



MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
SINGAPORE

**FUNDING GUIDE FOR THE  
NATIONAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE ON  
ACTIVE AND CONFIDENT AGEING**

(With effect from 15 February 2017)

# CONTENTS

General Definitions .....	3
Objectives .....	5
Eligibility Criteria .....	6
Call for Proposals .....	7
Application Process .....	7
Evaluation Process and Grant Approval .....	8
Letter of Award .....	8
Acceptance Form .....	9
Matters to Resolve before Proceeding with the Research .....	9
Progress Reports.....	10
Funding Support .....	10
Intellectual Property Management .....	15
Termination.....	17
Accounting and Audit Requirements.....	17
Disclaimer of Liability.....	18
Changes to Guidelines .....	18

## Annexes

### Annex A: Non-Fundable Direct Costs

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE NATIONAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE ON ACTIVE AND CONFIDENT AGEING COMPETITIVE GRANT CALLS**

### **General Definitions**

1. In these Guidelines, unless the context otherwise requires:

Acceptance Form	Shall mean the Acceptance Form accompanying the Letter of Award which is to be completed by the Institutions, Investigators and Collaborators.
Application	shall mean any and all documents and information, including Project Abstracts and Project Proposals, submitted by the Project Team for the purpose of a particular NIC Grant call.
Approved Proposal	shall mean the Application to undertake the Research described therein as approved by Grantor (together with all modifications, amendments and revisions required by Grantor).
Background IP	shall mean any existing IP brought by the Project Team into the Research.
Collaborator	shall mean any company, institution, incorporated body or other industry or academic collaborator, which is not an Institution or an Investigator but is to be engaged in the Research in collaboration with the Institutions or any of them.
Co-Investigator	shall mean any person named in the Letter of Award as a “Co-Investigator” for the Research.
Contract	shall include the Letter of Award and any schedules attached including the general terms and conditions, any other annexes and appendices referred to in the Letter of Award and any other terms specifically accepted by the Grantor as forming part of the Contract.
Deliverables	shall mean the tangible outcomes of the Research to be achieved by the Project Team as specified in the Approved Proposal.
Funding or Funds	shall mean the amount or amounts payable under the Contract as specified in the Letter of Award.
Grant	shall mean the award of Funding to the Project Team.
Grantor	shall mean the Ministry of Health (“MOH”) providing the Funding as set out in the Letter of Award.
Grantor’s Affiliates	shall include the Government of the Republic of Singapore, including all its Ministries, departments and Organs of State, and all Statutory Boards. “Grantor’s Affiliates” shall also include MOH Holdings Pte Ltd

	(MOHH), the Agency for Integrated Care Pte Ltd (AIC) and such other entity as the Grantor may designate in writing.
Host Institution	shall mean the body or institution or administering organisation named in the Letter of Award as the “Host Institution” as the body responsible for undertaking and managing the Research.
Implementation Partner	shall mean a Singapore-registered Institution which will implement the Project Team’s proposed solution(s). Additional requirements would be detailed in the Public Document specific to a particular NIC Grant call.
Institutions	shall refer to any public, private or non-profit organisations, including healthcare providers, research institutes and institutes of higher learning (IHLs) and shall mean collectively, the Host Institution and the Partner Institutions and “Institution” shall mean any one of them. To avoid doubt, an Implementation Partner is a Partner Institution.
Intellectual Property or IP	shall mean all copyright, rights in relation to inventions (including patent rights and unpatented technologies), plant varieties, registered and unregistered trademarks (including service marks), registered designs, confidential information (including trade secrets and know-how), mask-works and integrated circuit layouts, and all other rights resulting from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary or artistic fields.
Investigators	shall mean collectively, the Lead Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators.
IRB	shall mean Institutional Review Board.
Lead Principal Investigator or ‘Lead PI’	shall mean any person named in the Letter of Award as a Lead Principal Investigator for the Research who shall have primary responsibility to the design, execution and management of the Research and will lead the Research.
Letter of Award or LOA	shall mean the letter issued by the NIC(PO) on behalf of the Grantor to the Project Team under which the Grant of the Funds is made to the Project Team through the Host Institution.
Milestones	shall mean the agreed milestones that the Project Team shall achieve as specified in the Letter of Award.
NIC	shall refer to the National Innovation Challenge on Active and Confident Ageing
NIC(PO)	shall mean the National Innovation Challenge Programme Office, under MOH, which is responsible for all administrative aspects related to the NIC.
Partner Institutions	shall mean the bodies or institutions named in the Letter of Award as the “Partner Institutions” forming part of the Project Team and

