

NATIONAL ASTHMA RESEARCH PROGRAM

FELLOWSHIP: GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

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General information for Applicants

Over the past ten years the Asthma Australia National Asthma Research Program has resulted in significant contributions to important discovery science, clinical, and population health research projects, as well as PhD Scholarships and research fellowships to promote emerging researchers in the field.

Asthma Australia invites applicants whose research relates to people with asthma, to apply for Asthma Australia Fellowship.

Applicants for the Asthma Australia Fellowship must be conducting research in Australia.

Please refer to the advertisement for specific eligibility requirements.

Submission process

- Applications should be submitted to <u>research@asthma.org.au</u>. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- Applications must include
 - Completed application form
 - o Completed consumer review form
 - Academic transcript
- Applicants must provide their supervisor the supervisor report to complete and submit to research@asthma.org.au.
- Applications must be lodged electronically in Microsoft Windows Word or PDF format, using the application form. Applications not received in this format will not be accepted.
- Left margin should be at least 2.5cm with content aligned text left
- Font (body) should be Calibri 11 point
- Applications should be in one document and named as follows: SURNAME OF APPLICANT FELLOWSHIPGRANT YEAR

Reporting expectations

If successful, applicants will provide 6 monthly progress reports to Asthma Australia. Progress reports will include:

- Any changes to the research,
- Any issues or delays which might impact the completion of the project,
- Progress against key milestones,
- Outcomes, and
- Publications, presentations, collaborations and additional funding which have arisen as a result of the research.

These should be provided in language appropriate for a lay audience.

Affiliation and acknowledgment

Successful applicants must ensure (wherever possible) Asthma Australia's contribution and support of the Project is acknowledged in publications or presentations related to the research.



Assessment Process

Applications are assessed for their eligibility by Asthma Australia staff. Eligible applications will undergo assessment by peer and consumer reviewers from Asthma Australia's Research Advisory Committee or delegate/s.

All applications are assessed against standardised assessment criteria which are described in this document. Applicants will receive a score out of 100 for both peer review and consumer reviews.

Peer Review

Peer reviewers assess applications on the extent to which they address the five criteria below. Applications will be assessed against the category descriptors on the following pages.

Peer Review Categories	Weight
Project details (scientific quality)	30%
Research Impact and Translation	20%
Track record	20%
Research environment	20%
Consumer Centred	10%

Consumer review

Consumer reviewers assess applications on the extent to which they address the criteria below, which are addressed in the Consumer Review Form.

Consumer Review Categories	Weight
Impact	25%
Equity	25%
Translation	25%
Consumer Centred	25%



Applicant Guide

Project Details (Scientific quality) (30%)

This section should clearly demonstrate the need and rationale behind the research, aims and objectives, scientific quality of the methodology, expected outcomes, timeframes and feasibility of the research.

Applicants should address the following for each section:

Background	 Describe the rationale/need for the research Provide relevant background to the project including scientific
	aspects and any other relevant material
Aims	 Describe the specific aims and objectives
	 Include a clear statement of the hypothesis to be tested or the
	research question to be addressed
Research Plan and	 Outline the research plan in detail, including as appropriate:
expected outcomes	 Detailed description of design
	 Techniques to be used
	 Methods of statistical analysis
	 Expected outcomes of the research project
Research Milestones	• Detail the key research milestones and approximate timeframe in
and timeframe	dot points, table or gantt chart form
Feasibility	 Outline the team capacity and timelines to achieve targets
	 Outline any previous relevant research which supports the
	feasibility of this research/method/approach
	 Investigator track record will also be used to assess this section

Impact and Translation (20%)

This relates to the potential knowledge gain about asthma nationally and internationally and the proposed impact on people with asthma. It includes the likely interest from other researchers, conference organisers, journals, community groups and policy makers. This should consider the translatable policy and practice implications of the research for people with asthma. Applicants should also address in this section, how the research addressed Asthma Australia's research priority areas.

