:

- Director of Research at SVHM (Chair)
- Professor of Medicine of The University of Melbourne at SVHM
- Professor of Surgery of The University of Melbourne at SVHM / or delegate
- Director of Cancer Services
- Professor of Psychiatry of The University of Melbourne at SVHM
- Chief Medical Officer SVHM
- Chief Nursing Officer SVHM / Professor of Nursing SVHM
- Director of The Bionics Institute
- Director of St Vincent's Institute
- Allied Health Group Manager SVHM
- Director of Mission SVHM
- Director of Foundation (non-voting)
- Director of Palliative Care
- Research Week Committee Chair
- Director of Immunology Research Centre
- Representative of Early Career Researcher
- Research Directorate Project Manager (Secretary) (non-voting)
- Head of O'Brien's Institute

The Representative of Early Career Researcher will be nominated by the Committee and stand for a maximum of two years on the Committee.

4. CRITICAL DATES 2023

- REF Applications open: Tuesday 1st August 2023
- REF Applications close: Friday 1st September 2023
- REF results advised by Friday 1st December 2023
- REF Deeds of Agreements completed: December 2023/January 2024
- REF funding period begins: March 2024

5. FUNDING CATEGORIES

To meet the objectives of the funding criteria the following categories will be:

Category A: Research Buy-Out Time for Clinicians (part-time)

Category B: Support or Seeding Grants for Research Projects

Category C: The Margaret Young Bequest: Funding for a research project related to arthritis research

There will be no Category D.

Category E: The Sheehan-Birrell Foundation: Funding for a research project related to Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus at St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne

Category A: Research Buy-Out Time for Clinicians (part-time)

Objective:

To buy out clinical time for research activities. This is defined as providing funding to clinicians to do research, by either obtaining time to spend on research by foregoing clinical work, or by substituting another practitioner to fulfil clinical duties with the hospital, so that research can be undertaken.

Eligibility:

Offered to clinicians (i.e. Medical Practitioners, Nurses, Allied Health Professionals etc) with SVHM Hospital appointments. Applicants must have a clinical appointment equivalent to two sessions per week at a SVHM department as supported by your Head of Department. The clinical buy-out time is for paid clinical sessions at SVHM only. The applicant must hold a SVHM clinical appointment (honorary included). Preference will be given to early-to-mid career researchers. Prior successful applicants of Category A funding are only eligible for one more year of Category A funding (two years in total maximum).

Funding:

Funding is available to support research on a part-time basis of up to 0.2 EFT (capped at \$50,000; based on current award salary). Funding is to support clinical research undertaken on SVHM campuses.

Special consideration will be given to:

- i) Research that targets clinical or translational research outcomes
- ii) Research that has a collaborative nature (e.g. across departments, with campus institutes and universities etc)
- iii) Research that has co-funding from host departments.

Please note that, Category A applications should request funds for Clinical Buy Out Time only. Requests for other items, such as equipment, will not be considered in Category A applications.

Please note that, for the purposes of the REF process, the Principal Researcher for Category A applications is defined as the applicant who will be receiving funds for their salary.

Category B: Support or Seeding Grants for Research Projects

Objective:

Support for Researchers for to assist in employing staff, consumables, or intra-hospital services (e.g. Pathology, ethics applications, animal facility charges etc.). Category B is particularly for funding pilot projects particularly by early career researchers. It is intended to support early studies, not projects currently underway or near completion.

Eligibility:

Funding is available to a research team based on the St Vincent's campus. The PI or co-PI must hold an SVHM clinical appointment (honorary included).

Funding:

Duration of funding is seen as "seeding" for a one year term only. Projects should have well defined budgets, aims and be achievable in a 12 month period. Funding in Category B for individual projects is capped at \$20,000. Applicants may reapply for funding but would need to do so formally, via a new REF application.

Category C: The Margaret Young Bequest - Funding for research project related to Arthritis research

Objective:

Support for Researchers for to assist in employing staff, consumables, or intra-hospital services (e.g. pathology, ethics applications, animal facility charges etc.) and is intended to be applied towards research into the causes and management of arthritis.

Eligibility:

Funding is available to a research team based on the St Vincent's campus. The PI or co-PI must hold a SVHM clinical appointment (honorary included).

