

Translational Challenge Grant (TCG) Program 2025/26

Guidelines, Instructions and Conditions of Award

1. Program Overview

1.1. TCG Purpose and Requirements

Ramsay Hospital Research Foundation (RHRF) is seeking to fund translational research projects that will make a difference to healthcare by improving patient outcomes and models of care through innovative research.

Key to this grants program, all research grants must address social determinants of health and should seek to investigate ways to break the cycle of disadvantage. Social determinants of health categories RHRF are looking to address are listed as follows:

- Education
- Socioeconomic Status
- Lifestyle Risk Factors
- Environment

To be eligible for funding, projects must encompass the following:

- have a particular focus on improving health outcomes.
- be undertaken in one of the following clinical areas: cancer, mental health, cardiovascular disease, orthopaedic surgery or musculoskeletal injury. *RHRF may fund research in other clinical areas where there is a strong alignment to the broader research strategy and at the discretion of the RHRF Board.*
- demonstrate a commitment to improving social disadvantage by including one key determinant of health.
- be undertaken at a Ramsay site and at a non-Ramsay site.
- include a diverse patient population and benefit patients in both private and public healthcare settings.

RHRF is seeking applications from a broad cross section of the research community. Ramsay VMOs, Clinical Academics and University Based Researchers (including Early Career Researchers) associated with Ramsay Facilities, Ramsay Allied Health, and Ramsay Nurses are encouraged to apply.

A maximum of **\$400,000** is available per project, for projects up to a **maximum of three years** in duration.

As there is limited funding available, the RHRF Board will fund projects that best align with the strategic priorities of the foundation.

Applications will be reviewed for eligibility and shortlisted by the RHRF Grants Management Team. The shortlisted applications will then be evaluated by the RHRF Scientific Review Panel and Independent Reviewers, which will provide funding recommendations to the RHRF Board. The RHRF Board will make a final decision on which projects are funded. **RHRF reserves the right to only fund projects that have the full support of the RHRF Board.**

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RHRF will also arrange interviews with shortlisted applicants to address any questions that may arise from the RHRF management team review.

1.2. Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, a project must satisfy the following criteria:

- a) Research must be undertaken in Australia for the benefit of Australians.
- b) Research must have a particular focus on improving health outcomes.
- c) Research must be undertaken in one of the following clinical areas: cancer, mental health, cardiovascular disease, orthopaedic surgery or musculoskeletal injury. *RHRF may fund research in other clinical areas where there is a strong alignment to the broader research strategy and at the discretion of the RHRF Board.*
- d) Research must demonstrate a commitment to improving social disadvantage by including one key determinant of health. Projects that are funded will be required to provide an annual report that includes key metrics that demonstrate the impact in addressing a social determinant of health. All projects will also need to collect and report on socio-economic status of the patient cohort. These factors should be considered in the project design.
- e) Research must be undertaken at a Ramsay site. Research that is simply recruiting participants from Ramsay Health Care and does not meaningfully involve Ramsay Health Care facilities and staff will not be considered.
- f) The research team must include at least one researcher who is employed by Ramsay Health Care, or in the case of VMOs, accredited at a Ramsay Health Care Facility. If applicants are unable to meet this criterion, the RHRF team will help the applicant to identify suitable individuals to be involved in the research.
- g) Research must also be undertaken at a non-Ramsay site as well as a Ramsay site.
- h) Research must include a diverse patient population and benefit patients in both private and public healthcare settings.

Existing Grant Recipients Applications:

If you are an existing grant recipient, you are eligible to apply for an additional grant with RHRF, however, you are not permitted to receive more than two grants at any one time with RHRF where you are named the Chief Investigator. In addition to this, you are not permitted to be listed as an investigator as part of an investigative team on more than four RHRF funded projects.

1.3. Projects Not Considered for Funding

RHRF exists to fund and develop projects that will make a meaningful difference to Ramsay Health Care patients. As a foundation, our role is to develop research capacity and research quality within Ramsay Health Care. As a registered charity in Australia, RHRF is also required to fund projects that meet the broader public benefit and benefit the Australian community.

