**NATIONAL HEALTHCARE GROUP**

# NHG Research Funding Guidelines

NHG-LKCMedicine Clinician-Scientist Preparatory Programme Plus

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# NHG Research Funding Guidelines

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# NHG Research Funding Guidelines

## 1. General Information

The NHG Research Funding Guidelines is applicable to both research project grants and talent development programmes administered by NHG Group Research.

Project-based grants provide funding for the approved research project only; while talent development programmes may provide funding for the Principal Investigator (PI)'s protected time and/or approved research project. For jointly funded grants, additional requirements may apply in accordance with specific grant objectives.

For all grants/programmes, funding will be provided to the PI's NHG Host Institutions (HIs) on a reimbursement basis. Please refer to the NHG Research Website (https://www.research.nhg.com.sg) for more information on the respective grants and programmes.

Where applicable, all protected time and project funded by NHG Group Research shall adhere to the following:

(A) Research Protected Time

Only the approved research protected time or FTE equivalent will be reimbursed as part of the salary support component under the research talent development awards/programmes. All reimbursements for the approved research protected time will be subjected to an annual salary cap as stipulated in the respective Letter of Award (LOA), issued for the individual grant or award/programme, for the stipulated funding period.

In the event that the programme duration is extended, unutilised funding for the approved research protected time may be utilised during the extended period. No additional funding will be provided.

For reimbursement purposes of FTE, a Research Protected Time Logsheet will need to be submitted to NHG Group Research on a quarterly basis. The Human Resource/Payroll departments of the respective NHG HIs will be required to certify that the amount to be reimbursed as accurate via email.

(B) Research Project

All project expenditures will need to adhere to the approved budget in accordance to the fundable/non-fundable items as listed under Annex A, or otherwise determined by the respective grant calls. All expenditures must be incurred within the funding period, and the total amount to be reimbursed must not exceed the total approved budget.

NHG HIs shall strictly adhere to their institution's established procurement policies or the NHG procurement policies for all research project expenditures.

## 2. Administration of The Funding

2.1 Reimbursement for Research Expenditures

All claims for research expenditures are to be submitted quarterly to NHG HI's Finance or the respective 1FSS representatives in accordance to proper finance procedures for reimbursement by NHG Group Research. Where applicable, please quote the assigned project IO code for all research expenditures.

Claims must be substantiated with supporting documents such as photocopies of invoices, debit notes, receipts, boarding passes or proof for completion of trainings etc. **For expenditures with GST claimable from the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS), no reimbursement of GST will be provided.** The reimbursement amount shall exclude any GST charges. NHG HIs are to claim the GST proportion from IRAS directly. All expenditures to be claimed must be incurred within the funding period.

Please note that all final reimbursement claims must reach NHG Group Research within six (6) months from the end of award, unless otherwise specified in the award letter. NHG reserves the rights to reject any late claims, unless prior approval has been sought from NHG Group Research.

2.2 Research Project Variations

All variation requests will need to be submitted to NHG Group Research before any changes are effected. Retrospective variation requests will not be allowed unless compelling reasons can be provided for.

a) Request for Budget Variation (Across Categories)

Any request for budget variation (e.g. transferring of funds from one category to another such as from Miscellaneous category to Equipment category) must be submitted **at least one (1) month** before the purchase or incurring of the expenditure, and **at least three (3) months** before the end date of the award.

For budget variations of approved items within the same category, HIs may make the variations accordingly, as long as changes are within the category's approved amount and it does not include a new item not previously approved.

PIs will be required to complete and submit the "Request for Budget Variation Form" to NHG Group Research for review and approval. Strong and valid justifications for the variations must be provided. NHG Group Research will notify the PI, institutional CRU and institutional Finance/1FSS representative of the outcome via email.

b) Request for Unbudgeted Item

Any request to fund unbudgeted items not previously approved must be submitted **at least one (1) month** before the purchase or incurring of the expenditure, and **at least three (3) months** before the original end date of the award.

PIs will be required to complete and submit the "Request for Unbudgeted Item Form" to NHG Group Research for review and approval. Strong and valid justifications for the need of new items as well as quotations for new items must be provided. NHG Group Research will notify the PI, institutional CRU and institutional Finance or 1FSS representative of the outcome via email.

2.3 Submission of Research Reports & New Grant/Programme Applications

PIs will be required to fulfil the requirements for research report submissions under the respective grants/programmes. In the event of no acknowledgment or non-response, NHG Group Research reserves the right to prohibit the PI from applying to new grants/programmes as the lead PI.

