

Linking research and patient care



Victorian Cancer Agency Cancer Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream Research Funding Program 2007-08

Guidelines for Applying for Funding

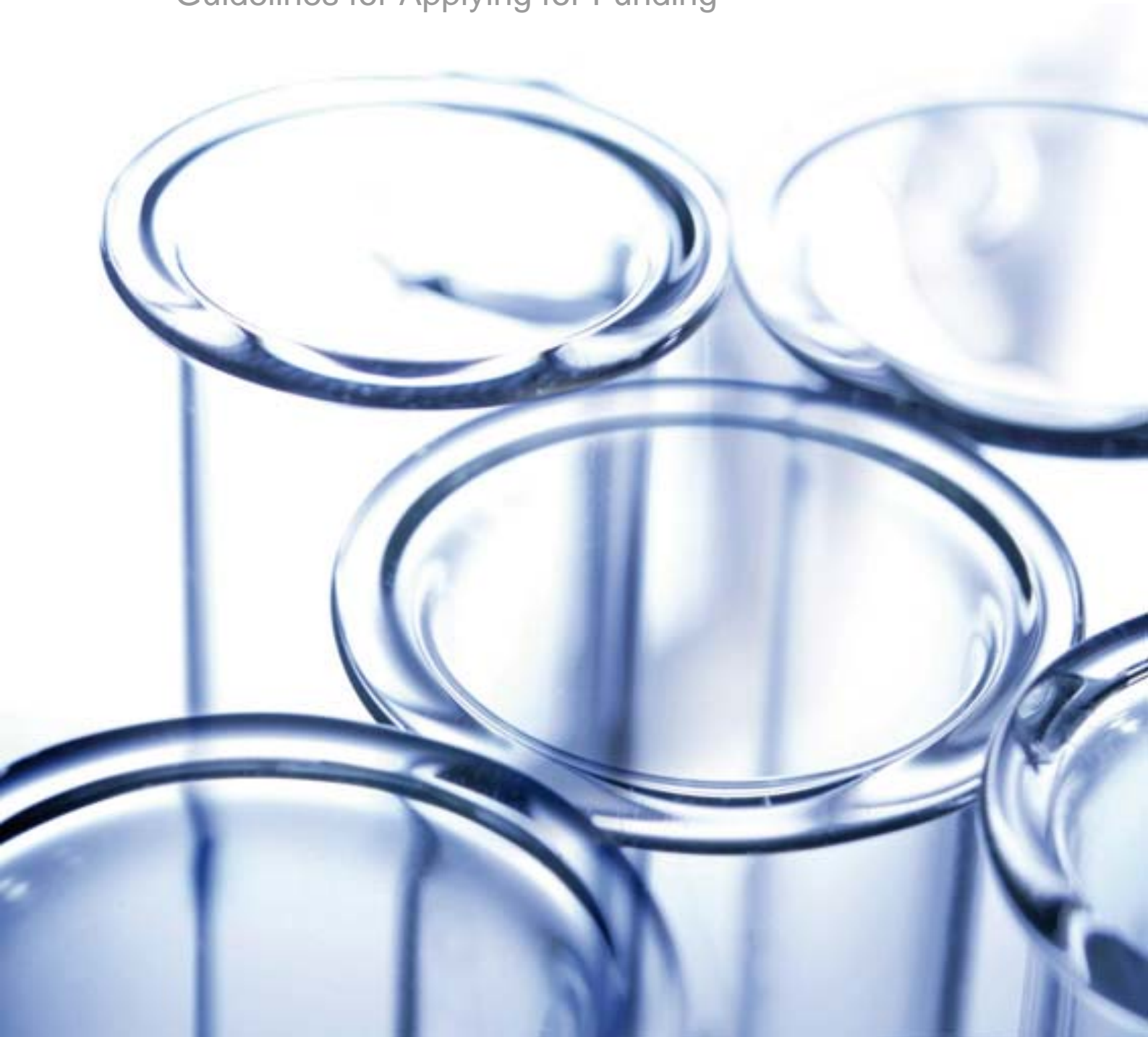


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Overview of the Victorian Cancer Agency

The Victorian Cancer Agency is a Consultative Council to the Victorian Minister for Health. The Victorian Cancer Agency was created to link cancer research with patient care for improved patient outcomes as part of the Victorian Government's cancer reform agenda. The first priority of the Victorian Cancer Agency is the development of a cancer research strategy for Victoria. This will guide the future work of the Agency. Broadly, the functions of the Agency include:

- setting strategic priorities for cancer research across Victoria
- fostering collaborative relationships between key stakeholders
- adding value to existing statewide initiatives and programs
- building cancer research capacity and capability in Victoria
- providing high level, strategic advice to stakeholders and Government on all aspects of cancer research.

