



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

hrc **nz** Health Research Council
of New Zealand
Te Kaunihera Rangahau Hauora o Aotearoa

2025 Health Delivery Research Project Grant Application Guidelines



1.	Health Delivery Research Project Grant – key information and requirements	4
1.1	Description.....	4
1.2	HRC priorities.....	4
1.3	Value.....	4
1.4	Eligibility criteria.....	5
1.5	Application process overview.....	5
1.6	Key dates	6
1.7	Grant contract and reporting	7
2.	General information on applying for a Health Delivery Research Project Grant.....	8
2.1	Preparation	8
2.2	Format	8
2.3	Allowed changes between the Expression of Interest and full application stage	9
2.4	Privacy provisions.....	10
2.5	Enquiries.....	10
2.6	Additional eligibility requirements	10
3.	Health Delivery Research Project Grant – instructions on how to complete the registration	12
3.1	General registration information.....	12
3.2	Step 1	12
3.3	Step 2	13
3.4	Step 3	13
4.	Health Delivery Research Project Grant – how to complete the EOI application ..	15
4.1	About the EOI application form	15
4.2	Completing the application form.....	15
4.3	Module 3: Evidence of collaboration/support	16
5.	Health Delivery Research Project Grant – how to complete the full application...	17
5.1	Completing Module 1: General information.....	17
5.2	Completing the application form.....	18
Appendix 1: Health Delivery Research Project application assessment process and criteria.....		30
1.	The Health Delivery Research Portfolio Panel.....	30
2.	Assessment overview.....	30
3.	EOI stage assessment process and criteria.....	30

3.1	EOI stage assessment process	30
3.2	EOI stage assessment criteria	31
4.	Full stage assessment process and criteria	32
4.1	Full stage assessment process	32
4.2	Full stage assessment criteria	32
	Appendix 2: Review summary and rebuttal templates	35

1. Health Delivery Research Project Grant – key information and requirements

This section sets out the requirements for the **Health Delivery Research Project Grant Expression of Interest (EOI) and full application**, including:

- information about the grant, including the maximum value and duration
- eligibility criteria that applicants must meet
- an overview of the application process and requirements, including key dates.

Sections 3-5 contain instructions on how to submit an application, including administrative requirements and how to demonstrate that the requirements for funding are met.

1.1 Description

The Health Delivery Research Project Grant provides support for health delivery research of varying values and durations.

The research must be within the scope of the [2025 Health Delivery Research Investment Signal](#) and must be connected to health delivery at a policy, practice or systems level. At a minimum, named investigators should be based in healthcare delivery settings with involvement in shaping the research need, undertaking the research, and identifying translational potential.

Applicants will need to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) application first. The EOI provides an overview of the proposed research and is the first stage of a two-stage application process for HRC Health Delivery Research Projects. The second stage is Full Application. The EOI should provide sufficient information for the Health Delivery Research Portfolio Panel to review based on established scoring criteria, and to recommend who should proceed with a full application submission.

1.2 HRC priorities

All HRC investment must have a clear line of sight to improving health outcomes for all New Zealanders, with a focus on areas of highest health need and communities with the highest health needs¹.

New Zealand's investment in health research must contribute to achieving the goals of the health system and the Science, Innovation and Technology (SI&T) sector. It is important to consider and identify how your research programme will add value and contribute to these goals and wider system performance. The vision for the health system is timely access to quality healthcare². A key focus for the science system is to harness the benefits of research and innovation to drive economic transformation.

1.3 Value

- The HRC expects to fund and encourages a range of grant values and durations up to a maximum term of five years and a maximum value of \$1.4 million.
- Funding requests will be pro rata by months – the maximum amount available per full year is \$466,666.
- The HRC encourages applicants to consider the most suitable budget and timeframe for their research, including smaller research projects over a shorter duration.
- Requested budgets need to be justified and reflect the activities being proposed.

¹ Areas of highest health need and communities with the highest health needs are identified in the Government Policy Statement on Health 2024-2027.

² The Government Policy Statement on Health (2024-2027) outlines 5 priority areas; 5 non-communicable diseases; 5 modifiable behaviours; 5 health targets; and 5 mental health targets.

1.4 Eligibility criteria

If you are applying as the ‘first named investigator’, who is the lead researcher on a Health Delivery Research Project Grant application, you must:

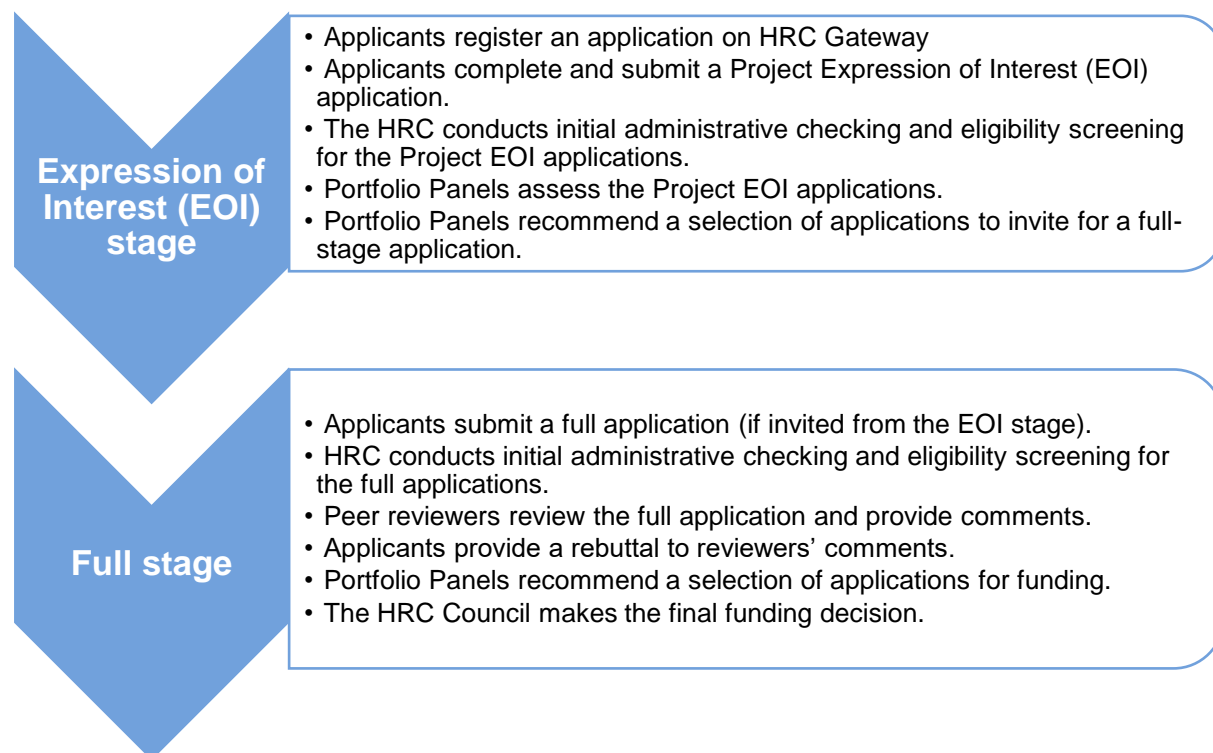
1. Have New Zealand as your principal domicile³ and principal place of employment. **Note:** Host organisations are responsible for ensuring that this criterion has been met.
2. Submit only **one** Project Grant application in the 2025 Health Delivery Research Investment Round as the first named investigator or co-first named investigator. All additional applications will be withdrawn.
3. Complete all progress or end of contract reports that are due from previous contracts in HRC Gateway. You cannot submit a new application in HRC Gateway if you have any outstanding reports.

The HRC welcomes proposals for ‘co-first named investigators’ under circumstances that would result in a research team of exceptional strength, such as interdisciplinary work. In addition, early and mid-career researchers who have not previously held a project contract are encouraged to apply as a co-first named investigator in combination with a mentor/experienced researcher. Eligibility criteria apply to both the first named investigator and co-first named investigator.

Note: You can only submit a Project application once within an investment year. Therefore, if you applied to the 2025 Project round (General, Rangahau Hauora Māori, or Pacific), you cannot submit the same application to the 2025 Health Delivery Project funding round.

1.5 Application process overview

Refer to Appendix 1: Health Delivery Research Project application assessment process and criteria for further information on the assessment process.



³ Principal domicile means the holding of New Zealand citizenship, or a residence class visa under the Immigration Act 2009, and either be domiciled or residing in New Zealand with the intention of residing here indefinitely, having done so for the immediately preceding 12 months. According to Section 4 of the Immigration Act, “residence class visa” means a permanent resident visa or a resident visa.

1.6 Key dates

In the Health Delivery Research Investment Round, the Project Grant application and assessment process has been split into the following stages. Please note key dates below and refer to Section 1.5 for further details.