Impact and Translation	 Outline the potential impact of this project for people with asthma
	 Describe the potential knowledge gains or fundamental outcomes of the research
	 Outline the expected pathway to translation for the research findings, and relevant considerations.
Research Priority	Outline how the project meets the Asthma Australia National Research
area	Program Priority(s). If a specific priority area has been outlined in the application information, this criteria must be addressed adequately for the application to be eligible.
	The priority areas are:
	 Prevention
	 Vulnerable groups



- Models and system
- Environment
- Influencing policy

Please see the Research Strategy for more detail.

Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria (if applicable) Asthma Australia is committed to advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research. Applications which specifically relate to the health of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People, must address the NHMRC Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria, which is as follows;

If applicable, please outline how your research addresses the Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria, which is as follows:

- Community engagement the proposal demonstrates how the research and potential outcomes are a priority for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with relevant community engagement by individuals, communities and/or organisations in conceptualisation, development and approval, data collection and management, analysis, report writing and dissemination of results.
- Benefit the potential health benefit of the project is demonstrated by addressing an important public health issue for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This benefit can have a single focus or affect several areas, such as knowledge, finance and policy or quality of life. The benefit may be direct and immediate, or it can be indirect, gradual and considered.
- Sustainability and transferability the proposal demonstrates how
 the results of the project have the potential to lead to achievable
 and effective contributions to health gain for Aboriginal and
 Torres Strait Islander peoples, beyond the life of the project. This
 may be through sustainability in the project setting and/or
 transferability to other settings such as evidence-based practice
 and/or policy. In considering this issue the proposal should
 address the relationship between costs and benefits.
- Building capability the proposal demonstrates how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and researchers will develop relevant capabilities through partnerships and participation in the project.

Track record (20%)

This section should detail the applicant's academic record and other achievements, which demonstrate the applicant's suitability for this scholarship. Reviewers will assess the applicant's academic transcript, supervisor's report and responses to the following sections:

- Medals, prizes and awards
- Publications and presentations
- Grants
- Student supervision
- Broader community engagement or relevant industry experience /work history.

Reviewers will consider this section relative to opportunity (see peer review guide).



Research environment and supervisor (20%)

Applicants must also provide a signed letter from their head of school, in addition to the application This should describe how the research environment will support the applicant to complete their Fellowship. For example, access to technical resources, additional expertise, equipment, facilities, infrastructure, and wider research/project team.

This will be used to assess the quality and suitability of the research environment, including resources and infrastructure available to the applicant and necessary for the completion of the research.

Consumer Centred (10%)

Asthma Australia is committed to being a consumer centred organisation, that meets the diverse needs of people with asthma and carers. This section prioritises research which is informed by consumers, driven by consumers, involving consumers. There is no single best method of consumer involvement, and all research should incorporate some consumer involvement. Refer to the table below for clarity on effective and meaningful consumer roles in research.

Consumer roles in Asthma Australia's National Research Program

Partner	Valued for significant knowledge
Expert	Being recognised for expertise
Advisor	Giving experiential advice to influence decisions
Advocate	Representing the broad views and experiences of people affected by asthma
Personal engagement	Providing a personal perspective though story-telling, surveys, focus groups and discussions

Adapted from: National Framework for Consumer Involvement in Cancer Control

Applicants should outline how relevant informed consumers have been involved during the development of the research proposal and/or the plan for how they will continue to participate in the research once underway. You do not need to name the specific consumer/s involved in the project, but describe who/how they came to be involved. Detail how and when they are involved in the research and what activities this will include.

