

## **Arthritis NZ External Research Grants: Information and Conditions Form 2023/2024**

### **ARTHRITIS NZ OVERVIEW**

Arthritis NZ 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 700,000 New Zealanders and is a leading cause of disability. There is no cure, but the condition can usually be managed effectively. Most people with arthritis continue to lead productive and fulfilling lives. We also advocate for people with arthritis by funding research, contributing to health policy, and collaborating with healthcare professionals.

### **ARTHRITIS NZ RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

Arthritis NZ uses its research funding programme to achieve the following key 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, Lupus/SLE, juvenile idiopathic arthritis, 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 (2021-2023)**

Arthritis NZ has developed a proactive and translational research programme which includes 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 five strategic initiatives for the period 2021 to 2023 are as follows:

1. We will develop an External Research Grants programme that is targeted towards our 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 an EOI/full application, the applicant confirms they have met, considered, and agreed to the following criteria:**

#### **GENERAL**

1. Arthritis NZ has a limited pool of funding available to contribute to quantitative and qualitative research projects. As such, our organisation is likely to support small research projects or feasibility studies that are conducted over a one-to-two-year period with a maximum budget of up to \$80,000.
2. The purpose of Arthritis NZ External Research Grants is to engage and support researchers or professionals in Aotearoa New Zealand working in the wider arthritis research field who are based in academia, health service provision or other types of institutional organisations.

3. Research projects must be clearly related to arthritis with the precise topic to be determined by applicants. Research projects should aim to be translational in nature and clearly align with Arthritis NZ's research objectives and Research Action Plan for 2021-2023.
4. External Research Grants will only be awarded for research projects which are of a high standard, maintaining the reputation of the New Zealand scientific community and Arthritis NZ as a funding body. Projects which have an identified major funder are particularly encouraged.
5. Arthritis NZ's External Research Grants are tenable within the following types of host institutions: New Zealand universities, health service or industry organisations, or other research-related institutions approved by Arthritis NZ.
6. If a successful applicant is not already employed by their host institution, the host institution must agree to employ the applicant for the duration of the External Research Grant.
7. There are no overhead costs associated with the External Research Grants.
8. Applicants must be a New Zealand citizen or resident.
9. Requests for overseas travel will not be accepted as part of the External Research Grant application.
10. The application process for External Research Grants comprises a **two-stage process**. This involves: a) the completion of an **Expression of Interest (EOI) form**, and b) the completion of a **full application** by those applicants who are invited to progress to stage two.
11. Grants are intended to provide short-term support of a terminable nature to an individual researcher or small group working on a clearly defined project. While it is expected that projects will be completed within a two-year period or less, Arthritis NZ will consider a three-year study if an exceptional case is proposed.

## BUDGET / SALARY CONSIDERATIONS

12. All applicants **must provide an estimated budget** in their EOI and detailed budget in their full application.
13. Arthritis NZ **will only** fund salaries for research fellows or officers, research assistants or other research-based staff who will be specifically employed or contracted to work on the proposed project funding is being sought for. Named investigators who are already salaried academic staff at any institution or health provider (or equivalent organisation) **are not** able to claim funding towards salary costs for this project.
14. Typically, Arthritis NZ will not provide funding towards salaries, publication costs and/or costs associated with attendance/travelling to conferences or other similar assemblies to support research dissemination.
15. Provision is made in the full application form for amounts to be requested for the employer's contribution to approved superannuation schemes for personnel employed on the grant.

