



Instructions for Applicants for the 2024 Brain Foundation Research Grants

For more than 50 years (since 1970) the Brain Foundation has been funding research into brain diseases, disorders and injuries, with the ultimate goal of advancing diagnoses, treatments and patient outcomes.

Applications for our 2024 Research Grants are now being accepted. This year, in addition to our usual categories, we have funds available specifically for (in alphabetical order):

- Acoustic Neuroma
- Aneurysm
- AVM (arteriovenous malformation)
- Concussion
- Migraine & Headache
- Trigeminal Neuralgia

The sad reality is; no matter how much money the Brain Foundation raises each year it will never be enough to fund all the worthy and dedicated researchers who apply for our grants.

We cannot express enough our gratitude to our supporters, corporate sponsors, fundraisers and donors. These people and organisations make possible our Research Grants Program.

We look forward to receiving your application which will be judged and selected by our prestigious and independent Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). Thank you and best wishes for your application.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Trevor Thompson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Trevor Thompson
Chief Executive Officer
Brain Foundation



1. Objectives

The primary objective of the Brain Foundation Research Grants is to support individual researchers and research teams to conduct the highest quality research in clinical neuroscience.

A subsidiary objective is to provide opportunities as a chief investigator for early career researchers to gain funding for projects with potential.

In particular, we are reserving two individual research grants, one being for a Neurological trainee and one for a Neurosurgical trainee for projects for which they are the only investigators.

The quality of the proposed research is judged by our Scientific Advisory Committee according to internationally benchmarked criteria of:

- scientific quality; and
- significance and innovation

2. Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)

All applications for Brain Foundation Research Grants will be assessed by our SAC. (See back of application form).

The SAC will bring together their cumulative expertise and experience in neurosurgery, neurology and neuroscience when evaluating the merit of applications for funding.

3. Assessment Criteria

All applications will be assessed on their scientific quality and their significance and/or innovation as follows:

(a) Scientific Quality (40%) This includes the:

- clarity of hypotheses and objectives; and
- strengths and weaknesses of the experimental design and feasibility

(b) Significance and/or Innovation (60%) This includes:

- The potential to increase knowledge about neurosurgical applications and procedures and neurological disorders and diseases, including brain and spinal injuries



- In particular, the potential to enable earlier, more accurate diagnosis of neurological diseases and disorders, and to develop more efficient and effective treatments

4. Description of Brain Foundation Grants

The 2024 Brain Foundation research grant categories are:

Category	Description
1	Alzheimer's Disease, Dementias & other Cognitive Disturbances
2	Brain Tumour incl. Acoustic Neuroma
3	Cerebrovascular incl. Stroke, Aneurysms, AVM
4	Concussion & Traumatic Brain Injury
5	Epilepsy
6	Infections, Meningitis and Encephalitis
7	Migraine and Headache
8	MND / ALS & other Neuro Degenerative Diseases
9	Multiple Sclerosis & other Inflammatory Diseases
10	Movement Disorders incl. Parkinson's & related diseases, Dystonia, Huntington's, PSP
11	Paediatric Neurology
12	Neuromuscular incl. Muscular Dystrophies, Myopathies & Neuropathies
13	Other

The total amount available for distribution depends on the income of the Brain Foundation in that year. As a guide, the grants awarded in 2023 were up to \$40,000 each.

Please note: although funds are available for all research categories and the above specific areas, grants will ONLY be awarded if they meet the assessment criteria of scientific quality and significance and/or innovation.

5. Eligibility

The Grants are open to competition nationally and all researchers in Australia are eligible to apply, however consideration, subject to merit, is given to:

- Early career investigators, either clinicians or neuroscientists, to help them establish an ongoing research program;
- Innovative projects;

- Pilot studies to enable a research project to be developed such that it could be supported by a recognised grant-giving agency in subsequent years;
- Bridging support for a clinician who has a valid reason for being unable to make an application to a conventional grant-giving agency; and
- Supplementation of an existing grant from, for example, NHMRC, particularly for grant applications that were successful but funded inadequately to allow satisfactory progress to be made. In this instance applicants should submit the reports on their project from that grant-giving agency, together with ratings, details of the requesting and awarded budget, and full justification for the unfunded items.
- Directors of the foundation and members of the SAC are not excluded from being co-investigators, but this is discouraged. Indeed it could count against the score for significance and innovation.

Please note the following conditions:

- The Brain Foundation will not entertain applications that imply an ongoing funding commitment beyond a single year. A single 3 year major grant was issued for the first time in 2014, and the Foundation may call for applications for similar grants in a specific area(s), separate to this funding round;
- The SAC will not normally be able to give any priority to projects involving clinical trials;
- The Brain Foundation does not fund requests for equipment only;
- Please submit only one application per person or team. 'Team' refers to a Chief Investigator and their co-investigators.
- Additional funding for a project in the next round is unlikely.
- Applications for funds for general use will not be considered. Funds will only be provided for specific projects; and
- Projects will only be considered where government or other conventional sources of funds are unavailable.
- Feedback on individual applications will not be available from the Foundation's secretariat.