	responsible for working together with the Host Institution to undertake the Research.
Policies	shall mean any policy, instruction, standard operating procedure, regulation or rule issued by Grantor in relation to the Funding provided under the Contract.
Project Abstract	shall mean a written summary of the Research no longer than 5 pages in length, in which a Project Team shall demonstrate a thorough literature review that provides the evidence or basis for its Application.
Project Proposal	shall mean a detailed proposal submitted by a Project Team detailing the Research following the shortlisting of the Project Abstract by the Grantor.
Project Team	shall comprise all Institutions, Collaborators and Investigators involved in the Research.
Public Document	shall refer to a set of guidelines, terms and conditions specific to a particular NIC Grant call.
Research	shall mean the project approved by the Grantor as described in the Approved Proposal subject to any modifications or amendments thereto made in accordance with the Contract.
Research IP	shall mean all Intellectual Property howsoever arising from the Research.

2. Words importing the singular include the plural and vice versa. The word “days” denotes calendar days unless otherwise specified.

## Objectives

3. The NIC seeks to catalyse innovative ideas and research in Singapore that can transform the experience of ageing in Singapore over the long term.
4. The NIC comprises three key research thrusts namely:

- a. Lengthening health span,

*The NIC wants to find better ways of delaying the onset of disease and disability and instead extend seniors' "health span", so that seniors in Singapore can continue to lead economically and socially active lives for much longer.*

- b. Productive longevity, and

*The NIC wants to facilitate research and innovation that can unlock the talent, energies and productivity in longevity, for the benefit of individuals, society and Singapore. For instance, potential research and innovation can be conducted to enable learning and re-learning throughout the ageing process, as well as to create ageless work places.*

c. Ageing within the home and community.

*The NIC is looking at research in science and technology to help seniors live independent and autonomous lives despite physical frailty. The NIC seeks new innovative solutions to effectively support ageing in place, in a smart city.*

5. These guidelines set forth the policies on the Grant calls, award and administration of competitive NIC Grants funded by the National Research Foundation (“NRF”) to ensure the effective management of the Funds.
6. These guidelines will serve as the baseline for all competitive NIC Grants funded by the NRF. The guidelines are intended to give potential Grant applicants an idea of, amongst other things, what the NIC is about, items that will be funded, the Grantor’s expectations of the Research and potential documents that potential Grant applicants may need to use throughout the entire process from Grant application to the completion of the Research.
7. For the avoidance of doubt, these guidelines are not legally binding. For the final requirements, as well as the particular terms and conditions specific to each NIC Grant call, applicants should refer to the specific Public Document accompanying each Grant call.
8. Legally binding terms and conditions will be set out only in the Letter of Award issued to successful Grant applicants.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

9. Potential Grant applicants should refer to the Public Document accompanying each Grant call for the eligibility criteria. In general, staff and members of all Institutions are welcome to apply. However, applicants from different fields must come together to form multidisciplinary Project Teams and collaborate on Research which must be conducted in Singapore. Foreigners may apply but the Institutions that they represent must be registered in Singapore either through the setting up of a local equivalent of their foreign Institution or through the formation of consortiums with a Singapore-registered Institution(s). If the foreign applicant is also the Lead PI of the Research, he or she must reside in Singapore for at least six months in each calendar year over the funding period.
10. All potential Grant applicants can approach the NIC(PO) for more details by email at [nic\\_ageing@moh.gov.sg](mailto:nic_ageing@moh.gov.sg). Applicants can also visit the NIC landing site found in the National Medical Research Council (“NMRC”) website ([http://www.nmrc.gov.sg/content/nmrc\\_internet/home/grant/compgrants/nicaca.html](http://www.nmrc.gov.sg/content/nmrc_internet/home/grant/compgrants/nicaca.html)). When registering their interest to take part in a Grant call, each Project Team must identify a Host Institution, which will correspond with the NIC(PO) on administrative matters. The Host Institution will have the following responsibilities to the NIC(PO), with respect to all Grant Applications:
  - a) Ensure that every Institution, Investigator and Collaborator support the Grant Application and have no objection to the Research being undertaken in its own respective premises if funded under the Grant;

