

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1. WHAT FIELD OF HEALTH RESEARCH DOES ARTHRITIS AUSTRALIA SUPPORT?

Arthritis Australia supports all areas of research relevant to arthritis, rheumatic diseases, musculoskeletal diseases or conditions including osteoporosis. Arthritis Australia also supports and fosters the career development of scientists and clinical investigators committed to research into arthritis and allied disorders by offering scholarships and fellowships.

Q2. WHAT TYPES OF RESEARCH FUNDING DOES ARTHRITIS AUSTRALIA PROVIDE?

Arthritis Australia provides:

- **Scholarships:** for young medical and science graduates to undertake thesis studies into arthritis and related disorders at recognised universities. These scholarships provide research training to doctorate or masters level and are designed to develop the intellectual and technical expertise required for a career involving laboratory and clinical investigation. Scholarships are intended, in general, to support basic and clinical research training within Australian research units and as a precursor to more advanced study in Australia and overseas. Scholarships are for one year and are renewable for three years, depending on progress and funding priorities.
- **Fellowships:** for post-doctoral work or following recently completed rheumatology advanced training. Available for research programs both overseas and in Australia.
- **Grants-in-Aid and Project Grants:** typically for short-term projects with well-defined aims and budgets which can be achieved in a 12-month period. Grants-in-Aid (each grant valued up to maximum \$15,000AUD) will be available only for new investigators* or allied health researchers, excluding physiotherapists unless they meet the criteria of a 'new investigator'. A small number of Project Grants (each grant valued up to maximum \$50,000AUD) will be available for musculoskeletal research including grants focusing on rheumatoid arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis.

**(defined as within six years of receiving their PhD)*

The **Grants Assessment Committee** reserves the right to re-categorise applications and will determine if, for instance, a '**Project Grant**' application can be awarded with partial funding as a '**Grant-in-aid**' instead. They may also consider applications across various categories e.g. scholarships and fellowships.

For specifically funded awards please refer to [Grants on offer in 2021 for 2022](#)

Q3. WHO CAN APPLY FOR ARTHRITIS AUSTRALIA RESEARCH FUNDING?

Awards are available to clinical, scientific and allied health professionals who are Australian citizens or permanent residents of Australia. Scholarships, Fellowships and Grants may only be held in universities, hospitals or recognised research institutes. Applications from professionals of non-Australian citizenship are welcome as long as the application lists the lead researcher as an Australian citizen or permanent resident.

Q4. HOW CAN RESEARCH FUNDS BE USED?

Research funds may only be used as direct costs for the specific purpose noted in the application. Scholarships and Fellowships are intended to support the researcher while they undertake thesis studies and post-doctoral research work respectively.

Q5. DOES ARTHRITIS AUSTRALIA FUND RESEARCH OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA?

In addition to the ARA Fellowship, Arthritis Australia offers one or more overseas awards.

For specifically funded overseas awards please refer to [Grants on offer in 2021 for 2022](#)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q6. HOW ARE APPLICATIONS ASSESSED?

The Grants Assessment Committee provides expert review and assessment of the annual applications submitted to Arthritis Australia for research scholarships, fellowships, project grants and grants-in-aid. This may be at various times of the year depending on the type of grant and its closing date.

Each year, approximately 10 individuals with appropriate research and health consumer credentials, experience and current standing are invited to join the Grants Assessment Committee. From 2015, the Committee has included two health consumers. Each application is carefully assessed by two spokespersons and the full committee. When the committee reaches consensus, the applications are ranked in order of merit and recommendations for funding are made to the Arthritis Australia Board.

To read more about the review process click [Review process](#)

Q7. TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

Applicants are asked to explain in detail how their project will produce a benefit to health consumers e.g. improve quality of life for patients with musculoskeletal disease or advance knowledge in clinical areas where there is therapeutic uncertainty.

- One project grant will be allocated specifically to a project with a translational emphasis.
- The Research Grants Assessment Committee reserves the right not to award any grant if there is no application of sufficient merit that fulfils the relevant criteria.

Q8. WHAT IF I TRANSFER INSTITUTION DURING MY AWARD?

If an investigator changes institutions during the grant award period, they are required to provide a letter from the new institution stating that they will be working on the same project, and must include the date of effectiveness. The investigator must also provide an updated certification page signed by the new head of department and administering institution. If there are any unused funds by the original institution, it is their responsibility to return these to Arthritis Australia.