Event	Description	Date (1pm)
EOI applications open	Open date for creating registration and EOI applications on HRC Gateway	5 February 2025
Registration closes	Deadline for creating a registration	12 March 2025
EOI applications close	Deadline for submitting EOI applications	26 March 2025
EOI applications assessment	EOI applications assessed by Portfolio Panels	April – May 2025
EOI result and full applications open	Date for EOI results updated on HRC Gateway, applicants who are invited to the full stage can start creating full applications	4 June 2025
Full applications close	Deadline for submitting full applications	23 July 2025
Full applications assessment	Peer review	August – September 2025
	Applicant rebuttal	October 2025
	Review by Portfolio Panels	November 2025
Results	Full application outcomes to applicants	11 December 2025
Research start deadline	Deadline to start the proposed research	1 March 2026

1.7 Grant contract and reporting

- The standard HRC research contract will be used for this grant.
- For new host organisations, due diligence will be undertaken prior to contracting. The HRC will provide further information and relevant forms for the organisation to complete following a successful outcome for the application.
- There is an option for the HRC to enter into a negotiated proposal enhancement process. This pathway provides an opportunity for applications to progress to be funded, contingent on specific feedback and/or conditions being met. This negotiated process would involve the HRC providing additional targeted feedback from the Portfolio Panels, followed by an opportunity for the host organisation to respond. The response will be considered by the HRC, the portfolio panel chairs, and additional expertise as required (this may be an iterative process).
- Successful applicants must start the grant by **1 March 2026**.
- All recipients of a Health Delivery Research Project Grant are required to submit annual progress reports, an end of contract report within three months of the contract end date, and post-contract reports due two and five years after the completion of this contract.
- All recipients of a Health Delivery Research Project Grant are required to participate in an HRC-led evaluation during and after completion of their grant, as applicable.

2. General information on applying for a Health Delivery Research Project Grant

This section includes general information on how to apply for a Health Delivery Research Project Grant.

The section includes:

- instructions for using HRC Gateway to submit an application
- formatting requirements for applications
- guidance about the privacy of application content
- contact information if you need assistance with your application.

When applying, you must follow the instructions in this section.

2.1 Preparation

2.1.1 HRC Gateway user account

To apply, you will need an HRC Gateway account. You can use your existing account or create a new one if you do not have one, via the following URL: <https://gateway.hrc.govt.nz>. If you have issues logging into your HRC Gateway account, contact info@hrc.govt.nz.

Note: All members named on your proposed research team must have an HRC Gateway user account so that their details can be included in the online form. Individual HRC Gateway accounts must be updated each year.

2.1.2 Prior to submission

Before submitting an application form, please read the:

- [2025 Health Delivery Research Investment Signal](#)
- 2025 Health Delivery Research Project Grant Application Guidelines (this document)

(Additional documentation)

- [Government Policy Statement on Health \(2024-2027\)](#)
- [New Zealand Health Research Strategy \(2017-2027\)](#)
- [New Zealand Health Research Prioritisation Framework](#)
- [HRC Research Ethics Guidelines](#)
- [Guidelines for Researchers on Health Research Involving Māori](#)
- [HRC Māori Health Advancement Guidelines](#) and [supporting resources](#)
- [Guidelines for Pacific Health Research](#)
- [HRC Research Impact Slideshow](#)
- [ARRIVE guidelines for animal research](#) (if applicable)
- HRC Peer Review Manual (accessed via the Health Delivery information page on HRC Gateway)

Click the document name to access the file.

2.1.3 Host organisation

The host organisation is the institution or organisation that will be responsible for administering a contract awarded. New host organisations that have not previously been funded by the HRC will be required to provide due diligence information before a contract can be offered. The HRC will provide further information and relevant forms for the organisation to complete if the application is being funded.

2.2 Format

2.2.1 General formatting

Use the **2025 Health Delivery Research Project Grant Application Form** as it contains special features specific to this grant type.

Please write your application in a clear, concise manner with sufficient detail. The Portfolio Panels reviewing your application includes a broad range of expertise. It is important that they can understand the scope and implications of your application.

Applications must be in English or Te Reo Māori; if in Te Reo Māori, a translation in English must also be provided (any translation will not be included in the page limit).

When applying, please:

- use Arial 10-point type font or larger
- use default margins
- use single line spacing
- keep to the page limits.

2.2.2 Compliance

The HRC will not process your application if you do not use the correct HRC application forms or follow the stated page limits and font sizes/styles. Your application may be withdrawn.

Please avoid these common pitfalls:

1. Only submit your application using HRC Gateway. Do not send applications or supporting documents to the HRC via email or any other means.
2. If your host organisation has a Research Office (or equivalent), your application must be approved by the Research Office first. The application will then be released to the HRC. Please allow enough time for this approval process before the HRC's closing deadline. All queries regarding applications should be directed to the host's Research Office rather than to the HRC directly.
3. Ensure you complete all modules, including Module 1 which must be completed in HRC Gateway. Incomplete applications after the closing date will be considered withdrawn and deleted from HRC Gateway.
4. Do not include any additional material (e.g. slides, protocols, other funding applications) as 'supporting documents' on HRC Gateway, and avoid using hyperlinks in the application form. The HRC will remove all additional material and hyperlinks from your application.
5. Do not send digital files directly to the HRC. Independent researchers and research providers requiring assistance with using HRC Gateway should contact the HRC in the first instance.

2.3 Allowed changes between the Expression of Interest and full application stage

Please do not make any significant changes to the research team or research plans outlined in your Expression of Interest (EOI) form. Significant changes may result in your full application being disqualified. Slight modifications can be made to your research title and lay summary, please refer to section 3.2-3.4 for further information.

Generally, you cannot add any named investigators to the team at the full stage, except:

- for statistical expertise in clinical trials
- if specifically in response to feedback from an EOI Portfolio Panel
- to replace an existing member due to unforeseen circumstances.

The form to request an additional named investigator, or to replace or remove an investigator is available from your research office. If your organisation does not have a research office, please directly contact the HRC.

In the EOI form, named investigators indicated their FTE commitment by selecting from one of the following 'FTE bands':

- 3% - 10% (Low FTE)
- 11% - 40% (Medium FTE)

- 41% - 100% (High FTE)

In the full application, please enter a defined FTE value for each named investigator. This value should fall within the band that was selected in the EOI application.

Note: The HRC will consider changes of FTE between the EOI and full application that move to a different band; however, these must be justified and the HRC must be notified of these changes. The form to request a change of FTE is available from your research office. If your organisation does not have a research office, please directly contact the HRC. Any unapproved changes in FTE may result in your application being withdrawn.

2.4 Privacy provisions

2.4.1 Statistical and reporting purposes

The information provided in your application will be used for assessing your application. In a non-identifiable form, some information will be used for HRC's statistical and reporting purposes. The HRC stores all applications in a secure place, which may include the New Zealand Research Information System (NZRIS) curated by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) with details provided by funders of the science sector.

2.4.2 Personal information

Personal information contained in your application will be available to the HRC staff and those involved in assessing the Health Delivery Research Project Grant applications.

2.4.3 Media release

The HRC publishes details of research contracts including named individuals, host organisation, research title, lay summaries and funding awarded for public interest purposes and to meet the statutory requirements of the Health Research Council Act 1990.

2.4.4 Official Information Act

Official Information Act requests for information about an application or research contract will be discussed with the host organisation and first named investigator before responding to the request. Where appropriate, the request may be transferred to the host organisation.

2.5 Enquiries

If you have any questions about HRC applications, please contact your host organisation's Research Office.

You can contact the HRC at info@hrc.govt.nz if:

- Your organisation does not have a Research Office
- Your organisation's Research Office cannot assist you
- You have any technical difficulties (i.e. with HRC Gateway)

HRC Gateway will show the status of any application. Please do not contact the HRC for an update on your application.

2.6 Additional eligibility requirements

2.6.1 Eligibility restrictions on publicly funded research

The HRC cannot accept applications made by a department of the public service, as listed in Schedule 2 of the Public Service Act 2020. Named investigators from these departments cannot claim salary support.

As part of the New Zealand Government's broader response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, your application must not benefit a Russian state institution (including but not limited to support for Russian military or security activity) or an organisation outside the government that may be perceived as contributing to the war effort.

This is not a broad ban on collaborations with individual Russian researchers. The focus is on ensuring that New Zealand government funding does not support scientific research collaborations that could further Russia's ability to continue its aggression in Ukraine. As a Crown Agent, investing in health research for the public good with taxpayer funding, the HRC reserves the right to make ineligible any funding application that will benefit a state institution or other organisation identified for exclusion by the New Zealand Government.

2.6.2 Trusted Research Guidance

Please familiarise yourself with the [Trusted Research Guidance for Institutions and Researchers](#). New Zealand has an open and collaborative research and innovation system, and values academic freedom and research conducted independently by individuals and organisations. As part of preserving trust, the HRC screens proposals for risk related to sensitive technologies⁴ and may require funded projects to identify, mitigate, and monitor risks as part of the contractual conditions of the project.