Some examples of consumer involvement are:

- Provide informed input on strategic priority setting and direction
- Work with researchers to define or refine the research topic
- Provide informed input on research design and proposed methods
- Participate in project advisory committees
- Conduct lay reviews of research proposals
- Participate in recruiting participants to research
- Assist researchers to develop links to hard-to-reach populations
- Conduct reviews of participant information sheets and consent forms
- Assist researchers to pilot a research questionnaire
- Produce newsletters for members of their organisation that chart the progress of research



- Support the development of lay summaries
- Assist in disseminating information to the wider community

Consumer Review Form

Asthma Australia is committed to being a consumer-centred organisation, which meets the diverse needs of people with asthma and carers. We seek to champion the expressed needs of people with asthma and ensure their inclusion in our research program. We believe research should be informed by consumers, involve consumers and be meaningful for consumer lived experience.

Please submit the completed Consumer Review Form as part of your application. Your responses to these criteria will be scored by an Asthma Australia consumer representative.

The Consumer Review Form must be completed in plain English and be able to be considered by the consumer reviewer as a stand-alone document and without reference to information provided in the full application. Please provide a simple concise definition of key technical concepts used. We suggest you ask someone without detailed research knowledge to read the completed form, prior to submission, to check for understanding.

This should include; why the research is being conducted, aims and objectives, how you will do the research and what the benefits of the research will be as well as explanations of any technical terms used.

The Consumer Review Form must then describe how the proposed research addresses the following criteria:

Impact

Applicants should address which Asthma Australia research priority area/s this addresses, the need for the research, proposed outcomes and how these will lead to a benefit for people with asthma.

Explain the potential for the proposed research to have a direct, beneficial impact on the lives of people with asthma, in the short, medium and/or long term. Applicants should include what the benefit/s are expected to be, how likely it is they will occur, and when the benefits might be realised. This shouldn't be confused with the benefits for research participants.

Translation

This section should explain how the current study will be applied to the real world over the short, medium and long term to achieve the proposed impacts.

Consumers recognise that further steps are often required for the benefits of research to be realised. These steps might include additional research, changes in clinical practice, product development, regulation/law and/or policy changes. Consumers also recognise that outcomes achieved in a single body of work may make significant advances to the knowledge of asthma, but not necessarily benefit people with asthma immediately.

Applicants should identify the further steps required for benefit to be achieved and detail these, dot points or numbered timeframe are appropriate. These steps should detail the pathway to realise the benefit of the research, rather than the steps required to complete the research project. It is understood these steps will likely extend beyond the requesting funding period.

Applicants should also note here any potential barriers to translation and how they propose to address them.



Equity

This section should describe **who** benefits as a result of this research, and should address how the research benefits can be distributed to the wider population or how they benefit people most vulnerable to poor asthma outcomes (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, people experiencing socioeconomic hardship and people with severe asthma for example).

If a research project focuses on a specific population, the applicant should provide an explanation for the rationale behind this focus, including how relevant groups have been considered/consulted. The applicant should also provide explanation around if/how the benefits could be expanded or apply to other groups in the future.

This is not to say research cannot have a focus on a specific population group to be equitable. In fact, research which prioritises the health of vulnerable populations is a priority of the Asthma Australia research program. However, a study of a new treatment may be inequitable if the results can only benefit people in metropolitan areas or those who can access and afford them.

Consumer centred

Asthma Australia is committed to being a consumer-centred organisation, which meets the diverse needs of people with asthma and carers. Applicants should outline how relevant informed consumers have been involved during the development of the research proposal and/or the plan for how they will continue to participate in the research once underway.

Some examples of consumer involvement are:

- Work with researchers to define or refine the research topic
- Provide informed input on research design and proposed methods
- Conduct lay reviews of research proposals
- Participate in recruiting participants to research
- Assist researchers to develop links to hard-to-reach populations
- Conduct reviews of participant information sheets and consent forms
- Assist researchers to pilot a research questionnaire
- Support the development of lay summaries
- Assist in disseminating information to the wider community



Peer Review Guide

Peer reviewers should assess applications on the extent to which they address the five criteria below. Applications will be assessed against the category descriptors on the following pages.