Q9. WHAT IF I HAVE RECEIVED FUNDING FOR MY PROJECT AND I CHANGE MIDWAY THROUGH THE FUNDING YEAR?

If an investigator's project changes during the grant award period, they are required to provide a letter from their supervisor outlining the new project, and must include any changes to the budget. This will be reviewed by the Grants Assessment Committee in conjunction with the funder, and the investigator will be advised of the outcome.

Q10. CAN I HOLD MORE THAN ONE FELLOWSHIP IN ONE YEAR?

As success in the NHMRC funding program is one of the goals of Arthritis Australia's research strategy, applicants submitting a research proposal which is subsequently awarded NHMRC funding in the same calendar year, will no longer be eligible to receive funds from Arthritis Australia for this proposal. Similarly, recipients cannot hold more than one fellowship in any given year and will no longer be eligible to receive funds from Arthritis Australia should they be successful at receiving another fellowship e.g. from the RACP.

Q11. CAN I REQUEST AN EXTENSION FOR MY PROJECT?

Requests from current grant recipients may be submitted to Arthritis Australia for no-cost extensions in writing (Emails should be sent to researchgrants@arthritisaustralia.com.au on institution letterhead - with cc reference to a supervisor or team research leader). The request will be forwarded to the Chair of the GAC for approval. The period of the extension request must not exceed twelve (12) months - except in personal circumstances or in the case of a pandemic such as COVID-19 - with global effects.

Q12. HOW WILL I BE NOTIFIED IF MY APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL?

Applicants are notified in writing of the success or otherwise of their application within a month of the Research Grants Assessment Committee meeting which is held mid-September 2021.

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Q13. I'M INTERESTED IN APPLYING FOR THE PROJECT GRANT AND THE GRANT IN AID ARTHRITIS AUSTRALIA GRANT ROUNDS FOR 2022. IS THERE A LIMIT ON HOW MANY APPLICATIONS I'M ALLOWED TO APPLY FOR?

There is no limit on how many applications you are allowed to apply for. However, please note that applicants will not be awarded more than one grant in the same category whether Project Grant or Grant in Aid. The application may be moved to a different category if deemed appropriate by the Grant Assessment Committee.

Q14. I AM INTERESTED IN APPLYING FOR AN ARTHRITIS AUSTRALIA RESEARCH GRANT. I WAS A RECIPIENT OF AN ARTHRITIS AUSTRALIA GRANT IN AID IN 2020. I JUST WANTED TO CONFIRM IF I AM ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR A GRANT IN AID FOR 2022?

Yes, you are still eligible to apply for a Grant in Aid in 2022, provided you still meet the eligibility criteria of a 'new investigator'* or are an allied health researcher, excluding physiotherapist unless you meet the criteria of a 'new investigator'.

*(defined as within six years of receiving a PhD)

Q15. WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF INVESTIGATORS ALLOWED ON A TEAM?

There is no limit for the number of investigators allowed on a team.

Q16. CAN WE JUSTIFY THE ROLE OF EACH INVESTIGATOR IN THE TRACK RECORD SECTION?

Yes, the role of each investigator must be justified in the track record section.

Q17. ARE NON-AUSTRALIAN CITIZENS ELIGIBLE TO BE PART OF THE PROJECT TEAM?

Non-Australian citizens can be part of the project team. However, the lead investigator must be a permanent resident or citizen.

Q18. DOES THE NHMRC FUNDING RULE APPLY TO ALL ARTHRITIS AUSTRALIA RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES OR DOES THIS ONLY APPLY TO FELLOWSHIPS?

The NHMRC funding rule applies to all project grants, grants in aid, fellowships and scholarships. This rule is as follows: *As success in the NHMRC funding program is one of the goals of Arthritis Australia's research strategy, applicants submitting a research proposal which is subsequently awarded NHMRC funding in the same calendar year, will no longer be eligible to receive funds from Arthritis Australia for this proposal. Similarly, recipients cannot hold more than one fellowship in any given year and will no longer be eligible to receive funds from Arthritis Australia should they be successful at receiving another fellowship e.g. from the RACP.*

Q18. IF I WISH TO OBTAIN CLARIFICATION ON THE RESULTS OF MY APPLICATION, HOW DO I DO THIS?

Your inquiry should be directed to researchgrants@arthritisaustralia.com.au or:

Chair – Research Grants Assessment Committee
Arthritis Australia
PO Box 550
Broadway NSW 2007