Funding:

Duration of funding is for a one year term only. Projects should have well defined budgets, aims and be achievable in a 12 month period. Funding in Category C for individual projects is capped at \$20,000. Applicants may reapply for funding but would need to do so formally, via a new REF application.

Category D: SVHA's Inclusive Health Innovation Fund

Please note that the SVHA's Inclusive Health innovation Fund program will NOT be managed as part of the SVHM Research Endowment Fund Program this year. Please contact svcfoundation@svha.org.au for any questions regarding the SVHA Inclusive Health Innovation fund.

Category E: The Sheehan-Birrell Foundation: Funding for a research project related to Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus at St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne

Objective:

Support for Researchers for to assist in employing staff, consumables, or intra-hospital services (e.g. pathology, ethics applications, animal facility charges etc.) and is intended to be applied towards research into the causes and management of Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus at St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne (SVPHM).

Eligibility:

Funding is available to a research team based at St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne. The PI or co-PI must hold a SVPHM clinical appointment.

Funding:

Duration of funding is for a one year term only. Projects should have well defined budgets, aims and be achievable in a 12 month period. Funding in Category E for individual projects is capped at \$20,000. Applicants may reapply for funding but would need to do so formally, via a new REF application.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants are required to complete and submit the **online Application Form**. Abstract submission portal and online application form to be finalised. You can download the application form via <https://www.ivvy.com.au/event/ACMD23/research-endowment-fund.html>

Application must be completed and submitted online by 4:30pm on Friday 1st September 2023.

REF APPLICATION

The Application Form collects more detailed information on your project proposal, budget, research team, etc.

1. Register REF Grant using the abstract submission portal, and upload your application form using the file name:

REF2023-24 [Applicant's surname] Application Form

2. **Electronic applications are accepted via the abstract submission portal. You do not need to submit hard copies this year.**
3. **Applications must be completed by 4:30pm on Friday 1st September 2023.**

Please note:

1. Both wet ink and electronic signatures are accepted
2. If submitting a scanned copy of your application, please ensure that your scanned application is formatted in the correct orientation. Failure to do so will result in your application be bounced back.
3. Late applications will not be accepted.

7. GUIDANCE

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with both application steps, as described above. Applicants are encouraged to consult these guidelines and pay attention when completing each step to ensure:

- ✓ Compliance (e.g. word limits etc)
- ✓ REF funding criteria are considered
- ✓ Pitch (i.e. be written for a general or non-specialist in your subspecialty)
- ✓ Available resources (e.g. databases, access to clinical information, equipment etc)
- ✓ Budget – using the REF budget template
- ✓ Timeline of activities (milestones / deliverables)
- ✓ Compliance with research ethics obligations

8. PAST REF APPLICANTS

If you have been successful as a REF recipient in the past, you may be eligible to reapply for REF support for the same project. In this case you need to complete a new REF Registration Form and Application Form with a Progress Report. Category A funding is only eligible for two years in total. Category D funding is not eligible for re-current funding.

9. APPLYING FOR ONE OR MORE CATEGORIES

Only **one** application per category per Principal Researcher / research group will be accepted. Co-funding from host departments for such items as infrastructure, reagents etc is therefore encouraged.

10. BUDGET

All applicants must include a budget with their completed REF Application Form.

There is a budget template included in the REF Application Form. The budget template is provided as a guide only. There are examples in the template of common research areas, for budgetary consideration. Applicants must provide budget line items according to their specific requirements.

- ❖ For **Category A** (Research Buy-Out Time for Clinicians (part-time)) the budget would be expected to be a part-time salary cost ranging up to a maximum of 0.2 EFT, based on an appropriate award salary (capped \$50,000)

Please note that Category A applications should request funds for Clinical Buy Out Time only. Requests for other items, such as equipment, will not be considered in Category A applications.

- ❖ For **Category B** (Support or Seeding Grants for Research Projects) please note that support is for one year only, and that there is a limit of \$20,000.00 per individual project.
- ❖ For **Category C** (Support or Seeding Grants for Arthritis Research Project) please note that support is for one year only, and that there is a limit of \$20,000.00 per individual project.
- ❖ For **Category E** (Support or Seeding Grants for Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus Research Project at St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne) please note that support is for one year only, and that there is a limit of \$20,000.00 per individual project.