⁴ Technologies become sensitive when they are or could become dual-use i.e. have both a civil and military/security application; or, underpin, or have the potential to underpin, significant economic value for New Zealand.

3. Health Delivery Research Project Grant – instructions on how to complete the registration

This section includes instructions on registering your application in HRC Gateway.

A Health Delivery Research Project Grant EOI Application consists of three Modules, while a full application consists of six. This section relates to Module 1, which forms the first section of both the EOI and the full application.

3.1 General registration information

When applying, you must first submit a registration via HRC Gateway. This step generates an HRC reference number to use on the Expression of Interest (EOI) application form. The information you enter as part of the registration will form Module 1 of your EOI and Full stage application (if applicable).

Once you have submitted your registration, it is forwarded in HRC Gateway to your host organisation's Research Office. Your Research Office will need to approve the registration and then forward it to the HRC. **Always allow sufficient time before the registration closing date for these steps.** If you are applying from an independent organisation or if your host organisation does not have a Research Office, your registration will be automatically forwarded to the HRC.

Note: All named investigators must have an HRC Gateway account to be included in your application. You can update information in your registration before submitting your EOI application. However, the intent is that the registration submission should accurately reflect the information that will be included in the EOI application.

3.2 Step 1

Start the registration process by clicking the 'Apply now' button on the 2025 Health Delivery Research Project Grant information page on HRC Gateway. The 'Apply now' button will only appear when the application submission period is open. Clicking the 'Apply now' button will open a dialog form where the following information is required.

3.2.1 Research title

The research title should be succinct, written in plain language, and clearly describe the proposed research without using metaphorical terms. The title must not exceed 80 characters, including spaces and punctuation (e.g. 'growth factors' contains 14 characters). Please use sentence case. The HRC reserves the right to amend the title of funded applications.

3.2.2 Host organisation

The host organisation is the institution or organisation that will be responsible for administering any contract awarded.

Select the relevant 'Host organisation' from the drop-down list (this shows host organisations currently recognised by the HRC). If applicable, a specific Research Office and Research Office contact will be able to be selected.

Note: If your host organisation does not appear in the drop-down list, please tick the check box 'My host organisation is not in the list'. A field 'Host organisation details' will appear in the next section, and the name of the host organisation should be entered here.

If the host organisation has a Research Office with more than one staff member, please select the contact in the Research Office who will most likely be handling the application, or who will be the principal contact.

If the host organisation has more than one Research Office, please select which Research Office will be handling the application.

3.3 Step 2

3.3.1 First named investigator

Some of this information will be automatically populated from the first named investigator's profile in HRC Gateway (e.g. organisation and department). If the profile is not current, details must be updated. The details listed on the application will be automatically refreshed after the profile is updated. Click on the 'Update' button to enter and update the information requested.

The first named investigator will be considered the first point of contact during the application and assessment process and will be understood to be acting for, and in concurrence with, the other named investigators. All correspondence for the application will be addressed to this person and the host. Once an application is created, the first named investigator cannot be changed.

Information on ethnicity, gender and whether the researcher is a clinician (and is practising) is used for HRC information purposes only. Please note that ethnicity, iwi, clinician, or practising clinician are not required to be entered as these details will automatically populate from the individual's profile.

3.4 Step 3

Click the 'Update' button to enter details for the following fields.

3.4.1 Support personnel

Examples of support personnel include individuals who will help you with the project application process (i.e. upload your application to HRC Gateway). Do not list named investigators or your host organisation's Research Office staff. All support personnel need to have an HRC Gateway account to view and edit your application.

3.4.2 Named investigators

All named investigators must have an HRC Gateway account before they can be added to the application. **All members named on the research team must be added to this application on HRC Gateway and will be included in Module 1.** Each named investigator will need to sign in to HRC Gateway and check and update their details before EOI applications are submitted. Click the 'Update' button to enter additional information as requested.

Under **Role type**, you can assign a role to an individual as follows:

- Co-first named investigator: A co-principal investigator (or co-lead researcher) with joint responsibility for the project. Note that the co-first named investigator must fulfil the same eligibility criteria as the first named investigator.
- Named investigator: A named investigator listed on the application, whose expertise and involvement are critical to the success of the project.
- Student/Intern: A Masters or PhD student or research intern named in the project application.
- Technician: An individual who will complete specific tasks that require technical knowledge and experience.
- Supporting staff: A team member who is conducting administrative, non-technical, tasks.

Role in project should include brief information on what the named investigator will undertake in the activation activities (1-2 sentences maximum). It should be clear which individual(s) are contributing in a mentoring capacity.

You will need to select an **FTE** band for each named investigator:

- 3% - 10% (Low FTE)
- 11% - 40% (Medium FTE)
- 41% - 100% (High FTE)

Information on ethnicity, gender and whether the researcher is a clinician (and is practicing) is used for HRC information purposes only. Please note ethnicity, iwi, clinician, or practising clinician are not required to be entered as these details will automatically populate from the individual's profile. All

named investigators on successful applications may be cited by the HRC in its various communication channels.

3.4.3 Research location(s)

This is the specific department(s) and organisation where most research or data analysis will be completed.

3.4.4 Discipline

Choose from the drop-down box. This should be the area of health delivery research that your application is connected with.

3.4.5 Duration

Enter the proposed term of the work in months. This cannot exceed 60 months (5 years).

3.4.6 Type of research

Choose from the drop-down list what you consider the most appropriate term for broadly describing the research proposal for assessment purposes.

3.4.7 Commencement date

Enter the proposed commencement date. Please note that the research activity must start by **1 March 2026**.

3.4.8 Lay summary

The lay summary needs to include a clear statement covering the following key elements:

- the purpose of the research, why it is needed, and how it contributes to priorities
- how the research will be undertaken, including the methodological approach
- anticipated health benefits, expected outcomes, and value for money.

The HRC will use this information in the final approval process if the application is recommended for funding. The lay summary will also be publicised through the HRC's communication channels (e.g. website) and should be easily understood by members of the public (150-word limit). The HRC reserves the right to amend the lay summary.

3.4.9 ANZSRC and keywords

This information is for HRC evaluation purposes only.

Categorise the proposed research using the ANZSRC codes for the Fields of Research (FOR) and Socioeconomic Objective (SEO). Enter the percentage to the nearest 10% for each category to a total of 100%.

Enter keywords that categorise the research.

4. Health Delivery Research Project Grant – how to complete the EOI application

This section includes instructions on how to complete the EOI application form.

An EOI application for a Health Delivery Research Project Grant consists of three Modules. This section relates to Modules 2 and 3.

4.1 About the EOI application form

The **2025 Health Research Delivery Project Grant Expression of Interest Application Form** is a Microsoft Word form that contains a coversheet, Module 2 and Module 3 of the EOI application.

You must download the correct application form from HRC Gateway. Once you have completed the application form, you will need to upload it to HRC Gateway as a PDF file. The complete application with all Modules (including Module 1 which was completed as part of the registration) will be generated by HRC Gateway for downloading and printing.

Note: By submitting an application on HRC Gateway, you confirm that your application complies with all requirements, including formatting guidelines and page limits. The HRC will not accept changes after the closing date.

4.2 Completing the application form

The application form is compatible with Windows PC and MAC computers. The form has default formatting that conforms to the HRC's requirements. Figures and tables are best pasted in from a separate draft document instead of created directly in the form.

Remember:

- Enter information only in the indicated form fields.
- Do not reformat Module and Section headings.
- Use the original HRC document templates. Do not copy and paste into a new document as this can drastically change fonts and remove other features required for HRC processes.
- Input HRC Ref ID# and the first named investigator's surname on the coversheet.
- HRC Gateway will remove the coversheet from the final system-generated PDF.
- Provide information to satisfy the following sections in the form.

4.2.1 Module 2: Proposal (3-page limit)

When writing your application, you must use the section headings provided. These correspond to the assessment criteria that will be used by the Portfolio Panel (see Section 1.6 for more information).

General information

Briefly outline the research aim(s), research question(s), and proposed research design/methodologies. This information will provide the Portfolio Panel with important context when they assess your application.

Rationale for research

What is the critical research need?

Include information to demonstrate:

- that your research is in scope of the [2025 Health Delivery Research Investment Signal](#), aligns with HRC priorities, and has the potential to directly inform decisions or changes to policy, practice or systems in the New Zealand health and disability sector and can therefore be supported by public funds.
- the priority health issue or a focus on a community with high-health needs where the health issue is unique or important to New Zealand health delivery, with demonstration of the evidence gap.

Who has been involved in determining the proposed research?

Demonstrate the involvement of key health sector organisations, groups, communities, consumers, and expertise in the research process (e.g. with identifying the research need/gap, developing and undertaking the research, and being in a position to ensure uptake and translation as required).

How will this research question and approach ensure improvements to health equity?

