



## **Guidelines for the Management of NCID Catalyst Grant**

**Funds are up to a maximum period of 12 months, unless otherwise stipulated in the award letter. Applicants should have an awareness of the feasibility to complete the study within the stipulated timeframe and that includes fulfilling the ethics & research agreement requirements.**

### **Matters to resolve before proceeding with research**

#### Approvals from Ethics Committees

1. No research can be undertaken without relevant IRB/ethics and other applicable approvals (IACUC, GCP etc), **which must be submitted to [rco\\_grants@ncid.sg](mailto:rco_grants@ncid.sg) within 2 months from date of these approvals.**

#### Research Collaboration Agreements

2. The Institutions may undertake work on the Research in collaboration with a Collaborator. Where and when this occurs, the investigators are responsible for putting in place research collaboration agreements that are undertaken by the Institutions.

### **Reimbursement of funds**

3. All Institutions (including Host and Partner Institutions) will be required to ensure that the expenditures are fundable, necessary, and reasonable for the conduct of the Research and verify claimed items with source documents, before submitting the funds reimbursement to NCID.
4. A list of **fundable & non-fundable direct cost items** is provided in the Annex 1.
5. All expenditure should be incurred (based on invoice or service rendered date) within the Approved Project Term<sup>1</sup>.
6. In general, prudence should be exercised for all project costs, and expenditures claimed must comply with the Institutions' internal procurement processes, guidelines, and policies.
7. NCID reserves the rights to reject any claims that have resulted from changes to Research without prior approval from NCID and items found not to be fundable, not necessary, not reasonable, not relevant, or not used for the Research.

#### Expenditure of Manpower (EOM)

8. Funding of Research Personnel under the grant must comply with prevailing and consistently applied human resource guidelines of the employing Institution(s).

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<sup>1</sup> Expenditures related to on-boarding of research personnel may be supported before the start of Term but must be made in accordance with the Institutions' human resources policies and after the date in which the NCID receives the completed Acceptance Form.



9. This will extend to Institutions' prevailing policies on associated human resources costs (e.g., staff insurance, employment benefits, employment levy, employment pass, pre-examination medical check-up & housing allowance)
10. All EOM related expenses shall be pro-rated taking reference from the project start date, except for lump-sum insurance claims, which shall be allowable as claimed. As a general principle, staff costs should be charged based on time commitment to the Research.
11. Details of Research Personnel employed under the Funding must be provided in the manpower listing of the reimbursement claim form, and continuously updated, including new additions and those whose employment have ended.
12. All Institutions must adhere to the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices<sup>2</sup>.
13. The Institution(s) are allowed to make manpower changes (i.e., increase/decrease in headcount, change in designation or scheme of hires, change in time commitment to the grant), as long as the changes are necessary for the Research, comply with the Institution(s)' policies and does not exceed the EOM vote.

#### Equipment ("EQP")

14. There shall be no purchase of all equipment three (3) months before the completion date of the project. The completion date of the project refers to latest approved completion date.
15. The Institutions / Investigators shall ensure that the purchase of each equipment is necessary for the Research or activity supported by the Funding and is not otherwise reasonably available and accessible.
16. For high value equipment purchase, Investigators are required to update the list of equipment acquired, as part of the Final Report submission. NCID may require the Institutions / Investigators to allow approved Third Parties to access and use the equipment, subject to the availability of the equipment.
17. The Institutions are allowed to make changes within the EQP vote (i.e., changes in quantity and changes in equipment), provided that these changes are (i) necessary, relevant, and used for the Research; (ii) do not constitute a change in Research; and (iii) are kept within the approved equipment vote budget.

#### Other Operating Expenses ("OOE")

18. The Institutions are allowed to make changes within the OOE vote (i.e., changes in quantity and changes in OOE items), provided that these changes are (i) necessary, relevant, and used for the Research; (ii) do not constitute a change to the Research; and (iii) are kept within the approved OOE vote budget.

