

2025 Grant-in-aid Application Guide

healthy bones for every body

Key dates for 2025 Grant Round

Applications open	Monday 14 April, 2025
Applications close	Monday 30 June, 2025
Grants awarded	September 2025

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1. Introduction

Established in 1991, The Bone Growth Foundation Inc. trading as the Bone Health Foundation (BHF/**Foundation**) is a not-for-profit organisation that raises money for research and education into bone health and musculoskeletal conditions that affect Australians of all ages. The Foundation receives no government funding and relies solely on support from public and private individuals and organisations.

The Australian and New Zealand bone and mineral society (ANZBMS) represent a research community that has a proven track record of producing internationally competitive research outcomes which have a meaningful impact on individuals with poor bone health.

The bone and mineral research sector is currently experiencing unprecedented challenges and historic low funding rates in major and international funding schemes.

The ANZBMS and BHF have aligned purposes to enable rigorous research, advocacy and education focused on reducing the burden of bone disease. Together they are committed to ensuring this track record of excellence and impact, continues and thrives in the current climate of complex national funding conditions.

This Research Grant Application Guide serves to outline the overarching funding guidelines for the co-funded Grant-in-aid Grants program. This document should be read before completing an application form.

2. Purpose

Bone research is a core objective of both the ANZBMS and BHF's mission to help prevent bone diseases which impact the lives of young and old.

By supporting bone research, we can foster the current and next generation of researchers who will pave the way forward to the next innovation in bone disease prevention, treatment and care.

The aim of the Grant-in-aid is to support high quality unfunded bone and mineral-related research applications. The purpose is to enable mid-career researchers who have been unsuccessful in a major research grant application to continue to generate data to strengthen their application and enhance their competitiveness in subsequent major grant rounds.

3. Eligibility Criteria

Who may apply for the ANZBMS/BHF Grant-in-aid

These grants are open to **Applicants who are Early to Mid-Career Researchers** who have been the Principal Investigator on an unsuccessful national or international research grant application in 2024/5.

Early to Mid-Career Range	3 to 18 years full-time equivalent (FTE) of either post doctorate (from the date of having a PhD awarded), medical graduation, or equivalent qualification as at the grant application close date.
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- > Applicants who have experienced career disruptions will be considered. Please provide appropriate information in the relevant application form.
- > One submission per Applicant as Principal Investigator will be accepted.

Proposal eligibility – what may be funded

- > The applicant must be a financial member of the ANZBMS for the duration of the award.
- > The project must be focused on bone and mineral research and must not be currently funded by a Nationally or International competitive funding body (eg NHMRC, ARC, or similar scale funding), or by any other industry-sector funding.
- > The proposal must be a 12 month feasible project, which is a bone and mineral research-related component of a recently unsuccessful application (by the Principal Investigator) as considered by a National or International funding agency. An outcome letter dated 2024 or 2025 must be attached.
- > The proposed project / research must be located / managed / operated under a University, hospital or major research institution based in either Australia or New Zealand.
- > The Applicant (Principal Investigator) must be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, have resident status or have the appropriate visa to work in Australia or New Zealand for the entire duration of the funding period.
- > The Principal Investigator (PI) must reside in Australia or New Zealand.
- > Each grant must be used for resources, equipment, salary support of applicant, and/or support personnel such as research assistants or other assistance required for a specific project.
- > The Foundation Board of Directors in conjunction with the ANZBMS Council makes the final decision on which applications will receive Research funding.

Proposal ineligibility - what is not funded?

- > Applications that do not directly relate to the core objectives of the ANZBMS or BHF.
- > Projects which have received any funding from the government or other industry sectors for the same/similar aims and proposed budget will not be considered for funding. If funding is received/notified during the application or assessment period, the application must be withdrawn.
- > Principal Investigators who currently hold a BHF or ANZBMS/BHF award at the date of application submission are not eligible, however they may be listed as an Associate Investigator.

- > A proposal that does not align to a larger funding application that was submitted to a major National/International funding round in 2024 or 2025.
- > Institutional fees, infrastructure costs and associated overheads will not be covered.