Peer Review Categories	Weight
Quality and feasibility of the research proposal (scientific quality)	30%
Research Impact and Translation	20%
Track record	20%
Research environment	20%
Consumer Centred	10%

Project Details (Scientific quality) (30%)

In their assessment, peer reviewers should consider:

Background

- Is there a clear need for the research?
- Has the method/framework/approach been partially tested?

Aims

- What outcome is sought in the proposed study and what is the measure?
- Is it well integrated and adequately developed?

Research Plan and expected outcomes

- Is the design appropriate for the aims of the research?
- What are the strengths and weakness of the study and its design?
- Have major problems been overlooked? Have alternative approaches been considered?
- Is the plan well informed by knowledge of the literature?

Research Milestones and timeframe

• Are key milestones and timeframes outlined? Are the reasonable?

Feasibility and sustainability

- Will the research plan successfully address the states hypothesis or research objective?
- Are the goals concrete and achievable?
- Is the investigating team appropriate? Do they have the right skills and experience?
- Is the sustainability of the solution addressed (if applicable), beyond the life of the project?

Description	Weight
The proposal has a research plan that:	
is well-defined, highly coherent and strongly developed	Outstanding
has a near flawless study design	(10)
is highly feasible with all the required expertise, research tools and techniques	
established	
would be highly competitive with the best, similar research proposals internationally	
is clearly defined, coherent and well developed	Excellent
has a strong study design	(9–8)
is feasible with all required tools, techniques and expertise established	
is likely to be competitive with strong, similar research proposals internationally	
is generally clear in its scientific plan and is logical	Very good
raises only very few minor concerns with respect to the study design	(7–6)



• is feasible in all, or almost all areas - required techniques and tools either established	
or nearly established	
may not be highly competitive with similar research proposals internationally	
• is generally solid in its scientific plan, but may not always be clear in its intent and	Good
may lack some focus	(5–4)
raises several minor concerns regarding the study design	
raises doubts about the feasibility in some areas	
• is not likely to be competitive with similar research proposals internationally	
is somewhat unclear in its scientific approach and goals	Marginal
contains some major design flaws	(3–2)
raises major concerns about the feasibility and thus the likelihood of successful	
completion	
is unclear in its scientific approach and goals	Unsatisfactory
contains several major study design flaws	(1)
raises several major concerns about the feasibility and thus the likelihood of	
successful completion	
contains a research plan which does not seem to be feasible	Poor
is unlikely to be successfully completed	(0)
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Impact and Translation (20%)

Peer reviewers should consider the five Asthma Australia research priority areas in their assessment. If applicants are asked to address a specific priority area to be eligible for the grant, reviewers will be advised. Otherwise, applicants can address one or more area.

- Research that focuses on primary and secondary **prevention**
- Research, interventions and other methods of enquiry which seek to address the inequity of asthma impact on **vulnerable groups** in Australia.
- Research or design and testing of models and systems which seek to address the systemic contributions to asthma health or illness.
- Research which explores and minimises the impact of the changing **environment** on asthma health.
- **Influencing policy** through the consolidation of our experience, insights and consultations with the wider research community

Descriptions	Mark
will result in a highly significant advance in knowledge in this field which addresses	Outstanding (10-
an issue of great importance to people with asthma	9)
Has a strong focus on one or more of the National Asthma Research Program priority	
areas	
Will make an excellent contribution to the applicant's future career aspirations	
will advance knowledge in this field which addresses an issue of importance to	Very good (8-6)
people with asthma	
Has a focus on the National Asthma Research Program priority area/s	
Will make a good contribution to the applicant's future career aspirations	
may incrementally advance knowledge in the field which addresses an issue of some	Satisfactory (5-3)
importance to people with asthma	
Has some implications for a National Asthma Research Program priority area	
Will make a satisfactory contribution to the applicant's future career aspirations	



- addresses an issue of some concern to people with asthma
- Has **no implications** for a National Asthma Research Program priority area
- Will make a **limited** contribution to the applicant's future career aspirations

