



NHMRC/NAFOSTED JOINT CALL FOR COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS SCHEME-SPECIFIC PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The following sections provide additional information about the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)/ National Foundation for Science and Technology Development of Vietnam (NAFOSTED) Joint Call for Collaborative Research Projects (NHMRC/NAFOSTED Joint Call for Research) including scheme-specific objectives, critical dates, assessment criteria, eligibility rules and funding details, and must be read in conjunction with the following supporting documents available via Grant Connect (GO ID: GO839):

- NHMRC Funding Rules 2018
- Guide to NHMRC Peer Review 2018, incorporating the scheme-specific Peer Review Guidelines
- NHMRC Advice and Instructions to Applicants 2018, incorporating the scheme-specific Advice and Instructions to Applicants
- NHMRC Funding Agreement
- Law no. 29/2013/QH13
- Circular no. 37/2014/TT-BKHCN
- Circular no. 55/2015/TTLT-BTC-BKHCN
- Circular no. 27/2015/TTLT-BKHCN-BTC
- Decree no. 23/2014/ND-CP
- Circular no. 40/2017/TT-BTC

It is recommended that you read the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2018* before reading these scheme-specific funding rules.

Applicants should be aware of the relevant NAFOSTED requirements for this call, as highlighted where necessary throughout this document.

Note: Vietnamese applicants wishing to make contact with NHMRC must do so via their Australian Chief Investigator A (CIA) and relevant Research Administration Officer (RAO) in the first instance.

1 ABOUT THE CALL

1.1 Background

On 29 November 2016, NAFOSTED and NHMRC held the first joint networking symposium for health and medical researchers in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Researchers from Vietnam and Australia came together at the symposium to share research relevant to the three symposium themes of infectious diseases, maternal/child health and public health. The symposium sought to:

- deepen collaboration between health and medical researchers in both countries
- identify respective capacities and complementarities within each country, and
- build linkages and pinpoint potential future collaborations.

Following on from this symposium, this grant opportunity has been developed jointly by NAFOSTED and NHMRC.

1.2 Eligible Granting Activities and Objectives

Eligible grant activities under this joint call for research are research into one or more of the following themes:

- Infectious Diseases
- Maternal/Child Health
- Public Health.

This call will **not** fund research applications outside of the three themes listed above.

The specific objectives of this joint grant opportunity are to:

- generate new knowledge in infectious diseases, maternal/child health and/or public health that can be translated into health policy and practice to benefit human health
- foster co-investment with international partners in research programs of joint interest that will involve researchers based in Vietnam and Australia
- foster the exchange of scientific skills and technological capabilities between Vietnam and Australia, and
- build further collaborations between Vietnamese and Australian researchers.

1.3 Definitions

The following definitions are provided to clarify terminological differences between NHMRC and NAFOSTED documentation.

Administering Institution (AI): the organisation that will be responsible for the funding agreement. There should be an Australian AI and a Vietnamese AI for each application.

Chief Investigator A (CIA): Australian lead/principal investigator

Chief Investigator B (CIB): Vietnamese lead/principal investigator

Chief Investigator C to J (CIC-CIJ): Additional investigators from either Australia or Vietnam

Research Administration Officer (RAO): the officer nominated by the Administering Institution as its contact person.

2 CRITICAL DATES

Wednesday 6	Applications open in NHMRC's Research Grants Management System
December 2017	(RGMS) and NAFOSTED's Online Management System (OMS)
Wednesday 17	Minimum data due for applications in RGMS
January 2018 by	
5pm AEDT	
Wednesday 28	Applications close in RGMS and OMS
February 2018 by	
5pm AEDT	
June 2018*	Grant Review Panel (GRP) Meeting
August/September	Funding Outcomes notified
2018*	

^{*}Dates subject to change

Application outcomes are notified when peer review processes are finalised and Ministerial approvals are obtained. Refer to section 11.4 and 11.6 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018 for further details.

Minimum data must be entered into RGMS by **1.00 pm** Indochina Time/**5.00 pm** Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT) on the specified due date to allow NHMRC to start sourcing suitable panel members. Applicants are also reminded to complete the recommended fields below with correct information. Using placeholder text such as "text", "synopsis" or "xx" etc. is not acceptable as minimum data.

