

Research Translation and Innovation Initiative

2027 INNOVATE GRANTS

Funding Guidelines

Funding Guidelines and Application information available at:

<https://www.metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/research/research-grants/innovate-grants>

Enquiries to:

Senior Research Grants Officer, Metro South Research

Email: MSH-Grants@health.qld.gov.au

Phone: 07 3443 8057

Funded by:

Metro South Health

Study, Education and Research Trust Account

Contents

Contents	2
1. OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH TRANSLATION & INNOVATION INITIATIVE.....	3
2. KEY DATES	3
3. FUNDING AMOUNT, DURATION, INDICATIVE NUMBER OF GRANTS OFFERED.....	3
4. ADMINISTRATION OF MSH RTII INNOVATE GRANTS.....	4
5. FUNDING BODY.....	4
6. FUNDING PRINCIPLES	4
6.1 TARGET AREAS	4
7. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT	5
8. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	5
8.1 APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY.....	5
8.2 PROJECT TEAM ELIGIBILITY.....	5
8.3 PROJECT ELIGIBILITY	5
8.4 OTHER ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.....	7
8.5 CONSULTATION	8
9. TWO-STAGE APPLICATION PROCESS.....	8
10. STAGE 1 EOI APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS.....	8
10.1 EOI CERTIFICATION	8
10.2 INDICATIVE BUDGET PREPARATION.....	8
10.3 SUBMISSION OF STAGE 1 EOI APPLICATION.....	9
10.4 STAGE 1 EOI SHORTLISTING.....	9
11. STAGE 2 FULL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS	9
11.1 SUBMISSION OF STAGE 2 FULL APPLICATION	9
12. STAGE 2 FULL APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA	10
14.2 WEIGHTING	11
14.3 SCORING.....	11
14.4 STAGE 2 DETAILED BUDGET PREPARATION.....	9
13. STAGE 2 FULL APPLICATION ASSESSMENT PROCESS	11
15.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDING.....	11
15.2 FUNDING DELEGATE.....	12
14. AWARDING OF GRANTS	12
16.1 FEEDBACK AND ISSUES/DISPUTES	12
15. POST-AWARD REPORTING	12
17.1 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT	12
17.2 FINAL REPORT.....	12
16. POST-AWARD VARIATIONS	12
17. CERTIFICATION.....	13
17.1 CERTIFICATION BY APPLICANT'S HEAD OF DEPARTMENT/DIVISION.....	13

1. OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH TRANSLATION & INNOVATION INITIATIVE

Research translation is the process of systematically moving research findings and outcomes into policy or practice, ensuring that innovations lead to tangible benefits in real-world settings.

The intent of the Research Translation and Innovation Initiative (RTII) is to provide funding – INNOVATE Grants – for MSH employees to accelerate the implementation of evidence-based interventions and innovations into practice, ensuring that our community benefits from new knowledge, or the use of knowledge in creative ways.

INNOVATE Grants will provide funding for projects that:

- Focus on implementing and integrating new or modified interventions (e.g. diagnostic, therapeutic, or healthcare practices) or models of care designed to improve health outcomes in an existing service delivery area, or promote system changes into policy and broader practice; and
- Are evidence-based and have been shown to be effective through prior research; and
- Contribute to the development of networked and integrated services that meet the needs of our community; and
- Can demonstrate a realistic prospect of delivering a substantive and sustainable change in the service delivery area, within a three-year timeframe; and
- Foster collaboration across disciplines, services, or sectors to strengthen implementation, scalability, and sustained practice integration.

2. KEY DATES

EOI open	6 October 2026
EOI closing date	20 November 2026
Shortlisting of EOI's	23 November 2026
Invitation for full application	7 December 2026
Full application closing date	1 February 2027
Notification of outcome	15 March 2027
Funding commences	1 April 2027

3. FUNDING AMOUNT, DURATION, INDICATIVE NUMBER OF GRANTS OFFERED

Funding amount	Funding period	Indicative # grants offered
\$200,000 per grant	Up to 3 years	5

4. ADMINISTRATION OF MSH RTII INNOVATE GRANTS

The MSH RTII is administered by the Metro South Health Research Office, in accordance with Metro South Health Research Management policy and procedures, which may be accessed at:

<https://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/research/about-us/policies-and-procedures>

5. FUNDING BODY

The MSH RTII is funded by the MSH Study, Education, and Research Trust Account (SERTA). The award of funds is governed by the regulations associated with MSH SERTA Operational Rules.