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to [www.mom.gov.sg](http://www.mom.gov.sg) for details of the Fair Consideration Framework.



### Indirect Costs

19. Indirect costs in research are those costs that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified readily and specifically with a particular sponsored research project but contribute to the ability of the Institutions to support such research projects (e.g., providing research space, research administration and utilities, and not through the actual performance of activities under the sponsored projects).
20. NCID's Catalyst Grant does not manage or support indirect cost funding.

### **Budget Variations**

21. NCID delegates the approval authority for fund variation between the budget categories to the Institution's Director of Research (or equivalent), subject to a cumulative amount not exceeding ten percent (10%) of the total project direct cost value.
22. For variations cumulatively above ten percent (10%), the approval authority remains with NCID. Requests should be submitted to NCID **no later than 3 months before the completion date of the projects on a 12-month duration**.
23. Retrospective variation requests or late requests to NCID will not be allowed unless there is compelling justification.
24. Inter-institutional variations, where applicable, require NCID's approval and acknowledgement from the Director of Research (or equivalent) for all Institutions involved.

### Grant Extension

25. No extension request will be accepted unless there are very compelling reasons. Please write to [rco\\_grants@ncid.sg](mailto:rco_grants@ncid.sg) **immediately** in the event of such situation.

**For Matters Listed in Para 26 to Para 30, awardees are to seek approval 1 month prior to the proposed changes by emailing the variation form Secretariat, National Infectious Diseases Research Co-ordinating Office via [RCO\\_GRANTS@NCID.SG](mailto:RCO_GRANTS@NCID.SG)**

### Change in Lead Principal Investigator/Investigators

26. NCID's approval will be required for a change in the Lead Principal Investigator/Investigators.
27. The Lead Principal Investigator plays a significant role in steering the Research towards its intended objectives. As such, the Host Institution will be required to inform NCID immediately and provide a mitigation plan, should there be a long leave of absence by the Lead Principal Investigator or change to the Lead Principal Investigator. The Host Institution will be required to provide the NCID an assessment of why the proposed Lead Principal Investigator would be a suitable fit to steer the Research towards its envisaged goals. NCID reserves the right to suspend/terminate the Research if the mitigation plan is not satisfactory.



### Change in Host Institution

NCID's approval will be required should there be a change in Host Institution. The request must be made to NCID and be endorsed by the Director of Research (or equivalent) of both the existing and new Host Institutions.

### Change in Research Scope

29. NCID's approval will be required for any change(s) to the scope of the Research. This includes change, removal or addition of scientific objectives, deliverables/Key Performance Indicators or milestones.

30. If an activity/task initially meant to be carried out by the Investigators/Institutions is subcontracted or entrusted to a third-party, this would also constitute a change in Research and NCID's prior approval will be required.

### **Final Report**

#### Final Report

31. The Institutions are required to submit a Final Report **within three (3) months** following the end of the project.

#### Comprehensiveness of Report

32. Investigators will be required to give additional information about the progress and outcomes of any Research if the information submitted in the Final Report is deemed to be inadequate.

#### Final Claim/ Statement of Account

33. The Institutions are required to submit a Final Claims / Final Statement of Account **within one (1) month** from the end of the Term.

#### Debarring of Investigators

34. Lead Principal Investigators who fail to submit the Final Progress Report and/or Final Statement of Account within the stipulated timelines will be debarred. Debarred Lead Principal Investigators will not be eligible to submit new grant applications as Lead Principal Investigator for a period starting from the report submission deadline and ending one year from the date the overdue Final Report or Final Statement of Account is received by NCID.

### **Acknowledgement Guidelines**

35. All grantees should attribute their awards/grants to NCID Catalyst Grant.

36. At any time, during or after completion of the Research, the Institutions should acknowledge NCID for its Funding support in any publication (including the Internet) of any material based on or developed under the Research.