11. LEGITIMATE & LIMITED EXPENSES

Legitimate expenses for REF funding may be considered to be:

- ❖ Researcher salary and/or salary support for research project-related staff (e.g. assistants, research nurses, consultants etc)
- ❖ Superannuation and related on-costs for project-specific staff
- ❖ Standard pay scales, or current awards, for scientists, nurses, research nurses, allied health professionals and/or medical clinicians etc will apply. Applicants should refer to their HR / payroll officer to ensure that these standard rates, and to specify these rates in their project budget.
- ❖ Project related costs for intra-hospital services (e.g. pathology lab fees, ethics applications, animal facility charges and the like)

Limited expenses:

- ❖ Small items of equipment essential to the project may be requested. These must however be clearly justified and would not normally cost more than \$10,000.

12. USE OF FUNDS

Budgets are to be formulated according to the research project's specific requirements. Budgets should therefore be financial requests for project-related resources, or research salaries related to the project.

Funding, for personal expenses, apart from a salary or stipend will not be accepted.

Funding is not for retrospective expenses, but ones commencing in 2023.

Due to a limit on available funds the REF Committee retain the discretion to decide on the final amount of funding available to an applicant.

The REF funds must only be used for the purpose applied for in the project application, as submitted to the REF Committee.

Where a successful REF applicant subsequently gains further funding from another funding body/agency, for the activity described in the REF project application, then the Applicant must declare that additional funding by writing to the Chair of the REF Committee, at stvfunding.research@svha.org.au. Applicants may be required to return any unspent funds. Failure to declare external funding may result in withdrawal of funds and the requirement to return spent funds to the REF.

Applicants must use REF funds for on-campus services (refer to Appendix 1) where available; alternative service providers are only to be used if facility is not available locally.

The REF Committee may decide to issue 'vouchers' for on-campus services to successful applicants rather than provide cash funds.

13. SALARY SUPPORT

Where a REF award supports a salary (e.g. for Category A – Research Buy-Out Time for Clinicians (part-time)) it is the responsibility of the Principal Researcher to ensure that administration of the REF award is managed via the appropriate payroll and financial pathways.

14. APPLICATION ACCEPTANCE

Applications will be checked for compliance. Late, incomplete or non-compliant applications may not be accepted. Questions on the administrative process may be directed to stvfunding.research@svha.org.au.

Questions on these guidelines or the management of the REF may be directed to the Chair of the REF Committee, at stvfunding.research@svha.org.au.

Disclaimer: whilst every endeavour will be made to assist applicants in leading up to the application deadline, ultimately it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure a complete and compliant application is submitted.

Applications that are compliant will be accepted for assessment by the REF Committee and will be sent a letter of receipt acknowledging this. Non-compliant applications will also be identified and information sent to those applicants accordingly.

15. ADMINISTRATION OF SUCCESSFUL REF AWARDS

a. Outcome of Applications

All applicants will be advised in writing as soon as practical after the REF Committee meeting in November. It is anticipated such notice would be received by 1st December 2023.

Unsuccessful applicants will be encouraged to apply for the next annual REF grant round.

b. Deed of Agreement

Successful applicants will receive a Letter of Award outlining the terms and conditions of their funding agreement. The Letter will need to be signed by the Principal Researcher, Supervisor (for student applications only) and the Head of the Department / Institute, to certify that they are prepared for the project to be carried out under their supervision and/or in their Department / Institute. One copy of the signed Deed will need to be returned

to the Research Directorate, before funding can be disbursed into the applicant's financial account.

The Deed specifically outlines:

- Use of Funds
- External Funding
- Financial Account Required
- Research Conduct / Ethics clearance
- Reports – Progress and Final Reports
- Publicity and Acknowledgment

c. Financial Account

Successful REF applicants will need to identify an existing, or establish a new SVHM Research Account (RS) or Special Purpose (SP) cost centre, into which their REF award will be deposited. The Finance Department can assist with this process.