Where applicable, the PIs may also be invited to deliver a presentation update of their research progress to the respective research strategic committees.

The above mentioned variation request forms, as well as templates for the interim/final reports are also available on the NHG Research website at www.research.nhg.com.sg .

## 3. Roles & Responsibilities of NHG Host Institutions

3.1 To provide the necessary facilities, administrative and other support for the conduct of the research funded under the grant/programme.

3.2 For talent development programmes with research protected time funding, to ensure the awardee is given the time to undertake and complete the approved research

3.3 To establish, where applicable, proper institutional policies and procedures to regulate and monitor the following:

a) Research should only commence after receiving the necessary ethics and regulatory approvals from the relevant parties/agencies.

b) Research staff recruited and funded under the grant/programme should comply with institutions' prevailing and consistently applied HR guidelines.

c) Equipment, consumables and other items purchased using the funding complies with institutions' internal procurement guidelines and policies and have received prior approval from the NHG Group Research.

d) Ownership, access, and management of equipment, consumables and other items purchased using the funding during and for up to 5 years after the funding end date.

e) Overseas travel undertaken by the awardee and/or research team is in relation to the research funded under the grant or award/programme.

f) Research is conducted with integrity and in accordance with prevailing guidelines on good research practices which seek to limit scientific misconduct and unethical behavior.

g) Documentation and reporting of incidences with Conflict-Of-Interest (COIs) which may result in undesirable outcomes to the research subjects and/or research findings.

3.4 To ensure that funding would not be channeled overseas to fund research and development activities, unless previously approved as part of the grant/programme applications.

3.5 To inform NHG Group Research in writing if the lead PI of the awarded project had left the NHG cluster or will be undertaking long period of absence (more than 3 months), the HI and PI will need to inform on any mitigation plans to ensure that the progress of research is not impeded, otherwise NHG Group Research reserves the rights to terminate the award.

3.6 To use best efforts to ensure that Intellectual Property (IP) arising from the funded research is properly managed and where feasible, to ensure that the IP is duly protected in accordance to NHG Intellectual Property (IP) policy.

## 4. Publication of Research Findings

PIs should ensure that any resulting scientific publications or media material will duly acknowledge NHG and any other co-funding or partnering institution such as NTU/LKCMedicine, where applicable.

PIs should also ensure that a copy of the resulting scientific publication shall be deposited in the NHG HI's open access repository if any, in accordance to the institutional open access policy.

## 5. Third Party Collaborations

Awardees of the NHG grant/programme are strongly encouraged to put in place the necessary research agreements (eg, Research Collaboration Agreement, Project Agreement or Service Agreement etc) which are required to facilitate the approved research projects.

## Annex A

## Fundable Items

| Type of Expenses | Description |
|---|---|
| **Equipment Category** | |
| General policy | There shall be no purchase of all equipment three (3) months before the completion date of the project. The completion date of the project refers to latest approved completion date. |
| New Equipment (including hardware and software) | Allowable if needed specifically for the project. Each equipment must be individually identified and its total cost inclusive of bank charges, delivery and installation, etc estimated. Any equipment purchases shall also be subjected to an established and consistently applied policy of the host institution. |
| **Other Operating Expenses Category** | |
| Consumables | Allowable. Examples of such costs are supplies and materials, laboratory consumables, animals and drugs which are necessary for the successful execution of the project. All procurement of such items must be reasonable and are made according to the formal established and consistently applied policies of the host institution or by other collaborating institutions. |
| Use of services, equipment rental or lab spaces within the host Institution's or collaborating institution's central facilities | Allowable. The cost for the use of the services and central facilities owned by either the host institution or by other collaborating institutions, such as animal holding units, central laboratory services, are allowable and must be based on institutional fee schedules which are consistently applied regardless of source of funds.<br><br>Institutions may also be requested to certify that the fee structure is applied consistently. |
| Bank charges | Allowable as long as it is specifically related to the payments for consumables and equipment used in the research project. |
| Books and specialised journals relevant to the research | Purchase of books, specialised journals or lab manuals are allowable only if these are directly related to the project. If the host institution has a library, books and journals should be obtained from the library and the PI should refrain from purchasing the same books or journals. |
| Customs and import duties | Allowable as long as it is specifically related to importation of consumables and equipment used in the project. |
| Local & Overseas Conferences/ Trainings | In the case of talent development programmes, allowable for awardees and members of their study team, and if conference/training is directly relevant to the research area or necessary to accomplish the project objectives. |