- b) Ensure that every Institution, Investigator and Collaborator have the necessary resources and infrastructure to effectively administer operational processes such as fund disbursements progress reporting, inventory management, etc., if it receives the Grant; and
- c) Ensure that the Institutions, Investigators and Collaborators have the necessary competencies and track record to ensure successful completion of the Research.

### Call for Proposals

- 11. The NIC(PO) will prepare and call for Applications. A typical call for Applications could include the following:
  - a. a definition of the scope, objectives and intended outcomes of the call;
  - b. the research topics and areas of interest;
  - c. the estimated quantum and funding period;
  - d. the criteria to be used to evaluate Applications;
  - e. the evaluation process;
  - f. the dates of submission of Project Abstracts and Project Proposals and notification of awards; and
  - g. any other relevant information helpful to applicants in the planning and preparation of their Applications.
- 12. A call for Applications will be announced by the NIC(PO) and the information subsequently disseminated through various platforms. Information of the application process and the application forms may be downloaded from the NMRC website. Interested parties may also email [nic\\_ageing@moh.gov.sg](mailto:nic_ageing@moh.gov.sg) to receive a copy of the application forms.

### Application Process

- 13. The Application will be a **two-stage process**. The Host Institution will first need to submit a Project Abstract as specified in the Public Document with the following information:
  - (i) Title of Research
  - (ii) Abstract
  - (iii) Research background and objective(s)
  - (iv) Research description – Methodology and Approach
  - (v) Intended outcomes and deliverables
  - (vi) Application potential of Research outcome(s)
  - (vii) Research implementation schedule
- 14. The Grantor will then shortlist Project Abstracts and inform the relevant Project Teams via email. The shortlisted Project Teams will then be required to develop more detailed Project Proposals specifying the following:
  - (i) Title of Research
  - (ii) Research start date
  - (iii) Detailed Research description

- (iv) Implementation plan
- (v) Key outcomes and measurement
- (vi) Budget forecast
- (vii) Method to scale up
- (viii) Sustainability of Research
- (ix) Potential Challenges
- (x) Declaration of IP

15. The detailed Project Proposals will be assessed by an evaluation panel appointed by the Grantor. The decision to award will be made by the Grantor on the evaluation panel's recommendation.
16. All Applications must be in the English language and submitted in both hard- and soft-copy format to the NIC(PO). Applications which are incomplete, late or not fully endorsed will not be considered. Lead PIs must indicate if their proposals for the Research have also been submitted for funding elsewhere and provide details on these other potential funding applications.
17. All Applications submitted must contain all the information needed for a proper and complete evaluation. In particular, Applications should address the challenge statement(s) found in the Public Document for each Grant call. Relevant privileged or confidential information should be disclosed to help convey a better understanding of the proposed Research. However, such information should be clearly marked in the Application. All reviewers and evaluation panellists will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement and a declaration that they do not have any conflicts of interest.

### **Evaluation Process and Grant Approval**

18. All Research will be evaluated against the criteria described in the Public Document in relation to the particular Grant call under the NIC.
19. The entire evaluation process, from the close of the Grant call to award notification should not exceed 9 months.
20. Unsuccessful applicants only at the detailed Project Proposal stage will be provided information on why their Applications have been unsuccessful.