Minimum data for the NHMRC/NAFOSTED Joint Call for Research consists of the following fields in NHMRC's RGMS:

- General (all sections)
- A-RC Research Classification (all sections)
- A-RT Research Team including the lead Vietnamese CIB name and other team members if known (note: team members other than CIA and CIB may be added or deleted after the minimum data deadline until the close of applications).

Research Administration Officers (RAOs) are not required to certify applications for the purpose of minimum data; applications should only be certified once complete and ready for submission (section 10.4 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018 and section 6 of the NHMRC Advice and Instructions to Applicants 2018).

Completed applications must be submitted to:

- NHMRC in RGMS by 1.00 pm Indochina Time/5.00 pm AEDT on the specified closing date, and
- NAFOSTED in OMS by 5.00 pm Indochina Time/9.00 pm AEDT on the specified closing date.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Note: As this grant opportunity is for international collaborations and will be assessed by a joint Australian and Vietnamese GRP, applicants must provide consent to NHMRC to share application information with international assessors.

3 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed and ranked against the Assessment Criteria listed below:

- 1. Scientific quality of the project including feasibility (25%)
- 2. Significance of the expected outcomes relative to aims and objectives of the call (25%)
- 3. Track record of the team relative to opportunity (25%). Note: This will be an indication of the team's ability to undertake research and deliver outcomes of benefit to both Vietnam and Australia
- 4. Added value of international collaboration (25%)

Applications are assessed relative to opportunity, taking into consideration any career disruptions (see section 6.2 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018).

Applicants are expected to address the four assessment criteria in their application and should closely consider the relevant category descriptors (Attachment A). The category descriptors are used by GRP members to score each application against each criterion. This ensures a consistent framework by which applications are scored.

3.1 Health Research Involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

All applications that are identified as relating to the improvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health must also address the *Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria*. Further information on how these criteria are assessed is provided in *section 6.3* of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2018*.

3.2 Budget

Proposed budgets are reviewed based on the requirements of each application and the peer reviewers' (and/or senior NAFOSTED and NHMRC scientists') knowledge of the associated costs.

4 HOW TO APPLY

Each application must have a CIA (Australian) and a CIB (Vietnamese). The CIA and CIB are to be the leaders of the Australian and Vietnamese research teams, respectively.

4.1 Applicant team

NHMRC

The CIA and Administering Institution will need to be Australian. This is for administrative purposes only. We respect that there are two lead Chief Investigators (equivalent to CIA), one from Australia and one from Vietnam for every collaborative proposal submitted. However, we request the Australian lead Chief Investigator be listed as the CIA and the Vietnamese lead Chief Investigator be listed as CIB. Further information on RGMS can be found on the NHMRC website.

NAFOSTED

The CIB and Administering Institution will need to be Vietnamese. The Vietnamese Principal Investigator (CIB) <u>must</u> submit all application documentation through NAFOSTED's Online Management System (OMS). See section 4.2 for the list of documents required. Vietnamese applicants should refer to information on the <u>NAFOSTED website</u> and in the *NHMRC-NAFOSTED Advice and Instructions to Applicants*.

4.2 Application Documentation

The documents making up the joint grant proposal are a key source of information for assessors from both Australia and Vietnam.

The Australian CIA must ensure the following documents are submitted via RGMS before the close of the application round:

- application details Parts A and B
- joint grant proposal, in English.

See the NHMRC-NAFOSTED Advice and Instructions to Applicants for further detail.

Step-by-step instructions for entering application information in RGMS are provided in the *Applying for Grants* user guide available on the <u>NHMRC website</u>.

The Vietnamese Principal Investigator Applicant (CIB) must submit the following documents to NAFOSTED via OMS in both English and Vietnamese:

NAFOSTED application form

- Joint grant proposal
- Budget spreadsheet
- Scientific curriculum vitae.

Instructions and Frequently Asked Questions to register the application are provided in the *OMS* system available on the <u>NAFOSTED website</u>.