| Type of Expenses | Description |
|---|---|
| Local & Overseas Conferences/ Trainings (Continued) | In the case of research project grants, allowable for NHG staff and non-NHG partner institutions' staff who are part of the study team, and if conference/training is directly relevant to the research area or necessary to accomplish the project objectives (or as otherwise approved in the grant budget).<br><br>For conferences, documentation on registration and poster/presentation details will need to be submitted along with proof of payment. For trainings, documentation on attendance/completion will need to be submitted along with proof of payment.<br><br>The expenses for overseas conferences/trainings may include registration fee, air tickets (economy class only), per diem and other allowances. The total expenses for each overseas conference/training must not exceed S$6,000 per person (unless otherwise approved in the grant budget). Such payments should be in accordance with the formal policies of the institution of the relevant staff. The travel policy of the relevant institution must be consistently adhered to. Additionally, proof of overseas travel (*e.g.* photocopy of boarding pass) will be required for overseas conferences/trainings. |
| Photocopying and printing charges | Allowable, inclusive of printing costs for posters specifically related to the research project. |
| Publications | Allowable, if publication is from the grant/award, and if it adheres to the formal established policy of the host Institution, where applicable.<br><br>The costs of reprints and publishing in other media, such as books, monographs and pamphlets are not allowable unless specific approval has been obtained from the grant funding body. |
| Transportation, postage & courier services | Allowable<br><br>This includes postage, courier and freight charges for bringing in equipment and specialised research consumables and reimbursement for staff transportation. |
| Payment to research participants and other related costs | Allowable for payment to research participants, provided this is the scope of the research and has been provided for in the grant and approved. Claims will need to be supported by documents acknowledged by research participants when they receive the payment, including participants' details and signature, date of visit, amount paid and vouchers details (if applicable).<br>Press advertisements costs for recruitment of research participants are also allowable. |
| Others | Other miscellaneous costs which are directly related to the project may be allowed subjected to approval from the grant funding body based on the justifications provided. An example of such item is ethics review cost, equipment authorisation fee etc. |

## Non-Fundable Items

| Type of Expenses | Description |
|---|---|
| **Manpower Category** | |
| Salaries, CPF and fringe benefits including medical, dental, contribution to welfare fund, etc. | Not allowable |
| Bonus / Incentive payments | Not allowable |
| Annual Leave | Not allowable |
| Staff insurance | Not allowable |
| Overtime | Not allowable |
| Staff recruitment and related cost | Not allowable. Examples of such costs are advertisement and recruitment agency cost.<br><br>Staff relocation, settling-in allowances etc. are not allowable. |
| Lead PI's, co-investigators', collaborators' & visiting professor/researchers' EOM cost | Not allowable |
| Stipend for students | Not allowable. Examples include stipends for post graduate or undergraduate students that's under the mentorship of the awardee. |
| **Equipment Category** | |
| General Purpose IT and communication equipment | Not allowable. Examples of such devices are computers, hand phones and all hand-held devices etc. |
| Office equipment | Not allowable |
| Office furniture & fittings | Not allowable, this includes renovation/outfitting costs, rent, depreciation of buildings and equipment, and related expenditures. |
| Cost of capital works and general infrastructure | Not allowable. |

| Type of Expenses | Description |
|---|---|
| **Other Operating Expenses** | |
| Audit fees | Not allowable |
| Journal Subscription | Not allowable |
| Entertainment & Refreshment | Not allowable |
| Fines and penalties | Not allowable |
| GST | Not allowable, if claimable from the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS) |
| Insurance premiums | Not allowable. The host institution is responsible for the insurance of the equipment, relevant workmen compensation and professional indemnity insurance, in line with the host institution's risk policies. |
| Legal fees | Not allowable |
| Overhead expenses - rental, utilities, telephone charges, facilities management, etc | Not allowable |
| Patent application, IP related and commercialization expenses | Not allowable<br><br>This includes patent application filing, maintenance and other related cost. Such cost should be paid by the host institution. |
| Professional fees (including fees to consultants) | Not allowable |
| Professional membership fees of PIs /RFs /RAs funded from the grant | Not allowable |
| Staff retreat and team-building activities | Not allowable |