### **Letter of Award**

21. Successful applicants will be informed by the NIC(PO) of the award of the Grant. Notifications of awards in the form of a LOA will be sent to the Host Institution and the Project Team.
22. The LOA will include the following:
  - (i) Acceptance Form
  - (ii) Schedules and budget details
  - (iii) Deliverables and Milestones
  - (iv) IP clauses for the NIC
  - (v) Terms and Conditions
  - (vi) Guidelines on Managing a Grant

## **Acceptance Form**

23. The Acceptance Form appended with the LOA must be acknowledged by all of the following:
  - a) the Host Institution;
  - b) the Lead PI(s); and
  - c) all other Investigators, Institutions and Collaborators in the Project Team.
24. Upon acceptance of the NIC Grant, the Host Institution and the Project Team shall be bound by the terms and conditions set out in the LOA specific to that particular competitive NIC Grant call which they have responded to.
25. The Lead PI cannot act as the authorised signatory of the Host Institution for purposes of the LOA. In such cases, another officer duly authorised by the management of the Host Institution should sign the Acceptance Form on its behalf.
26. The Acceptance Form should be returned to the NIC(PO) within the time frame stipulated in the LOA. This should be returned together with detailed schedules and the budget phasing, including Milestones and key performance indicators (KPIs).
27. The official 'Start Date' and 'End Date' of the Research will be stipulated in the LOA.

## **Matters to Resolve before Proceeding with the Research**

### Approvals from Ethics Committees

28. The Project Team shall remain accountable for the safety and quality of care of all subjects during the course of the Research and be responsible for the submission of any applications required for ethics approval, if necessary. In the event that ethics approval is required, no Research activities relating to any human subject or animal tissue shall commence until a copy of the necessary approval from the relevant board and committees (IRB, etc) has been submitted to the Grantor. The failure to do so will delay the disbursement of Funds.

### Written Agreement

29. The Investigators are responsible for putting in place research collaboration agreements where and when applicable.

### Research Integrity Policy

30. The Host Institution must spell out in the written research collaboration agreement specific measures to be undertaken by the Lead PIs, all Investigators, Institutions and Collaborators to ensure the physical and emotional safety of all persons engaged in the Research. The Host Institution must also undertake to:

- a) Comply with the provisions of any relevant laws of the Republic of Singapore, statutes, regulations, by-laws, rules, guidelines and requirements applicable to it, as well as all applicable Policies adopted by NIC(PO), as the same may be amended or varied from time to time; and

- b) Have in place a set of guidelines on the responsible conduct of the Research and procedures for investigating and responding to accusations of misconduct; and
- c) Be held responsible for the conduct of the work related to the Research and all other Investigators, Institutions and Collaborators.

## **Progress Reports**

- 31. The Host Institution is required to submit progress reports to the NIC(PO) within 2 months from the end of the financial year (a financial year starts from 1 April and ends on 31 March of the following year), or at a frequency stipulated in the Public Document of the particular Grant call to account for the Research funded for the past year. The NIC(PO) reserves the right to request progress reports more frequently when necessary.
- 32. Progress reports will be reviewed by the NIC(PO) to ensure that Project Teams are achieving their stated objectives and approved KPIs. Project Teams may be required to give additional information about the progress of the Research if the information submitted is deemed to be inadequate. The NIC(PO) reserves the right to terminate Funding for the Research if Project Teams are determined to be making unsatisfactory progress in the Research or in achieving the stated objectives of the Research.
- 33. Late submission of progress reports may also lead to a suspension of the disbursement of Funds or the termination of the Grant by the Grantor.

## **Funding Support**

- 34. When budgeting for Funding under the NIC, the total cost of the Research should include all direct costs. In general, prudence should be exercised for all project costs. All expenditures should be budgeted inclusive of any applicable Goods and Service Taxes (GST) at the prevailing rates.
- 35. Budget items are categorised as direct or indirect cost items. Direct costs are defined as the incremental cost required to implement the Research. This excludes contributions in-kind, existing equipment and the cost of existing manpower as well as building cost. Annex A provides more information on the list of non-fundable direct cost items. Indirect costs in Research are those costs that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified readily and specifically with a particular sponsored research project, but contribute to the ability of the Institutions to support such research projects (e.g. providing research space, research administration, utilities), and not through the actual performance of activities under the sponsored research projects.
- 36. In general, fundable direct costs include:
  - a) Expenditure on manpower (EOM);
  - b) Expenditure on new equipment (EQPT); and
  - c) Other operating expenses (OOE).
- 37. The Grantor will only support up to 80% of the total approved qualifying direct costs of the Research. The Project Team will co-fund the remaining qualifying direct costs (i.e. no less than 20% of total approved qualifying costs of the Research). The Host

Institution shall ensure that the Project Team's expenditure is according to the agreed contribution.