Note: The joint grant proposal submitted to NHMRC in RGMS and to NAFOSTED in OMS must be **identical** – see section 5 on eligibility (below) for further information.

A pre-formatted Microsoft Word document for the joint grant proposal in both languages can be downloaded from both the Grant Connect and NAFOSTED websites.

Compliance with page limits and formatting requirements are essential. See *section 10* of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2018* for further information.

5 ELIGIBILTY

NHMRC

Australian applicants seeking NHMRC funds must comply with the eligibility requirements outlined in section 7 of the NHMRC Funding Rules 2018.

NAFOSTED

Eligibility requirements for Chief Investigator B (CIB):

- a) Currently working for a registered scientific and technology organisation at the time of the submission. If the CIB is not currently employed by any scientific and technological organisation, he/she must be supported by a reputable Vietnamese scientific and technological organisation that agrees to be the host institution,
- b) Having proper research qualification and expertise that match the requirements of the project being proposed, including: PhD degree or associate professor/professor title, relevant research results published in prestigious international journals, please refer to <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/journals-nc-10.1007/journal
- c) Commit sufficient time to complete the research being proposed as per regulations. In case the CIB is overseas for business trip, his/her time abroad must not exceed 1/3 of the total project conduct time, and
- d) Abide by conditions for CIB registration and participation as per regulations. CIB, who have been previously funded by NAFOSTED but not completely finished their project at the deadline of the proposal submission, are considered as ineligible. Each CIB can lead only one project funded by NAFOSTED and be a research member of other projects at the same time.

Other Vietnamese applicants on the one team must comply with the eligibility requirements outlined in *Article 10* of the *Circular no. 37/2014/TT-BKHCN*.

5.1 Submission of Application to NHMRC and NAFOSTED

As this joint grant opportunity is utilising both NHMRC's RGMS and NAFOSTED's OMS, two concurrent applications must be submitted. In addition, NAFOSTED requires hardcopy submission of documents as outlined in the NHMRC-NAFOSTED Advice and Instructions to Applicants.

Joint grant proposals submitted to NHMRC and NAFOSTED must be identical to each other and the hard copy submission must match the electronic soft copy submissions. Submissions that are not identical in content will not proceed to further review.

5.2 Multiple Grant Eligibility

Researchers can only be lead/principal investigator (i.e. CIA for Australians or CIB for Vietnamese) on one application and a Chief Investigator (not lead/principal investigator but listed as CIC - CIJ) on one other under this call. All applications that do not meet this eligibility requirement will be ruled ineligible and will be excluded from further consideration in accordance with Section 10.7 of the NHMRC Funding Rules.

Applicants may hold, or apply for, other NHMRC grants during the period of funding offered under this call. However, the time commitments of the Chief Investigators will be carefully considered in the review of the application.

Applicants can only apply for one NAFOSTED grant during the period of funding offered under this call.

It is the responsibility of all CIs to ensure that they review the eligibility requirements of other schemes they may apply to during this time, prior to submission of an application.

5.3 Eligibility Check

Eligibility checks will be undertaken by both NHMRC and NAFOSTED to ensure that applications fit within the objectives and scope of this call (as detailed in *section 1.2*) and the eligibility criteria as detailed in *section 5*. Those that are assessed as outside the remit of the call will not proceed to further review.

5.4 Research Teams

Proposals must involve a genuine collaboration involving at least one research team from Vietnam and Australia to be eligible. A research team must involve more than the two lead CIs. The joint application should have a minimum of three CIs but must not exceed ten CIs. The research project requires joint input of both the Vietnamese and Australian teams.

5.5 Administering Institution

For Vietnamese researchers: applications must be certified by an Administering Institution and submitted through the RAO of an approved NAFOSTED Administering Institution. Prospective applicants and institution should refer to the <u>Circular no. 37/2014/TT-BKHCN</u> and the <u>Law no. 29/2013/QH13</u>.

For Australian researchers: applications must be certified and submitted through the RAO of an approved NHMRC Administering Institution. Prospective applicants and institutions should refer to the NHMRC Administering Institutions Policy.

