



Victorian Cancer Agency
Supportive Care in Cancer
Research Funding Program
2007-08
Guidelines for Applying for Funding

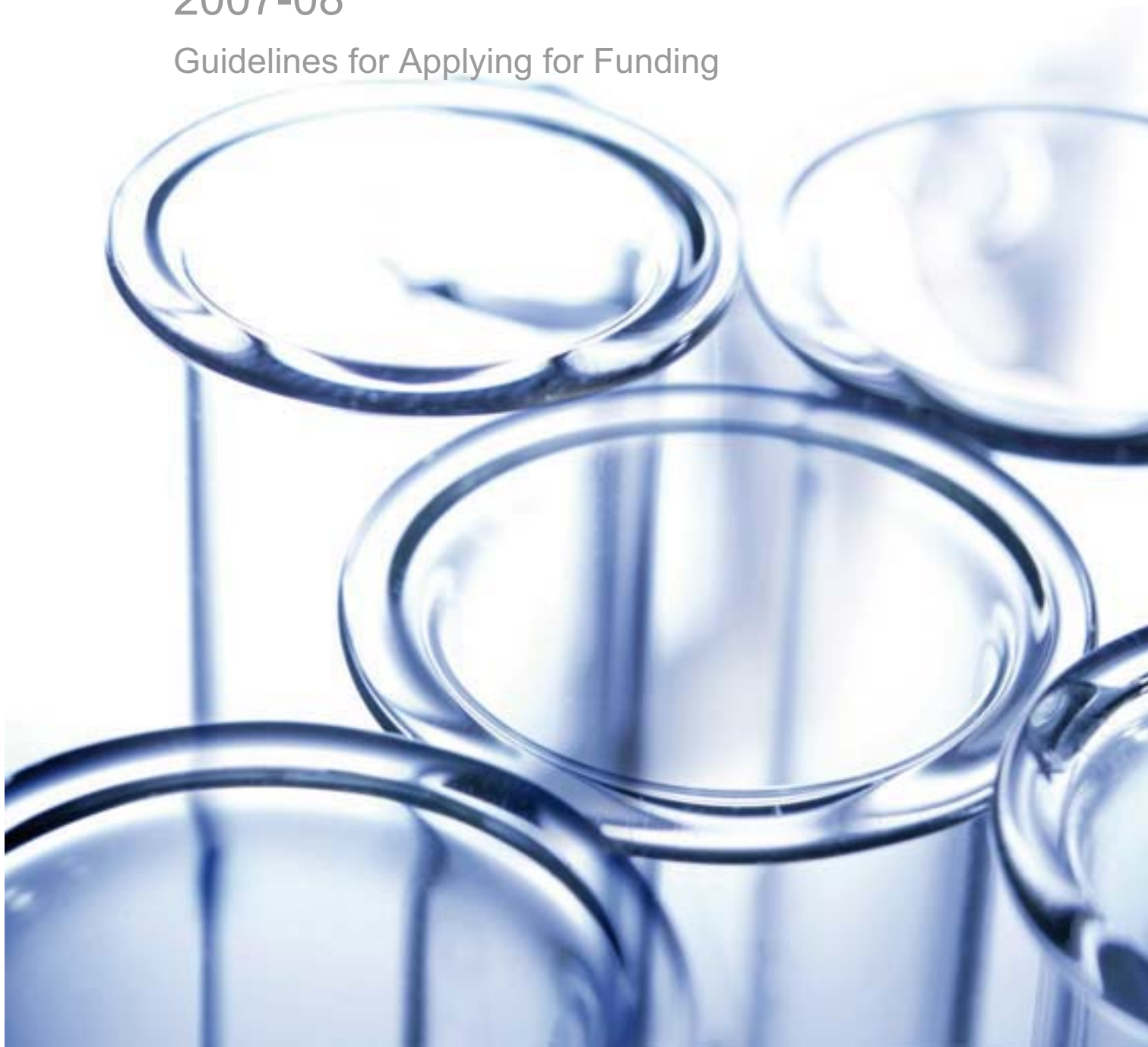


Table of Contents

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	5
ABOUT THE 2007-08 VICTORIAN CANCER AGENCY SUPPORTIVE CARE IN CANCER RESEARCH FUNDING PROGRAM	6
FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	6
1. <i>Infrastructure support for supportive care in cancer research</i>	7
2. <i>Supportive care in cancer clinician-researcher fellowships</i>	7
3. <i>Supportive care in cancer scholarships</i>	7
APPLICATION FOR THE 2007-08 VICTORIAN CANCER AGENCY SUPPORTIVE CARE IN CANCER RESEARCH PROGRAM	8
ELIGIBILITY FOR APPLICATION	8
SPECIFIC CRITERIA FOR THE 2007-08 VICTORIAN CANCER AGENCY SUPPORTIVE CARE IN CANCER RESEARCH PROGRAM	9
HOW TO APPLY	10
FORMAT AND CLOSING DATE	10
INCOMPLETE AND MISLEADING INFORMATION	10
KEY TIMEFRAMES	10
APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR ALL APPLICATIONS	11
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	11
PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY	11
APPEALS	11
ETHICS CLEARANCE	11
APPENDIX 2: OBLIGATIONS OF INDIVIDUALS FUNDED BY THE VICTORIAN CANCER AGENCY	12
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY	12
REPORTING	12
RECOGNITION OF SUPPORT	12
APPENDIX 3: VICTORIAN CANCER AGENCY SUPPORTIVE CARE IN CANCER SCHOLARSHIP ENTITLEMENTS	13

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.

The 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Cancer Supportive Care in Cancer Research 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 cancer 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 2006-07, the Victorian Cancer Agency offered research scholarships to support applicants to undertake a PhD or Masters in supportive care in cancer research. In this year's round of offers, applications will again be invited for PhD or Masters scholarships in supportive care in cancer research. Research support will also be broadened to include funding for clinician-research fellowships and infrastructure support (research assistance or direct research costs) to facilitate supportive care in cancer research.

The 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Cancer Supportive Care in Cancer Research Program 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 including:

- Supportive Care in Cancer Research Program
- Clinical Trials and Tumour Stream Research Program
- Regional Cancer Research Enabling 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 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 Supportive Care in Cancer Research Funding Program

Definition of supportive care in cancer

Supportive care is an umbrella term for all services, both generalist and specialist, that may be required to support people with cancer and their carers. It includes:

- self-help and support
- user involvement
- information giving
- psychological support
- pain and symptom control
- social support
- rehabilitation
- complementary therapies
- spiritual support
- palliative care and
