1. Introduction

The National Health Innovation Centre (NHIC) is an initiative of the National Medical Research Council (NMRC) Singapore to provide guidance and support to the clinical community on the commercialisation activities in Singapore. This includes identification and protection of commercially viable Intellectual Property (IP), commercialisation of such IP, and funding support for the development of innovations targeted at commercialisation that can provide benefit to Singapore and its health care sector.

2. Innovation to Commercialisation (I2C) Grant

The Innovation to Commercialisation (I2C) grant is a unique funding scheme for the clinical community that is set up to provide funding for IP protection and the development of projects with a commercialisable outcome.

The I2C grant is structured in phased approach to define clear and deliverable milestones with better risk management, as shown in the following chart. NHIC will deploy project managers and consultants to guide and work with each awarded project team to assist with developing and implementing an appropriate business strategy aimed at commercialising the products or services.

- Determination of IP protection strategy for an innovation that is viable and commercialisable
- Funding of patenting expenses

- For innovation that has demonstrated its initial proof-of-concept in a limited number of in vitro and in vivo research/laboratory models
- Development of an innovation by creating practical, deliverable plan with commercialisation outcomes
- Up to $250K for 1 year max.

- For innovation that has successfully completed I2D Phase only
- Implementation of the innovation to produce real instances of changed practice with potential commercial partner engaged
- Up to $1M for 2 years max.

Eligibility: Principal Investigator must hold a primary appointment in a local public hospital/ public health institution/national specialty centre/Academic Medical Centres and salaried by the institution
I2C Grant Categories:

• **Innovation to Protect (I2P):** Funds the IP protection expenses of an innovation, mainly patenting costs. Application for I2P funding can be submitted through the Research/IP/Innovation Office of your healthcare cluster using your existing Technology/Invention Disclosure Form.

• **Innovation to Develop (I2D):** Funds the development of an innovation with a realisable commercialisation plan.

• **Innovation to Implement (I2I):** Funds the implementation of the innovation with at least a potential commercial partner engaged/identified. This category is only open and applicable for innovators that have successfully completed their projects at the I2D Phase, or its equivalent as deemed appropriate by NHIC.

3. Request For Proposals For I2D Funding

NHIC is pleased to announce its inaugural grant call for proposals for the “Innovation to Develop” (I2D) category under the Innovation to Commercialisation (I2C) Grant. This grant category aims to provide continued support for innovative projects that have established technical/scientific merit and demonstrated initial proof-of-concept in a limited number of *in vitro* and *in vivo* research/laboratory models to continue their exploratory efforts initiated, and develop further to increase private sector commercialisation of innovations derived from applications. The I2D category will provide resources and competitive funding to bridge the gap of a marketable innovation with the ultimate objective of generating and enhancing the clinical institution’s Intellectual Property (IP) for out-licensing and the formation of new commercial enterprises.

3.1. Eligibility

This competitive grant call is open to Principal Investigators (PIs) who are holding a primary appointment in a local public hospital/public health institution/national specialty centre/academic medical centre and salaried by the institution.

3.2. Funding Quantum and Duration

This category will provide a funding quantum capped at S$250,000 (inclusive of max. 20% indirect costs) over a period of up to 12 months, with the possibility of no-cost grant extension upon approval by the NHIC Oversight Committee.

The grant will be administered by NHIC in accordance to the terms and conditions of NMRC’s prevailing policies for research grants, which can be found at the following weblink:-

http://www.nmrc.gov.sg/content/nmrc_internet/home/policy/policyresearchgrant.html

3.3. Criteria

This I2D category aims to attract innovators that have demonstrated their initial proof-of-concept for candidate drug constructs/biologics/vaccines in a limited number of *in vitro* and *in vivo* research, or medical device candidates in a limited number of laboratory models (may include animal studies). Documentation of the results of laboratory studies demonstrating preliminary proof-of-concept in *in vitro*, and animal studies, or in laboratory
models, and a project proposal with a clear and realisable commercialisation plan have to be included in the application.

Project funding is offered if innovations
- Have a realistic prospect of attracting a commercial partner
- Would result in products appearing on the market, if successful
- Have the potential to make a return on the basis of royalty on sales/services
- Would result in significant health care or services cost-savings

4. Application Process

This grant category is open for application throughout the year, i.e. no formal grant calls will be held. Applicants can submit their proposals at any time. As this is the inaugural grant targeting at commercialisation for innovations, interested clinical institution members should send their applications via e-mail to grant@nhic.sg, by the closing date of 26 September 2014. Applicants are to submit a 3-page pre-proposal (as a single PDF/DOC file) describing the commercial and scientific rationale behind the project proposal based on the following outline:

i) Executive Summary
- Proposal Title
- Project Aims and Time Frame (limited to 6-12 months)
- Deliverables (e.g., synthesis of compounds for POC testing and completion of POC studies in XYZ animal models)

ii) Rationale
- What has already been established in this area of innovation and what are its current limitations?
- What do you consider to be innovative about your proposal and why do you think it will succeed?
- What are the commercialisation opportunities and/or the potential public health impact of your innovation?
- What are the reasonable 6-month and 1-year benchmarks for success?

iii) Resources Required
- FTE support
- Reagent or CRO support
- Project Costing (Breakdown into EOM\(^1\), OOE\(^2\), EQPT\(^3\))

The submitted pre-proposal application needs to be signed and approved by your respective Healthcare Clusters.

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\(^1\) Expenditure on Manpower  
\(^2\) Other Operating Expenses  
\(^3\) Equipment
5. Review and Approval Process

The pre-proposals will be reviewed by the NHIC project review panel, which consists of the NHIC Director, NHIC Deputy Director, NHIC IP & Licensing Manager, and NHIC Business Development Manager. Only shortlisted pre-proposals will be invited for a full proposal submission. For the shortlisted pre-proposals, the Principal Investigator (PI) and team will have the opportunity to present a 15-mins innovator pitch to the NHIC Project Evaluation Panel. NHIC will collaborate directly with the PI to develop the commercial framework, justification and valuation of the technology that is being proposed for commercial development gap-funding by NHIC. The commitment of the PI in collaborating with NHIC will be an important determinant of the successful award of funding. The NHIC Project Evaluation Panel that includes internal/external subject matter and business development experts as identified by NHIC, will review the proposals before final approval by the NHIC Oversight Committee. The review and approval process is estimated to take about 16 weeks to complete as shown below. Awards will be announced in December 2014.
6. Project Monitoring

Funded I2D projects will be subjected to quarterly reviews by NHIC in accordance with projected milestones. NHIC will provide active guidance and support in managing the projects. Should there be a need for no-cost extension beyond the 12-month grant duration, approval has to be sought from the NHIC Oversight Committee.

*All questions relating to the I2C Grant are to be directed to Mr. Teo Cher Hwa, Deputy Director of NHIC, at e-mail: Teo_Cher_Hwa@nhic.sg*