



Auckland Academic Health Alliance Collaboration Fund Grant Application Guide

TIMETABLE

March 2018	Funding round for Project Grants opens
20 April 2018	Closing date for receipt of Project Grant applications
May 2018	Project Grant Review meeting
May/June 2018	Results from Project Grant funding round announced

BACKGROUND

The Auckland Academic Health Alliance (AAHA) formalises a research, teaching and clinical delivery relationship spanning more than four decades between the Auckland DHB (ADHB) and the University of Auckland. Both institutions are leaders in their respective fields, the ADHB being the country’s largest healthcare organisation while the University of Auckland is New Zealand’s leading teaching and research institution. The ADHB Charitable Trust (A+ Trust)¹ is the official fundraising arm of ADHB and a major supporter of research at ADHB.

The Alliance model is focused on a virtuous cycle closely linking patients, research, teaching and education. This cycle sees patients involved in research, knowledge reaching patients faster and quicker pathways to commercialisation for research pioneered and developed by ADHB and University of Auckland researchers and clinicians.

One of the first significant initiatives of the AAHA is the establishment of a co- funded (A+ Trust and Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences - FMHS) research fund designed to support joint research projects and develop relationships between ADHB and FMHS staff.

¹ Pursuant to a memorandum of understanding dated 1 May 2006, Auckland District Health Board Charitable Trust has delegated authority from Auckland District Health Board (ADHB) to enter into contracts with third parties on behalf of and as agent for ADHB and to accept obligations for ADHB in relation to clinical trials and studies to be undertaken at ADHB facilities and by ADHB employees.

This is a visible indication of the importance that the University and ADHB place on the role of AAHA in their future plans. It also provides a greater opportunity to develop collaborative translational research opportunities that should improve success in competitive research grants, such as the Health Research Council project and programme grants.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this 'seed' funding is to directly encourage and boost relationships between FMHS and ADHB research staff and to encourage researchers from both organizations to work together. A number of longstanding research relationships already exist, and this fund will strengthen these relationships by providing cooperative grant funding. It also provides a greater opportunity to develop collaborative translational research opportunities that should improve success in winning a variety of competitive international and national research grants, such as the Health Research Council project and programme grants.

GENERAL CRITERIA AND OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

1. ADMINISTRATION OF GRANT

The Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences of the University of Auckland, The Auckland District Health Board and the A+ Charitable Trust collectively support the administration of the grants. All expenditure is subject to the administrative policies of FMHS, ADHB and the rules of the A+ Trust.

2. ELIGIBILITY

- The research project named in the application must represent the intent of a true collaboration between the Auckland Academic Health Alliance partners and must be peer-reviewed
- The research project must be cohesive and coherent
- Principal investigators who undertake overall responsibility for submitting the proposal and executing the project must be employed by the University of Auckland and the Auckland District Health Board for the duration of the project.
- University of Auckland academic staff:
 - Must be eligible for the PBRF
 - Must undertake research based on their employment contract with the University

- Must be contributing significantly to at least two of the following if their salaries are paid by external grants, contracts or fellowships:
 - Teaching
 - Graduate supervision
 - University service
- Must provide a supporting statement from their Head of Department or Head of School outlining these commitments above
- Must have the following if they are employed on fixed-term or part-time contracts:
 - A contract for two years or more
 - An appointment of 0.2 FTE or greater
 - A statement that demonstrates in the application that they can complete their project within the remaining duration of their contract
- Incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible
- If there is an uncertainty about a staff member's eligibility, Auckland Academic Health Alliance Research Collaboration Fund Steering Committee will make the final decision
- Appeals against funding decisions will not be considered

3. APPLICATIONS

- Applicants must use the AAHA Collaborative Research Grant application form
- Applicants must list their pending applications for related research on the application form
- The AAHA Collaborative Research Grant application form must be filled out in line with the instructions
- Minimum acceptable font size is Arial 10 point, single spacing
- The stated limitation on application length must be observed
- Pages in excess of the specified limit will be removed prior to sending the proposal to the Assessment Committee
- Section headings must not be removed but italicised instructions may be removed
- Handwritten applications will not be accepted
- Late applications will not be accepted

- Prior to submission, applicants should have read:
 - All relevant University of Auckland and Auckland District Health Board policies
 - Te Ara Tika Guidelines for Māori research ethics: A framework for researchers and ethics committee members².
 - New Zealand ethical guidelines for interventional studies and observational studies.³
- There will be a single application form for this fund. Once the PIs have signed the proposal document, appropriate sign off(s) must be obtained from Auckland DHB management.

Following this, the University of Auckland PI will create the electronic proposal in the University's Research Funding Module. The signature page will need to be scanned and incorporated back into the full proposal.