## APPLICATIONS

16. An applicant's EOI and full application (if invited to submit) should be self-supporting without attached appendices.
17. **The two-stage process for External Research Grants is as follows:**

#### A. Stage One: Expression of Interest

- i. All applicants must complete the **three-page** Arthritis NZ External Research Grants EOI form and associated details.
- ii. All EOI must use Calibri (body) font size 12.
- iii. All applicants must also provide a copy of their CV with their EOI using the New Zealand RS&T standard Curriculum Vitae template.
- iv. Please note that those who do not complete the EOI or provide an EOI longer than the three-page maximum will not be considered at the initial evaluation stage.
- v. All EOI must be addressed to Dr. Richard Griffiths, Research Manager at Arthritis NZ, and submitted in PDF format to our organisation's [research@arthritis.org.nz](mailto:research@arthritis.org.nz) email address by **5pm Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024**.
- vi. All EOI will be evaluated by the Research Committee of Arthritis NZ who will make a recommendation regarding which applicants are invited to submit a full application for the 2023/2024 External Research Grants round.
- vii. All applicants will be notified via email of the outcome of the EOI evaluations by **Thursday 28th March 2024**.

#### B. Stage Two: Full Application

- i. Those who are invited to progress to stage two will subsequently need to complete a full application form.
- ii. There is a **maximum of 18 pages** allowed per full application. Any full applications that exceed this length will not be considered.
- iii. While the sub-headings provided in the full application must remain in the order they are presented, they can be on different pages to ensure applicants have ample room to convey the necessary information requested.
- iv. Details of all professional and scientific staff that will be associated with the research should also be included, whether or not a salary is being requested, and the role of each staff member should be explained in Section IV of their full application form (see page 12). Please note that it is important that any estimated salary increases (including promotions) for those research staff named in B. iv are also included to cover the whole grant period.
- v. All full application forms must use Calibri (body) font size 12.
- vi. All full applications must include one signed and dated copy of the Arthritis NZ Research Project Administrative Agreement with signatures provided by the applicant, a relevant Head of Department (or equivalent), and an Authorised Official on behalf of the Host Institution.
- vii. Full applications (including CV) must be addressed to Dr Richard Griffiths and submitted **in PDF format via email** by **5pm Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024** to [research@arthritis.org.nz](mailto:research@arthritis.org.nz)

#### TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

18. Arthritis NZ upholds the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in our everyday mahi (work) through partnerships, participation and protection. Applicants must provide a brief statement of up to 150 words in their EOI of how their proposed research project aligns with the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, promotes inclusion and may be beneficial to Māori communities and/or Māori who are affected by arthritis. In the full application, applicants must provide a more detailed statement of up to 250 words.

#### HEALTH EQUITY

19. 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, works towards achieving health equity and improved health outcomes for Māori and Pacific peoples. Applicants must provide a brief statement of up to 150 words in the EOI of how their proposed research project may address health equity for Māori, Pacific peoples and other groups who experience disparity. In the full application, applicants must provide a more detailed statement of up to 250 words.

## ETHICAL APPROVALS (FULL APPLICATIONS ONLY)

20. Applicants are responsible for obtaining any necessary ethics approval ahead of their research project commencing. Applicants must include any ethics approval details or their intention to apply for relevant ethics approval in relation to their project in their full application if they progress to stage two.

## REFEREES (FULL APPLICATIONS ONLY)

21. Applicants who progress to the second stage of the application process **must nominate two referees**. These can be New Zealand or international experts in the relevant research field, and do not have a conflict of interest with the applicant or the research process.
- Members of the same institution, frequent collaborators, family members and friends should not be listed as potential referees.
  - Arthritis NZ will seek **one independent review** of each full application.
22. Applicants must ensure their nominated referees have agreed to review their full application and be available from **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May to Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024** to complete their referee reports.
23. Applicants can provide the names of a maximum of two individuals or groups whom they wish not to review their application. Reasons must be clearly indicated.
24. Arthritis NZ also reserves the right to reject nominated referees and reserves the right to seek reports from other contributors in the relevant research field.

## PRIVACY

25. The information requested will only be used for the purpose of assessing EOI and full applications. All EOI and full applications received for the 2023/2024 External Research Grants funding round will be stored on a secure cloud-based server.
26. Personal information contained in EOI and full applications may be made available to members of Arthritis NZ Committees relevant to the evaluation process. This includes any electronic and paper-based copies of EOI and full applications.
27. In the event an applicant is successful, Arthritis NZ has the right to release their 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 Completion of External Research Grants Projects section for further details).