6 FUNDING

Funding for the Australian component is provided to the Australian Administering Institution, which is responsible for the administration of the grant (refer to the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2018*, *sections 8.3* and *12*).

Funding for the Vietnamese component is provided to the Vietnamese Administering Institution, which is responsible for the administration of the grant and has a 3713 account at Vietnam State Treasury. Please refer to <u>Circular no. 55/2015/TTLT-BTC-BKHCN</u> and <u>Circular no. 27/2015/TTLT-BKHCN-BTC</u>.

6.1 Level and Duration of Funding

NAFOSTED and NHMRC have allocated a total of up to \$6 million AUD (\$3 million AUD each) to support collaborative research projects under this grant opportunity.

Grants will be awarded for a total duration of up to three years and applicants are required to fully and clearly justify their requested budget in order to demonstrate value for money. The GRP will consider the requested budget and may reduce the budget to ensure the project can be achieved, while ensuring value for money.

Applicants will be required to submit two budgets with their proposal, a Vietnamese and an Australian budget.

To support multiple collaborative efforts, NHMRC will limit individual applications to a maximum of \$500,000 (AUD) for the duration of the grant. NAFOSTED will also limit the budget funded for each project, noting the total funding is only available for up to eight projects, based on the significance and contribution of the proposals to science and technology development.

For a more detailed explanation on how to prepare the budget in the application, refer to sections 3.4 and 3.7 of the scheme-specific Advice and Instructions to Applicants.

6.2 Use of Funds

NHMRC: NHMRC will only fund those aspects of the application that will be performed in Australia, and will only provide salary support to eligible Australian Chief Investigators and research support staff. Associate Investigators, Vietnamese CIs including the CIB (CIA equivalent), and other Vietnamese-based research support staff cannot draw a salary from NHMRC funds, nor can requests be made in the NHMRC budget for Direct Research and Equipment costs that will be incurred in Vietnam or by the Vietnamese applicants.

Additionally, applicants should refer to *section 8.3.2* of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2018* for details on allowable budget items for Research Support Schemes. Applicants are required to clearly justify the requested budget in order to demonstrate value for money.

NAFOSTED: NAFOSTED funds must be used to support research activities undertaken by Vietnamese team members, including: labor cost for all the Vietnamese scientists as member of research team, materials and supplies, tools and equipment, travel expenses (for domestic travel or visits to Australia for research purposes), accommodation, outsourcing services, other direct costs (stationery, workshop organising, booking accommodation and local travel costs of Australian researchers staying in Vietnam), overheads and common supporting expenses (for the administering institution). Details on funding guidelines refer to Circular no. 55/2015/TTLT-BTC-BKHCN, Circular no. 27/2015/TTLT-BKHCN-BTC, Circular no. 40/2017/TT-BTC.

6.3 Travel Costs

Travel costs associated with the conduct of field research, collaborative workshops and symposia to facilitate international team communication are permissible in the budget proposal as Direct Research Costs. Requests for these funds must be fully justified in the application.

7 ASSESSMENT PROCESS

7.1 Overview of Process

Applications that meet the objectives and scope of the call (as detailed in *section 1.2*), as well as all eligibility requirements (as detailed in *section 5*), will progress to peer review. The *scheme-specific Peer Review Guidelines* outline the peer review process for this call.

7.1.1 GRP Meeting

The GRP will conduct a videoconference to finalise the review of all applications. For further information on the GRP meeting, see the *Guide to NHMRC Peer Review 2018* and *schemespecific Peer Review Guidelines* (available via GrantConnect).

8 GRANT ADMINISTRATION

Administrative obligations and processes specific to NHMRC/NAFOSTED Joint Call for *Research* awardees are outlined below. Unless otherwise stated, these are in addition to the general requirements set out in the *NHMRC Funding Agreement* and section 12 of the *NHMRC Funding Rules* 2018.

8.1 Reporting

NHMRC: The requirements for financial and scientific reporting are as described in *section 12* of the *NHMRC Funding Rules 2018*.

NAFOSTED: The requirements for financial and scientific reporting are as described in section 3 and 4 of <u>Law no. 29/2013/QH13</u>.

