

Linking research and patient care



Victorian
Cancer
Agency

Victorian Cancer Agency
Regional Cancer Research Enabling
Program
2007-08
Guidelines for Applying for Funding

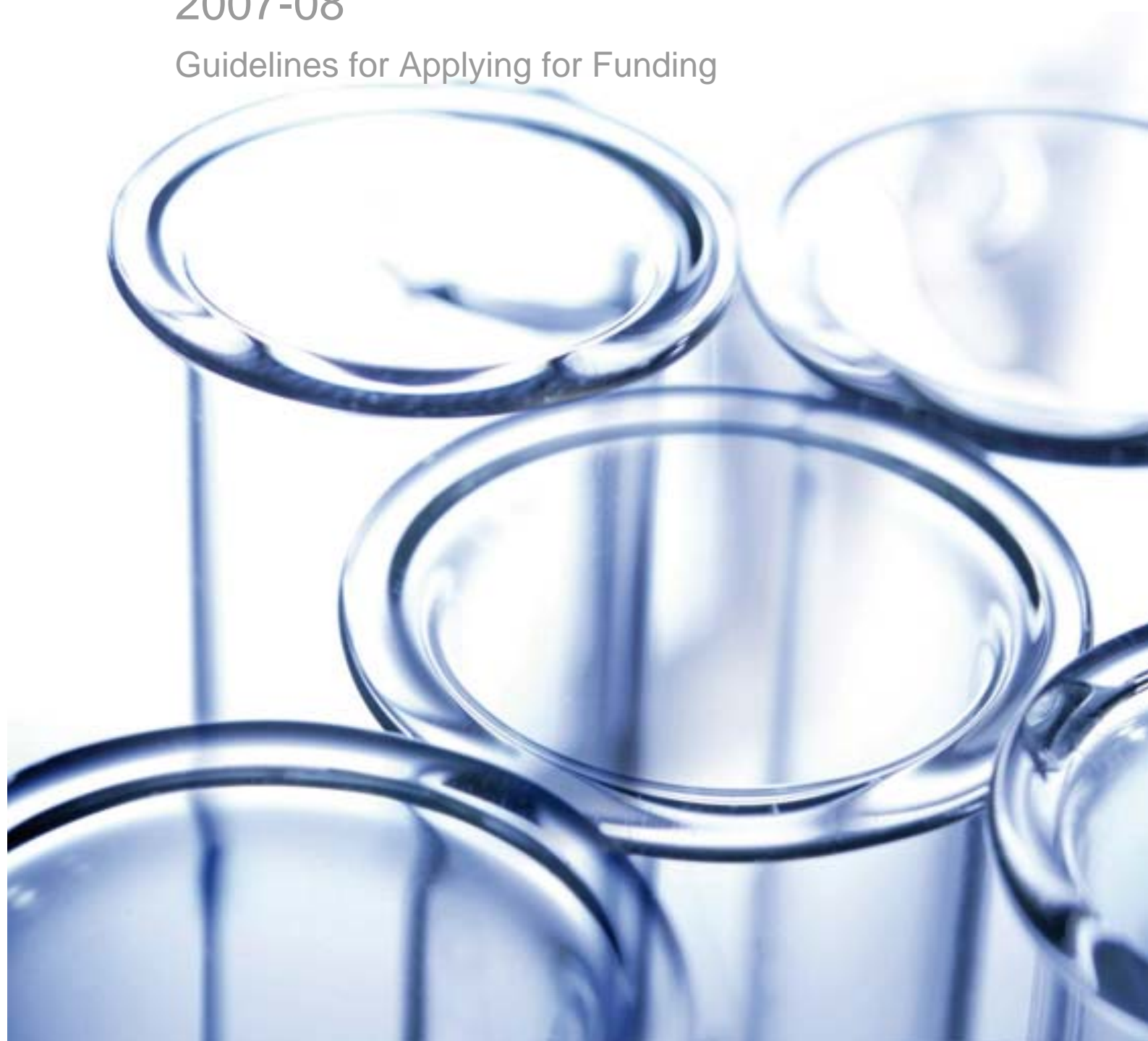


Table of Contents

OVERVIEW OF THE VICTORIAN CANCER AGENCY	3
VICTORIA'S CANCER REFORM AGENDA	3
GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF FUNDING.....	4
GENERIC CRITERIA FOR THE VICTORIAN CANCER AGENCY 2007-08 RESEARCH FUNDING PROGRAM	4
ABOUT THE 2007-08 VICTORIAN CANCER AGENCY REGIONAL CANCER RESEARCH ENABLING PROGRAM.....	5
1. <i>Infrastructure support</i>	5
2. <i>Clinician-researcher support fellowships</i>	5
APPLICATION FOR THE 2007-08 VICTORIAN CANCER AGENCY REGIONAL CANCER RESEARCH ENABLING PROGRAM	6
ELIGIBILITY FOR APPLICATION.....	6
SPECIFIC CRITERIA FOR THE 2007-08 VICTORIAN CANCER AGENCY REGIONAL CANCER RESEARCH ENABLING PROGRAM	7
HOW TO APPLY	8
FORMAT AND CLOSING DATE.....	8
INCOMPLETE AND MISLEADING INFORMATION.....	8
KEY TIMEFRAMES.....	8
APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR ALL APPLICATIONS.....	9
CONFLICT OF INTEREST.....	9
PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY	9
APPEALS.....	9
ETHICS CLEARANCE.....	9
APPENDIX 2: OBLIGATIONS OF INDIVIDUALS FUNDED BY THE VICTORIAN CANCER AGENCY.....	11
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY	11
REPORTING.....	11
RECOGNITION OF SUPPORT.....	11

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 in cancer research across Victoria. In 2007-08, the Victorian Cancer Agency has identified building research capacity across regional Victoria as one of its priorities for investment.

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 of Funding

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

- Regional Cancer Research Enabling Program
- Supportive Care in Cancer Research Program
- Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream 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 at www.victoriancanceragency.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 in each of the programs will be reviewed and supported based on specific criteria for each program and their adherence to the following generic criteria. 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 Regional Cancer Research Enabling Program

One of the priority areas for the Victorian Cancer Agency is to build cancer research capacity and capability across Victoria. To address this priority in 2007-08 the Agency will offer targeted support for cancer research across regional Victoria.

A variety of options to build regional cancer research capacity and capability will be considered by the Agency including:

1. infrastructure support to undertake cancer research, including research workforce support (requests for part-time or full-time support for research assistants/pharmacists/support as required will be considered)
2. clinician-researcher support fellowships

1. Infrastructure support

One-off seed funding requests of up to \$60,000 will be considered for infrastructure to facilitate cancer research in regional areas. Infrastructure may include: requests for funding to support regional workshops, software, office space, office equipment or small pieces of research equipment to enable research. Infrastructure may also include some funding to enable linkages with a metropolitan health service for collaborative research purposes (such as travel allowances or teleconference facilities).

