

Questions and Answers that have arisen at and since the Information Workshop for Stream Three

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Q1

Can an entity not presently on the NHMRC list of administering institutions be the identified administering institution?

A1

Yes, provided that the full proposal contains a specific additional attachment in which the entity self certifies against the criteria outlined for this purpose in the NHMRC Administering Institution Policy September 2002. The following text is copied from this policy in the section covering self-certification and outlines the criteria that need to be addressed.

Category 2 Self Certification

The NHMRC requires that these institutions signify to the NHMRC acceptance of the following criteria:

- a. They are located in Australia.*
- b. They are established as:
 - i) an NHMRC Accredited Health and Medical Research Institute; OR*
 - ii) an institution primarily involved in public health, biomedical or clinical research;**

OR

 - iii) a public hospital; OR*
 - iv) an equivalent organisation, excluding commercial organisations and individual persons, to be considered by the Research Committee of NHMRC to determine that it satisfies the requirements of the objectives of the NHMRC Act 1992.*
- c. They have the resources to meet Government financial accountability requirements.*
- d. They are able to assure provision of infrastructure support for the research activity.*
- e. They have procedures in place, as relevant to the type of research undertaken, for adherence to:
 - i) Joint AVCC/NHMRC guidelines on research practice;*
 - ii) NHMRC endorsed "National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans";*
 - iii) NHMRC animal ethics/welfare guidelines;*
 - iv) State/Territory/Commonwealth bio-safety guidelines;*
 - v) State/Territory/Commonwealth laws; for example, gene technology, animal welfare, occupational health and safety, workers' compensation; and*
 - vi) Management of intellectual property.**
- f. Where relevant, the research undertaken in the institution, is in compliance with the requirements of the:
 - i) Australian Health Ethics Committee; and*
 - ii) NHMRC Animal Welfare Committee.**

Information must be provided in answer to the criteria listed above (a to f). Appropriate documents should be attached to the form, providing evidence of compliance with each criterion.

The following link is the address at which the policy can be found.
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/research/policy.pdf>

The Research Advisory Board will consider applications against these criteria on a case-by-case basis

Q2

On page 7 of the full proposal documents, we are asked for details of all named chief investigators in related 'proposals', implying a request for information about potential future commitments. However, the subsequent wording relates to 'current involvement' in research projects, implying a request for information only about current commitments. Could you please clarify?

A2

The intent of this section is to gather information on current related research activity. This should include related research activity whether it is in the form of

- a proposal currently being developed for submission for funding;
- related research proposals that are currently submitted for funding for which the outcomes are not yet known; and
- related research activity that is funded and underway.

Q3

Some of our signatories are currently interstate or overseas. Can you please tell me if you accept faxed signatures from investigators who are based interstate or are currently overseas (if we arrange that originals are to follow to you)?

A3

The application form should clearly list the names of all investigators. In the case of one or more being overseas, a faxed copy of the signature is acceptable as an inclusion within the hard-copy application (i.e. not faxed to APHCRI), but should be followed in due course by a signed original, clearly identifying the proposal to which it belongs, sent to APHCRI.

Q4

Is it possible to submit the hard copy application with Associate Investigator and Partner signatures on separate pages, instead of these scrolling over pages, so that they can be mailed out simultaneously rather than sequentially?

A4

Yes

Q5

Is it acceptable for page numbers to be removed from the hard copy version of the signature pages, so that they can be slotted in to the final application, once it has been completed (so that signatures can be collected simultaneously to the completion of the application)?

A5

Yes. In this case it would be helpful to manually write page numbers in the hard copy once it is collated so that there is no doubt about which page belongs where.

Q6

Could you please clarify how necessary it is to have all signatures, of both AIs and Other partners, on the hard copy application forms. Would it be acceptable, for example, to e-mail a Word file of the relevant section of the application form to our AIs and other partners, and then have them send separate sheets with their signatures? We can then staple them together into the main application. What can you suggest?

A6

It is important that the hard copy has all the names and signatures of the AIs and other partners included within it. It is acceptable to collate the hard copy in the manner that you suggest – that is that

you send out the Word file, receive the completed form back, collate them in the hard copy and send the final hard copy to APHCRI.

Q7

Is it acceptable to make one page per investigator for page 8, 'Details of the involvement of all named chief investigators in related proposals', so that we know where page numbers that follow will end up?

A7

Yes. This will effectively mean that there are multiple "page 8's" in the hard copy, but that is acceptable. However, the pages in the hard copy should be collated in the correct order. If necessary, hand written page numbers could be inserted to indicate the correct final pagination.

Q8

Are the 'number of hours' provided by the Partner organisation and the 'number of hours' provided by an Associate Investigator associated with that Partner organisation exclusive to one another?