6. FUNDING PRINCIPLES

MSH is committed to the following principles for the RTII:

- Achievement of a reasonable balance in the distribution of grants across all MSH facilities and services,
- Achievement of gender equity in the grants program,
- Development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and translational and innovative projects that aim to improve equity of access or health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,
- Support of high-quality projects that meets the needs of our community,
- Maintenance of the highest levels of probity throughout the Initiative.

6.1 TARGET AREAS

MSH may identify target areas that enable special consideration for applicants and projects that would support achievement of MSH RTII funding principles. For the 2027 RTII, MSH encourages applications from the following:

- Applicants employed within, and for research translation and innovation projects primarily conducted at:
 - Bayside Health Service
 - Community & Oral Health Services
 - Logan and Beaudesert Health Service
 - QEII Hospital
 - Southern Queensland Centre of Excellence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care, Inala
- Female and non-binary applicants
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants
- Applicants with research translation and innovation projects that are focused on improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Applicants with research translation and innovation projects that address the high and medium priority needs of the Metro South community, as described in the [Brisbane South Joint Regional Needs Assessment 2025 – 2027](#).

7. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The following documents describe the principles that guide service delivery and research and innovation in Queensland's public health system, and should be used to inform your MSH RTII application:

- [*Department of Health Strategic Plan 2025-2029*](#)
- [*Metro South Health Strategic Plan 2024-2028*](#)
- [*Metro South Health Service Plan 2024-2028*](#)
- [*Brisbane South Joint Regional Needs Assessment 2025-2027*](#)

8. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

8.1 APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

- i. The applicant is the project lead.
- ii. MSH SERTA Operational Rules require the project lead to be a MSH employee at the time of applying and for the duration of the project/grant.
- iii. Honorary appointees are not eligible to be the applicant.
- iv. Conjoint appointees are not eligible to be the applicant if their sole employment contract is with a university partner – even in cases where MSH pays the university for part of the conjoint appointee's salary. Conjoint appointees may still contribute knowledge or expertise as a member of the project team.

8.2 PROJECT TEAM ELIGIBILITY

Eligible project team members can be:

- i. MSH employees, employees of other Hospital and Health Services, research institutes, universities and organisations relevant to the conduct of the proposed project.
- ii. The involvement of health service consumers/patient representatives in the project is encouraged.
- iii. The inclusion of an implementation scientist is encouraged.

8.3 PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

8.3.1 What is eligible?

Funding is intended to support practice change and evidence translation, not the generation, testing, or validation of new research concepts or interventions. Eligible projects must focus on implementing, embedding, scaling, and sustaining evidence-based innovations and should apply appropriate implementation science methodologies to identify barriers and enablers, support adoption, and evaluate implementation outcomes.

Eligible projects must:

- i. focus on translating established research evidence into clinical practice.
- ii. involve a change or improvement to an existing MSH service, policy or practice.
- iii. focus on implementation, integration, and adoption into routine clinical practice.
- iv. have an evidence-base derived and shown to be effective through prior research.
- v. have the informed support of the relevant Head of Department/s.

- vi. have direct input from a relevant consumer representative, consumer partner, or consumer group during project design, planning, implementation and evaluation.
- vii. include arrangements for appropriate governance, such as:
 - project oversight (e.g. Project Steering Committee),
 - adherence to relevant legislative, policy, and institutional guidelines regarding research conduct, privacy, data management, and consumer engagement, and
 - meet MSH guidelines, procedures and work instructions related to the introduction of new interventions and clinical practice innovations.
 - Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) approval, Site-Specific Assessment (SSA) authorisation for the research elements relevant to the project.

Eligible projects may:

- i. involve MSH clinical, operational or technical services.
- ii. involve the extension of research translation and innovation activities from an existing MSH service to other MSH services.
 - Projects might ‘scale-up’ an evidence-based practice from an existing service area, to implement across clinical or professional streams, or departments within a facility or clinical directorate.
 - Projects might ‘scale-out’ an evidence-based practice from an existing service area, to implement across all relevant MSH services.

