

## 2025 PRF Seeding Grants

### EOI guidelines and general information for applicants

The purpose of PRF Seeding Grants is to assist early career physiotherapy researchers. The applicant, who will be supported by a research team that includes experienced researchers, must lead the proposed project. The proposal will predominantly be the work of the applicant, albeit with input and support from the lead supervising investigator. Where the applicant's project is part of a larger study, the proposal should state how the proposed project relates to, but is discrete from, the larger study. Generally, the project must be primarily conducted in Australia, and the sponsoring institute must be Australian based. Projects conducted outside Australia may be considered but must be clearly justified.

Applications are considered predominantly on the basis of scientific merit, significance and team track record. Inexperienced researchers are advised that collaboration with an Associate Investigator who has current experience in the relevant research area will enhance the likelihood of a project receiving PRF funding. Projects will only be funded if the budget is fully justified.

Applicants are required to submit an expression of interest (EOI) using the supplied form, followed by a full application for those who are shortlisted. It is anticipated that full applications will open in late May and close late June.

In 2025, there are up to six Seeding Grants available, each with a maximum amount of \$20,000.

### **Submission of EOI Applications**

The completed EOI form and any relevant documents are to be sent via email to:

[Jenine.Fleming@australian.physio](mailto:Jenine.Fleming@australian.physio)

All submissions must be received by **Sunday 2 March 2025**. Receipt of your application will be acknowledged by return e-mail.

### **Research Area**

Choose one or two areas of research from the following list:

- Acupuncture and Dry Needling
- Advanced Practice
- Animal
- Aquatic
- Cancer, Palliative Care and Lymphoedema
- Cardiorespiratory (Jill Nosworthy Seeding Grant)
- Disability
- Education
- Gerontology
- Mental Health
- Musculoskeletal
- Neurology
- Occupational Health
- Orthopaedics
- Paediatrics
- Pain
- Sports and Exercise
- Women's, Men and Pelvic Health
- Other (specify)



### **Ethical Approval**

For research involving humans and animals, ethical approval from an appropriate body must be gained. Please note that approval can be obtained once you have been notified of the outcome of your application. However, confirmation of this approval must be supplied to the PRF prior to the payment of grant monies.

### **The Applicant**

The applicant must:

- be the Chief Investigator of the project
- hold current unconditional registration as a physiotherapist with AHPRA
- currently reside in Australia
- be a financial member of the Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA) and maintain APA membership at the time of application and for the duration of the grant
- be an early career researcher

The applicant must not have received:

- a PRF Seeding, Project or Tagged Grant previously as a Chief Investigator or
- a Beryl Haynes Memorial grant previously
- any research grant of more than \$20,000 as a named lead investigator (e.g., CIA) including at the time of awarding this grant.

Applicants will be required to justify their eligibility as an early career researcher, but typically people > 10 years post PhD (excluding career disruptions) will be ineligible. If you have queries about your eligibility, we encourage you to contact us at least two weeks before the EOI closing date.

The applicant may have received a post-graduate scholarship/post-doctoral fellowship, however if they received more than \$20,000 in funding via a single grant in addition to salary support (over the duration of the fellowship) they are ineligible. This includes funds for items such as equipment, travel and research consumables or employment of research staff.

Applicants who are named investigators on larger grants (>\$20,000) who are not lead investigator/ CIA may be eligible for funding depending on the role they played in the project. Applicants should clearly articulate their role on the previous grant(s). As noted above, if you have queries about your eligibility, we encourage you to contact us at least two weeks before the EOI closing date.

The applicant may submit up to two separate Seeding Grant EOIs but only one will proceed to the full application stage (if applicable).

The applicant cannot be a named Associate Investigator on another application within the same funding round, including the Beryl Haynes Memorial Grant.

### **Research Team**

A number of Associate Investigators can be included as part of the research team.

At least one Associate Investigator should be an experienced researcher with previous and current research support and publications arising from that support. At least one of the Associate Investigators must be the Lead Supervising Investigator who agrees to support and commit time to developing the applicant as a researcher.

Where appropriate, please consider including consumers, end-users or people with lived experience of the condition as Associate Investigators.

### **Budget**

The maximum funding available for a PRF Seeding Grant is \$20,000.

As a grant made by the Physiotherapy Research Foundation is considered by the Australian Taxation Office as a 'gift' rather than a grant of financial assistance, no GST is payable. Therefore, there is no need to include GST in your project budget.

Itemise your budget under the following headings: personnel (indicate salary level, on-costs, time involved), equipment / project materials / consumables, travel and incentives.

For budget purposes, the following interpretations will apply:

Personnel – people employed in order to carry out the project, e.g. research officers or assistants. Funding to backfill the clinical workload of the Chief Investigator will be considered, however this must be justified.

Equipment, project materials and consumables – items used during the course of the project, e.g. imaging, paper.

Travel – normally only travel related to data acquisition will be funded, not conference travel.