The REF award will only be deposited directly into the SVHM Hospital RS/SP cost centre that the Applicant nominates. Payment will be made into the respective cost centre specified by the researcher as per the Letter of Award. Applicants will be advised when the payment has been completed.

All grants will require financial acquittal at the end of the award period.

d. Ethics and Compliance Approvals

Successful REF applicants will be sent an ethics form with the Letter of Award that will need to be completed so as to notify the Research Governance Unit of any ethics approvals required for their funding award.

Research conduct must be in accordance with the relevant SVHM institutional policies and comply with the relevant statutory codes, State and Federal government guidelines and Good Clinical Practice Standards.

Human research

Any human experimentation shall be conducted in accordance with the current requirements of the 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)' as developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Australian Research Council and Universities Australia.

Research involving animals

Experiments involving the use of animals shall be conducted, and experimental animals shall be housed, maintained and controlled, in accordance with the current 'Australian Code of Practice for the Care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, 7th Edition 2004' and any additional Supplementary Notes as adopted by the NHMRC.

Use of radioactive substances, ionising radiation, recombinant DNA potent teratogens or carcinogens

Clearance for research which involves any of the above must be obtained from the appropriate Institutional Biosafety Committee and/or, where relevant, Ethics Committee.

It is the Principal Researcher's responsibility to ensure that if they are conducting human research, research involving animals or genetically modified organisms that they obtain the appropriate approval. For further information or advice please contact the Research Governance Unit research.ethics@svhm.org.au or 9231 6970.

e. Reporting

Successful REF applicants will be required to complete a Report.

A Progress Report will be required at 12 month intervals until the completion of the project at which time a Final Report is required along with a financial acquittal.

Reports should provide information on any outcomes achieved e.g. grants, prizes, awards, publications etc. as a result of the REF award.

Templates for the Report will be available from the Research facilitation Unit's website.

f. Intellectual Property

Applicants in receipt of a REF award must comply with the SVHM Intellectual Property (IP) policy. The SVHM IP policy is available via the intranet.

g. Publicity and acknowledgement

Applicants must identify the St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne as their Affiliated Institution in all publications, presentations, conference proceedings, posters, abstracts, etc.

In addition, the St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne Research Endowment Fund must be acknowledged as a funding body in any publication arising from the research including articles, conference proceedings, posters, abstracts, grant applications etc. in the following format:

'This work was carried out with support from the St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) Research Endowment Fund.'

h. Presentation at the ACMD Research Week

Research funded by REF funds should be presented at an ACMD Research Week.

16. ENQUIRIES

For enquiries on administrative procedures relating to the application process please contact the Research Directorate on 9231 6971 or stvfunding.research@svha.org.au

For further information on these guidelines please contact the Chair of the REF Committee, at stvfunding.research@svha.org.au.

17. APPENDIX 1 - CAMPUS SERVICES AVAILABLE TO RESEARCHERS

Biobank

Contact Katherine Woods (BioBank Coordinator)
St Vincent's Institute
Location: 9 Princes Street, Fitzroy Vic 3065
E: katherine@nrlquality.org.au
W:
https://www.svi.edu.au/resources/svi_biobank_program/

Flow Cytometry Facility

Contact Anthony DiCarluccio
St Vincent's Institute
T: 9231 3511
E: adicarluccio@svi.edu.au
W:
https://www.svi.edu.au/resources/micro_ct/

Bioinformatics

Victorian Life Sciences Computation
Initiative/Department of Medicine St Vincent's
Contact Dr Gayle Philip
Hospital
T: 9035 3708
E: gkphilip@unimelb.edu.au

MicroCT facility/IVUS imaging

Contact Narelle McGregor
St Vincent's Institute
T: 9231 2555
E: nmcgregor@svi.edu.au
W:
https://www.svi.edu.au/resources/micro_ct/

Bioresources Centre

Contact Helen Barlow
T: 9231 2645
E: helen.barlow@svha.org.au

Statistics

Contact Associate Professor Vijaya
Sundararajan
Department of Medicine, SVHM
M: 0408 500 927
E: vijayas@unimelb.edu.au

Cell Manufacturing GMP Facility

Contact Dr Tom Loudovaris
3rd Floor O'Brien Institute
T: 9231 2405
E: tloudovaris@svi.edu.au