37. Published materials include scientific publications, books, journals, articles, newsletters, brochures, posters, websites, conference materials, case studies and reports.
38. In public communication, efforts should be made to acknowledge the partners under NCID. Support in media releases, interviews, speeches, videos, or any other media materials.
39. Where possible, the acknowledgement statement should follow:

"This research is supported by funds under the **NCID Catalyst Grant** and administered by the **National Centre for Infectious Diseases.**"

Please email [rco\\_grants@ncid.sg](mailto:rco_grants@ncid.sg) should you have any enquiries.

40. **Please be informed that post- tracking of the successful grant KPI will continue for 3 years from grant end date, by NIDRCO Secretariat.**

### **Conflict of Interest**

#### *Guiding Principles*

41. Investigators and other Research Personnel involved in the Research must ensure that the well-being of human subjects and research integrity are never compromised by the pursuit of personal gain, interest, or advantage. The robustness and validity of the Research may be called into question if biases of any form arise that could affect the planning, conduct, analysis, and reporting of the Research.
42. Actual or potential conflicts of interest may arise when the personal or family interests and loyalties of the Investigator or Research Personnel conflict with the interests of relevant parties, including NCID, Host Institution, Third Party Collaborators, sponsors, regulators, publishers and human research subjects or patients.
43. Some conflicts of interest may lead to undesirable outcomes, such as (but not limited to):
  - 43.1. biased judgments (for instance, in selection of human research subjects for enrolment, care provided to subjects, and use of subjects' confidential health information), resulting in loss or harm to the human research subject;
  - 43.2. biases in study design, data collection and analysis, adverse event reporting, or presentation and 43.3 publication of Research findings, thereby threatening scientific validity;
  - 43.3. impression of perception of improper action of some or all parties concerned.



### *Examples of Situations where Conflict of Interest might occur*

#### Financial Conflict of Interest

44. Financial conflicts of interest may potentially arise in the following situations (which are not exhaustive):

- 44.1. Receipt of incentive payments or payment per human research subject enrolled;
- 44.2. Receipt of significant payment of any sort (such as grants, compensation in the form of equipment, retainers for ongoing consultation, or honoraria) to support activities exclusive to the costs of conducting the Research, or for any other purpose not directly related to the reasonable costs of conducting the Research;
- 44.3. Receipt of compensation in any form that may be affected by or dependent on the Research outcome;
- 44.4. Entitlement to Intellectual Property rights over, or proprietary interests in, the article under Research, including patents, trademarks, copyrights, or licensing agreements;
- 44.5. Equity interest in other sponsors of the Research.

#### Non-Financial Conflict of Interest

45. Non-financial conflicts of interest may potentially arise in the following situations (which are not exhaustive):

- 45.1. Benefits or advantages, such as enhancement of an individual's career, education or professional reputation;
- 45.2. Privileges, such as access to privileged information, or free or discounted access to resources (such as services or facilities).

#### *Responsibilities on Conflict of Interest*

- 46. It is the responsibility of the Investigators and other Research Personnel to identify and disclose to the Host Institution All Conflicts of Interest, whether actual, potential, or perceived. Where there is uncertainty as to whether an interest could result in a conflict, Investigators and Research Personnel should err on the side of caution and disclose that interest for review by the Host Institution.
- 47. It is the responsibility of the Host Institution to put in place comprehensive policies and procedures to ensure that Investigators and other Research Personnel do not put themselves in a position or potential position of conflict of interest in relation to the Research, and to assess and address such conflicts if they do or potentially do arise.