Examples of eligible projects:

- Translation of new clinically proven knowledge of disease processes, diagnostic or treatment techniques into routine clinical practice and health decision making.
- Change management project to implement an evidence-based service model or practice from a work unit (e.g. clinical department) to other relevant work units in that MSH facility or service.
- Change management project to implement an evidence-based service model or practice from one MSH clinical directorate (e.g. MSAMHS, COHS, hospital), to other MSH clinical directorates.
- Temporary resources to enable sustainable implementation of a service model or practice that was demonstrated to be effective through a MSH RSS research grant, or other research project.
- Application of information and insights derived from clinical and population health research to the provision of health services.
- Moving evidence-based guidelines into health practice, through delivery and dissemination.
- Practice-based research, where the evidence from clinical trials is translated into guidelines for patients seen routinely in practice.

8.3.2 What is not eligible for RTII support?

The following types of projects/requests will not be supported:

- i. Pilot studies, feasibility studies, proof-of-concept projects, and research projects or other activities where the primary purpose is to generate, test, validate, or collect new evidence.
- ii. Projects designed primarily to test an intervention, establish efficacy, collect preliminary data, or justify future implementation.
- iii. The introduction or trial of a new service line within MSH.
- iv. The expansion of an existing service, without changing models of care or practice.
- v. Trial of medicines, medical devices or biological agents that are not (at the time of application) approved for use in the proposed service context, patient cohort or condition by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). For clarity, project activities that would usually fall under a Clinical Trial Notification (CTN) scheme are not eligible.
- vi. Evaluation of existing MSH services.
- vii. Services in other health services or organisations. If proposed as part of research translation or innovation activities involving other health services or partners, SERTA-funding could not be used to pay for implementation in other organisations.
- viii. Purchase of new assets or replacement of existing assets or equipment.
- ix. Services provided within Metro South Research Directorate.

Examples of ineligible projects:

- Establishing a robotic surgery service in a clinical specialty area where no such service currently exists within MSH.
- Temporary resources to clear service backlogs – i.e. additional clinical/operational/ technical staff to enable an increase in throughput based on existing service models.
- Trial of a novel cancer drug that hasn't received TGA approval for use in Australia.
- Trial of a medicine outside its current TGA-approved scope.
- Resources to enable measurement, write-up or publication of an existing service.
- The implementation of a successful MSH clinical service model into another Hospital and Health Service (HHS).
- Purchase of a new imaging machine.
- Upgrading computers, clinical or laboratory equipment.

8.4 OTHER ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- i. The majority of the proposed activity must take place on a MSH campus, facility or service.
- ii. The proposed activities must not be concurrently funded by any other organisation.

8.5 CONSULTATION

Consultation with your facility or service Executive Director, Divisional Director or Service Line Director is strongly recommended to ensure the project aligns with organisational need and priorities.

9. TWO-STAGE APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications will be considered using a two-stage process:

- i. **Stage 1 Expression of interest (EOI)** – completion of a short online form for the purpose of identifying projects that meet a genuine organisational need. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to progress to Stage 2.
- ii. **Stage 2 Full application** – the Stage 1 shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a full application for assessment against the evaluation criteria described in section 12.

10. STAGE 1 EOI APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants must submit their EOI application using the online form provided at <http://metrosouth.smartygrants.com.au/>.

10.1 EOI CERTIFICATION

The certification form on page 13 of these Funding Guidelines must be uploaded as part of your SmartyGrants EOI application.

The Head of Department (HoD) is required to sign the certification page to confirm their support, should the application be successful. Before requesting a signature, the applicant should brief their HoD about the details of the project. Allow sufficient time to brief and secure the HoD signature, or escalation of the signature if the HoD is involved in the project.

10.2 INDICATIVE BUDGET PREPARATION

The Stage 1 EOI requires an indicative project budget plan for a grant of \$200,000. The applicant should consult with the Metro South Research Finance team (MSH_RES_FIN@health.qld.gov.au) or other relevant Business/Finance teams to establish a project budget of \$200,000.00 for EOI submission.

Please make contact early to help this team manage the anticipated demand for assistance. Last minute requests for assistance will be difficult to accommodate.

10.2.1 Eligible and ineligible budget items

Eligible budget items are those that are essential and directly related to conducting the activities proposed in the application within the funding period. For example, salary or back-fill including standard on-costs for a project lead or other dedicated project team members; consumables and services required specifically for the activities described in the application; minor equipment, specialised software or computers dedicated and essential to the specific project; consumer reimbursement and remuneration; conference and publication costs.

Ineligible budget items include overheads, maintenance and levies for equipment, professional memberships/subscriptions, items that are for the purpose of day-to-day operations of the organisation, major clinical equipment that would otherwise be procured through an operational budget, ongoing salary or back-fill for staff to maintain the delivery of the implemented service change/model of care.