Poor/limited (2-1)

Track record (20%)

Reviewers should use the applicant's academic transcript, supervisor report and responses to the following sections:

- Medals, prizes and awards
- Publications and presentations (including posters)
- Grants
- Research student supervision experience
- Broader community engagement or relevant industry experience/work history

This section should be considered in relation to opportunity with regard to factors such as:

- Career disruption pregnancy, major illness/injury or carer responsibilities, interruptions
 caused by major social issues (eg pandemics);
- Clinical, administrative and teaching load;
- Available resources including situations where research is being conducted in remote or isolated communities;
- Building relationships of trust with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities over long periods and subsequent impact on track record and productivity;
- Relocation of an applicant and his/her research laboratory or clinical practice setting or other similar circumstances that impact upon research productivity;
- Typical performance (including publications) for the field in question.

Descriptions	Mark
GPA 6-7 in related coursework	Outstanding (10-9)
• >10 1 st /senior author publications in the area	
>10 middle author publications in the area	
CI on 3 or more NHMRC/ARC or other similar competitive grant	
applications	
Awards, prizes and other presentations	
Previous full-time research including current studies, or professional	
experiences	
Demonstrates strong community engagement activities	
GPA 6-7 in related coursework	Very good (8-6)
>5 1 st /senior author publications in the area	
>5 middle author publications in the area	
CI on 1 or more NHMRC/ARC or other similar competitive grant	
applications	
Awards, prizes and other presentations	
Demonstrates strong community engagement activities	
GPA 4-5 in related coursework	Satisfactory (5-3)
1-4 1 st /senior author publications in the area	
1-4 middle author publications in the area	
CI on 1 or more philanthropic or other grants	
Awards, prizes and other presentations	
Research project during training (including electives or volunteer work)	



•	Demonstrates some community engagement activities	
•	Few awards, prizes and other presentations	Poor/limited (2-1)
•	Demonstrates little industry relevant experience	
•	GPA <3 in related coursework	

Research Environment (20%)

Reviewers should also consider the suitability of the research environment and supervisor, using the supervisors report.

Descriptions	Mark
The research environment	Outstanding
Is well matched to the applicants proposed project	(10-9)
Offer outstanding quality research support systems and mentoring for the applicant	· · ·
 Research team has substantial success in attracting external grants 	
The research environment	Very good (8-6)
Is suited to the applicants proposed project	
Offer good quality research support systems and mentoring for the	
applicant	
Research team has some success in attracting external grants	
The research environment	Satisfactory (5-
Is somewhat suited to the applicants proposed project	3)
Offer satisfactory research support systems and mentoring for the applicant	
Research team has limited success in attracting external grants	
The research environment	Poor/limited (2-
Is not suited to the applicants proposed project	1)
Offer limited research support systems and mentoring for the applicant	
Research team has not had success in attracting external grants	

Consumer Centred (10%)

Asthma Australia is committed to being a consumer centred organisation, that meets the diverse needs of people with asthma and carers. This section prioritises research which is informed by consumers, driven by consumers, involving consumers. Peer reviews should consider the table below in their review for types of consumer roles in research.

Consumer roles in Asthma Australia's National Research Program

Partner	Valued for significant knowledge
Expert	Being recognised for expertise
Advisor	Giving experiential advice to influence decisions
Advocate	Representing the broad views and experiences of people affected by asthma
Personal	Providing a personal perspective though story-telling, surveys, focus groups and
engagement	discussions