The RHRF Board has decided that funding will not be allocated to any projects that:

- Are designed as a Research Fellowship. All projects must be designed to address a key research hypothesis and have a defined methodology and an anticipated outcome. Project budgets may include salary support, but the purpose of the grant should be broader than supporting an individual to conduct research.

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- **Top-Up Funding** - RHRF is seeking to develop meaningful research that is conducted within the Ramsay ecosystem. RHRF is not able to provide support that “tops-up” existing funding. An example of “top up” funding would be the circumstances where a Principal Investigator has already received grant funding to conduct a research project but requires an additional amount of funding to complete the project. The exception to this is situations where the Principal Investigator has received grant funding to conduct a project in a public hospital, University or other health care setting, and the Principal Investigator wants to extend the project to include Ramsay Facilities but requires additional funding to support the additional sites in the project. In this circumstance, an application for funding from RHRF is permitted.
- **Projects that are for capital equipment.** The purpose of this grant scheme is to fund research that improves patient outcomes. The foundation will not fund applications that contain equipment, devices, software or other capital type purchases that exceed an individual cost of \$5000.

1.4. Key Dates for Translational Challenge Grant 2025/26

Activity	Open	Close
Applications Submission	30 September 2025	15 December 2025
Internal Review of Applications	Early January 2026	Mid-January 2026
Scientific Review Panel Composition – panel members selected based on range of applications and clinical areas	Mid-December 2025	Mid-January 2026
Review of Applications by Scientific Review Panel and External Reviewers	Late January 2026	Late February 2026
Review Panel Recommendations Reported to RHRF Board for Endorsement	Mid-March 2026	-
Notification to Applicants	Late March 2026	-
Meeting with the Grant Recipients for contracts and next steps	April 2026	May 2026

2. How to Apply

2.1. REGGS Application Portal

This grant scheme is available to researchers based in Australia and all research must be conducted in Australia.

Online Application Portal - REGGS

All applications for RHRF grants must be submitted via the REGGS (Research Ethics, Governance and Grants) system. REGGS is an online, cloud-based portal for the management of research ethics, governance and grants across Ramsay Health Care and RHRF.

[Register on REGGS](#)

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To start an application, you must first register on REGGS. Go to <https://grants.rhrf.org.au> to set up an account.

Please select the green **apply now** button “**2025 RHRF Translational Challenge Grant**” to start your application.

Using REGGS

- The application is structured to be completed in multiple pages.
- You can navigate through the application to different parts of the application using the navigation menu on the left.
- Don't forget to SAVE regularly!

For detailed information on how to apply via REGGS, please see the REGGS grants – How To Guides found on the [RHRF website](#)

Tip! You will be able to save the online application and complete it over time. A copy of your application will be available to download from the portal and will be emailed to you once submitted.

2.2. Application Structure

The RHRF application process consists of a single full application submission. The application form requires detail in the following areas:

- **Research Project Overview**
 - This includes details of the project title, chief investigator, project summary, research focus area (e.g., Cancer, Mental Health etc.), funding requested, and social determinant of health addressed.
- **Detailed Project Proposal**
 - Applicants are required to submit a 3-page (max. 1500 words) project proposal detailing information in addition to the application that may be useful for the Scientific Review Panel members and RHRF board. The project proposal **should not** repeat information that is contained in the REGGS application form. Please see more details in section 2.3.
- **Sites**
 - Research must be conducted in at least one Ramsay site and one non-Ramsay site. This section should outline if sites have confirmed participation in the project and if not, what measures are being sought to confirm site participation in the project. If you have any letters of support or correspondence from the confirmed participating Ramsay sites, please attach them with your grant application.
- **Project Impact and Research Significance**
 - This section will ask questions to identify if the project aligns with Ramsay priorities such as improving clinical care and advancing patient outcomes.
- **Social Determinants of Health**
 - Research must address one social determinant of health in your project. The determinants of health to choose from in this section are Education, Socioeconomic

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Status, Lifestyle Risk Factors and Environment. Your project must outline how addressing the selected social determinant of health will lead to practice change and improvement in the health of patients.