A8

It is possible these are the same numbers and therefore mutually exclusive. For example, if the partner organisation is only contributing the time of a named associate investigator, the partner organisation can be named, but the time should be wholly allocated to the associate investigator. In this case the "number of hours" are exclusive to one another. However, if the partner organisation is contributing time additional to the associate investigator's time, or is contributing time and does not have an associate investigator named, then this time should be recorded separately against the partner organisation.

Q9

Could you please advise us of the appropriate definitions of 'Chief Investigator' and 'Associate Investigator' for the purposes of the Stream 3 proposal

A9

Broadly, APHCRI would expect that "chief investigators" have major leadership roles in the proposal and "associate investigators" have roles that are connected to the proposal. Potential Spokes should make these determinations and reflect the rationale in the application.

Q10

Can we "unlock" the electronic form in order to allow pages in the electronic form to be duplicated where necessary?

A10

Yes, but it is important that no text in the form as it appears on the web site is edited. This question has arisen because for some groups there are more Chief Investigators, and/or Associate Investigators and/or Other partners than the electronic form provides space for. In this case these parts of the form (or any other part of the form which has the same problem) can be reproduced by "unlocking" the electronic version. Groups intending to do this are encouraged to obtain the help of a person skilled in this process to ensure that no data is lost, and no changes to the criteria or explanations of the criteria are inadvertently made. Groups who do not want to "unlock" the electronic form should complete it to the limits of what each section allows. The hard copy however must contain all the information, even if this involves multiple "page 8's" as alluded to above. The hard copy will be the copy that is assessed, and, in any case in which there is a difference between the hard copy and the electronic copy, the hard copy will take priority.

Supplementary information relevant to this question provided by Jacqueline Schroeder which registrants can consider. It is acceptable to follow the approach she outlines. Please note with respect to the first paragraph that APHCRI was concerned to prevent unintentional modification of the application form resulting in subsequent confusion and was not implying that applicants would intentionally alter it. Please also note that the hard copy of the application will take priority in any situation in which there is a difference between the hard copy and the electronic copy.

“I understand from our recent discussion regarding the APHCRI Stream 3 Application Form that your motive behind providing a 'Form' rather than a Word Document was to prevent applicants from modifying the form in any inappropriate way. Unfortunately, the need to replicate tables in order to provide the requested information meant that the form had to be unlocked, allowing the form to be edited as per any normal Word document. Please note that the form must be unlocked in order to add extra AIs and Partners and may be the case if some Chief Investigators have more than two sources of current salary or have more than two current appointments (more details regarding this are provided below).

As discussed, it may make things easier for applicants if you request that attachments be provided in the case of ALL signature pages, as you did for the 'Details of Chief Investigators'. In this way, signature pages become independent of the electronic version of the Application Form and can:

- a. Keep the page number of the original form prior to completion; or*
- b. Be allocated appropriate page numbers once the pagination has been finalised (manually). In this way, any further editing to the Application while signature pages are collected will not affect the pagination on the signature pages.*

Please note that under the current Application Form format, if page numbers are left on the signature pages when they are distributed, and the electronic copy is amended in the meantime such that any page numbers spill over onto the following page, then the page numbers on the signature pages become meaningless and a possible source of confusion. The best way to deal with the Application Form in its current format is to format the pages in such a way that the signature pages each appear on a separate page. My understanding from our conversation is that it is acceptable to do so under the current circumstances outlined above.”

Q11

Is the reference to “Instructions for Applicants” at the bottom of the first page of the full proposal form a typographical error?

A11

Yes – it should have been “Information for Applicants”

Q12

Can CIs on a Stream 3 proposal get paid?

A11

Payments to CIs are not excluded. The case for paying CIs must be made.

Q12

What information do you want in the Associate Investigator details, under ‘Qualifications’? Do you want ‘PhD, MSc’ or something more substantial such as: PhD (2002) Queen Mary College, University of London?

A12

A brief summary of qualifications relevant to the application is what is wanted, rather than an exhaustive list.

Q13

In Section 2, 'Overview of Full Proposal', under 'Synopsis of Full Proposal' (page *), can you clarify whether you mean the instructions "This should not exceed one page" to refer to this row of the table or to the entire Section 2.

A13

The "one page" refers to the row – that is the Synopsis of Full Proposal, and not the entire Section 2

Q14

In Section 3, 'Chief Investigator Details', please clarify if you would like to receive full information regarding 'Current Appointment/s' and 'Source/s of current salary', where there are more than two of each of these for any Chief Investigator. Currently the form calls for only two entries for each of these categories.

A14

In cases where more than two appointments and/or two sources of current salary exist for Chief Investigators, additional information should be provided only in cases in which the first two appointments do not cover more than 60% of the total. For example, if a CI has a 25% role in one position, 25% role in a second position and 25% role in a third position then the third role should be included. If the roles were 40% and 25% and 10% - only the first two would be included.