
TRipartite Programme in Infectious Diseases Research for New Discoveries and TreatmENT

GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES



Objectives

The **TRipartite Programme in Infectious Diseases Research for New Discoveries and **TreatmENT** is a joint initiative established by three key entities: National Healthcare Group (**NHG**), Agency for Science, Technology and Research (**A*STAR**) and Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (**LKC**M**edicine**) focusing on advancing the research in the field of infectious diseases. The main objectives of this programme are as follows:**

- (a) To bring together infectious disease researchers of the partner institutions in collaborative translational infectious disease research
- (b) To develop a centre of excellence for infectious disease research
- (c) To seed promising research ideas and capabilities and increase the tripartite partners' competitiveness to vie for larger ecosystem grants; and
- (d) To drive and deliver translational infectious disease research with impact on policies and practice for better patient outcomes.

The Programme will fund projects through **two** types of grant schemes, depending on the scope of the research project:

- (a) Open grant call: Pilot grants to deepen collaborations and enhance capabilities between the partner institutions (up to \$250,000 per project, 1.5-2 years)
- (b) Directed projects: Large grants for projects that demonstrate potential for further development or new projects that have potential to vie for the large national grants within 2-3 years (up to \$1 million, 2-3 years)

Funding Criteria

Successful applicants are expected to be competitive in vying for large follow-on grant funding.

For pilot grants, all grant calls will be in Years 1-3 and will be open to eligible staff of the 3 partner institutions (NHG, A*STAR, LKCMedicine). **Each project shall involve at least 2 partner institutions.**

For large grants, the partner institutions intend for each of them to lead at least 1 of the projects under large grants scheme and for the funding to be distributed amongst the partner institutions.

The grants will not support overhead costs. All projects should be completed by the end of Year 5.

The proposed grant calls will focus on priority/key areas in infectious disease research as shown in **Figure 1**, based on (1) disease burden and (2) research expertise of the partner institutions:

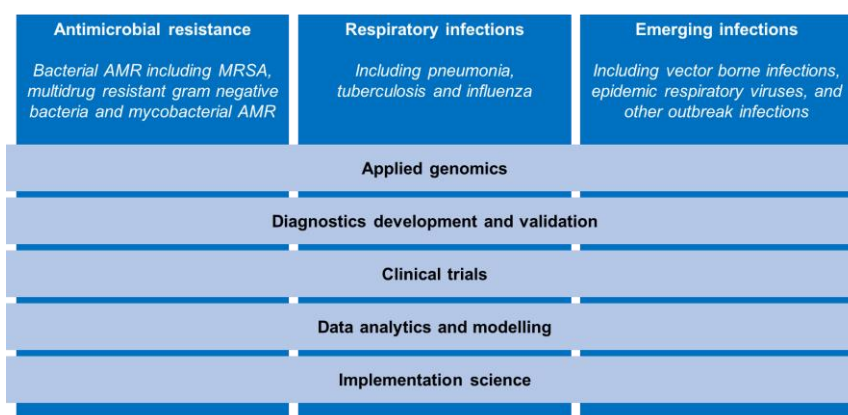


Figure 1 – TRIDENT Focus Areas

Eligibility Criteria

Each application must be submitted by **one Lead Principal Investigator (PI)** from either NHG, A*STAR or LKCMedicine, for pilot grants, each project shall involve at least 2 partner institutions; for large grants, all 3 partner institutions must be involved. Other research team members can include co-investigators/collaborators from outside of the 3 partner institutions or private companies¹. The eligibility criteria for Lead Principal Investigator are as follows:

Lead Principal Investigator

Applicant applying as Lead Principal Investigator is required to fulfil the following criteria at the point of application:

- a) A Lead PI from NHG may be doctors, nurses or allied health professionals holding a primary appointment from NHG member institutions. The Clinical Lead PI must fulfil the eligibility criteria listed below:
 - a. PI must be clinically qualified (i.e., with MD/MBBS/BDS).
 - b. Allied Health Professionals who meet the following conditions may apply:
 - i. Non-medically trained PIs who are nurses, pharmacists or other allied health professions in clinical practice, doing research in clinical settings or doing research with clinical and healthcare applications/relevance, are eligible to apply.
 - ii. Applicants who are working in human clinical research, including epidemiologists, biostatisticians, and whose research is clinically relevant and has potential health impact, are eligible to apply.
 - iii. Non-medically trained applicants conducting wet laboratory-based research is eligible to apply.