In general, the PRF will not fund publishing costs. However, if funding is requested then this must be fully justified. Furthermore, the PRF will not fund items that are usually funded or provided by an administering organisation such as a university or a hospital.

The PRF will not fund administering organisation's infrastructure costs, as this would substantially impact on the amount of funds remaining for research.

### **Timeline**

Please ensure that the timeline is feasible. Please note that there is the expectation that the project will be completed within 18 to 24 months of the grant being awarded (approximately April to October 2027). It is envisaged that the outcome of full applications will be known in mid-October 2025. Following ethics approval, full payment will be made in early 2026 (or earlier by arrangement).

### **Certifications**

The Chief Investigator (applicant) must verify the contents of the application and his or her eligibility for a PRF Seeding Grant.

The Lead Supervising Investigator (Associate Investigator 1) must verify their commitment to supporting and developing the Chief Investigator throughout the project.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Grants will be awarded by the APA Board of Directors, whose decisions shall be considered final, on the recommendation of the APA Grants Review Committee in relation to:

- Scientific quality (60%) - This includes the clarity of the hypotheses or research objectives, the appropriateness of the study design or methodology, evidence of high-quality research practices (such as statements on protocol registration, analysis plan registration and adhering to reporting guidelines for relevant study design) to ensure that the experimental results will be unbiased, reproducible and transparent, and the feasibility of the project.
- Significance of expected outcomes and/or innovation of the concept (25%) - This includes the potential of the project to increase knowledge in the field and have a significant impact on the practice of physiotherapy.
- Knowledge translation (15%) - This includes study design features that facilitate translation, planned processes for translating findings to the physiotherapy (and broader) community, and the likelihood that these strategies will lead to influences on

practice, policy and / or behaviour change. This can also include plans, which do not necessarily need to be achieved during the project scope or timeline.

- **Team quality and capability** - The applicants' research record demonstrates the appropriate research skills, experience, and concern for research rigour, relative to opportunity, required to complete the proposed project. The applicant clearly justifies their eligibility as an Early Career Researcher. The research record of the team demonstrates appropriate skills, experience and research rigour to support the development of the applicant as a researcher and ensure timely completion of the proposed project.
- **Budget** - This includes its appropriateness and level of detail provided which should include personnel, equipment, project materials, consumables, travel and incentives. Projects will only be funded if the budget is fully justified.

A sample of the scoring template used by the Grants Review Committee to assess applications is attached at the end of this document (please see page 5). Please ensure that you consult this carefully when preparing your application.

### **Legal Agreement**

Applicants are required to sign a formal agreement prior to receiving any grant monies.

### **Release of Information**

All information provided on a PRF grant application form is private and confidential and will be used in accordance with the APA's Privacy Policy. In the event that your grant application is successful, information including the names of investigators, grant amount, project title and project summary will be published on the PRF webpage of the APA website.

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the privacy officer at [privacy@australian.physio](mailto:privacy@australian.physio)

## **EOI DEADLINE: Sunday 2 March 2025**

The PRF must receive EOI submissions by the above specified deadline.

### **Queries:**

For queries please contact Jenine Fleming, PRF Administration Officer on (03) 9092 0852 or via email [Jenine.Fleming@australian.physio](mailto:Jenine.Fleming@australian.physio)



# 2025 PRF seeding grant – EOI evaluation

## 1. Project Identification

<b>Chief Investigator:</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	
<b>Application No.:</b>	

## 2. Project Overview (optional to complete)

## 3. Scientific Quality (60%) score out of 18 (please note 0.5 marks are permissible)

This includes the clarity of the hypotheses or research objectives, the appropriateness of the study design or methodology, evidence of high-quality research practices (such as statements on protocol registration, analysis plan registration and adhering to reporting guidelines for relevant study design) to ensure that the experimental results will be unbiased, reproducible and transparent, and the feasibility of the project.

- 18. Outstanding:** Well-defined, near flawless study design. Strong evidence of high quality, reproducible research practices. Highly feasible with expertise, tools and techniques established.
- 16. Excellent:** Clearly defined, strong, well-developed study design. Very good evidence of high quality, reproducible research practices. Feasible with expertise, tools and techniques established.
- 14. Very Good:** Generally clear in scientific plan with only very few minor concerns with study design. Good evidence of high quality, reproducible research practices, required techniques and tools established or nearly established.
- 12. Good:** Plan is generally solid but may lack clarity of intent and focus. Some evidence of high quality, reproducible research practices. Several minor concerns in design or feasibility.
- 10. Marginal:** Research plan is somewhat unclear in scientific approach and goals, with some major design flaws and major concerns about feasibility and likelihood of successful completion. Little evidence of high quality, reproducible research practices.
- 8. Poor:** Research plan is unclear in scientific approach and goals, with several major design flaws and several major concerns about feasibility and likelihood of successful completion. No evidence of high quality, reproducible research practices, and strong potential for bias.
- 0. Unsatisfactory:** Major flaws in the study and unlikely to be feasible or successfully completed. No evidence of high quality, reproducible research practices, and strong potential for bias.