- end of life and bereavement care¹.

Supportive care practitioners

All members of a multidisciplinary team have a role in the provision of supportive care. Supportive care practitioners may include: general practitioners, surgeons, radiation oncologists, medical oncologists, nurses, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists and a range of allied health staff that have a role in the provision of supportive care in cancer across the care continuum.

Funding opportunities

One of the priority areas for the Victorian Cancer Agency is building cancer research capacity and capability in the field of supportive care in cancer. To address this priority, the Agency will offer the following funding opportunities in 2007-08:

1. infrastructure support for supportive care in cancer research (including requests for support to employ research assistants or direct research costs)
2. supportive care in cancer clinician-researcher fellowships
3. supportive care in cancer scholarships (to undertake PhD or Masters by research)

¹ National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE). Guidance on Cancer Services: Improving Supportive and Palliative Care for Adults with Cancer. NICE: London, 2004. <http://www.nice.org.uk/pdf/csgspmanual.pdf>

1. Infrastructure support for supportive care in cancer research

Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals for short-term infrastructure funding to enable research in supportive care in cancer. Requests for up to one year of salary support up to \$70,000 for a research assistant and up to \$5,000 for direct research costs will be considered.

It is anticipated that research assistants will work alongside a qualified supportive care practitioner and should be suitably qualified to undertake or assist in data collection, conduct patient interviews, conduct or analyse surveys, provide statistical support or fill other functions as appropriate to the project. Submissions for infrastructure funding that will support pilot projects where there is a plan to seek nationally competitive funding will be viewed favourably. Staff training that will be relevant to the proposal may also be requested as part of infrastructure requests.

2. Supportive care in cancer clinician-researcher fellowships

Supportive care clinician-researcher fellowships are available to individuals working in supportive care in the cancer field, wishing to undertake research.

Specific eligibility criteria

Any supportive care practitioner can apply for supportive care clinician-researcher fellowships (see definition on page 6 of these guidelines). Applicants should have a demonstrated capacity to undertake research (with an Honours Degree as a minimum). It is an expectation that applicants will be mentored and supervised by a supportive care practitioner with research experience. Applications should have a defined research project, 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 \$10,000 will also be available for direct research costs including patient participation costs and necessary travel to permit collaborations.