10.3 SUBMISSION OF STAGE 1 EOI APPLICATION

- i. **EOI applications must be submitted no later than 3pm on Friday 20 November 2026.**
- ii. To accommodate unexpected technical problems or emergent events that might prevent meeting the submission deadline do not leave submission to the last minute. Applications will not be accepted after the deadline. Applicants are encouraged to plan to submit a day or more in advance of the deadline.
- iii. Incomplete applications may be deemed ineligible.
- iv. Emailed or hand delivered applications will not be accepted.

10.4 STAGE 1 EOI SHORTLISTING

EOI applications will be provided to relevant MSH Executive Directors for the purpose of shortlisting suitable projects to progress to Stage 2.

- i. The MSH Executive Directors will, at their discretion, determine an EOI application is for shortlisting or not, dependent on alignment with the intent of the INNOVATE initiative, and organisational priorities and service needs.
- ii. If more than 20 applications are received and shortlisted by MSH Executive Directors, the MSH Chief Research & Innovation Officer may establish a Shortlisting Selection Panel to further shortlist applications.
- iii. If required, the Shortlisting Selection Panel will, at their discretion, determine an application is for shortlisting or not, dependant on alignment with the intent of the INNOVATE initiative, and organisational priorities and service needs.

11. STAGE 2 FULL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their EOI, and shortlisted applicants will be invited to commence a full application for Stage 2 by 7 December 2026.

Applicants must submit their full application using the online form provided at <http://metrosouth.smartygrants.com.au/>.

11.1 SUBMISSION OF STAGE 2 FULL APPLICATION

- i. **Stage 2 full applications must be submitted no later than 3pm on Monday 1 February 2026.**
- ii. To accommodate unexpected technical problems or emergent events that might prevent meeting the submission deadline do not leave submission to the last minute. Applications will not be accepted after the deadline. Applicants are encouraged to plan to submit a day or more in advance of the deadline.
- iii. Incomplete applications may be deemed ineligible.
- iv. Emailed or hand delivered applications will not be accepted.

11.2 STAGE 2 DETAILED BUDGET PREPARATION

The Stage 2 full application requires a fully detailed project budget, verified by the Metro South Research Finance team (MSH_RES_FIN@health.qld.gov.au) or other relevant Business/Finance team. Please make contact early to help this team manage the anticipated demand for assistance. Last minute requests for assistance will be difficult to accommodate.

Funding may only be applied to the activities and budget described in the submitted full application.

12. STAGE 2 FULL APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

Stage 2 applications will be evaluated against four criteria:

Evaluation criteria	What is the RTII looking for in an application?
1. Significance	- Identifies the problem, evidence-practice gap, and justifies the need for the project. - Describes the established evidence-base for an intervention or solution to address this need. - Proposes a project that will deliver a substantive and sustainable change in the relevant service delivery area/s. - The extent to which the proposed project considers health equity for priority population groups, and the high and medium priority needs of the Metro South community (Brisbane South Joint Regional Needs Assessment 2025 – 2027).
2. Project design	- Identifies the framework, model or theory that underpins the delivery of the project. - Describes the implementation plan including project scope, sites involved, methodology, project tasks/activities, deliverables, evaluation plan and project timeline. - Demonstrates a robust process for sustainability of the intervention or model of care beyond the project through incorporation into existing resources and infrastructure. - Identifies stakeholders and proposed stakeholder engagement plan which may include health service consumers/patient representatives; project implementation partners (e.g. clinical networks, local champions, digital health & informatics); end users (e.g. clinical, operational and technical colleagues, policy makers, decision makers). - Includes details of prior consultation with and support of stakeholders. - Outlines the proposed project governance arrangements and links to existing MSH clinical and operational governance. - Outlines a communication plan, including reporting to governance committee/s.
3. Project team	- Demonstrates the project team has the combined requisite knowledge, expertise (research, clinical, operational, technical, implementation science, project management) and capacity to successfully manage the project to completion. - Describes an active role and responsibilities for each team member. - Includes a consumer representative/s.
4. Budget and feasibility	- Includes project labour and non-labour expenses, verified by relevant Business/Finance Manager. - Evidence of adequate consideration to resources required to complete the project within the 3-year timeframe. - Includes project risk mitigation.