One of the key areas for exploration during the development of the cancer research strategy is the identification of opportunities to build capacity and capability in cancer research across Victoria.

The 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Cancer Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream research funding program is designed to begin the process of enhancing Victoria's capacity and capability in cancer research, during the development phase of the cancer research strategy. The tumour stream research grants will build Victorian capacity in translational research and strengthen research institution/hospital/university partnerships to enhance the translation of research into practice. The clinical trial grants will be targeted towards building Victoria's capacity and capability in the area of cancer clinical trials.

Victoria's Cancer Reform Agenda

The Victorian Government has developed a cancer reform agenda that seeks to improve the planning and delivery of treatment and care to patients across the State. The agenda is supported by the development and implementation of:

- Integrated Cancer Services
- Patient Management Frameworks
- a model for safety and quality in cancer care
- priority service improvement areas
- the Victorian Cancer Agency.

The cancer reforms in Victoria represent a new approach to cancer services planning and the alignment of cancer research and services.

Guiding Principles

The 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Cancer Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream is designed to be complementary to the funding schemes available through the National Health Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and the Australian Research Council. This funding program will be provided to applicants who are able to demonstrate that they have not received funding from other sources for the proposal and / or that the proposal is a new research project or concept.

In 2007-08, the Victorian Cancer Agency has a range of funding programs available:

- Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream Research Program
- Regional Cancer Research Enabling Program
- Supportive Care in Cancer Research Program
- Link and Learn Grants
- Early Career Seed Grants
- Expressions of Interest for Platform Technology Capacity Building Grants

For further information on these 2007-08 funding program areas, please visit our website on www.victoriacanceragency.org.au.

Generic Criteria for the Victorian Cancer Agency 2007-08 Research Funding Program

The Victorian Government is committed to providing high quality, accessible health and community services. The vision and purpose of the Victorian Cancer Agency will assist in achieving this commitment by promoting, enhancing and facilitating cancer research that enables the delivery of evidence-based, research driven, cancer services. The Victorian Cancer Agency is committed to supporting and promoting innovation and excellence in cancer research to achieve this vision.

Applications for funding will be reviewed, and supported, according to the specific criteria of each funding program and their adherence to the following generic criteria. Additionally, all applicants must clearly demonstrate:

- how the research proposal or project will result in improved patient outcomes;
- that the project or proposal is collaborative in nature (demonstrates collaboration across multidisciplinary approaches and / or multi site and / or that key researchers in this field are involved in the project); and,
- how the project or proposal builds cancer research capacity and capability in Victoria.

About the 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Cancer Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream Research Funding Program

The 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Cancer Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream Research Funding Program is specifically designed with flexibility in its funding structure to enable a range of opportunities and programs to be considered. The Victorian Government commitment to cancer clinical trials and tumour stream research for 2007-08 is \$3.64 million. **The assessment panel will consider applications ranging from \$1,000 to \$250,000.** The Victorian Cancer Agency will provide greater consideration to projects that are innovative and non-duplicative of other efforts, and have a focus on collaboration between researchers and clinicians.

Tumour Stream Research Grants

The tumour stream research grants program will build Victorian capacity in translational research and will strengthen research institution / hospital / university partnerships to enhance the translation of research into practice. Tumour stream research proposals should be focused on a multidisciplinary approach to cancer research that will lead to rapid translation in improved patient care or policies / programs. Collaborations between researchers and clinicians are strongly encouraged.

