

ARTHRITIS NZ OVERVIEW

Arthritis NZ Mateponapona Aotearoa aims to improve the life of every person affected by arthritis. We are a national charity that provides information, advice and support to people diagnosed with any of the more than 140 forms of arthritis. Arthritis affects more than 750,000 New Zealanders and is a leading cause of disability. Many people with arthritis continue to lead productive and fulfilling lives with effective and appropriate support. In addition to advocating for people with arthritis through engaging with them and listening to their experiences, Arthritis NZ funds research, contributes to health policy and collaborates with healthcare professionals.

ARTHRITIS NZ RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Arthritis NZ uses its research funding programme to achieve the following key research objectives:

1. To contribute to the body of research that seeks to determine the cause of arthritis, prevention of arthritis, improvement of early diagnosis and treatment of all forms of arthritis.
2. To contribute to the growing body of research that documents and describes the impact of arthritis on the individual, the community and the wider New Zealand society.
3. To contribute to international research on arthritis through assisting New Zealand participation in international research projects and/or through a contribution to the body of research on gout arthritis, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA) and other forms of arthritis.
4. To evaluate specific programmes or treatments to ascertain effectiveness and improvement in the quality of life for people with arthritis.

ARTHRITIS NZ RESEARCH ACTION PLAN

Arthritis NZ has developed a proactive and translational research programme which includes biomedical, clinical, social and economic research. Significantly, this ensures that our organisation has a robust evidence-base to inform the development and delivery of our programmes, services and awareness. Our latest Research Action plan is currently being developed and will be finalised later in 2026. Our five previous strategic research initiatives were:

1. We will develop an External Research Grants programme that is targeted towards our key research objectives.
2. We will work towards co-funding research opportunities with other organisations working in the non-communicable diseases and long-term conditions arena (i.e. with “partner” organisations).
3. We will promote the participation of Māori and Pacific peoples in arthritis research (especially gout arthritis).
4. We want to engage the consumer more in research projects and related activities.
5. We will further encourage social and community-based research relating to arthritis.

By submitting a Summer Scholarship application, applicants confirm they have read and understood the following terms and conditions:

GENERAL

1. The purpose of the Arthritis NZ Summer Scholarships programme is to support students who are undertaking arthritis-related research whilst being supervised by an experienced research professional working in academia, health service provision and other types of institutional organisations.
2. Unless otherwise specified, Arthritis NZ will fund up to six Summer Scholarships valued at \$7,000 per year (excluding GST).

3. Projects are usually undertaken over 10-12 weeks during the summer period and provide students with an opportunity to develop valuable research skills and a deeper understanding of issues relating to arthritis and associated health.
4. Students who are awarded Scholarships are usually in their final year of undergraduate study or undertaking some sort of postgraduate study at a recognised institution.
5. Research projects must clearly align with Arthritis NZ's key research objectives and Research Action Plan.
6. Summer Scholarships will only be granted for research or studies which are of a high standard, maintaining the reputation of the New Zealand scientific community and Arthritis NZ as a funding body.

APPLICATIONS

7. Research projects must be clearly related to arthritis with the precise topic to be determined by supervisors. Applications are to be prepared by supervisors in advance of a Scholarship commencing as in most cases a student will not have been selected yet for an award.
8. **All applicants** must complete the Arthritis NZ Summer Scholarships application form.
 - The sub-headings provided in the official application form must remain in the order they are presented, but can be on different pages to ensure applicants have ample room to convey the necessary information requested.
 - All applications must be in Calibri (body) font size 12.
 - **Please note that any applicants who do not use the official application form will not be considered.**
9. There is a **maximum of 5 pages** per application. Any applications that exceed this length will not be considered.
10. All applicants **must also provide a separate copy of their CV** using the standard CV template for any research proposals submitted to the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology, the Health Research Council (HRC) or the Marsden Fund. **This must be no longer than 5 pages.**
11. All applications must be submitted to our research@arthritis.org.nz email address by 5pm on **Tuesday 11th August 2026.**

TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

12. Arthritis NZ upholds the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in our everyday mahi (work) through partnerships, participation and protection. Applicants must clearly discuss how their proposed research project aligns with the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, potentially promotes inclusion and may be beneficial to Māori communities and/or Māori who are affected by arthritis.

HEALTH EQUITY

13. Māori and Pacific peoples are priority populations for our organisation's equity focus. Arthritis NZ seeks to fund research which has the potential to also advance Māori and Pasifika health and wellbeing, working towards achieving health equity and ultimately better health outcomes for Māori and Pacific peoples. Applicants must therefore state how their proposed research project may address health equity for Māori, Pacific peoples and other groups who experience disparity.

RESEARCH IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECTS AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILISATION OF FINDINGS

The Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) defines **research impact** as, “*The direct and indirect influence of excellent and innovative research on individuals, communities or society, including improvements to health and other social, economic, cultural or environmental benefits for New Zealand*”. The subsequent “*creation of ‘real-world benefits’ for non-academic end-users*” (i.e. consumers or patients) is central to the idea of research impact.