12.1 WEIGHTING

The evaluation criteria are weighted as follows:

1	2	3	4
Significance	Project design	Project team	Budget and feasibility
30%	35%	25%	10%

12.2 SCORING

Each of the evaluation criteria will be scored by the selection panel members on a scale of 1 to 7, where:

- 1 = No evidence
- 2 = Unsatisfactory
- 3 = Fair
- 4 = Good
- 5 = Very Good
- 6 = Excellent
- 7 = Outstanding by national standards

Selection panel members complete this process online, via *SmartyGrants*. A final weighted score is calculated, reflecting the relative strength of the application in terms of how well it addresses and meets the evaluation criteria.

13. STAGE 2 FULL APPLICATION ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Applications will be assessed and ranked by the RTII Selection Panel. The RTII Selection Panel may, at its discretion, remove applications that are determined to be incomplete, ineligible, or not consistent with the Funding Guidelines.

The RTII Selection Panel includes the Metro South Chief Research and Innovation Officer and Metro South Chief Operating Officer and may also include representatives of Metro South Research Grants Committee, Metro South Research Council, facility Research Committees or Clinical Network Committees, Clinical Governance, Patient Safety & Quality Improvement, and other invited persons with relevant knowledge or experience.

The RTII Selection Panel will meet to discuss the outcomes of their assessments. The Panel may determine a ranking of applications that is not based solely on initial assessment scores, acknowledging that in addressing disparate scores panel members may agree to alter their scores based on discussions. Panel members may request an additional assessment of an application if panel member's scores are markedly disparate.

If multiple applications obtain equal scores, the RTII Selection Panel will determine a ranking and order of merit.

13.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDING

Final recommendations for awarding of grants may include, but is not limited to, consideration of:

- RTII Funding Principles and Target Areas
- Alignment of the application with RTII objectives.
- RTII evaluation criteria

- Selection panel member scores and comments
- Applicant's previous performance in relation to previous RSS grants.
- Applicant's compliance with previous RSS grant conditions.

To be clear, the final ranking and recommendations for awarding of grants might differ from the ranking based solely on scores derived from assessment against the evaluation criteria.

RTII Selection Panel may consider the need to balance the recommendations for funding in line with the RTII Funding Principles, RTII aims and other considerations, including operational requirements.

At the conclusion of the RTII Recommendation Meeting the recommendations of the RTII selection panel will be provided to the funding body delegate for approval.

13.2 FUNDING DELEGATE

Recommendations for funding will be considered by the Chair, Metro South SERTA as the delegate responsible for SERTA funds. The SERTA delegate may, at their sole discretion, choose to award grants on the basis of the recommendations received, or not.

14. AWARDING OF GRANTS

Award of grants will be via a letter of offer, accompanied by grant conditions. Prospective grant recipients will be required to accept the offer and conditions in writing by the date identified in the grant letter of offer.

The grant can only be applied to the activities and budget described in the submitted application.

14.1 FEEDBACK AND ISSUES/DISPUTES

Feedback on MSH RTII processes or outcomes should be directed to the Senior Research Grants Officer at MSH-Grants@health.qld.gov.au in the first instance. Issues and concerns will be managed in consultation with an independent Probity Advisor, and in accordance with procedures established for the MSH Research Support Scheme.

15. POST-AWARD REPORTING

15.1 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

An Annual Progress Report must be submitted to MSH-Grants@health.qld.gov.au for approval by the Chief Research and Innovation Officer by 30 November in each year of the grant, as a condition of holding a RTII grant. An Annual Report template will be sent via your SmartyGrants account.

15.2 FINAL REPORT

A Final Report will be required within 4 months of the end date of the grant. A Final Report template will be sent via your SmartyGrants account.

16. POST-AWARD VARIATIONS

Requests to extend the end date of the grant or vary the budget at any time during the grant period must be submitted in writing to MSH-Grants@health.qld.gov.au for approval by the Chief Research and Innovation Officer, Metro South Research.

17. CERTIFICATION

This page must be signed by the relevant Head of Department/s for the applicant and uploaded as part of the online EOI application.

Applicant name:
Project title:

17.1 CERTIFICATION BY APPLICANT'S HEAD OF DEPARTMENT/DIVISION

I certify that:

- **I am not the applicant, or a project team member.** *Note: if the Head of Department is named in the application, they cannot provide certification, and the signature must be escalated to the next appropriate delegate.*
- **I have been provided with details of the project,** including the proposed activities, resources and arrangements, and having considered the implications for service delivery I am prepared to have the project carried out in my department, should the application be successful.

Name of Head of Department (print):
Position title:
MSH site:
Signature:
Date: DD/MM/YEAR