3. Supportive care in cancer scholarships

Postgraduate cancer research scholarships are available to individuals interested in pursuing full-time PhD or 'Masters by research' projects in supportive care.

Specific eligibility criteria

Submissions will be considered from both local and overseas applicants interested in pursuing a full-time PhD or 'Masters by research' at a Victorian university, health service or research institute.

Available funding and entitlements

The scholarships will be in line with NHMRC allowance rates (refer to Appendix 3 of these guidelines). An additional \$5,000 will be available for the purchase of consumables and research costs related to the project and / or for conference travel costs.

The scholarship will be for the duration of the research project (up to a maximum of 3 years for PhD projects and up to a maximum of 2 years for Masters by research projects). Applications will also be considered from candidates who have already commenced their PhD or Masters.

Application for the 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Supportive Care in Cancer Research 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 Supportive Care in Cancer Research Program

Appropriate application forms must be completed for each of the three funding areas of the 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Supportive Care in Cancer Research Program.

Applicants for supportive care clinician-researcher fellowships and research scholarships (but not the infrastructure funding) will be asked to address the following more detailed criteria as part of this application:

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

Demonstrate that the research focuses on a significant issue related to supportive care in cancer. Proposals that demonstrate the application of research findings to the clinic will be viewed favourably.

- Quality of the research proposal

Demonstrated quality of research, based on the project feasibility, rationale, design, methodology and timeframes. The research proposal should have clear research objectives, and show that the project addresses significant gaps in supportive care in cancer research. Proposals that demonstrate the potential for implementation of the research findings into practice, or how this research may be used to inform further research that may lead to changes in practice, will be viewed favourably.

- Communication

Demonstrated ability and approach to communicating the results of the research proposal to other researchers, students, consumers and/or decision makers.

- Research institution support

Demonstrated host organisation provision of a supportive environment in terms of infrastructure, effective supervision and mentoring of the research, and also processes for evaluating the effectiveness and suitability of supervisory/mentoring arrangements.

- Other funding sources

Demonstrate that other funding has not been secured for the specific project detailed in the proposal and / or that the proposal is novel.

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 appropriate 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency Supportive Care in Cancer 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 by emailing victorian.canceragency@dhs.vic.gov.au.

Format and closing date

Please use Verdana 10 point font in your application and submit your application electronically to victorian.canceragency@dhs.vic.gov.au **by 2 pm Monday 29 October 2007**. Note that late applications will not be accepted.

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 Supportive Care in Cancer research funding 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 funding 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 scholarship and fellowship applications and the regional research enabling grants.

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, a defined plan of when the 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.

Appendix 3: Victorian Cancer Agency Supportive Care in Cancer Scholarship entitlements

Stipends	Basic Rate	Including \$5000 Allowance
Standard rate for biomedical and public health scholarships (non MBBS)	\$19,616	\$24,616
Medical and public health scholarships (with MBBS)	\$29,172	\$34,172

The scholarship will increase by 2% annually to reflect increases in the cost of living.

Allowances

All scholars will receive up to \$5000 per annum to be used for the purchase of consumables and research costs related to the scholarship, and for conference travel costs. In addition, the candidate will also receive reimbursement of their university amenities and services fees. An allowance for costs associated with printing of theses is also payable to a maximum of \$860 for PhD theses and \$430 for Masters theses.

Taxation

At present, provided various conditions are met, these scholarships are exempt from income tax.

At the commencement of this program, the Australian Taxation Office advised that the scholarships that the Victorian Government awards to eligible full-time students are income tax exempt pursuant to section 51-10, item 2.1A, of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. It is the responsibility of scholarship holders to advise the Australian Taxation Office of their full income details including the Victorian Cancer Agency Supportive Care in Cancer Scholarship. Further information regarding tax exemption of the scholarship can be obtained from the Australian Taxation Office (Phone: 132 866).

Paid Employment

The nature of this scholarship is full-time. Scholarship holders are permitted to undertake a strictly limited amount of paid employment throughout the year (in line with the paid work restrictions for PhD/Masters scholarship holders by the university at which they are enrolled). Paid employment must not impede the scholarship holder's study program.

Additional Scholarship Assistance

The scholarship holder can receive funding from other sources by way of top-ups (subject to guidelines of the administering institution). However, scholarship holders are not permitted to receive a full scholarship in addition to the Victorian Cancer Agency Supportive Care in Cancer Research Scholarship.