- **Stakeholder Involvement and Consumer Input**
 - This section is to outline the role of consumers, patients and stakeholders in your project. Co-design approach and input from individuals with lived experience should be considered. You will have confirmed participation from the individuals and organisations you have listed, and you should be able to outline their role in project delivery.
- **Investigative Team**
 - Applicants must list their research team including the experience they have working together as a team or collective experience. The research team must include at least one researcher who is employed by Ramsay Health Care, or in the case of VMOs, accredited at a Ramsay Health Care facility. If applicants are unable to meet this criterion, the RHRF team will help the applicant to identify suitable individuals to be involved in the research.
- **Project Budget**
 - Applicants must provide a project budget description that includes details of costs in relation to salaries, equipment, consumables etc. Applicants are also required to provide detail of additional funding that has been awarded and provide justification for the budget request that has been made.
- **Administering Organisation**
 - Details of the administering organisation are required such as the organisation name, ABN, address, contact name, contact email etc.

Please be concise and avoid unnecessary repetition throughout the application.

2.3. Detailed Project Proposal

Applicants will have the opportunity to include a separate, detailed project proposal with the application.

Your detailed project proposal should not exceed 3 pages (max. 1500 words) and should contain additional information that may be useful for Scientific Review Panel members and RHRF Board. The project proposal should not repeat information that is contained in the application form but may expand on information provided in the form as needed. The purpose of the additional information is to understand the context of the study and the proposed research, the potential implications and risks if the study proceeds and consideration regarding how the project would be implemented should it be successful.

Applicants must address all of the following items within the proposal:

- The research question, hypothesis, aims and objectives;
- The research methodology / study design;
- Provide a detailed table or written structure to outline key steps in your project to enable reviewers to understand how your project will be undertaken;
- The setting / the project sites and how any specific issues will be managed at these sites;
- Participant population, the participant recruitment strategy and data collection;

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- Provide guidance on how your project will be implemented if successful;
- Evaluations, health economic and statistical analysis;
- Ethics and Governance plan;
- Expected outcomes of the study and how it will benefit the patient population; and
- How you will measure the success of the project.

The detailed proposal can include references, figures, Gantt charts, tables, and diagrams as required. The 3-page limit includes all figures, charts, tables, and diagrams, but does not include references.

2.4. Applicant Declaration

RHRF expects that all the Investigators have participated in the development of the application and that anyone listed as an Investigator has agreed to be involved in the project.

The Investigators must have read these guidelines and, if awarded an RHRF grant, will be required to abide by the terms and conditions of RHRF grant awarded, including all reporting requirements.

The Chief investigator must also acknowledge that they have read the RHRF funding agreement and agree with the Terms and Conditions. We advise applicants to consult with the relevant legal department in their administering organisation before applying for the RHRF grant.

2.5 RHRF Contact Details

If you have any questions, please contact the RHRF Grants Team at: RHRFgrants@rhrf.org.au

For more information regarding our grants program and information on RHRF, please visit our website: <https://www.ramsayhealth.com.au/Ramsay-Research/Ramsay-Hospital-Research-Foundation/Grants-home>

3. TCG Grant Review Guidelines

In reviewing the grant applications, the Scientific Review Panel will consider the following criteria:

- Quality of the research project that addresses innovative and creative research topic
- Clearly addressed Social Determinants of Health and bridge of the gap in health inequality.
- Positive impact on patient outcomes and patient comfort.
- Areas of health and medical research that consist of early phase clinical research through to implementation. **Note: RHRF has previously decided it would not fund blue sky or discovery research.**

Following criteria rated on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 – Poor; 2 – Satisfactory; 3 – Good; 4 – Very good; 5 – Excellent) are used for scoring of the applications:

- Research Quality: 25%
- Research Significance and Innovation: 25%
- Research Capability: 25%
- Social Determinants of Health: 25%

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4. Conditions of Award

4.1 Administrating Organisation

The Administrating Organisation must be a single, reputable research organisation to be eligible. It must have policies and procedures in place for the management of research funds, the management of intellectual property, and for the conduct of research consistent with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

4.2 Funding Agreement

All successful applicants awarded a RHRF Translational Challenge Grant will be asked to enter into a Funding Agreement with RHRF and Ramsay Health Care.