4. Application Procedure / Requirements

- > The Research Grant Application Guide should be read before completing the application form.
- > Application forms can be requested from research@bonehealth.org.au from Monday 14 April, 2025.
- > The application form must contain all necessary information applicable to the project / research. All details included must be current at the time of application.
- > Applicants must use the Grant-in-aid template and adhere to the length and formatting requirements as stated in the application form.
- > Any applications not using the Grant-in-aid template will be **ineligible**.
- > All information must be provided prior to submission. No further information will be sought or accepted after the closing date.

5. Submission deadline

- > Completed applications must be signed and submitted via email to research@bonehealth.org.au by the closing date and time (8pm AEST Monday 30 June, 2025). Late submissions will not be accepted.
- > Applicants will receive an email from the Bone Health Foundation acknowledging receipt of their application.
- > For queries or to confirm receipt, please contact research@bonehealth.org.au.
- > Applicants are encouraged to submit applications at least a day ahead of the closing deadline.

6. Review process

- > The BHF and ANZBMS will form a Research Advisory Panel (**RAP**) to oversee the Research Program assessment and reporting.
- > All applications will be reviewed and scored by independent, non-conflicted reviewers.
- > Applications will be reviewed for completeness and adherence to the Grant-in-aid Grants Application Guide.
- > Applications that provide incomplete documentation at the deadline will be excluded.
- > Applications will be scored against the following criteria:
 - Scientific Quality
 - Significance of the Expected Outcomes and/or
 - Innovation of the Concept
 - Applicant and Team Quality (Relative to Opportunity) and Capabilities within Research Environment

7. Outcome of application

- > Applicants and their institutional contact will be notified via email of the outcome of their Grant-in-aid submission by the determined date as per Section 8 (listed below)
- > The Grant-in-aid review process is robust and independent and focuses on impact and evidence. A strict conflict of interest policy is adhered to.
- > The decision-making process is final and there is no appeal process.

- > Re-submissions (either in whole or in part) are not considered outside of a grant round.
- > Grants available in this round represent the full allocation of BHF/ANZBMS grant-in-aid funding pool.
- > Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to re-apply in future grant rounds.

8. 2025 Grant Round Timeline of Peer Review Process

- > Applications open **Monday 14 April, 2025.**
- > Applications must be received by **8pm AEST Monday 30 July, 2025.**
- > Applications assigned to external reviewers August, 2025
- > Grant Review Panel assessments of applications August 2025
- > Approval by Bone Health Foundation and ANZBMS Board of Directors September 2025.
- > Notification to applicants **September, 2025**
- > Successful applicants commence project on date as specified in grant agreement (once all approvals have been gained)

9. Approvals to be obtained prior to funding commencement.

- > Research undertaken must conform to the principles as set out by the NHMRC 's Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) and The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and any other conditions required by Research Ethics Committees.
- > Funding for Grants-in-aid will not be released to the nominated institution until all relevant approvals, particularly in relation to ethics and governance, have been received and lodged with the Foundation.
- > Funding will be released in 4 equal installments at the end of each quarter after the date of commencement of the research project, as detailed in the Grant Agreement, unless otherwise agreed.

10. Acceptance of Conditions of Research Grant-in-aid Award

- > Research Grants are offered in accordance with the conditions specified in the ANZBMS/BHF Grant Agreement
- > Upon acceptance of an offer of funding, a Letter of Award and a copy of the ANZBMS/BHF Grant Agreement will be issued to the administering Institution for review and signing.
- > The Head of Department must sign the Grant Agreement for, and on behalf of, the administering institution.
- > On signing, the Recipient and the Administering Institution agree to abide by all the conditions, which includes but is not limited to;
 - research must be undertaken at the nominated institution;
 - a commitment to honor any in-kind support that is required to complete the project (where applicable).
 - the ANZBMS/BHF Grant-in-aid must be acknowledged in any presentation or publication of the research;
 - a progress report must be provided after 6 months;
 - a final report and financial acquittal must be submitted to research@bonehealth.org.au within 60 days of the date of final invoice; and
 - agreement that the grant recipient may be contacted to provide information regarding their ANZBMS/Bone Health Foundation Grant.
- > The signed Grant Agreement must be returned to research@bonehealth.org.au for execution by the date stipulated in the Letter of Award.

- > Both parties must accept all terms of the Grant Agreement and complete the first quarter of research before any payments are made.

