



Genomic Cancer Clinical Trial Initiative
27 October 2023

NHMRC

Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies Grants

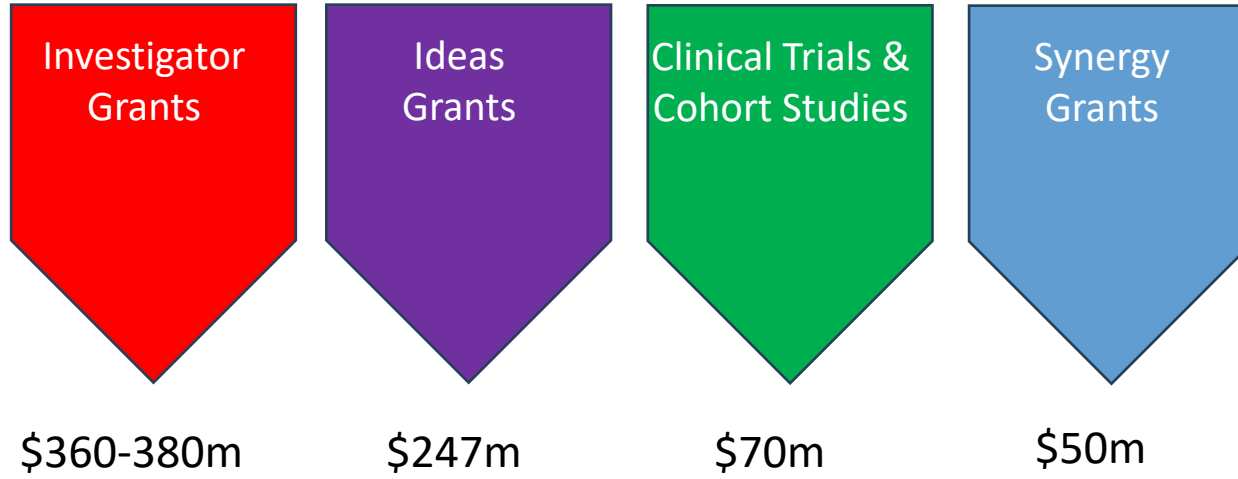
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Assistant Director, Translation Programs





NHMRC's grant program

Scale schemes



Strategic & leveraging

- Centres of Research Excellence
- Partnership Projects
- Development Grants
- Targeted Calls for Research
- International schemes
- Postgraduate Scholarships



Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies

Objective:

- Support high-quality clinical trials and cohort studies that address important gaps in knowledge.

Outcomes:

Improvements in health and well-being, health care practice or policy, as a result of high-quality:

- Clinical trials that provide reliable evidence of the effects of health-related interventions on health outcomes (or appropriate surrogates)
- Cohort studies (including retrospective cohort studies) that provide reliable evidence on the relation of important risk factors and other exposures to health-related outcomes.

The scheme receives an annual allocation of \$70 million (usually with additional structural priority funding) and supports about 30 grants annually.

Some statistics

	2019 grants/apps (funded rate)	2020 grants/apps (funded rate)	2021 grants/apps (funded rate)	2022 grants/apps (funded rate)
CTCS Grants	31/570 (5.4%)	30/436 (6.9%)	33/291 (11.3%)	28/243 (11.6%)
Clinical Trial	23/394 (5.8%)	20/299 (6.7%)	22/202 (10.9)	16/166 (9.6)
Cohort Study	8/187 (4.3%)	10/137 (7.3%)	11/89 (12.4)	12/75 (16.0)

