

NHMRC Centre for Research Excellence STRIDE: Stronger Investments for Infectious Diseases Call for applications for funding

Stronger Investments for Infectious Diseases (STRIDE) is an innovative centre funded under the NHMRC Centres of Research Excellence (CRE) scheme (2024 – 2029). STRIDE will be Australia's first dynamic hub for applied and policy-relevant research on the economics of infectious disease interventions. STRIDE will provide the framework, enhanced capacity among researchers and policymakers, and robust evidence needed to comprehensively assess the full impacts of infectious disease interventions that will use innovative health economics techniques to comprehensively assess the significant health, social and economic impacts of infectious disease interventions.

Aims of the CRE

- Establish a novel **impact evaluation framework** to comprehensively assess costs and benefits of infectious diseases interventions.
- Use this framework to **identify optimal investments** in medical technologies, health services, and programs for the elimination and control of infectious diseases.
- **Translate research outcomes** into policy and practice through funding guidelines; stakeholder organisation engagement and activities; professional and community education; national and international collaborations.
- Build the **next generation of world-class researchers and policy makers**, capable of generating and using the health economic evidence needed to prioritise investments in infectious diseases.

Research Support Funds

The aim of these funds is to provide ECRs an opportunity to work with STRIDE investigators to advance the goals of the CRE and build their experience and networks through collaboration with CRE partners and to increase their likelihood of success in winning larger-scale grant funding to further the goals of the CRE. STRIDE now provides two funding opportunities:

ECR research funding support	Post-graduate Awards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers most types of direct research costs including salary support. • Individual grants are capped at \$100,000 over a maximum of 2 years although exceptions to this amount/timeframe will be considered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers support for publication fees, travel, conferences, and some research costs such as transcription fees • Maximum of \$10,000.

Who can apply

- PhD students and post-doctoral scholars (obtained PhD less than 7 years ago).
- Researcher assistants (e.g. honours and master's students) where appropriate.
- In exceptional circumstances, CIs based in Australia for at least 80% of the CRE funding period may also apply for some salary, but priority will generally be given to ECRs.

Application process

For 2024-2027, there will be 2 funding rounds per year. Application for ECR research funding support is a 3-stage process. Those applying for a Post-graduate Award, can skip stages 1 and 2 and instead submit their application according to the stage 3 deadline. Timelines for the round 3, 2025 are as follows:

Stage 1 Draft Application 24 March 2025	Stage 2 Pitch 2 April 2025	Stage 3 Final Proposal 23 April 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a draft of the appropriate application form and submit to: djacob@kirby.unsw.edu.au 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help strengthen proposals, applicants are invited to 'pitch' their proposal to the Management Committee (5 min presentation + 10 min Q&A). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants to submit final application, replying to each point of feedback via a cover letter for scoring by the Management Committee.

Assessment criteria

The criteria listed below will be used to assess the different types of funding support.

It is important to note that STRIDE is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and this cuts across *all funding applications*. We are actively seeking to support ECRs from diverse backgrounds and for those seeking funding to undertake, present or publish research from outside their home country or country of residence, we strongly advocate for equal partnerships with local researchers from the country or territory which is the subject of the research.

Applications for ECR research funding support:

- Aligns with the objectives and vision of the CRE.
- Engages CIs and AIs leading work across research pillars.
- Building on the CRE Foundation studies and/or other relevant infectious diseases trials.
- Excellence of proposed work as described in the application. Where 'excellence' aligns with the NHMRC CRE guidance (*development of innovative, high quality, collaborative research*).
- Excellence (as defined above) of any outside collaborators (If relevant).
- Feasibility and significance of the work as described in the application.
- ECR is at a stage in their career such that the application would sufficiently support their career development.
- Likelihood that the allocation will improve the chances or lead to the successful outcome of a future grant application.

Post-graduate awards to support conferences/meetings and applicant presentations:

- Aligns with the objectives and vision of the CRE.
- Engages CIs and AIs working across research pillars.
- Excellence of proposed presentation. Where 'excellence' aligns with the NHMRC CRE guidance (*innovative, high quality, collaborative research*).
- Appropriately acknowledges financial support from STRIDE.
- The type of presentation (oral presentations prioritised) and whether they will be representing more than one piece of work on behalf of a wider team.

Post-graduate awards to support publication fees:

- Publication aligns with the objectives and vision of the CRE.
- Paper involves CIs and AIs leading work across 2 or more research pillars.
- Excellence of publication. Where 'excellence' aligns with the NHMRC CRE guidance (*innovative, high quality, collaborative research*).
- Appropriately acknowledges financial support from STRIDE.
- Release of award will be contingent on manuscript being accepted. The award will be held for 6 months from the date the application is approved. Applicants must provide evidence of manuscript being accepted within 6 months of successful application or will need to re-apply.

Additional information

- Roles of any collaborators (i.e. non-CI/AI researchers) must be clearly justified. Applications should include a CV (two page maximum) for all non-CI/AI researchers listed on the application for funding including ECRs.
- All those involved in the proposal must approve/sign the application form.
- When presenting or publishing CRE funded work, we request that the following content is included: **<insert title of piece of work>** was fully/partially funded by the NHMRC Centre for Research Excellence - **Stronger Investments for Infectious Diseases (STRIDE)**.
- For post-graduate awards to support conferences/meetings, applicants will need to have work accepted at the conference/meeting. A copy of the presentation/abstract should be submitted along with the application form.
- For post-graduate awards to support conferences/meetings, applications may be considered outside the normal funding cycle - applicants should send an enquiry to the CRE manager as soon as their presentation/poster has been accepted.
- For post-graduate awards to support publication fees, applicants should apply when they submit their manuscript.

Contact details

For questions related to this funding opportunity please contact: djacob@kirby.unsw.edu.au