48. At a minimum, the Host Institution's Conflict of Interest policy and procedures should —
- 48.1. be clear and unambiguous, transparent and readily accessible to Investigators and other Research Personnel;
  - 48.2. determine what is a Conflict of Interest situation that is required to be disclosed (conflicts of interest that may have an impact on human research subjects should, however, always be required to be disclosed);
  - 48.3. determine when disclosure of Conflict of Interest is most timely, and require Investigators and Research Personnel to provide updates and disclosures at regular intervals and as and when there are relevant changes in circumstances (such as, but not limited to, when new Collaboration Agreements are entered into, or existing ones modified);
  - 48.4. include possible follow-up action that may be taken to examine and to address conflict, where necessary;
  - 48.5. always prohibit payment or the giving of other incentives, or promises or offers of payment or the giving of other incentives (for instance, from a sponsor to a member of the Research Personnel) that are conditioned upon a particular Research result or tied to a successful Research outcome;
  - 48.6. be consistently applied and enforced through effective remedies and sanctions.
49. The Host Institution shall keep clear, comprehensive, and updated records of Conflicts of Interest that had been reported to it and which it had dealt with in relation to the Research.
50. Where requested, the Host Institution shall make its Conflict of Interest policy available to NCID.

#### **Dispute Resolution**

51. Any dispute or disagreement arising out of or relating to this Contract, or the breach thereof shall as far as reasonably possible be amicably resolved by negotiation between the parties.
52. In the event that any such dispute or disagreement arising out of or relating to this Contract, no party shall proceed to litigation or to any form of dispute resolution unless the parties have made reasonable effort to resolve the same through mediation in accordance with the mediation rules of the Singapore Mediation Centre. A party who receives a notice for mediation from another party shall consent and participate in the mediation process.
53. Additional guidelines for Financial Regulations can be referred at [Annex 2](#).



**Annex 1**

**List of Fundable/Non-fundable Items**

**Fundable Items**

<b>Manpower Category</b>	
General Policy	<p>For research assistants / research technicians / research fellows or any staff needed to support the research, NHG institutions shall use reasonable efforts to employ or otherwise engage Singapore Citizens and/or Singapore Permanent Residents.</p> <p>The term “research assistants” or “research technicians” or staff of equivalent qualifications shall mean staff performing mainly technical tasks as well as providing support functions distinct from the work carried out by the investigators.</p> <p>While these staff may provide intellectual input to the research, they are not required to be directly involved in the management of research or for providing leadership in the conception and creation of new knowledge, products, processes, methods, and systems. At the point of entry, research assistants / research technicians will typically not be required to possess PhD qualifications.</p> <p>For clarification, “research assistants” will not include existing nurses and other hospital workers whom may assist in the research.</p> <p>All NHG Institutions must continue to adhere to the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p><sup>1</sup> Please refer to <a href="http://www.mom.gov.sg">www.mom.gov.sg</a> for details of the Fair Consideration Framework.</p>
Salaries, CPF and fringe benefits including medical, dental, contribution to welfare fund, etc.	<p>Allowable as part of overall compensation to employees funded through the programme, provided such costs are incurred under formal established and consistently applied policies of the host institution. Employees refer to research team members such as research fellows, research engineers/scientists, research assistants/associates, biostatisticians, nurses, and technical officers.</p> <p>The salaries offered to staffs should be reasonable, in line with local market benchmarks and comply with formal established pay scale of the host institution that is consistently applied regardless of the source of funds.</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>