Applications will be evaluated if it can be demonstrated that the proposal meets the Victorian Cancer Agency research funding priorities 2007-08 presented on page 3, and meets the specific criteria outlined below. Proposals in the areas of early detection, screening, diagnosis, prognosis and / or treatment will be considered and the funding grant may cover the cost of research including salaries, equipment (valued at less than \$20,000), travel and consumables. Funding will need to be administered by 30 June 2008 and will be available for up to a two-year period. Some examples of one-off or short-term proposals are listed below:

- trial and evaluate innovative ways of realising policy goals at a service level;
- facilitate the translation of existing evidence into practice;
- undertake quality improvement/service improvement initiatives that have the potential to be transferred across settings, and funding has not been received from other sources;
- improve change management and project evaluation experience and / or capacity amongst staff involved in cancer research; and,
- undertake a project to gather pilot data for submissions to other funding bodies incorporating cancer research.

Clinical Trials Grants

The clinical trial grants will build Victoria's capacity and capability in the area of cancer clinical trials. Applications will be evaluated if the proposal demonstrates that the Victorian Cancer Agency generic research funding priorities 2007-08 presented on page 3, can be achieved. The specific criteria **do not** apply to clinical trial capacity building funding requests. Funding will need to be administered by 30 June 2008 and will only be available for a twelve month period.

Some examples of areas that will be considered for funding in the area of cancer clinical trials are given below.

- Staffing requirements – such as biostatisticians, pharmacists, allied health staff, research nurses, data managers, clinical trial managers (etc.)
- Pilot studies – provide funding to enable pilot cancer clinical trials to be conducted or research undertaken to develop proposals for cancer clinical trials in Victoria
- Training and education of staff (for example attendance at a training course in Good Clinical Practice)
- Industry grants – to enable the commencement or continuation of clinical trials to improve cancer patient outcomes in Victoria
- Co-operative groups involved in cancer clinical trials
- Preparation for cancer clinical trial site audit
- Attendance at relevant cancer clinical trial conferences or workshops
- Infrastructure (such as information technology or data management / database design requirements)
- ‘Other’ areas as identified by applicants that directly relate to cancer clinical trials and that meet the generic and specific criteria of the Victorian Cancer Agency for this funding program

Application for the 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Cancer Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream Research Funding Program

Eligibility for application

- Applicants must be Australian citizens or have permanent residency status.
- The research must be undertaken within Victoria for the duration of the grant. Applicants must make their application under the auspices of a Victorian hospital, research organisation or university. One organisation should be designated as the administering organisation.
- The administering research organisation must have in place: policies and procedures for the management of public funds, as well as policies for the proper conduct of research in relation to ethics and good scientific conduct. The administering research organisation must also provide adequate infrastructure to allow the research to be completed.

Administration and receipt of funding

Offers will be made by the Victorian Cancer Agency to the lead applicant. The lead applicant will be responsible for managing and organising the administration of the funded program and for reporting to the Victorian Cancer Agency.

Successful applicants will be asked to sign a funding agreement that carries certain obligations to the individual. Details of these obligations are outlined in Appendix 2 of these guidelines.

Specific Criteria for the 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Tumour Stream research program only

The following specific criteria must be addressed as part of the application for funding through the 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream research program. **The specific criteria only apply to applications for funding for tumour stream research programs.**

- Significance of the research proposal and relevance of the proposed project to cancer

Demonstrate that the research focuses on: early detection, prevention, diagnosis, prognosis, treatment and / or screening of cancer.

- Quality of the research proposal

The quality of the research proposal, based on the project feasibility, rationale, design, methodology and timeframes.

- Communication

Demonstrated ability to communicate the results of the research proposal to other researchers, students, consumers and decision makers.

- Research institution support

A supportive environment for the research in terms of infrastructure should be demonstrated by the host organisation. It is expected that the host organisation will ensure that there is effective supervision and mentoring of the research group, and have a process for evaluating the effectiveness and suitability of supervisory/mentoring arrangements.

- Other funding sources

This funding program will be provided to applicants who are able to demonstrate that they have not received funding from other sources for the proposal and / or that the proposal is a new research project or concept.

The application should also include brief scoping documents of financial, infrastructure, resource and implementation timelines for consideration, where applicable. The Victorian Cancer Agency may then enter into direct negotiation with the applicants and may request additional information, if required.