Outline any potential downstream impacts of the proposed research for health equity⁵ including:

- how the research approach will immediately reduce or avoid exacerbating health inequities; and
- any intended positive outcomes the applicants are seeking to achieve through the research for health equity issues and priority populations.

Research impact

What benefits are expected to arise from your research, and who will benefit?

Give a realistic description of how research findings have the potential to influence health delivery policy, practice, or systems in New Zealand, with a clear line of sight to improved health or other social/economic impacts.

Māori health advancement

How will this research question and approach advance Māori health?

Demonstrate:

- how the outcomes of your research could contribute to improved Māori health outcomes or reduction in inequity in the short-term or over time
- activities undertaken or that will be undertaken during this research to maximise the likelihood that it will contribute to Māori health advancement
- culturally appropriate research practices and principles, as appropriate.

Consideration of Māori health advancement is context-specific, as determined by the nature and scope of the research. See the HRC's [Māori Health Advancement Guidelines](#) for further information.

Reference list (1-page limit)

Start this section on a new page. Provide the references cited in Module 2 with a full list of all authors, article title, journal, year, volume, and page numbers. Place an asterisk beside all named investigators' publications. You can limit the author list to a more convenient number to fit any space limitations.

A reference to Māori terms in your application with a brief interpretation should be included here.

4.3 Module 3: Evidence of collaboration/support

List any evidence of collaboration or support here. This could include a variety of documents including, but not limited to, email correspondence and letters of support. Evidence may constitute informal or formal expressions of support from stakeholders such as key sector organisations, groups, communities, consumers, and expertise who have been involved or intend to be involved in the research process.

The documents themselves must be added to Module 3 of the application form (start each of these on a new page) and can be only 1-2 pages each.

Evidence could, for example, outline how the interested party has been involved in identifying the research need, the development of the research and/or will be involved in the undertaking/translation of the research. It should not simply state that the research is necessary.

⁵ A broad definition of equity should be considered, e.g. a range of social determinants and demographics.

5. Health Delivery Research Project Grant – how to complete the full application

If your application successfully progresses through the Expression of Interest stage, you will be invited to submit a full application. This section includes instructions for this stage of applying for a Health Delivery Research Project Grant.

A full application for a Health Delivery Research Project Grant consists of six Modules. This section relates to Modules 1 to 6.

5.1 Completing Module 1: General information

Most of the information in this Module was entered at the EOI stage and cannot be edited or updated. Update Module 1 in HRC Gateway to include the following additional information.

5.1.1 First named investigator

Most information for the first named investigator was completed at the EOI stage, and some fields cannot be edited or updated.

At the full stage, you will need to enter a defined **FTE value** for the first named investigator.

5.1.2 Named investigators

Enter a defined FTE value for each named investigator. This value should fall within the FTE band that was chosen for each investigator in the EOI application. **The FTE value should match the value for the first year in the budget Excel spreadsheet.**

Role in project should include brief information on what the investigator will undertake in the project (1-2 sentences max).

Information on ethnicity, gender and whether the researcher is a clinician (and is practicing) is used for HRC information purposes only. Please note ethnicity, iwi, clinician, or practising clinician are not required to be entered as these details will automatically populate from the individual's profiles. Each named investigator will need to sign in to HRC Gateway and check and update their details before applications are submitted.

5.1.3 Research costs

Enter the relevant totals for staff costs, overhead, working expenses and total cost of research (as entered in the **2025 Health Delivery Research Project Grant Budget Form**).

5.1.4 Objectives and milestones

Objectives and milestones are assessed, included in a resulting research contract, and used for contract monitoring in progress and end of contract reports. Objectives and milestones must be measurable and achievable within the term of a contract. There is no limit to the number of objectives and milestones.

Objectives

Briefly describe the intended objectives of this research application. Objectives should relate to the overall goal or aim of the research. The HRC suggests a minimum of 3 objectives, with sufficient standalone operational detail and scientific information to assess your performance in subsequent years.

All objectives must be added before milestones can be added.

Milestones

Provide key milestones that you aim to achieve by the end of each year of a resulting contract. Each milestone must relate to one or more of the objectives previously added. For contract monitoring and HRC accountability reporting, if your research requires ethics and/or regulatory approval (human, animal, or biological safety) and/or clinical trial registration, these **must** be identified as separate Year 1 milestones, even if you expect to gain these approvals before starting the proposed research award.

Example milestones:

Year	Milestone	Objective(s)
1	Gain animal ethics approval	Objective 1
1	Complete animal study, data collection, and analysis	Objective 1
1	Register clinical trial prospectively in ANZCTR	Objective 2
1	Gain ethics approval for clinical trial	Objective 2
2	Publish results of lab-based study	Objective 1
2	Recruit 200 participants to clinical trial	Objective 2
3	Complete recruitment to clinical trial (300 total)	Objective 2
3	Complete statistical analysis of clinical trial	Objective 2
4	Submit manuscript to NZMJ	All objectives

5.1.5 About the application form

Details on where to complete each Module are summarised in the table below.

Module/Section	Action required
Cover sheet	Complete in 2025 Health Research Delivery Project Grant Full Application Form (Microsoft Word template) – this section is removed by HRC Gateway once you have submitted your completed application.
Module 1	Complete in HRC Gateway
Module 2	Complete in application form (Microsoft Word template)
Module 3	Complete in application form (Microsoft Word template)
Module 4: Sections 4A-4C	Complete in application form (Microsoft Word template)
Module 4: Section 4D	Upload supporting documents as separate PDF files to HRC Gateway
Module 4: Sections 4E-4H	Complete in 2025 Health Delivery Research Project Grant Budget Form (Microsoft Excel spreadsheet)
Module 5	Upload CVs as separate PDF files to HRC Gateway
Module 6: Sections 6A-6C	Complete in HRC Gateway
Module 6: Section 6D	Complete in application form (Microsoft Word template)

The complete application with all Modules will be generated by HRC Gateway for downloading and printing.

Note: By submitting an application to HRC Gateway, you confirm that your submitted application complies with all requirements, including formatting and page limits. The HRC will not accept changes after the closing date.

5.2 Completing the application form

The application form is compatible with Windows PC and MAC computers. The form has default formatting that conforms to the HRC's requirements. Figures and tables are best pasted in from a separate draft document instead of created directly in the form.

Remember:

- Enter information only in the indicated form fields.
- Do not reformat Module and Section headings.
- Do not delete spreadsheet columns/shaded rows, but you may insert more unshaded rows.
- Use the original HRC document templates. Do not copy and paste into a new document as this can drastically change fonts and remove other features required for HRC processes.
- Input HRC Ref ID# and the named investigator's surname on the coversheet.
- Provide information to satisfy the following sections in the form.

5.2.1 Module 2: Proposal

Section 2A Summary of proposed research (1-page limit)

This section should clearly summarise the research proposal and should be no more than one page. A clear and succinct summary, including all the important points of the application can help reviewers get an overview of the proposal and is useful as a quick reference for the Portfolio Panel members. Use the suggested headings and add subheadings if required.

Section 2B Description of proposed research (10-page limit, excluding references)

You must use the section headings provided as these correspond to the assessment criteria. Remember that your audience includes not only your discipline-specific peer reviewers but also a more broadly experienced Portfolio Panel. It is in your best interest to structure your writing clearly and logically. Using graphics and tables is an efficient use of space (please ensure font type and size are easily legible). Ideally, seek feedback from a colleague outside your immediate research area.

Ensure that the format of non-text content is compatible with PDF conversion software. For assessment process and criteria, please refer to Appendix 1: Health Delivery Research Project application assessment process and criteria.

Rationale for research

Demonstrate that your research is in scope of the [2025 Health Delivery Research Investment Signal](#), aligns with HRC priorities, and has the potential to directly inform decisions or changes to policy, practice or systems in the New Zealand health and disability sector and therefore can be supported by public funds.

Demonstrate that your research addresses a priority health issue or focuses on a community with high-health needs where the health issue is unique or important to New Zealand health delivery.

Clearly show that you have adequately reviewed what is already known in the area and that there is a clear case for further research. For example, refer to systematic reviews or an otherwise robust demonstration of a research gap.

Consider the following:

- What is the significant/important gap in health delivery at a policy, practice or system level that your research will address?
- Why is this research of importance to health delivery in New Zealand, and how will the research evidence directly meet the needs of the sector?
- How does your research contribute to, or align with, research currently being undertaken either nationally or internationally?
- Where does your proposed research fit relative to the worldwide perspective? For example, is it unique to New Zealand?
- Do your hypotheses build on existing knowledge?
- How original is the approach?
- What is the significance of the health issue for New Zealand health and society?

- How will your research contribute to achieving health equity⁶?

Design and methods

Include sufficient detail of study design and methods so that an assessment can be made of its appropriateness, robustness and/or innovativeness. This might include a description of sample recruitment and characteristics (including number, gender and ethnicity, where relevant), study methodology, and proposed methods of data collection and analysis.