“**Knowledge mobilisation**” is a concept championed by Keele University’s Impact Accelerator Unit (IAU) that enables research findings to become more accessible, understandable and useful for stakeholders who in turn work together to increase research-informed healthcare and healthcare-informed research. Additionally, Keele’s IAU “*aim to improve the quality of the impact our research has by facilitating the connection between evidence-based findings and the needs of individuals and communities, thereby improving patient care*”. Research impact and knowledge mobilisation are concepts that ultimately complement one another.

Past Summer Scholarship applicants have been asked to suggest how their proposed study will help people who have arthritis. We are now asking applicants to consider what kind of *broader impact* their project could potentially have on New Zealand communities and society in terms of health, social, economic, cultural and/or environmental benefits. They will also be asked to indicate how they can potentially go further than the “traditional” dissemination of results (i.e. via conference papers and peer-reviewed journal articles) to ensure their findings can be understood, but also made more readily available to people who have arthritis and other stakeholders who might have a professional interest in their project (e.g. clinicians, allied health practitioners, other long-term condition charities and commissioning agencies).

14. All applicants must indicate the potential impact their proposed project may have in terms of its return on investment to Arthritis NZ and possible other health, social, economic, cultural and/or environmental benefits to communities and wider New Zealand society. Your proposed research impact and knowledge mobilisation statement should also explain how your project will potentially help people who have arthritis.
15. All applicants must also provide some comments about how they intend to make their findings more widely available and useful to consumers and other relevant stakeholders in everyday practice.

ETHICAL APPROVALS

16. Applicants are responsible for obtaining any necessary ethics approval ahead of any Summer Scholarship project commencing. Applicants must include any ethics approval details or acknowledge their intention to apply for relevant ethics approval in relation to their proposed project.

PRIVACY

17. The information requested will only be used for the purpose of assessing a proposal. All proposals received in the 2026/2027 round will be stored on a secure cloud-based server.
18. Personal information contained in the proposal may be made available to members of Arthritis NZ Committees relevant to the review of the proposal. This includes any electronic and paper-based copies of the proposal.
19. In the event a proposal is successful, Arthritis NZ has the right to release a successful applicant’s name, the title and a lay summary of their project, and the amount of funding awarded for public interest purposes via a range of our organisation’s communication channels (please see below).

EVALUATION

20. Applications will be assessed by the Research Committee of Arthritis NZ, who will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees on successful applications.
21. The Research Committee reserves discretion as to the criteria which it will use for evaluation of applications, but in general these will include:
 - The scientific merit of the proposed study (including study design and appropriateness of the research methods chosen).
 - The study's potential to advance knowledge and address an important gap in the wider arthritis research field.
 - The potential of the proposed study to help people with arthritis.
 - The qualifications and track record of the applicant relative to opportunity and career stage.
 - The potential of the proposed study to help students strengthen their research skills and knowledge relating to arthritis-related research.
 - The impact the proposed study may have in terms of potential return on investment for Arthritis NZ and benefits at a consumer, community, everyday practice and societal level.
22. All applicants will be informed via email of the outcomes of the Summer Scholarships review process by the end of September 2026.

COMPLETION OF PROJECTS/OUTPUTS (NEW PROCESS)

23. It is the responsibility of supervisors and students to ensure that their research project is completed on time.
24. All recipients of an Arthritis NZ Summer Scholarship award must submit a report about their project via our new Microsoft Forms portal within one calendar month of completing their project. Additionally:
 - The form should be completed by the student in conjunction with their supervisor or with their approval or oversight (note: this form is very similar to the reporting template we have provided over the past few years).
 - After this form has been submitted, the student will be asked to email a high-resolution profile photograph of themselves and several high-resolution photographs (2MB in size or larger) of themselves undertaking work for their Scholarship (if applicable).
25. Any additional published material or stakeholder engagement that relates to a completed Summer Scholarship project must appropriately acknowledge the funding assistance of Arthritis NZ (i.e., a publication in peer reviewed scientific or medical journals, book chapters, presentation to conferences or other similar assemblies, conference proceedings, post-project engagement with other stakeholder and relevant audiences, etc.).
26. **All successful applicants agree to their research findings and associated photographs being shared in summary and/or visual form by Arthritis NZ across a range of our organisation's communication channels, provided that:**
 - i. They retain the right to decline dissemination/sharing of their research findings if dissemination/sharing could or may jeopardise publication in peer-reviewed literature, or acceptance at conferences.
 - ii. They have the right to review material before it is disseminated/shared publicly to confirm accuracy. If they are not satisfied as to the accuracy, they have the right to request changes as required to ensure the material is accurate in all respects. Arthritis NZ's communication channels include the following:



Arthritis NZ

Matepona
Aotearoa

- The Arthritis NZ website (<https://www.arthritis.org.nz/>).
- Arthritis NZ's various social media channels (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Blue Sky, LinkedIn, etc.).
- *E-News* reports (usually published monthly).
- *My Joint Support* print and digital magazine (published bi-annually).
- Any other relevant Arthritis NZ communication channels or events.

CONTACT

27. The Research Manager at Arthritis NZ will liaise with applicants wherever possible when preparing content based on their findings to ensure all parties are comfortable with the final material which Arthritis NZ publicly shares.

28. For further information about Arthritis NZ's Summer Scholarships programme, please do not hesitate to contact:

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