Following meeting with the successful grant recipients, RHRF expects contract negotiations to be completed in two to three months. RHRF reserves the right to withdraw this offer if the contract isn't fully executed within this time frame.

4.3 Budget and Funding Conditions

Below is an overview of how RHRF grant funding may or may not be used by Grantees.

4.3.1 What RHRF will fund:

RHRF will fund any costs that are directly related to the project, are not already available at the site or to the project team and can be justified.

Examples of costs RHRF will fund are:

- Salaries for Research Assistants, Research Nurses, Statisticians, and other salary on-costs (e.g., payroll tax, workers compensation, leave loading, and superannuation) as determined from the relevant Award Rates;
- A Clinical Fellowship, PhD Scholarship, or a Masters (Research) Scholarship. The conditions are set out below;
- Direct research costs such as materials and consumables. The purchase of essential items and equipment specifically required for the project is allowed if such items are normally not available and do not exceed an individual cost of \$5000;
- Reasonable expenses for services, or purchase/licensing of software;
- Funds for travel. *Note: these costs will only be considered when they form an integral part of the project;*
- Costs associated with participant recruitment, where there is a justifiable need;
- Software development, if it is adequately justified and directly related to the research project; and
- Fees, charges and oncosts that are directly related to the research project. All such fees must be justified.

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4.3.2 What RHRF will not fund:

The list below outlines items the RHRF will not fund and should not be included:

- Administering Organisation's indirect research or infrastructure costs;
- "Business as usual" staff salaries providing in or out of hospital services, or other healthcare services;
- Insurance costs;
- Costs related to intellectual property management;
- Entertainment, hospitality and personal expenses (including subscriptions and professional membership fees);
- Scholarships for Post-Graduate Masters Degrees;
- Grants that are predominantly for equipment; or
- Capital works, general maintenance costs, telephone or communication systems, basic office equipment such as desks and chairs, rent, or the cost of utilities.

4.3.3 No Indirect Costs

RHRF is a registered charity and awards grants on the condition that its funds are not used for indirect research or infrastructure costs.

4.3.4 Funding is not for infrastructure

RHRF will not fund grants that are predominantly requests for equipment. In the event of the purchase of capital items in excess of \$5,000 with RHRF funds, including equipment, the Grantee must ensure that those items, or any proceeds from the sale of those items, continue to be applied for similar purposes of the original application until at least 30 June 2027.

4.4 Conditions for the Inclusion of Clinical Fellowship, or PhD Scholarship, or a Masters (Research) Scholarship

RHRF is committed to supporting clinical research training programs. As such, applicants may elect to fund one of a Clinical Fellowship, PhD Scholarship or Masters (Research) Scholarship as part of their research project.

The involvement of a Clinical Fellow, or PhD or Research Masters Candidate must be clearly described in the application and justified in the 'Project Budget' section of the application.

4.4.1 Clinical Fellowship

The Clinical Fellowship is for junior health care professionals who have a PhD or other research qualification and who wish to develop skills in translation and implementation of research in actual health care settings.

Conditions of funding a Clinical Fellowship via an RHRF grant include:

- Fellowships will be for a maximum of two years and must be for the benefit of a Ramsay Health Care facility.
- Fellowships will be awarded via a related University and the appointment must include academic credentials.
- Recruitment of the Fellow must be subject to transparent, merit-based appointments.

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4.4.2 PhD Scholarship / Masters (Research) Scholarship

Applicants may include one PhD Scholarship or one Masters (Research) Scholarship in medicine, allied health or nursing or related disciplines to support the development of a next generation of clinical academics.