Include indicative timelines for the research. The HRC recommends you consult with specialists such as methodologists, statisticians, health economists and key stakeholders (including communities or patient groups) before finalising your research design. Where possible, detail the validity of the proposed analyses, and the feasibility of attaining the statistical power sought (if appropriate).

Where appropriate, it is essential to provide power calculations and an estimate of the likely effect size and the sample size required to detect this (power analysis), after consultation/involvement with a statistician. Clinical trial* applications must include a description of statistical guidelines for early termination and a description of data and safety monitoring arrangements, where appropriate.

The reviewers need this information to judge and appropriately score this criterion, so ensure that the practicalities are clearly stated, i.e. what will be done, how, by whom, where and when.

*The HRC provides an independent Data Monitoring Core Committee (DMCC) with appropriate trial-specific expertise that follows best international practice if required. For more information on trial monitoring in general and the HRC DMCC in particular, see (www.hrc.govt.nz/about-us/committees/data-monitoring-core-committee).

Expertise and track record of the research team

Provide evidence that the team has the qualifications, experience and knowledge in the proposed research area; right mix of expertise, and appropriate networks and collaborations; history of productivity and delivery; and the right research environment/infrastructure to deliver the research and disseminate results.

Demonstrate the involvement of key health sector individuals in the research process (both in identifying the research need/gap, undertaking the research, and being in a position to ensure uptake and translation as required). These individuals may include clinical leaders, educators and healthcare managers, or individuals who make decisions about/influence health policy, practice or systems.

Describe any career disruptions, and their impact, that may be relevant to your career history. A career disruption is defined as a prolonged interruption to your capacity to work due to pregnancy, major illness/injury, parental leave, and/or carer responsibilities.

The expertise and track record of each member of the team (i.e. named investigators) must be described. Consideration will be given to the FTE of senior named investigators and weight their scoring on the expertise and track record of the research team accordingly, i.e. high scores should not be allocated based on a senior named investigator who has a small percentage FTE involvement in the research. Include a brief description of the team's track record related to the research area, to demonstrate the ability to deliver proposed study outcomes. Highlight important skills, expertise and previous collaborations in the team that would support delivery of the proposed research. A justification for staff roles should be provided.

The HRC recognises that applicants with experience in sectors other than public sector research may have gained valuable expertise or produced outputs (e.g. patents) relevant to research translation, and this may have limited the applicant's opportunity to produce more traditional research outputs. The research team in the full application must be added to the application on HRC Gateway and included in any subsequent contract.

⁶ A broad definition of equity should be considered, e.g. a range of social determinants and demographics.

Research impact

Note: This section includes two components: 1) a description of how your research might be used and the anticipated benefits for New Zealand, and 2) the action plan to maximise the use and benefits of the research. See the HRC's Research Impact Slideshow for additional guidance on how to complete this section.⁷

Please consider the following:

What types of benefits are expected to arise from your research, and who will benefit?

Give a realistic description of how your research will influence health delivery policy, practice, or systems in New Zealand, with a clear line of sight to improved health or other social/economic impacts. Importantly, identify the more immediate benefits and users of the research who will form a focal point for your action plan (below). The balance between describing short-term benefits and potential longer-term impact will depend on the specific research context, with emphasis on considerations within your sphere of influence throughout the life of the research project.

The [HRC's Research Impact Slideshow](#) outlines the elements that should be covered in this section, including the types of benefits and research users, and the geographical distribution of benefits (such as how contribution to international research effort will benefit New Zealand). Research-related benefits, such as capacity and capability gains for New Zealand, and influence on future research agenda-setting, may be included where relevant.

What specific activities will you undertake, throughout the life of the research project, to maximise the use and benefits of your research?

Describe what targeted actions have been, or will be, taken to improve the likelihood of research uptake and impact, and to ensure that the next users or end-users (identified in the previous section) can meaningfully contribute to, and/or benefit from, the research. Describe other planned dissemination activities that are designed to reach broader audiences. Who can enable the uptake of your research, and how have they been involved in your research? Identify uncertainties to uptake, or systematic/institutional barriers, and your mitigation strategies (where relevant).

What elements of the team's track record of knowledge transfer provide confidence in the likelihood of research uptake? For example, existing links, relationships, or networks with relevant research next-users or end-users; demonstrable examples of knowledge mobilisation, or changes in health outcomes or societal impact generated from similar research. This component is considered relative to opportunity.

Māori health advancement

You will need to address these two questions.

How will the outcomes of your research contribute to Māori health advancement?

Give a realistic description of how this research could contribute to improved Māori health outcomes or reductions in inequity over time. Consideration should be given to potential short-term and/or longer-term Māori health gains, within the specific context of the research and where it is positioned along the research pathway. In addition, more immediate users and beneficiaries of the research who can use the research findings for Māori health gain should be identified.

What activities have you already undertaken (that are relevant to this research), and what will you undertake during this research, that will realise your research contribution to Māori health advancement?

Describe specific actions that have been, and will be, undertaken (from the development of the research idea through to the completion of the research) to maximise the likelihood that this research will contribute to Māori health advancement. Outline actions taken to ensure that the next users or beneficiaries of the research can utilise the findings for Māori health gain.

⁷ Consult the HRC's [Research Impact Slideshow](#) for further discussion on the types of benefits that can arise from health research, and where these benefits might be expected to occur along a pathway to impact.

If the research is not expected to make direct contributions to Māori health, identify actions that will be undertaken throughout the life of the project to contribute to other facets of Māori health advancement. Identify barriers to actioning your aspirations for advancing Māori health and your mitigation strategies (where relevant). Identify elements of the team's track record that provide confidence that this research will optimally contribute to Māori health advancement. For example, existing links, relationships, or networks with relevant Māori communities and next-users or end-users of research; demonstrable examples of knowledge translation and uptake; or changes to practice or policy that have enhanced equity and advanced Māori health. This component is considered relative to opportunity (i.e. stage of career progression, nature of research, and organisational capacity and capability).

In responding to these questions, consider how your research is informed by the four domains of Māori health advancement (see the [Māori Health Advancement Guidelines](#) for more details). The HRC encourages you to consider these domains when developing your research, as this may identify aspects of the research not previously considered. You do not need to specifically address all four domains in your application; however, doing so could help create the strongest rationale for your application. Consideration of Māori health advancement is context-specific, as determined by the nature and scope of the research.

5.2.2 Module 3: References

Start this section on a new page. Provide the references cited in Module 2 with a full list of all authors, article title, journal, year, volume, and page numbers. Place an asterisk beside all named investigators' publications. You can limit the author list to a more convenient number to fit any space limitations.

Reference lists generated by bibliographic software may need to be first copied into a blank Word document and then copied into the form.

A reference to Māori terms in your application with a brief interpretation should be included here.

5.2.3 Module 4: Contract information and budget

Note: Sections 4A – 4C are part of the **2025 Health Research Delivery Project Grant Full Application Form**.

Section 4D are letters of collaboration/supporting documents/memorandums of understanding. These documents will need to be uploaded to HRC Gateway; your uploaded documents will be added to the end of your application.

Sections 4E – 4H are to be completed on the separate Excel file - **2025 Health Delivery Research Project Grant Budget Form**.

Section 4A: Justification of expenses

Justification of research staff

Justify the role and FTE of the named investigators and any other research staff listed in section 4E. Please include the following (if applicable):

- An explanation of each person's role (named or un-named, funded or not funded by the proposal), who will actively contribute to this research. These may be research assistants, technicians, medical staff, interviewers and support staff or similar, whose names or position titles are listed in the budget under 'Research staff' and who have specific FTE involvements.
- A justification for un-named postdoctoral fellows. Named postdoctoral fellows should be included as named investigators and should provide a CV.
- Evidence that biostatisticians, data managers, health economists and health care providers are integrated into the team as appropriate, e.g. sufficient FTE is allocated for each year of the contract.

Requests for funding may be declined for roles that are not fully justified or are simply described as a 'training opportunity'. It is your responsibility to ensure that no personnel in this section will exceed

100% FTE of their combined commitments during the term of the contract. The roles of students and casual staff should be justified under 'Working expenses'.

Justification of working expenses and casual staff

All items listed under 'Materials' and 'Research expenses' in the budget should be justified, with costs broken down per item, and full costs for number of units requested. The application review process will consider the appropriateness of the budget and working expenses. If there are exceptional requests for working expenses, ensure that the Portfolio Panel will clearly understand why the requested materials, travel, research tools and significant one-line items are necessary for the successful completion of the research.

Clearly justify the role of students and casual staff so that the Portfolio Panel can appreciate how these persons are necessary for the proposed research.

For students, stipends must be included at the per annum values approved by the HRC: \$30,000 for PhD students and \$20,000 for Masters students, and up to \$7,500 for summer students, or pro-rata for part-time students.