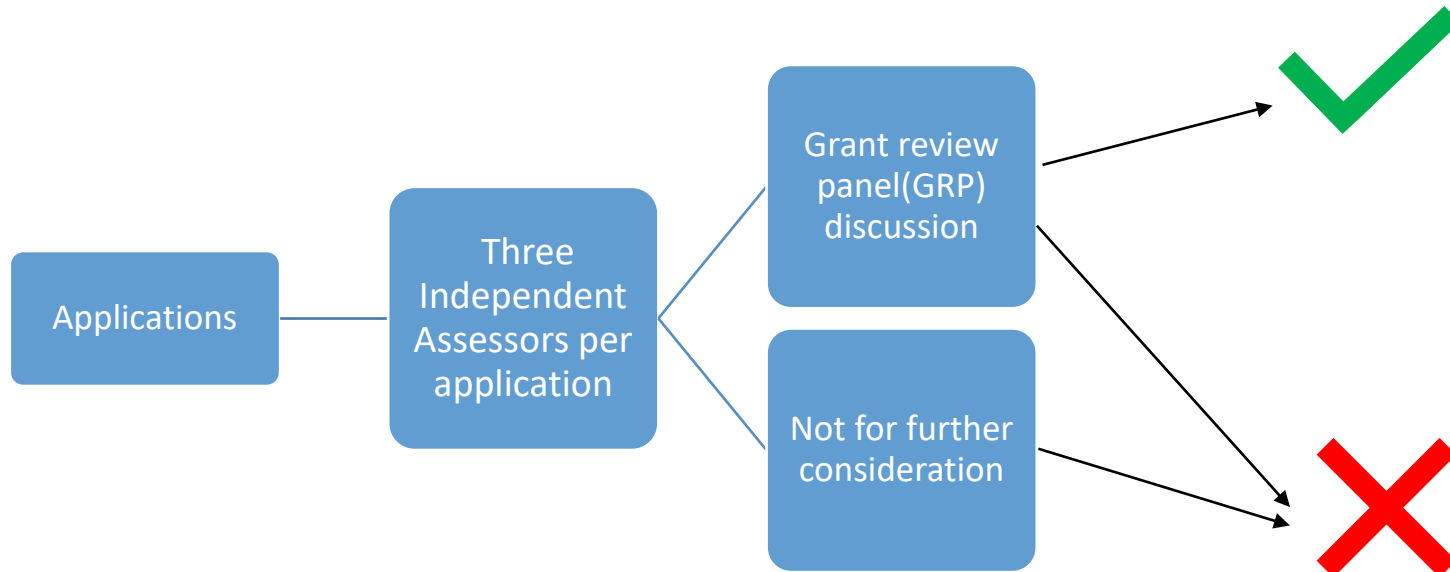
2023
226
applications

Observations: 2019-2023

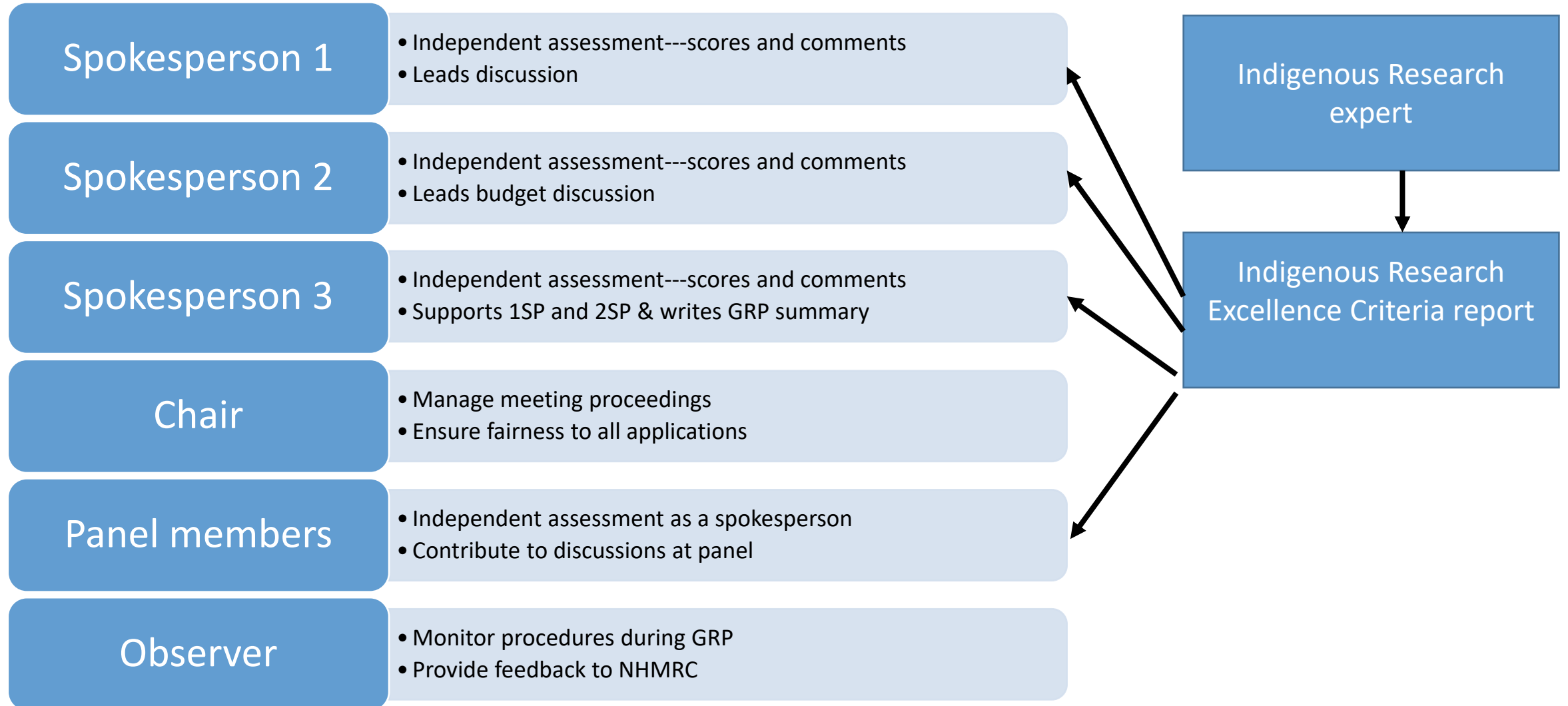
Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Requested budget	\$1.01b	\$862m	\$635m	\$575m	\$624m
Mean budget request	\$1.8m	\$2.0m	\$2.1m	\$2.4m	\$2.8m
Mean budget granted	\$2.4m	\$2.5m	\$2.3m	\$2.6m	TBC