Salary support to enable time to be dedicated to research will also be considered. Requests for up to a full-time equivalent position for one year can be requested (for example, research assistants or pharmacists). It is expected that the research assistant will work alongside a qualified practitioner and be suitably mentored in their role. One-off, one-year grants between \$1,000-\$70,000 will be considered under this initiative.

2. Clinician-researcher support fellowships

Two-year clinician-researcher support fellowships will be available for clinicians based in regional Victoria wishing to undertake cancer research.

Specific eligibility criteria

A component of these fellowships will be the formation of links between the regional clinician-researchers/investigators and cancer researchers with appropriate research experience (preferably translational cancer research), for collaboration and mentoring purposes. Applicants should have a demonstrated capacity to undertake research. It is an expectation that applicants will be mentored and supervised at the administering organisation by a cancer practitioner with research experience. Applications should have a defined research area, evidence of organisational support for the project, and evidence of release from clinical commitments to undertake research. Whilst collaboration is strongly encouraged by the Victorian Cancer Agency, the fellowship must be undertaken in Victoria.

Available funding and entitlements

Applications will be considered up to 75% of salary costs (and on-costs) for up to two years. Requests for part-time fellowship support and on-costs will also be considered. A further \$12,500 will also be available for direct research costs including patient participation costs and necessary travel to permit collaborations.

Application for the 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Regional Cancer Research Enabling Program

Eligibility for application

- Applicants must be Australian citizens or have permanent residency status.
- Funded 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, 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 Regional Cancer Research Enabling Program

The following specific criteria must be addressed as part of the application for funding for through the 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Regional Research Enabling Program.

- 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. Proposals that demonstrate the application of research to the clinic will be viewed favourably.

- 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 novel.

- Support and Mentoring Linkages

Demonstration of support and mentoring between the regionally based clinician-researcher and an experienced mentor, who has relevant cancer research experience.

The application should also include brief scoping documents of financial, infrastructure, resource and implementation timelines for consideration, where applicable.

The Victorian Cancer Agency may enter into direct negotiation with the applicants and may request additional information, if required.

How to Apply

All applicants must complete the relevant 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Regional Research Enabling Program Application Form. This is available from the website (www.victoriancanceragency.org.au) or by contacting the Agency on 03 9635 5481 or by emailing 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 furnish further information after the closing date.

Key Timeframes

The following dates apply to the submission of applications to the 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Regional Cancer Research Enabling 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 assessment 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 Lynda Whitaker 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.