How to Apply

All applicants must complete the 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Cancer Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream Research Funding Program application form. This is available from the website (www.victoriancanceragency.org.au) or by contacting the Agency on 03 9635 5481 or via email on victorian.canceragency@dhs.vic.gov.au

Format and Closing Date

Please submit your application electronically to victorian.canceragency@dhs.vic.gov.au **by 2 pm Monday 29 October 2007.**

Further information can be obtained by contacting the Agency on 03 9635 5481 or via email on victorian.canceragency@dhs.vic.gov.au

Incomplete and Misleading Information

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the applications are complete and accurate. It is completely within the assessment panel's discretion as to whether it will request the applicant to provide further information after the closing date.

Key Timeframes

The following dates apply to the submission of applications to the 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Cancer Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream Research Program:

Process	Date
Call for applications	Late September 2007
Close of applications	2 pm 29 October 2007
Assessment of applications	November 2007
Notification of successful applicants	December 2007

Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted

Appendix 1: Assessment Process for all Applications

The Victorian Cancer Agency Consultative Council will review all applications for adherence to these guidelines and for application completeness.

An independent panel will assess the clinical trials and tumour stream research proposals, supportive care scholarships and fellowships and the regional research enabling proposals.

The Agency reserves the right to enter into direct negotiations, or to request further information, from all applicants to assist in the assessment process. Additionally, eligible applicants may be invited to discuss their application with the assessment panel. The lodging of an application does not confer any entitlement upon the applicant. The making of a recommendation is totally within the discretion of the assessment panel.

Conflict of Interest

The Victorian Government requires its assessment panel members to act in an ethical manner, declare conflicts of interest and to withdraw from considering applications where such conflict exists.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All information contained in applications will be regarded as confidential. Documents containing personal information will be handled and protected in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*. Personal information will only be disclosed with the permission of the individual to whom it relates or where the Act allows.

Applicants consent to the information supplied as part of their application being disclosed for the purposes of the assessment and administration of the fellowship. Such disclosure includes but is not limited to; disclosure to members of the assessment panel, independent readers/assessors requested by the assessment panel to provide advice on the application, relevant employees of the Victorian Government involved with the research grant process.

Applicants acknowledge that announcement of the funding grants will involve the dissemination of information to the public about the general nature of the funding grants.

Appeals

The decision of the selection panel is final. Appeals will only be considered against process issues and not against the panels' decision. Appeals on the process can be made to Charlene MacLeod, Program Manager on 03 9635 5457.

Ethics Clearance

If offered a funding grant, where appropriate evidence of relevant committee approvals (for example Human Research Ethics Committee, Animal Experimentation Ethics Committee or Biosafety Committee) must be shown to the Victorian Cancer Agency. The funding will not commence until all approvals have been provided or if not available, the details of the expected time when these approvals will be obtained should be supplied to the Victorian Cancer Agency.

Appendix 2: Obligations of individuals funded by the Victorian Cancer Agency

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the Department of Human Services, on behalf of the Victorian Cancer Agency.

Intellectual Property

The Victorian Government has a standard approach to the management of possible intellectual property (IP) generated from research funded by the Agency. Successful applicants for research proposals will be requested to agree to this approach when signing the funding agreement. An overview of the approach is outlined below and further detail is available by contacting the Agency on 9635 5481.

- All IP owned by the organisations that the Department funds
- Organisations providing the Department with a non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, world-wide, royalty free licence (including a right to sub-licence) over the IP, for non-commercial use.
- A licence specifically excluding commercialisation by Government unless the funded organisation defaults on its minimum performance criteria requirements.
- An expectation that organisations meet the minimum performance criteria in that they must undertake commercialisation of the project intellectual property in a manner that ensures such fair and reasonable access to products for the benefit of the Victorian public as DHS, acting reasonably, deems appropriate including that the price or terms of supply of the Product are fair and reasonable.

Reporting

The funding agreement will set out the reporting requirements for each research grant and the level of reporting will depend on the value and type of proposal funded.

Recognition of support

The recipient should acknowledge the support of the Victorian Government in all publications and any public announcements pertaining to the research, or funding program.

Administration of Funding

Offers will be made by the Victorian Cancer Agency to the lead applicant. The lead applicant will be responsible for managing and organising the administration of the funded program and for reporting to the Victorian Cancer Agency.