Bonus / Incentive payments	Allowable as part of a total compensation package, provided such payments are reasonable and are made according to a formal policy of the host institution that is consistently applied regardless of the source of funds.
Annual leave	Allowable for employees. The number of days of leave accorded to staff must be in accordance with formal policies of the host institution that is consistently applied regardless of the source of funds.
Staff insurance	Allowable, provided incurred under an established and consistently applied policy of the host institution.
<b>Equipment Category</b>	
General Policy	There shall be no purchase of all equipment <u>three (3) months before the completion date of the project</u> . The completion date of the project refers to latest approved completion date.
New Equipment (including hardware and software)	Allowable if needed specifically for the project.  Each equipment must be individually identified and its total cost inclusive of bank charges, delivery, and installation, etc. estimated. Any equipment purchases shall also be subjected to an established and consistently applied policy of the host institution.
<b>Other Operating Expenses Category</b>	
Consumables	Allowable. Examples of such costs are supplies and materials, laboratory consumables, animals and drugs which are necessary for the successful execution of the project.  All procurement of such items must be reasonable and are made according to the formal established and consistently applied policies of the host institution or by other collaborating institutions.
Use of services, equipment rental or lab spaces within the host Institution's or collaborating institution's central facilities	Allowable. The cost for the use of the services and central facilities owned by either the host institution or by other collaborating institutions, such as animal holding units, central laboratory services, are allowable and must be based on institutional fee schedules which are consistently applied regardless of source of funds.  Institutions may also be requested to certify that the fee structure is applied consistently.
Bank charges	Allowable as long as it is specifically related to the payments for consumables and equipment used in the research project.
Books and specialized journals relevant to the research	Purchase of books, specialized journals or lab manuals are 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.



Customs and import duties	Allowable as long as it is specifically related to importation of consumables and equipment used in the project.
Photocopying and printing charges	Allowable, inclusive of printing costs for posters specifically related to the research project.
Publications	<p>Allowable, if publication is from the grant/award. 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 grant funding body.</p>
Transportation, postage & courier services	<p>Allowable</p> <p>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.</p>
Payment to research participants and other related costs	<p>Allowable for payment to research participants, provided this is the scope of the research and has been provided for in the grant and approved. Claims will need to be supported by documents acknowledged by research participants when they receive the payment, including participants' details and signature, date of visit, amount paid and vouchers details (if applicable).</p> <p>Press advertisements costs for recruitment of research participants are also allowable.</p>
Conferences	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. Documentation for attendance/completion of conference/training will need to be submitted.
Others	Other miscellaneous costs which are directly related to the project may be allowed subjected to approval from the grant funding body based on the justifications provided. An example of such item is ethics review cost, equipment authorization fee etc.



### **Non-fundable Items**

<b>Manpower Category</b>	
Salaries of Lead Principal Investigator / Investigators / Visiting Professors researchers/ Collaborators / administrative support staff	Not allowable.
<b>Equipment Category</b>	
General purpose IT and communication equipment	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.  The procurement of such equipment must be reasonable and in accordance to the established and consistent institutional policies.
Cost of capital works and general infrastructure, office equipment, furniture, and fittings.	Not allowable.
<b>Other Operating Expenses Category</b>	
Teaching buy outs	Not allowable for the hiring of substitutes to perform the Investigators' teaching duties.
Stipend top-up for existing post-graduate scholarship holders	Not allowable.
Undergraduate stipend and tuition support	Not allowable.
Costs related to general administration and management	Not allowable. This includes common office equipment, such as furniture and fittings, office software, photocopiers, scanners, and office supplies.
Cost of office or laboratory space	Not allowable. This includes renovation and/or outfitting costs, rent, depreciation of buildings and equipment, and related expenditures such as water, electricity, general waste disposal and building/facilities maintenance charges.



Personal productivity equipment and tools, and communication expenses	Not allowable unless the use of mobile phones and other form of smart devices were indicated in the methodology for the Research.
Audit fees (Internal and external audit) and legal fees	Not allowable, except for audit fees for Institutions without approved grants from the National Medical Research Council (NMRC).
Entertainment	Not allowable.
Refreshment	Not allowable unless this is related to a hosted conference or workshop related to the Research.
Fines and Penalties	Not allowable.
Patent Application	Not allowable. This includes patent application filing, maintenance, legal and other related costs.
Professional membership fees of PIs/RFs/Ras funded by the grant	Not allowable.
Professional fees (including fees to consultants)	Not allowable unless specifically provided for and approved in the grant.
Staff retreat and team-building activities.	Not allowable.
Insurance premiums	Not allowable.
GST	Not allowable, if claimable from the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS).
Overseas travel	Not allowable.