## EVALUATION

28. EOI will be evaluated by the Research Committee of Arthritis NZ who will provide recommendations for successful applicants to submit a full application.
29. The Research Committee of Arthritis NZ will subsequently evaluate the full application forms that have been submitted by those who have progressed to stage two of the application process. The Research Committee will then make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees shortly after the evaluation process has been completed advising which full applications have been successful in the second round.
30. All applicants will be informed via email of the outcome of the evaluation of full applications by **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024**.

31. The Research Committee will assess EOI and full applications and be guided by the following criteria:
- The proposed research project's potential to advance knowledge and address an important gap in the wider arthritis research field.
  - Scientific merit of the proposed research including study design and appropriateness of the research methods.
  - Alignment with Arthritis NZ's key objectives and Research Action Plan (2021-2023).
  - Potential of the proposed research to help people with arthritis.
  - Qualifications and track record of the applicant relative to opportunity and career stage.
  - Alignment with the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and how it intends to address health equity for Māori, Pacific peoples and other groups who experience disparity.
32. Arthritis NZ will not provide feedback from the EOI or full application rounds.

## COMPLETION OF EXTERNAL RESEARCH GRANTS PROJECTS

33. Any External Research Grant awarded **must be taken up within six months** of award notification. Funding not uplifted within this period may be withdrawn at the discretion of Arthritis NZ.
34. Successful applicants are expected to update the Research Manager from Arthritis NZ as follows to demonstrate progress is being made on their research project and to also build a positive working relationship between the two parties:
- A two-page progress report on the anniversary of their External Research Grants award.
35. Arthritis NZ recognises that longer research projects have the potential to change whilst in field. If the contractual details of an External Research Grant change, a variation request will need to be prepared by successful applicants in writing and submitted in PDF form via email to Arthritis NZ's Research Manager at the earliest opportunity.
36. All successful applicants must complete the official Arthritis NZ External Research Grant reporting template (maximum 5 pages) **within two calendar months** of completing their research project.
- While the sub-headings provided in the official reporting template must remain in the order they are presented, they can be on different pages to ensure applicants have ample room to convey the necessary information requested.
  - The Arthritis NZ Research Committee and Board of Trustees will also be provided with copies of completed External Research Grant project reports.
37. Any additional published material that relates to a successful External Research Grants award must appropriately acknowledge the funding assistance of Arthritis NZ (i.e., a publication in peer reviewed scientific or medical journals, book chapters, presentations to conferences or other similar assemblies, conference proceedings, etc.).
38. **All successful applicants agree to any aspect of their research findings being shared in summary or visual form by Arthritis NZ across a range of our organisation's communication channels.** This includes the following:
- The Arthritis NZ website (<https://www.arthritis.org.nz/>).
  - Arthritis NZ's various social media channels (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn).
  - E-News* reports (usually published on a monthly basis).
  - Joint Support* print and digital magazine (published bi-annually).
  - Any other relevant Arthritis NZ communication channels or events.

39. It is expected that the successful applicants will collaborate with the Arthritis NZ Research Manager to promote/showcase their research. It is not anticipated that this will be onerous and may include writing short articles for Arthritis NZ's communication channels or relevant media interviews.
40. The Research Manager at Arthritis NZ will liaise with successful applicants wherever possible when preparing content based on their research findings to ensure that they approve of the final material which Arthritis NZ elects to publicly share.

## CONTACT

41. Please direct any questions you may have about Arthritis NZ's External Research Grants 2023/2024 funding round to:

Dr. Richard Griffiths  
Research Manager  
Arthritis NZ Mateponapona Aotearoa  
Phone: 027 293 6709  
Email: [richard.griffiths@arthritis.org.nz](mailto:richard.griffiths@arthritis.org.nz)