9 ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Category Descriptors

Attachment A: Category Descriptors

The following category descriptors are used as a guide to scoring an application against each of the assessment criteria: 1) Scientific quality of the project including feasibility, 2) Significance of the expected outcomes relative to aims and objectives of call, 3) Track record of the team – relative to opportunity, 4) Added value of international collaboration. While the category descriptors provide peer reviewers with some benchmarks to appropriately score each application, it is not essential that all descriptors relating to a given score be met. The descriptors are a guide to a "best fit" outcome. *Categories 1-3 are not worthy of funding. Categories 4-7 are worthy of funding, subject to the availability of resources.*

Category	Scientific Quality including feasibility (25%)	Significance of the Expected Outcomes relative to aims and objectives of call (25%)	Track Record of team – relative to opportunity (25%)	Added value of international collaboration (25%)
7 Outstanding by International Standards	The proposal has a research plan that: • has objectives that are well-defined, highly coherent and strongly developed scientific approach relevant to the scope of the research call • is a near flawless design • is without question highly feasible given that all of the required expertise and research tools and techniques are present in the relevant research environment(s)	 will result in a highly significant advance in knowledge in this field which addresses an issue of great importance to human health will translate into fundamental novel approaches in infectious diseases, maternal/child health and/or public health that translate into policy and practice for Vietnam and Australia will very likely be the subject of invited plenary presentations at national and international meetings will likely result in highly influential publications 	Relative to opportunity, the applicant team: • has expertise that specifically targets the proposed research both in terms of its depth and breadth • has over the last five years, a combined record of research achievement quality (as exemplified by the top five publications of each CI) and productivity (totality of outputs) and/or translation into practice that is outstanding by international standards commensurate with their field of research • has senior members with outstanding national and international reputations in the field of research relevant to the application • may involve junior members	The proposed collaboration should result in: • outstanding demonstration that the team will utilise expertise between the two countries • outstanding outcomes from the international partnership will be significant to both Vietnam and Australia both in terms of knowledge transfer and impact

6 Excellent	The proposal has a research plan that: • has objectives that are well-defined, highly coherent and strongly developed scientific approach relevant to the scope of the research call • is well designed • is highly feasible given that all of the required expertise and research tools and techniques are present in the relevant research environment(s)	The planned research: • will result in a significant advance in knowledge in this field which addresses an issue of significant importance to human health • is likely to translate into fundamental novel approaches in infectious diseases, maternal/child health and/or public health that translate into policy and practice for Vietnam and Australia • will likely be the subject of invited plenary presentations at national and international meetings • will likely result in influential publications	who are very strong contributors to the overall team quality & capability Relative to opportunity, the applicant team: • has expertise that is highly relevant to the proposed research both in terms of its depth and breadth • has over the last five years, a combined record of research achievement quality (as exemplified by the top five publications of each CI) and productivity (totality of outputs) and/or translation into practice that is excellent by international standards commensurate with their field of research • has senior members with excellent national and/or international reputations in the field of research relevant to the application • may involve junior members who are strong contributors to the overall team quality & capability • Relative to opportunity, the	The proposed collaboration should result in: • highly significant demonstration that the team will utilise expertise between the two countries • highly significant outcomes from the international partnership will be significant to both Vietnam and Australia both in terms of knowledge transfer and impact The proposed
Very Good	research plan that: • has very clear objectives and scientific approach	 will advance knowledge in this field which addresses an issue of importance to human health may translate into fundamental 	 raises only minor concerns regarding the depth and breadth of expertise relevant 	collaboration should result in: significant demonstration that