- Budget requests range from \$80k to 12M.
- Number of CIs are increasing annually.
- CIA gender balance: applicants and funded
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health applications do very well.

Peer Review Process



Peer Review: Functions



Preparing for a CTCS application

Planning and preparation:

- Become familiar with the Grant Guidelines
- Assessment criteria & Category descriptors
- Seek out mentors
- Consumer involvement, implementation strategy, risk management and Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria are crucial!
- Governance and ethics
- Capacity and capability building



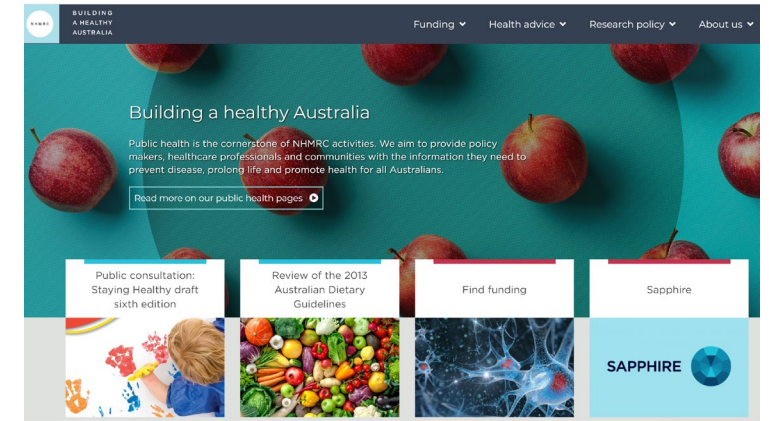
Writing a CTCS application: new aspects

- Research proposal has a strong rationale supported by evidence. Systematic review?
- Developed with meaningful consumer and community involvement
- SPIRIT Statement items (<https://www.spirit-statement.org/spirit-statement/>)
- STROBE reporting standard <https://www.strobe-statement.org/>
- Realistic milestones and performance indicators; implementation plan
- Appropriate budget that matches the scope and scale of the project



General considerations

- The fit to the scheme is good (e.g. Ideas Grants vs CTCS)
- Seek advice from your RAO, mentors and colleagues
- Addressed all criteria clearly
- Think like a reviewer. Participating in peer review is a useful experience!
- Well written, easy to read, no errors (in spelling or incorrect information)
- Concise
- The applications are clearly written for CTCS and do not read as re-purposed from other schemes.
- Write clearly and ensure it is easy to follow
- Not too many acronyms



Final thoughts

- Cohort studies with a focus on cancer/oncology
- MRFF vs MREA consultation: watch this space
- MRFF offers another significant opportunity to get your research funded

BUT, make sure it addresses the correct scheme and is tailored appropriately



Australian Government

Discussion Paper:

Improving alignment and coordination
between the Medical Research Future
Fund and NHMRC's Medical Research
Endowment Account

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Australian Government

National Health and Medical Research Council

Thank you

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NHMRC

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A HEALTHY
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