**Score:**

**Out of 18**

**Comments:**

**4. Significance of Expected Outcomes and/or Innovation of the Concept - (25%) score out of 7.5** (please note 0.5 marks are permissible)

This includes the potential of the project to increase knowledge in the field and have a significant impact on the practice of physiotherapy.

- 7.5 Excellent:** Will result in a significant advance in knowledge in this field. It is likely to have a significant impact on physiotherapy practice and translate into transformative outcomes downstream. Will most likely result in highly influential publications and invited presentations. The work is highly innovative in concept.
- 6. Very Good:** Will advance knowledge in this field. It may have a significant impact on physiotherapy practice. It may translate into transformative outcomes downstream. Will likely result in very strong publications and could be the subject of invited presentations. The work is innovative in concept.
- 4. Good:** May incrementally advance knowledge in this field but it is unlikely to have a significant impact on physiotherapy practice and unlikely to translate into transformative outcomes downstream. May result in some good but not excellent publications but is unlikely to be the subject of invited presentations. The work is solid in concept.
- 2. Marginal:** May result in some publications. The work may have some innovative or novel aspects.
- 0. Unsatisfactory:** Unlikely to result in publications and/or influence practice. The work is not innovative or novel.

Score:

Out of 7.5

Comments:

**5. Knowledge Translation (15%) score out of 4.5** (please note 0.5 marks are permissible)

This includes study design features that facilitates translation, planned processes for translating findings to the physiotherapy (and broader) community, and the likelihood that these strategies will lead to influences on practice, policy and / or behaviour change. This can also include future plans, which do not necessarily need to be achieved during the project scope or timeline.

- 4.5. Excellent:** Clearly defined translation strategy. Strong evidence of end-user engagement in the design, conduct analysis and/or dissemination of results. Process is clearly outlined. Strategy indicates that current or downstream findings are likely to influence practice, policy and / or behaviour change. Feasible with expertise of the team.
- 3. Good:** Translation strategy is generally solid but may lack focus. Some evidence of end-user engagement in the design, conduct analysis and/or dissemination of results. Several minor concerns regarding the likelihood that using this strategy will result in current or downstream findings influencing practice, policy and / or behaviour change. Several minor concerns regarding feasibility.
- 2. Poor:** Translation strategy is unclear. Unlikely to be feasible. Very little evidence of end-user engagement in the design, conduct analysis and/or dissemination of results.
- 0. Unsatisfactory:** No translation strategy provided.

Score:

Out of 4.5

Comments:

**Total score =**

**out of 30**

## 6. Team Quality and Capability

The applicants' research record demonstrates the appropriate research skills, experience, and concern for research rigour, relative to opportunity, required to complete the proposed project. The applicant clearly justifies their eligibility as an Early Career Researcher. The research record of the team demonstrates appropriate skills, experience and research rigour to support the development of the applicant as a researcher and ensure timely completion of the proposed project.

**Excellent:** The applicant has a combined record of excellent research achievement in their research field, relative to opportunity. The applicant (and/or team) has expertise that is highly relevant to all elements of the project.

**Very Good:** The applicant has a combined record of research achievement that is above average in their research field, relative to opportunity. There are only minor concerns about the expertise of the applicant (and/or team) relevant to the project.

**Good:** The applicant has a combined record of research achievement that is average in their research field, relative to opportunity. There are some concerns about the expertise of the applicant (and/or team) relevant to the project.

**Poor:** The applicant has a combined record of research achievement that is below average by peer standards in their research field, relative to opportunity. There are major concerns about the expertise of the applicant (and/or team) relevant to the project.

**Unsatisfactory** Insufficient details provided

**Comments:**

## 7. Budget

How appropriate is the budget? This should be itemised under the following headings: personnel (indicate salary level, on-costs, time involved), equipment / project materials / consumables, travel and incentives.

**Excellent:** The budget is well considered and applicable for both the project and use of PRF funds. Itemised headings used. All detail/calculations provided as appropriate.

**Good:** The budget is adequately considered and applicable for both the project and use of PRF funds. Itemised headings generally used. Some detail/calculations provided as appropriate.

**Marginal:** There are minor concerns about the budget and use of PRF funds. Limited use of headings. Minimal detail/calculations provided.

**Unsatisfactory:** Unrealistic budget provided. Inappropriate use of PRF funds. Insufficient details provided.

**Comments:** Please outline what adjustments should be made to the budget and if there are components that the PRF should not fund. Please note this feedback will be provided to shortlisted applicants to assist them in preparing their full application.

## 8. Feasibility

**8.1** Based on the information provided, is this project feasible? Please consider timelines, the budget and already collected data.

Yes / No

**Comments:**

**8.2** Are there any reasons why this application should not progress to the full application stage outside of the criteria?

Yes / No

**Comments:**

## 9. Applicant feedback

(This feedback will be anonymous to the applicant but shared with other GRC members and reviewers where necessary).

9.1 Key project strengths

9.2 Key areas for improvement

**Reviewer's name:** \_\_\_\_\_