38. Support for indirect costs, on top of supportable qualifying direct costs, is capped at 20% of the supportable qualifying direct costs less research scholarships unless otherwise stated in the Public Document of the Grant. Support for indirect costs is allowed only for Singapore-based institutes of higher learning (IHLs) and not-for-profit entities, including public healthcare providers. All proposed budgets are subject to the prior written approval of the Grantor.

#### Disbursement of Funds

39. Following confirmation of the Grant, and signing of the LOA, the Host Institution must submit detailed schedules and budgets of their Research, including (i) Milestones, (ii) KPIs, and (iii) budget phasing (projected cash-flow breakdown by financial year) or expected drawdown requirements for the funding period of their Research to the NIC(PO), using the template provided with the LOA.
40. The Host Institution must, in the first instance, pay for the expenditure incurred for approved costs and subsequently claim reimbursement from NIC(PO). The Host Institution must then submit claims on a quarterly basis using the template provided with the LOA.
41. Only items specified in the approved budget will be funded by the Grantor.
42. The Grantor reserves the right to reject any claims from the Host Institution that have resulted from changes to the Research which were made without obtaining the Grantor's prior written approval.

#### EOM (Expenditure on Manpower)

43. Funding of manpower under the Grant must comply with prevailing human resource guidelines of the employing Host/Partner Institution(s), which should be applied consistently regardless of the source of funds.
44. For manpower-related fund requisitions, an update of all staff employed under the Research must be provided, including those whose employment has ended.
45. All hiring Institutions (Host or Partner) and the hiring supervisor shall employ or otherwise engage Research Assistants/ Research Technicians or staff of equivalent qualifications who are Singapore citizens and/or Singapore Permanent Residents to be deployed in the work under the Research.
  - a) The term "Research Assistants" or "Research Technicians" or staff of equivalent qualifications shall mean research technicians, or staff of equivalent qualifications who participate in the Research by performing mainly technical tasks as well as providing support functions distinct from the work carried out by the Investigators.
  - b) Whilst Research Assistants/ Research Technicians may provide intellectual input to the Research, they are not required to be directly involved in the management

of the Research or for providing leadership in the conception and creation of new knowledge, products, processes, methods and systems under the Research.

- c) At the point of entry, Research Assistants/ Research Technicians will typically not be required to possess PhD qualifications. For clarification, "Research Assistants" will not include nurses and other hospital workers whom may assist in the Research.
46. In the event the hiring supervisor is unable to comply with paragraph 45 above, the Lead PI must seek prior written approval of the Grantor with proper justification and Research Assistants/Research Technicians or staff of equivalent qualifications of other nationality can be employed only if the request is supported.
47. For Research Fellows, the Institutions shall use reasonable efforts to employ or otherwise engage Singapore citizens or Singapore permanent residents unless the required expertise is not available or the skill of any foreign person is necessary for the performance of the Research.

#### Equipment and Other Operating Expenses (OOE)

48. Only items specified and approved in the Letter of Award will be funded.
49. The Grantor's written approval must be sought prior to purchasing new equipment/OOE items that is not in the approved budget. In the event that the Grantor's prior written approval was not obtained for the purchase of equipment not specified in the LOA, the Host Institution will bear the cost of the equipment.
50. All items claimed under the Grant must have been procured in compliance with the Institution's internal procurement processes, guidelines and policies.
51. The Grantor reserves the right to reject variation requests made retrospectively for equipment/OOE not listed in the LOA.

#### Overseas Travel Related Expenses

52. It is the responsibility of the Project Team to ensure that all travel expenses are in line with the Institutions' prevailing policy on travel, which should be consistently applied regardless of the source of funds. The Host Institution and Partner Institutions are to ensure that any travel undertaken is in relation to the Grant only and for no other purpose.