Conditions of funding a PhD or Masters (Research) Scholarship via an RHRF Grant include:

- Scholarships funded can be either a full scholarship which is at a minimum equal to the Australian Government Research Training Program stipend and conditions, or as a top-up scholarship to a competitively awarded main scholarship.
- These scholarships will be for domestic candidates only and must involve a Ramsay Health Care facility.
- Recruitment must be subject to open, merit-based and acceptable to the University providing enrolment.

4.5 Payments Linked to the Completion of Stages

RHRF payments are made upon the completion of the agreed project stages (comprising of a series of milestones). In order to receive payments, Grantees must submit Progress Reports at the completion of each agreed stage. Invoice should be requested once the progress report has been approved by RHRF.

Upon execution of the funding agreement the first payment will be made upon the submission of an invoice. The first payment is normally a percentage of the total grant amount to the maximum \$50,000 and is typically enough to get the project started.

The remainder of the payments will be paid on completion of each project stage. Most projects will have 6-8 Stages.

4.6 Intellectual Property

At a minimum RHRF requires the following licence conditions:

- Grants to RHRF a perpetual, non-exclusive, worldwide, royalty free, irrevocable licence (which may be assigned and sub-licensed) to exercise all rights in Research Project Outcomes, including uses, disclosures, reproductions, modifications and adaptations, for such non-commercial research, training and publicity purposes as RHRF requires from time to time.
- Grants to Ramsay Health Care a perpetual, non-exclusive, non-transferable, worldwide, royalty free, irrevocable licence to exercise all rights in Research Project Outcomes, including uses, disclosures, reproductions, modifications and adaptations for the purpose of Ramsay Health Care's initiatives in improving patient outcomes.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the Intellectual Property or commercialisation aspects, please contact the RHRF Grants Team at: RHRFgrants@rhrf.org.au

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4.7 Open Access Publications

The outcomes of this RHRF grant must be for the public benefit. As such, RHRF requires that all grant recipients publish their findings and outputs in accordance with the NHMRC Open Access Policy, in a timely manner, for the public benefit.

The intent is that all research outputs from the RHRF grants must be made publicly accessible, in line with the NHMRC guidelines, as per one or a combination of the dot points below:

- Publications in open access journals
- Publications in hybrid journals where the author/s have paid for the research to be open access
- Publications that are in free/open journals
- Publications that are publicly available via University repositories

Grantees will be required to report on all publications and outputs throughout the grant.

4.8 Reports

Grantees will be required to submit a series of reports throughout the life of research project. While regular reporting is required, the reports are designed to capture key information and not to be onerous. RHRF will provide all grantees with the report templates, which may be updated from time to time. All reporting will be required to be performed via the REGGS portal.

4.8.1 Milestone Reports

Milestone reports are required to be submitted at the completion of each stage and are linked to payments. These reports should be considered as status updates of the progress of the project.

4.8.2 Annual Progress Report and Acquittal Statement

An Annual Progress Report is required at the end of each financial year along with the Acquittal Statement. Grantees will be required to report on outputs including open access publications, socioeconomic status of the research participants, project sites and funding support at a minimum. Usually, these reports are due by end of August each year.

4.8.3 End of Project Report and Acquittal Statement

An end of Research Project Report is required at the conclusion of the research project and research grant along with the Final Acquittal Statement.

4.8.4 Post Grant Outcomes Evaluation Report

A Post Grant Outcomes Evaluation Report is required annually for a period of five (5) years from the end of the completion of the grant. This report is focused on the outputs, outcomes and any translation of the research achieved by the research project. This information is important and some of it is included in the RHRF Impact Report.

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4.9 Acknowledgement and Style Guide

The RHRF grant must be acknowledged in all publications, reports and other communications, using the following acknowledgement:

This research was/is supported by the Ramsay Hospital Research Foundation (grant #)

An Acknowledgement and Logo Guide have been created for all RHRF grant recipients to follow and adhere to and will be disseminated once a grant is awarded funding.