Please name students if they have been identified at the time of application and describe how their expertise is relevant to their role. Unnamed students can be included in the application budget, e.g. "PhD student (not yet appointed)". However, you cannot include any information about your intention to recruit and appoint a student with a particular expertise or characteristic, such as ethnicity or gender. Any such supplementary detail on unnamed students will be considered unjustified and will be disregarded in the assessment process. You must advise the HRC of the student's name and relevant expertise once they have been appointed.

When applying, it is your responsibility to ensure that no students in this section will exceed 100% FTE on their combined commitments with the host organisation during the term of the contract. The HRC encourages the inclusion of allowable costs associated with knowledge transfer activities.

Quotes must be provided to support discretionary costs, where available. These can be uploaded as PDF files to HRC Gateway as supporting documents.

Section 4B: Previous/current contracts and awards

List contracts awarded to the first named investigator within the past five years

Using the table provided, outline current and previous support from any agency that has been received by the first named investigator as principal investigator. Copy the table and repeat for each received grant as required. This section is intended to provide the HRC reviewers and Panel members with an overall summary of the first named investigator's abilities to secure research funding for this type of research.

For 'Nature of support', indicate whether the funding supports salaries only, working expenses only, both salary and working expenses, equipment, a junior research fellow, etc.

If applicable, please detail how this previous/current contract relates to and/or overlaps with the application.

Note: The table and text after the heading of this subsection can be deleted and replaced by an Excel spreadsheet using the layout and required information in the original table.

Section 4C: Other support

Other research applications awaiting decision

List any relevant research applications pending with the HRC and/or other funders that might alter the project budget. If applicable, indicate in the spaces provided any overlap (research, resources and personnel) that the listed application might have with this application. By providing this information, you agree that the HRC may seek clarification details from the other funders if required.

Co-funding

Provide details if you have approached other funders for co-funding of this research. If applicable, detail the joint funding arrangements.

Please disclose and provide details of any significant relationship to third parties (e.g. commercial sector entities contributing to project costs, equipment, staff joint appointments). A clear description of how the current application relates to those relationships is desirable, but assessment of commercial links is **not** part of the HRC's peer-review process.

Financial or other interest(s)

For HRC funding applications, a financial or other interest is anything of economic value or a political/philosophical perspective, including relationships with entities outside of the research host organisation. While not an exhaustive list, examples of financial interests include positions such as consultant, director, officer, partner or manager of an entity (whether paid or unpaid); salaries; consulting income; honoraria; gifts; loans and travel payments. Examples of other interests include alignment with special interest groups seeking to advance or promote a particular world view or policy.

A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual's financial relationships or interests may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the individual's professional judgment in conducting or reporting research. If you have identified financial or other interests in a funding application, please also outline the specific details of their proposed conflict management strategy.

Section 4D: Letters of collaboration/supporting documents

Any additional documentation (including subcontracts/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), letters of collaboration/support) should be uploaded as separate PDF files under 'Letters of collaboration/support documents' on HRC Gateway. Please see the subsection 'Subcontracts/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)' in Section 4E below for further details.

A letter of collaboration should outline how the interested party intends to implement the findings of the research upon its completion or provide material or actual support for the research, not simply state that the research is necessary. Please ensure that any organisation providing a letter of collaboration recognises their intended commitment to the conduct of the proposed research and the timeline of their involvement.

Additional documents such as protocols, other funding applications and CVs should not be included. There is a limit of 15 letters of collaboration/support documents. Your uploaded documents will be added to the end of your application.

Section 4E: Research proposal budget

Further instructions are contained in the Notes tab of the **2025 Health Delivery Research Project Grant Budget Form**.

For more information, refer to the **HRC Rules** document, which is available on HRC Gateway.

Budget calculations and spreadsheet

All calculations are GST exclusive and in whole dollar amounts, i.e. no cents or decimals. The 'Salary', 'Working expenses' and 'Total cost of this research' are components of Section 4E. The spreadsheet automatically calculates totals for each year of costs. Insert more rows into the table if required.

The 'Total cost of research' shaded section automatically calculates all of the figures in this box. Do not enter any details into any shaded areas as these are completed automatically.

Salary

Only enter contract research staff employed or to be employed by the host organisation in this section. All positions should specify grade and level, FTE and salary; 'time only' is permissible. The monetary value (\$) should be the actual salary amount that the named staff member is expected to receive for the research proposed.

The budget form does not accept FTE less than 3%. The HRC and Panels do not favour applications listing numerous investigators with a very low FTE. Salary requests should only be for significant input and involvement in the project. Advisory groups of contributors, who have FTE commitments less than 3%, may be a consideration for the research team.

Do not enter salary-associated costs (i.e. amounts requested for an employer's contribution to approved superannuation schemes and accident compensation levies) for research staff in this Salary section – instead, enter them in the 'Working expenses' section.

Staff that must not be entered into the Salary section of the budget are subcontracted staff, named or unnamed Masters and PhD students on stipends and casual staff.

- Subcontracted staff are those who are **not** employees of the host organisation. The salary and all other expenses for these staff should be broken down into appropriate categories on a detailed subcontract/MOU between the host organisation and non-host organisation using Section 4F. The total GST-exclusive dollar figure for the subcontract/MOU should be all-inclusive, including overhead calculations (note: the HRC does not cover overheads for overseas-based organisations). Enter the subcontract/MOU total under 'Working expenses - subcontracts' for each year.
- To request funding to provide a stipend for a PhD (\$30,000 pa) or Masters student (\$20,000 pa), enter these into 'Working expenses – materials and research expenses'. Students should be named if they have been identified at the time of application. Unnamed students can be included in the application budget as e.g. "PhD student (not yet appointed)". You must advise the HRC of the student's name once appointed.
- Casual staff (those without an ongoing role or commitment to the research but providing one-off services to the research on a part-time, hourly or per diem basis, e.g. interviewers) can be requested under 'Working expenses - materials and research expenses'.

Note: The proportion of the contract budget allocated to overseas named investigators must not exceed 20% for this Health Delivery Research Project Grant.

Overheads will be paid at a negotiated rate for each host organisation on all eligible contracts.

Working expenses

Working expenses include 'direct costs' only. The only exception is in the case of subcontracts, as described above. Estimates of costs should be expressed in current prices exclusive of GST.

Materials and research expenses

The direct costs of the research include all the disbursements that can be identified, justified and charged to a contract and may include the following:

- Research consumables (these should be itemised at current cost per unit and full cost for number required).
- Other costs directly related to the research – telephone calls/communications, mail and freight.
- Computer-related license fees for research-specific software; access to High Performance Computing infrastructure (NeSI).
- Minor research equipment (to a total of \$5,000).
- A proportionate part of new specialised equipment (equipment to be acquired) may be included and fully justified on research applications (upload budgetary supportive documents separately via HRC Gateway and list in Section 4D).
- Depreciation on specialised equipment: depreciation and capital costs on existing equipment are included in the overhead rate. If an organisation's auditors have certified that specific items of equipment have been excluded from the research rate, then depreciation on the excluded equipment can be included in research applications and justified in the same manner as other direct costs.
- Expenses of research participants.
- Travel costs directly related to the conduct of the research. Contract funds may be used to provide assistance with overseas travel provided the HRC is satisfied that such travel is directly relevant to the conduct of the research and that alternative sources of funding are not available.

This is not intended to relieve the applicant's host organisation of its obligation to assist with the costs of overseas travel by its employees.

- Costs for stipends for Masters (\$20,000 pa) and PhD (\$30,000 pa) students can be requested. Both named and unnamed students can be included; in both cases, a description of the student's research project/contribution to the research activity should be provided in Section 4A. Funding for stipends will be conditional upon the organisation arranging a tax-free stipend that satisfies the Inland Revenue and host organisation's rules. Ensure that PhD students requested are supported for three years of PhD study, either entirely or partly through this project. Note: students' fees and thesis costs cannot be claimed.
- Dissemination and translation of research results (fair and reasonable charges associated with the approved publication of the results of HRC-sponsored research in journals, reports, monographs or books may be paid from contract funds. Also, costs incurred from other forms of dissemination or knowledge transfer activities, such as meeting with community groups or knowledge mobilisation meetings with policy/practice representatives).
- Conference allowance: The maximum allowance for conference attendance is \$1,000 per annum per named investigator if fully supported at 100% FTE by the grant and must be fully justified. The allowance cannot be distributed proportionately between grants. This allowance is distinct from the cost to disseminate findings from this proposed research; this cost must also be fully justified. Fares and allowances should be calculated in accordance with the regulations and scales of the host organisation.
- Note: If you intend to ask the HRC's Data Monitoring Core Committee (DMCC) to monitor this study, there is no cost involved. However, if the DMCC agrees to monitor the trial, costs for members of the study team (including the study statistician) to attend the meetings (and preparation of biannual statistical reports) should be included in the application's budget. If you have any questions, please contact the Secretary to the DMCC at dmcc@hrc.govt.nz.