#### Performance Bonus

53. Claims for staff performance bonus should be submitted within 6 months following the end of the funding period. For Host Institutions that practise accrual of performance bonus according to its finance policy, balance funds should either be returned or claimed within 6 months if the pay-out comes after the end of the funding period.

## Grant Management

54. The Host Institution must commit to using the Funds awarded within the Start Date and End Date as stated in the LOA. Any variation to the commitment or any material variation to the approved scope of the Research, in particular its stated objectives, aims, KPIs and proposed outcomes must be approved in writing by the Grantor.

### Virement between Votes/Variation to Approved Budget

55. The Grantor reserves the right to reject any claims that have resulted from changes in the Research without prior written approval from the Grantor.
56. Except as stipulated in paragraphs 57 and 58, a request for any variation to the approved budget should be made to the Grantor before the last 3 months of the end of the funding period. Retrospective variation requests will not be allowed, unless there is compelling justification for submission of a late variation request.
57. The Research budget variations between and within cost categories/, without an increase in overall budget, is delegated to the internal approving authority of the Host Institution, subject to the following conditions being met:
- a) The approving authority of the Host Institution may approve Grant variation/virement of funds between votes subject to a cumulative amount (inclusive of all previously approved requests) not exceeding 10% of the total Grant awarded for the Research. For virements cumulatively above 10%, the approval authority remains the Grantor;
  - b) No Grant variation/virement is allowed for items that have been specifically rejected from the approved Application or items that have not been originally approved in the budget;
  - c) The Grantor's approval must be sought for any grant variation/virement outside of the scope of the Research.
  - d) Any virement into the EOM vote would require the Grantor's approval, even if the cumulative amount is below 10% of the total Grant awarded.
  - e) Virement of funds into the Overseas Travel vote is not allowed. Overspending will not be reimbursed.
58. The Host Institution is to inform the NIC(PO) of the variation/virement within one (1) month of the virement.

### EOM

59. Grantor delegates the approval authority for manpower changes (i.e. increase/decrease in headcount, change in designation or scheme of projected hires, change in time commitment to the Grant) to the Host Institution. Any virement into the EOM vote will require the Grantor's approval. Updates must be provided when the fund requisition form is submitted to the Grantor.

### Grant Extension

60. Requests for Grant extensions should be made at least 6 months before the original End Date using the relevant form provided by the NIC(PO). Any variation requests necessary to meet the extension period must be made known as part of the extension request. If, in the opinion of the Grantor, the request is justified, the Grantor may choose to grant an extension. No additional funds will be given for any extensions granted. During the period of extension, Project Teams must abide by any additional conditions and limitations for the usage of the Funds stipulated by the Grantor.
61. A one-off Grant extension should not be more than a total period of 6 months. An extension beyond 6 months will require compelling justifications.
62. The approval of Grant extension does not equate to the approval of any Research change requests as a result of the extension. Project Teams should seek formal written approval from the Grantor for any Research change requests to meet the needs of the Grant extension.
63. The Lead PI shall submit the necessary information through the Host Institution on the request for extension to the Grantor for approval.

### Change in Lead Principal Investigator

64. In the scenario that the Lead PI resigns or takes an extended leave of absence of 6 months or more, it is the responsibility of the Host Institution to inform the NIC(PO).
65. Change in the Lead PI is normally not allowed as the Research would have been approved taking into consideration the expertise and track record of the Lead PI. In exceptional cases where a change in the Lead PI is required (despite all conditions of the LOA required of the Lead PI having been met), the Host Institution must submit a written request to the NIC(PO) to nominate a new Lead PI. The new Lead PI must be able to take on and successfully execute all the duties required by this role. In the event that the Host Institution cannot find any suitable person to fulfil this role, or that the nominated individual is not approved by the Grantor, the Grantor reserves the right to terminate the Funding for the Research.
66. Continued support of the Research will depend on whether the new Lead PI can achieve the Milestones and KPIs. The Grantor reserves the right to terminate the Grant if the new Lead PI is unable to achieve the necessary outcomes.
67. In cases where the Lead PI moves to another Singapore-based organisation, and the Host Institution and new employing institution respectively agree to transfer the administration of the Grant and take on the duties of a Host Institution, the Grantor may allow for the transfer of the Research and Grant awarded. The new employing Institution must be Singapore-based and must enter into an agreement with the Grantor on the same terms and conditions that apply to the original Host Institution in endorsing the Research.