4. REPORTS

- The Principal Investigators are responsible for submitting written annual progress reports in addition to final reports at the completion of the research project. The project report must include:
 - A copy of the project summary and objectives from the application
 - Details of the current status of the project, including any issues
 - A description of how the project has met the objectives as set out in the application
 - A statement about how the project has contributed to the Collaboration Fund goals, especially in development of the current collaboration, and planned research grant submissions.
- All reports will be submitted to the Faculty Research Office
- The subsequent years funding will be subject to suitable progress of the project as outlined in the reports.
- All outstanding final and progress reports for existing research grants must be submitted before additional funds are awarded for new or continuing projects

²<http://www.hrc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Te%20Ara%20Tika%20Guidelines%20for%20Maori%20Research%20Ethics.pdf>

³<http://neac.health.govt.nz/publications-and-resources/neac-publications/streamlined-ethical-guidelines-health-and-disability>

5. DURATION OF AWARDS

The Research project must be completed in the time period set in the application form. All awards terminate at the end of the specified period. Extensions to awards are not possible unless formal approval is obtained.

6. SIZE OF AWARDS

The AAHA Collaborative Research Grant will support two grants of total value of \$50,000 and two grants of total value of \$100,000. Applicants should apply for one or the other, not both.

7. BUDGET RELATED MATTERS

- All budgets must be approved by the relevant authorities of the Faculty and the ADHB
- The AAHA Collaborative Research Grant may not be used to pay for:
 - The salaries of named investigators
 - Indirect cost of research
 - Training costs
- Budgets must be presented GST exclusive
- All over expenditure is the responsibility of the applicants
- Unspent funds at the end of the study period remain within the Trust and the Faculty and cannot be used for any other purpose.

8. EQUIPMENT

The AAHA Collaborative Research Grant may be used for the purchase of equipment that costs less than \$5,000 NZD if the need for the equipment specific to a research project is justified. All equipment purchases need to adhere to the purchasing policies of the University of Auckland and the Auckland District Health Board. All equipment purchased remains the property of the University of Auckland, ADHB, or as determined by the Steering Committee. Approval of the purchase will be required before equipment is purchased.

9. TRAVEL

The AAHA Collaborative Research Grant may be used for travel if the need for travel can be justified by demonstrating the direct link with the project undertaken. The grant may not be used for conference travel.

10. RESEARCH STUDENT SUPPORT

The AAHA Collaborative Research Grant may be used to provide stipends or other direct support for research students who are appointed to work on the project with the principal and /or associate investigators if justification is made.

11. FULL FUNDING OF APPLICATIONS

All expenditure must be justified in the application and the committee reserves the right to determine appropriate levels of funding.

12. CHANGE OF PURPOSE

Funds awarded may not be spent on purposes other than those detailed in the application and approved by the Assessment Committee. Where unforeseen and exceptional circumstances arise and have an impact on the planned research expenditure, the Principal Investigators should make an application to the Faculty Research Office for change of purpose in line with the aims and outcomes outlined in the original application.

13. ETHICS & BIOLOGICAL SAFETY

Where research involves human participants, animals, or the use of low risk genetically modified organisms or radioactive material, the approval of the appropriate Institutional Review Committee is required prior to activation of any award. Where high-risk organisms are used, appropriate ERMA approval is required prior to activation of award. All research involving patients must be undertaken in compliance with international Good Clinical Practice (ICH-GCP).

If ethical approval is required for the research project, no funding will be accessible until the full approval is in place and confirmation of ethics and any relevant safety approvals is provided to the FMHS and ADHB Research Offices. Applicants will be expected to abide by the conditions of the ethical approval or relinquish the funding.

14. ASSESSMENT

The AAHA Collaborative Research Grant applications will be assessed by a committee composed of six members who represent the Faculty and the ADHB. The Committee will have an equal representation from both stakeholders, and one member of the Governance Body from each stakeholder will be permanent members of the Committee. Applications will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Scientific Merit (40%)
- Research Track Record (30%)
- Contribution to AAHA Collaboration Fund Goals (30%)

The appropriateness of the budget and value for money will be considered by the Assessment Committee. Novel or recent collaborations will be given priority over existing collaborations. The Research Track Record will be assessed across the whole collaborative group. The Committee may draw on external expertise, as required. The decisions of the Committee are final and require ratification by A+ Charitable Trust and the Dean, FMHS.

15. FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS – ADHB LOCALITY APPROVAL

No funding will be accessible until full ADHB locality approvals are in place. When you submit your application it will be automatically allocated an ADHB study number. If the application is successful and requires ADHB locality approval, you will be advised of this in the outcome letter. This process is facilitated by the ADHB Research Office (researchoffice@adhb.govt.nz)

16. OTHER MATTERS

- The placement, use or disposal of unused consumables will be negotiated between the researcher, ADHB, Trust and the Faculty.
- Intellectual Property will be shared by the University of Auckland and the ADHB.
- Protection of Intellectual Property is subject to relevant policies of the University of Auckland and the ADHB
- If the investigator resigns, transfers to a different organisation, or is unable to complete the research project, the Faculty Research Office must be informed immediately in writing. Alternative arrangements need to be negotiated and approved. Any planned absences are required to comply with relevant policies of the University and the ADHB. Any planned absence more than one month needs to be indicated at the time of the application and its impact on the study described.