Subcontracts/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Subcontract staff are not employees of the host organisation. The salaries for these staff and all other expenses (e.g. working expenses) requested for the subcontract must appear in a detailed subcontract/MOU between the host organisation and non-host organisation. An MOU should also include overhead calculations for salaries (note: the HRC does not cover overheads for overseas-based organisations). A *pro forma* MOU is available upon request from the HRC. If a subcontract/MOU is greater than \$50,000, all expenses requested should be broken down into the appropriate categories in Section 4F (MOU Budget). Upload the MOUs as separate PDF files to HRC Gateway as a supporting document (see Section 4D).

MOUs must also be provided for 'time only' subcontracted staff. If MOUs cannot be provided when applying, you can include a support letter that describes the individual's level of involvement and role in the application. If the application is successful, copies of MOUs for any time-only individuals not provided in the application may be required at the contracting stage.

Salary associated costs

Enter amounts requested for the employer's contribution to approved superannuation schemes and accident compensation levies for research staff in the 'Working expenses' section. The amounts for each year should be entered separately in the budget form, and the percentage rates for both ACC and Super should be noted for each individual (and justified in Section 4A where required, i.e. for non-standard rates).

International expenses

The HRC will not contribute to the overhead of overseas investigators, and the total proportion of the contract budget allocated to overseas investigators must not exceed 20%.

Total cost of research

Enter the appropriate overhead rate (OHR) in the budget. Please seek advice from your host organisation's Research Office on the costing of your application and the OHR negotiated with the HRC.

After entering the appropriate OHR, the total cost of the research will be automatically calculated. Enter this amount in the online section of the research application.

Section 4F: MOU budget

When a substantial proportion of the total budget of a research proposal is contained in a subcontract/MOU, the expenditure must be itemised in the same way as the overall research proposal budget (see above). Use Section 4F to provide budget details for all MOUs requesting more than \$50,000; add a copy of Section 4F for each subcontractor. The overhead rate used should be that for the host organisation of the subcontracted staff, not that of the main host organisation of the applicant (note: the HRC does not cover overheads for overseas-based organisations). The total dollar amount for each year should then be entered under 'Working expenses – Subcontracts' and a copy of the subcontract/MOU should be uploaded separately in HRC Gateway.

A CV must be provided in Module 5 for all named investigators on MOUs to enable the Panel to determine whether the named investigator's expertise is appropriate and/or necessary. Without this information, the Panel may decide not to support the budget for the MOU. CVs are not necessary for employees of commercial enterprises providing service for fees.

If there are no subcontracts/MOUs for this application, or none requesting more than \$50,000, you can delete or ignore Section 4F.

Section 4G: FTE summary

List the time involvement of **all** personnel (including those on a subcontract/MOUs) in terms of FTEs, e.g. 10% FTE. Give all names (for un-named positions, indicate as 'technician', 'research nurse' and 'postdoctoral fellow' etc.). Half percentages (e.g. 4.5%) are not allowed. Indicate when named investigators are 'Time only' (i.e. not receiving salary for their involvement in the project). Identify all postgraduate students by 'Masters' or 'PhD' as well as by their names. Ensure the FTE figures are the same as those in the budget and MOU budget sections (Sections 4E and 4F), as well as in Module 1. Heads of department must agree to provide workload relief for research staff working on HRC contracts (Principles of full cost funding).

Section 4H: List of collaborators (national and international)

Provide the collaborator's full name, organisation, and country (the location where the organisation is based and the collaborators undertake their research).

For collaboration purposes, select one of the following options: Research, commercialisation or knowledge transfer.

For support, please indicate the value of any funding for this research provided by the collaborator in New Zealand dollars or list any in-kind support.

5.2.4 Module 5: New Zealand standard CV template

Upload a CV for all named investigators (include those on MOU).

Use the New Zealand standard CV template with default font from HRC Gateway. Do not exceed the page limits. The HRC will not accept any other form of CV.

The information provided in the CV **must match** the information provided in the application and in the named investigator's HRC Gateway profile.

The CV may indicate when career breaks (including pandemic-related disruptions) have taken place as track record will be assessed relative to opportunity.

5.2.5 Module 6: Research classification

This section is for the HRC's evaluation purposes and is not used in allocating funding. The required details must be entered in HRC Gateway.

Section 6A: ANZSRC and keywords

Categorise the proposed research using the ANZSRC codes for the Fields of Research (FOR) and Socioeconomic Objective (SEO). Enter the percentage to the nearest 10% for each category to a total of 100%. Enter keywords that categorise the research.

Section 6B: Economic benefits

Briefly describe any potential economic benefits you consider may arise from your research. If no direct economic benefits are anticipated, please state this rather than leaving the field blank. The HRC's interpretation of economic benefits is broad and includes:

- contributing to maintaining a healthy and productive population
- contributing to an efficient and cost-effective health system, and
- value generated from IP and innovation.

Section 6C: Health issues and mapping category

Health issues

Enter the requested information on HRC Gateway. Choose the health issue that best describes your research and, if required, one secondary health issue.

Mapping category

Enter the requested information on HRC Gateway (select one). Choose the category that best describes the starting point for your research. The following table describes each category.

Mapping category	Description
Biomedical	
Gene	Research into the genetic basis of disease, identification of genes involved. Linkage analysis falls here and not under clinical studies.
Cell biology	Analysis of molecular-level interactions. This includes protein-protein interactions, determination of the function of genes involved in diseases, and whole cell studies (e.g. immunological studies, transfections, etc).
Physiology	This includes all physiology and anatomy. Animal models of disease are included in this category, and studies on host-pathogen interactions.
Diagnostics	This includes innovations and the development/refinement of new or existing diagnostic tools.
Pharmaceuticals /treatments	This includes the development of new pharmaceuticals (drug design and development) as well as new treatments for diseases (e.g. vaccines, other therapies).
Clinical	
Clinical studies	Research involving human subjects. This excludes research in which samples from human subjects are used for fundamental biomedical research, such as genetic linkage analyses.
Clinical trials	Randomised clinical trials, usually randomised controlled clinical trials.
Health services	
Health economics	Research into the cost-effectiveness of treatments/services etc.
Clinical services	This includes primary and secondary care services. Access to and appropriateness of services are also included, and safety of services and compensation. Macro-level analysis of health system changes falls into this area.
Public health	
Knowledge resources	This includes all epidemiology, underpinning social science (qualitative and quantitative), development of tools and new methodologies, and development of indicators.
Risk factors	Research linking life experiences, behaviours, exposures etc. with health outcomes.
Interventions	Research that includes the design and evaluation of interventions.
At-risk populations	Includes research on specific population groups. These groups may be based on age, ethnicity, occupation, etc. Includes research using diagnostics in a particular group.
Community services	Research around community-run services and community groups, e.g. marae-based healthcare services.

Section 6D: Research methodology categorisation

Note: Complete Section 6D in the Health Delivery Research Project Grant Full Application Form (not in HRC Gateway).

The HRC uses this information to inform our assessment process and policy analyses. We appreciate there is a range of different research methodologies and that these can be described in different ways. The research methodology keywords entered in this section should be descriptive and provide a greater level of detail than simply 'quantitative', 'qualitative' or 'trial'. However, only single words or terms should be entered in this section – we are not expecting a detailed written description of the methodologies to be used.

Possible examples of research methodology keywords may include terms such as participatory action research; cluster randomised controlled trial; kaupapa Māori methods; systematic review; meta-analysis; implementation science; etc.

Appendix 1: Health Delivery Research Project application assessment process and criteria

1. The Health Delivery Research Portfolio Panel

Most of the Project Grant assessment process is done by the Health Delivery Research Portfolio Panel (which will now be referred to as the 'Portfolio Panel'). The Portfolio Panel is made up of members with broad expertise across health, research, clinical education, Māori health, Pacific health, disability, research end-user, commercial and policy sectors and backgrounds. At least two members will be of Māori descent and one member will be of Pacific descent.

In situations where there are not enough Portfolio Panel members to assess applications, the HRC may form two separate Portfolio Panels or appoint additional experts to assess individual applications. The Portfolio Panel can include different people between the EOI and full stage.

Anyone who is a **first named investigator**, **co-first named investigator** or a **named investigator** on an application should not sit on the panel that is reviewing their application. However, they may sit on or chair a different panel.

2. Assessment overview

Two-stage process

Project applications are processed through a two-stage process. Stage One is an Expression of Interest (EOI), which provides an overview of the proposed research. The EOI should provide sufficient information for Portfolio Panels to review based on established scoring criteria and to recommend who should proceed with a full application submission.

Stage One: EOI application

Portfolio Panel members score the EOI before the panel meeting to yield a ranked list. Lowest scoring applications are usually triaged, i.e. not discussed at the meeting. At the panel meeting, applications are discussed and scored. Only highly ranked applications will be invited to submit full applications.