All applications will be judged by the Brain Foundation's SAC on the relative merit of a project within a nationally competitive framework and the funds available.



6. Special Conditions

6.1 Each award recipient is required to provide a video of 1-2 minutes duration to introduce their project. This can be done using a webcam or phone and will be published on our website with professional editing done by the Brain Foundation. Recipients must indicate if they do not wish the Brain Foundation to publish such information.

6.2 Grant recipients are required to provide a brief progress/final report to the Brain Foundation 13 months after the awarding of the grant. These reports are to be in a language able to be understood by a lay person, no longer than 1,000 words, and accompanied by photographs, diagrams or pictures suitable for publication purposes in the Brain Foundation's newsletter 'brainwaves' and on the website. Please submit this report as per the [Progress/Final report template](#), which will be emailed to you.

6.3 Grant recipients are required to sign the Formal Letter of Award Grant Agreement, which confirms the funding period, due date of progress/final report, and confirmation of special conditions.

6.4 Acknowledgement of the Brain Foundation as donor of the Grant wherever possible, such as in media interviews, and on papers, posters and publications relating to the research.

6.5 Where practical and feasible, assist the Brain Foundation on an ad-hoc basis by providing expert opinion and information in their project area, such as:

- Reviewing information for the Brain Foundation websites and Neurological Directory;
- The provision of information required by Brain Foundation staff to answer queries from the general public; and
- Responding to media releases if required.

The Brain Foundation recognises the time constraints of researchers, and endeavours not to "overload" any one researcher with such requests for assistance.

6.6 It is expected that grant recipients will participate in, and present progress reports/findings to fellow neurologists, neurosurgeons, neuroscientists at appropriate Brain Foundation events, if / when these events are scheduled.

6.7 The Brain Foundation donates grants to support the research of successful applicants, and it is a condition of the grant that no administration fee can be deducted by the university or institution from an individual recipient's grant award.



7. Deadline for Submission

Submissions are to be emailed to grants@brainfoundation.org.au by close of business Friday 14th June 2024.

8. How to Lodge Your Application

Please complete the application form to apply for a 2024 Brain Foundation Research Grant and send as a PDF to: grants@brainfoundation.org.au

using the following naming convention (please use upper and lower case and NOT all uppercase):

Lastname Firstname – Simplified Project Title

for example, *Smith John – The anatomy of the brain*

You will receive a return acknowledgement email within two weeks. If you do **not** receive an acknowledgement within two weeks of lodgement, please contact the Brain Foundation on 1300 886 660 or email grants@brainfoundation.org.au to ensure that your application has been received.

9. Notification to Applicants

All chief investigators will be advised by email of:

- Receipt of their application by Monday 1st July 2024 (please email anniek@brainfoundation.org.au if you have not received confirmation by this date)
- Whether or not their application for a research grant was successful by 20th September 2024
- Feedback on individual applications will not be available from the Foundation's secretariat.

In addition, **all successful chief investigators will be notified by telephone**. Please ensure that you provide a mobile phone number and a telephone number which is answered during business hours.

10. Confidentiality

Information contained in applications is regarded as confidential unless otherwise indicated and will be received and treated as confidential by the Brain Foundation. It is the responsibility of all Brain Foundation staff and members of the Scientific Advisory Committee not to disclose to any person confidential information to which they become privy as a result of the exercise of their responsibilities to the Brain Foundation.



Information comprising the names of successful grant applicants and their administering institutions, together with the title of the research project and a lay summary, are published in the Brain Foundation's newsletter 'brainwaves' and are available through the Brain Foundation's website. The lay summary may also be released to the media.

11. Privacy

Documents containing personal information are handled and protected in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act 1988, which sets standards for the collection, storage, use and disclosure of, and access to, personal information. Personal information is disclosed only with permission of the individual to whom it relates or where the Act allows.

12. Incomplete, false or misleading applications

Once submitted to the Brain Foundation, the application will be considered final and no changes can be accepted. The application is the main source of information available for assessment. As such it must contain all the information necessary for assessment of the project without the need for further written or oral explanation, or reference to additional documentation. All details in the application, particularly concerning any successful Grants, must be current at the time of application.

If an application contains information that is false or misleading, it will be excluded from any further consideration for funding.

13. Removal of Applications

The Brain Foundation reserves the right to remove from further consideration in the selection process any applications that are ineligible or which are clearly of a standard that will not gain support in the competitive national grant awards. Exclusion of ineligible applications may take place at any time during the selection process.

14. Further Information

If you require any further information about the Brain Foundation's Research Grants please contact Anniek Grundy, Grants Program Manager on 1300 886 660 or email anniek@brainfoundation.org.au