Adapted from: National Framework for Consumer Involvement in Cancer Control



Description	Weight	
The planned research:		
has very high and meaningful consumer engagement throughout all aspects of the	Outstanding	
project	(10)	
 engages a very large number of consumers in several roles (see table above) in the project 		
will result in very high awareness and understanding of asthma in the community		
 has high and meaningful consumer engagement and engages consumers meaningfully throughout most aspects of the project 	Excellent (9–8)	
 engages a large number of consumers in different roles (see table above) in the project will result in high awareness and understanding of asthma in the community 		
 has strong and relevant consumer engagement throughout many aspects of the project 	Very good	
 engages some consumers in at least 2 different roles (see table above) in the project 	(7–6)	
will result in clear awareness and understanding of asthma in the community		
has good consumer engagement throughout some aspects of the project	Good	
engages consumers who may have different roles (see table above) in the project	(5–4)	
will result in raised awareness and understanding of asthma in the community		
has consumer engagement throughout an aspect of the project	Marginal	
engages consumers in a role (see table above) in the project	(3–2)	
will result in slightly raised awareness or understanding of asthma in the community		
 has consumer engagement throughout an aspect of the project that is not meaningful or relevant 	Unsatisfactory (1)	
engages consumers without a clear role (see table above) in the project		
• will result in the same awareness or understanding of asthma that currently exists in the community		
has no consumer engagement	Poor	
• will result in misinformation or a decline in the awareness or understanding of asthma in the community	(0)	



Consumer Review Guide

Consumer reviewers independently score each of the review criteria on a scale of 1-10. The scoring guide below and the detailed description of each criterion is provided to consumer reviewers and is provided here for applicants' information.

De	Descriptions Mark		
•	Proposal is of the highest quality, provides all the information required, is easily understood, and there is no possibility for improvement.	10	
•	An impressive proposal that provides all required information clearly and in detail.	9	
•	The proposal provides most of the information required in a clear and detailed way. Little else could be included.	8	
•	The proposal is sound but could be improved with addition of detail. The response contains minor gaps, or slight confusion in some parts.	6-7	
•	A barely acceptable proposal which addresses the criterion but provides minimal detail, causes confusion and/or includes some irrelevant information.	4-5	
•	The proposal suffers serious inadequacies such as little or no detail, irrelevant information and/or causes confusion.	3	
•	The proposal does not address the question except in the most fleeting way or is inappropriate to the question. The information provided is very brief or generally irrelevant.	2	
•	There is no proposal, or a response that does not address the question. Nowhere else in the Consumer Review Form is there any information relevant to the question.	1	

In assigning your score, please refer to the general guide to scoring depicted on the scale and considering the following key points:

Impact	Has the researcher explained the extent of the problem and its importance?
	 importance? Has the researcher explained how the research will lead to tangible benefit/s to people with asthma? Are there a number of benefits?
	 Has the researcher indicated the probability, magnitude and/or duration of these potential benefits?
	 Has the researcher indicated when in the future the potential benefits might be achieved?
	 Does the research address at least one Asthma Australia research priority area?
Equity	 Has the researcher explained how the findings could be generalised or applied to other population groups who are not part of the research? Does the research have the potential to provide benefit across all relevant persons groups and/or places?
	 Does the research address an under-studied or under-served population? Does the research address a population with a high burden of illness or poorer outcomes?



Translation

- Has the researcher explained how the research findings may be translated or further developed to enable translated into meaningful outcome for people with asthma?
- Do you understand when in the future the benefits might be achieved?
- Has the researcher provided a description of the broad steps or stages required to reach the stated benefits of the research?

Consumer involvement

- Has consumer consultation into the development of this specific project already been undertaken?
- Are there formal processes/structures in place that link the researchers with consumers?
- Is the nature of consumer involvement clearly described, including the matters on which consumers will be consulted and the mechanisms by which this consultation will occur, and is the involvement two-way?
- Has an individual consumer, or a consumer organisation, agreed to act as the consumer representative on this project?
- Given the nature of the research, does the extent and type/s of consumer involvement seem appropriate? Eg we would not expect a laboratory research project to include extensive consumer involvement
- Is there a plan for ongoing consumer involvement in the research?
- Has the researcher considered the role of consumers in the translation of their findings?