¹ Funding from TRIDENT cannot be transferred to local or overseas institutions. However, in-kind contributions to the projects are allowed.

- iv. Applicants must possess a minimum academic qualification of a PhD or the equivalent training.
- b) A Lead PI from A*STAR must have at least 50% appointment at A*STAR with A*STAR as the primary appointment.
- c) A Lead PI from LKCMedicine must be full-time faculty; Visiting Professors and Adjunct Professors will not be eligible. Teaching Fellows at LKCMedicine are eligible provided their appointment covers the period of the proposed research project. LKCMedicine faculty staff who are medically trained (i.e., with MD/MBBS/BDS) but not registered with the Singapore Medical Council can still qualify as Clinical Lead PIs provided that their projects are pre-clinical in nature.

Co-Investigators and Collaborators

There is no limit to the number of Co-Investigators or collaborators. However, **Co-Investigators must conduct the research and provide substantial contribution to the project. Please specify and describe clearly the roles of Co-Investigators and collaborators in the relevant section.** Researchers from outside of the 3 partner institutions or private companies can only participate as collaborators.

Review Process

All applications will be evaluated by the Management Committee². The Leads of the Management Committee will discuss and recommend the shortlisted applications to Steering Committee for final endorsement.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Scientific excellence and relevance to the objectives of TRIDENT
2. Capability of the PI and the research team(s) conducting the research
3. Feasibility and potential impact of the project
4. Potential translational application of project
5. Potential to secure follow-on funding

Application Format

Use **Arial font size 10** for all text and attachments through the application form.

Funding Quantum and Duration

TRIDENT will provide a funding quantum of up to S\$250,000 (pilot grant) up to 2 years or S\$1,000,000 (large grant) up to 3 years.

² The TRIDENT Management Committee consists of Leads and Members from each Partner Institution.

Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants are required to submit semi-annual reports detailing the progress of the Programme, budget utilisation, and financial statements by **30 September each year** and a final report to TRIDENT Programme Office within 3 months from the project completion date. Successful applicants are required to track and report the outcomes of the Project for a period of five (5) years after the end of the Funding Period. Reports are expected to be prepared using the prescribed template provided.

Application submission

Interested applicants must complete the “GRANT Application Form”. Submissions should be made to the TRIDENT Programme Office at: tripartite_id@ncid.sg through the Host Institution’s Research Office by **31 May 2024, 5pm** and include the following:

- The Application Package **without signatures**, including all pictures, tables, charts and various attachments in **Word Document** format.
- The Application Package **with signatures**, including all pictures, tables, charts and various attachments in **PDF** format.

The TRIDENT Programme Office will not accept late or incomplete submissions or submissions from individual applicants without endorsements from Head of Department (HOD) and Institution Director of Research or equivalent.

The following will be rejected:

- Incomplete applications e.g., missing documents such as CVs, missing signatures, sections left blank, etc.
- Incorrect application form templates.

Please note that each applicant can only submit one application, and the application must list all the people and groups involved in the project.

For enquiries, please contact the TRIDENT Programme Office at: tripartite_id@ncid.sg

Claims

All claims will be processed **on reimbursement basis** and are subjected to the prevailing NHG finance policies, and may be modified by the management. However, all grantees will be notified if there are changes to the finance policies.