11. Varying a grant

- > Variations occur when there is a requirement to modify a grant from the original proposal submitted. This may include changes in budget or personnel or an amendment to the budget or timing of the grant.
- > If the Recipient is unable to perform, or to continue to perform, activities in relation to the Grant Agreement, the ANZBMS or BHF must be notified in writing as soon as practicable.
- > If any funding from the government or any other industry sector for the same/similar aims and budget has been obtained during the award period, awardees must inform BHF (research@bonehealth.org.au) within 7 days, and submit a grant variation request. Part or all remaining funding may be withdrawn at the discretion of ANZBMS/BHF if significant overlap occurs between aims and budget.
- > Extensions to a research project end date will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, with a maximum extension of 6 months.
- > Requests to amend a grant or the terms and conditions should be made to research@bonehealth.org.au and a Grant Variation Form will be provided for submission and review.

12. Duration of grant and expenditure of funds

- > ANZBMS/BHF Grants-in-aid are 12-month awards which take effect from the commencement date as agreed in the Grant Agreement document. (Note the commencement date must be within 3 months of the execution of the Grant Agreement, unless otherwise agreed)
- > Expenditure of funds must be within the grant period and in accordance with the approved budget unless a variation has been submitted and approved by the ANZBMS/BHF.
- > If the Agreement is terminated before the Grant is complete, or the Grant is completed without full expenditure of the Grant amount, all remaining funds must be returned to the BHF within 30 days.

13. Reporting

- > A 6-month progress report must be submitted for approval to ensure continuity of funding. Progress reports enable the ANZBMS/BHF to ensure satisfactory progress is being achieved.
- > At the completion of the Grant, and within 60 days of receipt of the final invoice, a final report must be submitted to research@bonehealth.org.au and must be accompanied by a financial acquittal.
- > All reports must use the relevant templates as supplied by BHF.
- > The ANZBMS/BHF may determine that all or part of the funding may be repaid if a Recipient fails to submit satisfactory reports.
- > A grant Recipient who fails to submit satisfactory reports may not be considered for future Research funding rounds.
- > Information provided in reports to the ANZBMS/BHF may be used for internal reporting, media releases and in any publications as agreed by all parties.

14. Enquiries

Any enquiries regarding the administration of grants should be addressed to:

Linda Stanton, Bone Health Foundation

Email: research@bonehealth.org.au

15. Appendix 1: FAQ's

Grant Types

1. 2025 ANZBMS/BHF Grants-in-aid

The aim of the grant is to foster the development and career progression of talented researchers with a strong interest in bone health. The ANZBMS/BHF have allocated funding for **up to 2 x \$25,000 Grants** to be made available to **Applicants who are Early to Mid-Career Researchers** who have been the Principal Investigator on an unsuccessful National or International research grant application in 2024/25.

The aim of these research grants is to offer funding to researchers who have the potential to make significant advances in the field of bone health and to establish a strong platform to enable them to be more competitive in obtaining future funding for a major national or international grant.

Eligibility

2. Does the research career stage eligibility criteria only apply to the Principal Investigator?

Yes.

3. Who is eligible to apply?

Applicants must be researchers with 3-18 years full-time equivalent (FTE) of either post doctorate (from the date of having a PhD awarded), medical graduation, or equivalent qualification as at the grant application close date.

Career Disruptions for the Principal Investigator are considered when calculating the 3-18 years of full-time equivalent (FTE) career. Detailed calculations of career disruptions must be provided and justified.

For the proposal to be eligible, please read Section 3 of this Guide.

Principal Investigators who currently hold a BHF or ANZBMS/BHF grant are not eligible to apply. They may, however, appear as an Associate Investigator.

Researchers can apply as Principal investigator on one ANZBMS/BHF grant only. They may, however, appear as an Associate Investigator.

- > Councillors and committee members of ANZBMS, and board members of BHF, are permitted to apply. When an ANZBMS Councillor, ANZBMS committee member or BHF Board member applies as a Principal Investigator, they will declare their conflicts of interest and will not participate in the grant assessments or endorsement processes by the BHF Board or ANZBMS Governing Council

4. Does bone research need to be the main area of past research of the Principal Investigator

Not necessarily. Applications will be assessed against the criteria, which includes significance and innovation of the proposal, feasibility of the proposal, the team and research environment, and track record statement as it relates to the proposal which will be assessed relative to opportunity.