	relevant to the scope of the research call raises only minor concerns regarding study design is feasible given that all of the required expertise and research tools and techniques are present in the relevant research environment(s)	 novel approaches in infectious diseases, maternal/child health and/or public health that translate into policy and practice for Vietnam and Australia could be the subject of invited plenary presentations at international and national meetings is likely to result in some very strong publications 	 to the proposed research has over the last five years, a combined record of research achievement quality (as exemplified by the top five publications of each CI) and productivity (totality of outputs) and/or translation into practice which places it well above average for their peers or cohort members have very good and growing national and/or international reputations in the field of research relevant to the application may involve junior members who are valuable contributors to the team quality & capability 	the team will utilise expertise between the two countries • significant outcomes from the international partnership will be significant to both Vietnam and Australia both in terms of knowledge transfer and impact
4 Good	The proposal has a research plan that: • has clear objectives and scientific approach relevant to the scope of the research call • raises several areas of concern regarding study design • is generally feasible, although some concerns exist about ongoing need to develop or obtain	 The planned research: addresses an issue of importance to human health may translate into fundamental novel in infectious diseases, maternal/child health and/or public health that translate into policy and practice Vietnam and Australia is unlikely to be the subject of invited plenary presentations at international meetings may result in some good but not excellent publications 	Relative to opportunity, the applicant team: • members have track records in fields relevant to the proposed research but with several potentially significant concerns regarding depth and breadth of relevant expertise • has, over the last five years, a combined record of research achievement quality (as exemplified by the top five publications of each CI) and productivity	The proposed collaboration should result in: • some demonstration that the team will utilise expertise between the two countries • some outcomes from the international partnership will be significant to both Vietnam and Australia both in terms of knowledge

	some research tools or techniques		 (totality of outputs) and/or translation into practice, that places them above average for their peers/cohort members have good and growing national and/or international reputations in the field of research relevant to the application 	transfer and impact
3 Marginal	The proposal has a research plan that: • is somewhat unclear on its objectives and scientific approach relevant to the scope of the research call • raises several areas of concern about feasibility and/or study design and thus the likelihood of successful completion	 addresses an issue of some importance to human health is unlikely to translate into fundamental novel approaches in infectious diseases, maternal/child health and/or public health that translate into policy and practice for Vietnam and Australia may result in some publications 	Relative to opportunity, the applicant team: • members have made contributions to the field of research but there are significant concerns regarding the depth and breadth of relevant expertise • has over the last five years, a combined record of research achievement quality (as exemplified by the top five publications of each CI) and productivity (totality of outputs) and/or translation into practice, that places them at an average level for their peers/cohort • members have established national reputations but do not yet have strong international profiles	The proposed collaboration is likely to result in: Ilimited demonstration that the team will utilise expertise between the two countries Ilimited outcomes from the international partnership will be significant to both Vietnam and Australia both in terms of knowledge transfer and impact

2 Unsatisfactory	The proposal has a research plan that: • is unclear on its objectives and scientific approach relevant to the scope of the research call • contains several major study design flaws • raises several major concerns about feasibility and thus the likelihood of successful completion	 The planned research: addresses an issue of some concern to human health extremely unlikely to translate into fundamental novel approaches in infectious diseases, maternal/child health and/or public health that translate into policy and practice for Vietnam and Australia provides a program of research which will not significantly advance current knowledge in the field 	Relative to opportunity, the applicant team: • is deficient in some areas of expertise that will be required to successfully complete the proposed research • has published only a few works in relevant and other fields of research • members are not well known nationally or internationally in the relevant research fields	The proposed collaboration is likely to result in: • very limited demonstration that the team will utilise expertise between the two countries • very limited outcomes from the international partnership will be significant to both Vietnam and Australia both in terms of knowledge transfer and impact
1 Poor	The proposal has a research plan that: • is unclear on its objectives and scientific approach relevant to the scope of the research call • contains a research plan that does not seem feasible • is unlikely to be successfully completed	 The planned research: does not address an issue of more than marginal concern to human health will not translate into fundamental outcomes in the science and/or practice of infectious diseases, maternal/child health and/or public health for Vietnam and Australia will not advance current knowledge in the field 	Relative to opportunity, the applicant team: • is heavily underpowered in terms of relevant expertise required to successfully complete the research program • is not productive to any significant extent in relevant fields • members are not well known nationally or internationally in the relevant research fields	The proposed collaboration is likely to result in: no mutually beneficial demonstration that the team will utilise expertise between the two countries no outcomes from the international partnership will be significant to both Vietnam and Australia both in terms of knowledge transfer and impact