LIST OF FUNDABLE AND NON-FUNDABLE ITEMS

Type of Expenses	Description
Expenditure on Manpower	
Salaries, CPF and fringe benefits of employees funded through these programmes, including medical, dental, contribution to welfare fund, etc.	<p>Allowable as part of overall compensation to employees funded through these programmes, provided such costs are incurred under formally established and consistently applied institutional policies.</p> <p>Salaries offered to staff should be reasonable, in line with local market benchmarks and should comply with established pay scales of the host institution / department that are consistently applied regardless of funding sources.</p> <p>Each staff must be individually identified by designation and his/her salaries, CPF and fringe benefits estimated. Expenses pertaining to dependents shall be excluded.</p>
Annual leave	Allowable for employees. The number of days of leave accorded to staff must be in accordance with established institutional policies that are consistently applied regardless of funding sources.
Bonus/Incentive payments	Allowable as part of total compensation package, provided that such payments are reasonable and in accordance with established institutional policies that are consistently applied regardless of funding sources.
Staff insurance	Allowable, provided incurred under an established and consistently applied policy of the host institution.
Participation of overseas experts and students	Not allowable.
Staff recruitment and related costs.	<p>Not allowable. Examples of such costs are advertisement and recruitment agency cost.</p> <p>Employment pass (EP) application fees, Staff re-location, settling-in allowances, etc, are not allowable.</p>
Overtime	Not allowable.
Stipends and course fees of full- time and/or part-time graduate research students.	Not allowable.
PI/Co-I/Collaborator EOM costs	Not allowable.
Student attachment and top-up for research students	Not allowable.
Equipment	
New equipment	<p>Allowable if specifically needed for the project.</p> <p>Equipment must be individually identified and its total costs inclusive of bank charges, delivery and installation, etc estimated.</p>

Type of Expenses	Description
General purpose IT and communication equipment	<p>Not allowable unless specifically provided for and approved in the grant. Examples of such costs are computers, office productivity software, PDAs, mobile phones, workstations, printers, etc.</p> <p>The procurement of such equipment must be reasonable and in accordance to the established and consistent institutional policies.</p>
Cost of capital works and general infrastructure, office equipment, furniture and fittings.	Not allowable.
Other Operating Expenses	
Consumables	<p>Allowable.</p> <p>Examples of such costs are supplies and materials, laboratory consumables, animals and drugs which are necessary for the successful execution of the funded project.</p> <p>All procurement of such items must be reasonable and made in accordance with established and consistent institutional policies.</p>
Bank charges	Allowable provided such charges are specifically related to payments for consumables and equipment used in the project.
Customs and import duties	Allowable provided such charges are specifically related to import of consumables and equipment used in the project.
Books and specialized journals relevant to the research	Allowable only if these are directly related to the project. If the host institution has a library, books and journals should be obtained from the library and the PI should refrain from purchasing the same books or journals.
GST	Not allowable, if claimable from the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS).
Conferences	<p>Allowable for staff who are part of the study team, and if conference/training is directly relevant to the research area or necessary to accomplish the project objectives.</p> <p>Documentation for attendance/completion of conference/training will need to be submitted.</p>
Overseas travel	Not allowable.
Photocopying and printing charges	Allowable.
Publications	<p>Allowable.</p> <p>Page charges for publication of manuscript in professional journals are allowable if they adhere to established institutional policy, where applicable.</p> <p>The costs of reprints and publishing in other media, such as books, monographs and pamphlets are not allowable unless specific approval has been obtained from the host institution.</p>

Type of Expenses	Description
Repairs and maintenance of research equipment	<p>Allowable if specifically budgeted for in the project and the equipment is used extensively for the benefit of the research project.</p> <p>The period of maintenance funded from the research grant will be restricted to the duration of the project. For new equipment, maintenance should not be budgeted for the duration the equipment is under warranty (e.g., Year 1) and quotations for maintenance contracts must be included when the proposal is shortlisted.</p>
Stationery and printer consumables	Allowable.
Training	Not allowable unless required specifically for the project and subjected to approval.
Transportation, postage and courier services	Allowable. This includes postage, courier and freight charges for bringing in equipment and specialized research consumables and reimbursement for staff transportation in accordance with institution policies.
Use of services, equipment rental or lab spaces	Allowable.
Volunteers and research patients, and other related costs	<p>Allowable for payment to volunteers and research subjects provided this is within the scope of the research and has been provided for and approved in the grant. Any vouchers or cash reimbursement given to research patients and volunteers need to be reasonable and to be acknowledged by recipients with signatures.</p> <p>Press advertisements for patient recruitment are allowable.</p>
Audit fees	Not allowable.
Entertainment & Refreshments	Not allowable.
Fines and penalties	Not allowable.
Insurance premiums	Not allowable.
Legal Fees	Not allowable.
Indirect Research Cost/ Overhead expenses, rental, utilities, telephone charges, facilities management, repairs, maintenance, etc.	Not allowable.
Patent-related expenses	Not allowable.
Professional fees (including fees to consultants)	Not allowable, unless specifically provided for in the grant and approved.
Professional membership fees of PIs/RFs/RAs funded by Joint Research Fund	Not allowable.
Staff retreat	Not allowable.