5. How is career stage defined in relation to career disruption and relative to opportunity defined?

The ANZBMS/BHF uses similar criteria to NHMRC for these definitions. The time spent doing research is counted towards the career stage. If the applicant can demonstrate that they have not worked in research for a period of time, then this time can be considered to be deducted from the time post-PhD.

Circumstances considered under relative to opportunity include, but are not limited to:

- amount of time spent as an active researcher.
- career disruption (see below for further details).
- available resources, including situations where research is being conducted in remote or isolated location
- clinical, administrative or teaching workload.
- relocation of an applicant and his/her research laboratory or clinical practice setting or other similar circumstances that impact upon research productivity.
- research outputs and productivity commensurate with time spent employed in other sectors and restrictions on publication associated with time spent working in other sectors (e.g. industry, policy and government).
- the typical performance of researchers in the research field in question.

A career disruption, which is a type of relative to opportunity consideration, is defined as a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work due to pregnancy, major illness/injury and/or carer responsibilities. Interruptions must involve either a continuous absence from work for periods of 28 calendar days or more and/or a long-term partial return to work that has been formalised with the applicant's employer/institution.

6. Can a researcher be named on multiple applications?

A researcher can be named as the Principal Investigator on one application only but is able to be named as an Associate Investigator on multiple applications.

7. Can I apply if I have not previously submitted a related larger funding application to a National/International funding round?

No. The purpose of this scheme is to support proposals that have recently been judged to be competitive in a National/international funding scheme but have been unsuccessful in securing funding.

8. Can I apply if I have submitted a relevant larger funding application to a National/International funding round but have not received an outcome letter/notification?

No. The purpose of this scheme is to support proposals that have recently been judged to be competitive in a National/international funding scheme but have been unsuccessful in securing funding.

Applying

9. What format should applications be submitted in?

All applications must be completed using the BHF/ANZBMS approved template. This must be submitted in pdf format. Application forms can be requested from research@bonehealth.org.au

10. Who should submit the application?

Either the Principal Investigator or the internal research grants office can submit the application.

Please confirm this arrangement internally ahead of submission.

Documentation

11. Do I need to include my PhD certificate to prove my eligibility?

No, simply state when you received your PhD in the appropriate section of the application form.

12. What evidence is needed to show experience in bone research?

Relevant experience must be included in the track record statement on the application form.

Any related outputs (eg publications, industry reports, health policies and guidelines) can be noted.

13. Are copies of CVs and ethics required?

No. The information in the application template will be sufficient and should not require any further attachments. If you are successful, ethics approval will be required prior to commencement of the project.

14. Are references required in the Project Summary (Section 1) of the application form?

Responses are acceptable without references in Section 1 of the application form. However, anything based on prior work should be cited and then listed in the reference table (Section 5).

Research Team

15. Is there any limit to the number of Investigators included in the application?

Yes. There is only one PI and up to three Associate Investigators.

16. Can senior researchers or senior advisers of the bone research submit as Principal Investigator?

Senior researchers, defined as more than 18 FTE years post PhD, can only appear as Associate Investigators. It is recommended however that the Principal Investigator is supported by an experienced research team if appropriate.

17. What if a Principal Investigator is transitioning from a different field of research to bone (clinical) research?

Yes provided the research meets the criteria. Details of the transition can be included in the application in the when discussing achievements relative to opportunity.

Grant funds

18. Are grants subject to the GST?

Yes

19. Does the Grant-in-aid cover institutional fees/infrastructure costs/overheads?

No.

20. Can grant funding be used for equipment, research assistant salaries, consumables and travel?

Grant funding can be used to fund expenses that explicitly relate to the grant objectives. These costs must be clearly outlined in the application.

21. Can on-costs be included as part of the salary cost in the budget?

Reasonable on-costs can be included in the project budget of \$25,000.

22. Can severance pay be included in grant acquittals?

No. The grant solely supports the actual cost of the project. Therefore, severance pay cannot be included.

International

23. Does the Bone Health Foundation award grants internationally (outside of Australia and New Zealand)?

No. Applications will only be accepted from applicants who apply through an Australian or New Zealand based institutions and demonstrate that the conduct of the project will be administered in Australia or New Zealand.

24. Can a researcher from another country be the Principal Investigator for the grant, but the research be completed at an eligible Australian or New Zealand based Institution?

Applicants who reside in another country cannot be a Principal Investigator.