Stage Two: Full application

Full applications are reviewed initially by external reviewers and the Portfolio Panel members. Applicants can provide a rebuttal to the reviewer reports. Each application, with the reviewer reports and the applicant's rebuttal, is considered at the panel meeting. Portfolio Panel members discuss and score the applications using the criteria described below and make funding recommendations to the HRC Council.

The HRC Council will make the final funding decision.

3. EOI stage assessment process and criteria

3.1 EOI stage assessment process

The following steps will be completed to assess Health Delivery Research Project Grant applications at the EOI stage:

- Applications are checked by the HRC to confirm that eligibility criteria have been met. Prior to the panel meeting, eligible applications are assessed and scored by the Portfolio Panel members separately according to assessment criteria (details on these are set out in Section 3.2).
- Applications are ranked based on Portfolio Panel members' pre-meeting scores, and the lowest scoring applications may be triaged, i.e. they do not proceed to the Portfolio Panel meeting and do not receive specific feedback.
- The Portfolio Panel convenes to discuss and score the remaining applications. From this, a final ranked list is determined.
- The top-ranked applications are invited to the full stage.
- Feedback (see Review Summary Template in Appendix 2) is provided for all applications discussed at the Portfolio Panel meeting.

3.2 EOI stage assessment criteria

The Portfolio Panel uses assessment criteria to award a score for each of the following three areas: Rationale for research, Research impact, and Māori health advancement. Each area is scored using a 7-point scale; the total maximum score is 21.

Score	Criteria descriptor
7	Exceptional
6	Excellent
5	Very good
4	Good
3	Adequate
2	Unsatisfactory
1	Poor

Criteria	Points
Rationale for research	7
Research impact	7
Māori health advancement	7
Total	21

A. Rationale for research

Based on the information in the EOI form, the Portfolio Panel will determine whether the proposed research:

- is in the scope of the [2025 Health Delivery Research Investment Signal](#), aligns with HRC priorities, and has the potential to directly inform decisions or changes to policy, practice or systems in the New Zealand health and disability sector and therefore can be supported by public funds.
- addresses a priority health issue or focuses on a community with high-health needs where the health issue is unique or important to New Zealand health delivery, with demonstration of the evidence gap.
- is shaped by health sector, policy, consumer, community, or system involvement and that this involvement will continue throughout the research, to be substantiated by evidence of engagement and involvement on the research team.
- will contribute to achieving health equity, with the applicant demonstrating consideration of the downstream impacts of their research on health equity.

B. Research impact

Based on the information in the EOI form, the Portfolio Panel will determine if the proposed research is likely to have an impact that adds value and benefit to New Zealand, by considering whether the research:

- has the potential to influence health delivery policy, practice, or systems in New Zealand, with a clear line of sight to improved health or other social/economic impacts.
- will contribute to developing workforce capacity and capability, including upskilling of research team members.
- has been well-designed to answer the research aim(s) and question(s).

C. Māori health advancement

Based on the information in the EOI form, the Portfolio Panel will determine if the proposed research is likely to advance Māori health by considering whether:

- applicants have provided a description of how their research could lead to improved Māori health or reductions in health inequity over time.

- the research team is undertaking activities to address Māori health advancement, as appropriate to the nature and scope of the research. This may include, but is not limited to, activities such as:
 - the establishment of meaningful, collaborative, and reciprocal relationships with Māori
 - undertaking research that addresses Māori health need and inequity
 - the formation of appropriate research teams
 - the development of current and future workforce capacity and capability, including upskilling of research team members
 - adherence to culturally appropriate research practices and principles (as appropriate to the context of the research).

4. Full stage assessment process and criteria

4.1 Full stage assessment process

The following steps will be completed to assess Health Delivery Research Project Grant applications at the full stage:

- Before the panel meeting, applications will be reviewed by external peer reviewers and assigned Portfolio Panel members.
 - Applications are assigned to 2-3 external peer reviewers to assess the two criteria: 'Design and methods' and 'Expertise and track record of the research team'.
 - Applications are assigned to 2 Portfolio Panel members to assess the other three criteria concurrent to the external peer review stage: 'Rationale for research', 'Research impact' and 'Māori health advancement'.
 - The outcome is a score for each of these criteria with feedback/justification for the score allocated and additional comments if necessary. Details on each of these criteria are set out in section 4.2.
- The reports written by the external peer reviewers and assigned Portfolio Panel members are shared with the applicant.
- Applicants have an opportunity to provide a rebuttal to the comments or questions raised by the external reviewers.
- The Portfolio Panel meets in a panel meeting to discuss and score applications. Panel members will review applications, external peer review reports, Panel member reports, and the applicants' rebuttal beforehand.
- Applications are ranked based on panel members' scores, the Portfolio Panel makes a recommendation to the HRC on which applications are fundable, based on the ranked scores. The Portfolio Panel can also recommend applications as fundable, contingent on specific feedback and/or conditions being met.
- All Health Delivery Research Investment Round funding recommendations are forwarded to the HRC Council for funding approval.
- Feedback (see the Review Summary Template in Appendix 2) is provided for all applications discussed at the Portfolio Panel meeting.

4.2 Full stage assessment criteria

Health Delivery Research Project Grant full applications are scored using a 7-point scale for each criterion with the following weighting so that the total maximum score is 35. There is a corresponding section of the application form for applicants to provide information relevant to each of the criteria.

Score	Criteria descriptor
7	Exceptional
6	Excellent
5	Very good
4	Good
3	Adequate

Criteria	Points
Rationale for research	7
Design and methods	7
Expertise and track record of the research team	7
Research impact	7
Māori health advancement	7

2	Unsatisfactory	Total	35
1	Poor		

A. Rationale for research

The applicant must demonstrate that the research:

- is in the scope of the [2025 Health Delivery Research Investment Signal](#), aligns with HRC priorities, and has the potential to directly inform decisions or changes to policy, practice or systems in the New Zealand health and disability sector and therefore can be supported by public funds.
- addresses a priority health issue or focuses on a community with high-health needs where the health issue is unique or important to New Zealand health delivery, with demonstration of the evidence gap.
- has aims, research questions and hypotheses that build on existing knowledge and address this evidence gap.
- is shaped by health sector, policy, consumer, community, or system involvement and that this involvement will continue throughout the research, to be substantiated by evidence of engagement and involvement of the research team.
- will contribute to achieving health equity, with the applicant demonstrating consideration of the downstream impacts of their research on health equity.

B. Design and methods

The applicant must demonstrate that the study has been well designed to answer the research questions because it demonstrates some or all the following:

- comprehensive and feasible study design that is achievable within the timeframe
- appropriate study design to address the objectives of the research
- awareness of statistical considerations/technical or population issues/practicalities
- evidence of availability of materials/samples
- culturally appropriate methodology
- sound data management and data monitoring arrangements
- patient safety issues well managed.

C. Expertise and track record of the research team

The applicant must demonstrate that the team, relative to opportunity, have the ability to achieve the proposed outcomes and impacts because they have demonstrated:

- appropriate qualifications and experience
- the right mix of expertise, experience and FTEs, including consideration of capacity building
- the capability to perform research in the current research environment
- demonstrated connections with the health sector and communities, including having named investigators based in health delivery settings and communities, with the ability to shape the research need, undertake the research, and identify translational potential
- networks to maximise knowledge transfer and research uptake, with any plans for dissemination tailored towards specific end-users
- history of productivity and delivery on previous research funding.

D. Research impact

The proposed research is likely to add value and benefit to New Zealand because:

- Applicants have described a credible pathway for how their research will influence health delivery policy, practice, or systems in Aotearoa New Zealand, with a clear line of sight to improved health or other social/economic impacts.

- The research team is undertaking steps to maximise the likelihood of impact beyond the productions of knowledge (with appropriate consideration to knowledge translation and implementation) and have the necessary skills, networks and experience to achieve this.

E. Māori health advancement

The proposed research is likely to advance Māori health because:

- Applicants have provided a description of how their research could lead to improved Māori health or reductions in health inequity over time.
- The research team are undertaking activities to address Māori health advancement, as appropriate to the nature and scope of the research. This may include, but is not limited to, activities such as:
 - the establishment of meaningful, collaborative, and reciprocal relationships with Māori
 - undertaking research that addresses Māori health need and inequity
 - the formation of appropriate research teams
 - the development of current and future workforce capacity and capability, including upskilling of research team members
 - adherence to culturally appropriate research practices and principles (as appropriate to the context of the research).

Applicant rebuttal template

Applicant surname		HRC reference #	
Funding round		Due date	
Title of research			

Instructions (delete after reading): The project application rebuttal has a 2-page limit, which includes references. Please ensure you address all the issues raised by reviewers and remain objective in your response. Do not change the default margins and font (size 11), although you can write in bold and underline for emphasis. Try to leave spaces to improve legibility.

This form is provided on HRC Gateway.