## Intellectual Property Management

68. Nothing in the LOA shall affect any person's right to own or licence Background IP.
69. MOH agrees that all rights, title to or interest in, all Research IP created by the Project Team shall vest in the Project Team.
70. Background IP is any existing IP brought by the Institutions and/or Collaborators into the Research. Unless expressly agreed otherwise, this Research shall have no effect on Background IP.
71. All Research IP shall, at the first instance, be the property of the Institutions in such proportions as they may determine. This is without prejudice to any agreement that the Institutions may enter into with the Investigators or Research personnel on ownership and exploitation of Research IP.
72. The Investigators shall use best efforts to identify and disclose to the Institutions details of all such Research IP.
73. The Institutions shall keep and maintain a full, comprehensive and updated list of all Research IP, which shall be made available to the Grantor for inspection at any time.
74. The Institutions shall use best efforts to ensure that Research IP is properly managed and wherever feasible, fully exploited and commercialised. When required to do so by the Grantor, the Institutions shall attend such meetings as the Grantor may direct to discuss the potential for exploitation and commercialisation of Research IP. If the Grantor determines that the Institution has failed to exploit and commercialise the Research IP to the Grantor's satisfaction, the Grantor may require the Institution to procure that:
  - a) all rights, interest and title in the Research IP and where necessary, the Background IP, or any part thereof, be assigned; or
  - b) a non-exclusive, partially exclusive or exclusive license in respect of the Research IP and, where necessary, the Background IP, or any part thereof, be granted;to the Grantor, or to such other party or parties as the Grantor may determine, on such terms as the Grantor may, in its sole discretion, determine are reasonable based on the circumstances, to further develop and commercialise the Research IP.
75. The Institutions shall keep and maintain a full, comprehensive and updated set of statements, records and accounts documenting the revenue from the commercialisation and exploitation of the Research IP.
76. The Grantor and the Grantor's Affiliates shall be granted, free of any additional charge, a non-exclusive, non-transferable, perpetual, irrevocable, worldwide, royalty-free right and licence to use, modify, reproduce and distribute the Research IP (together with any modifications, improvements and developments thereof) for non-commercial, R&D and/or educational purposes only.
77. In the event any Institution is subsequently engaged by:

- (i) the Government of the Republic of Singapore;
- (ii) any current or future Statutory Boards or not-for-profit organisations identified by the Grantor;
- (iii) any corporation, medical hospital, community hospital, clinic, healthcare institution, healthcare practitioner, or home and/or centre-based care provider (“Organisation”):
  - (a) that is related to the Grantor by reason of the existence of a collaboration or other form of co-operation between the Grantor and the Organisation;
  - (b) that is related to the Grantor by reason of being the Grantor’s Affiliate;
  - (c) which has been authorized by the Grantor to use, access or benefit from the Project or the terms of the LOA whether directly or indirectly; or
  - (d) as may be identified by the Grantor from time to time,

on any project which involves the Institution providing products or services incorporating the Research IP, the Institution shall offer these products or services to the above entities at preferential pricing, i.e. offer a discount on the price which the Institution provides these products and services to any other party.

#### **Disclosure Management and Publications**

- 78. The Grantor expects Lead PIs to play a proactive role in working with their Project Teams to effectively protect, commercialise and exploit Research IP arising from the Research. This includes ensuring that disclosures of Research IP are promptly reported to the Lead PIs by their Project Teams.
- 79. Regardless of whether it is during or after completion of the Research, members of the Project Team who publish or produce any works which relate to the Research should acknowledge NRF and the Grantor for the Funding support. Published materials include scientific publications, books, journals, articles, newsletters, brochures, posters, websites, conference materials, signage, case studies and reports. Where relevant, efforts should also be made to acknowledge NRF and the Grantor’s support in media releases, interviews, speeches, videos or other publicity/information platforms.
- 80. Except for articles or papers published in scientific, technical or professional journals, the following disclaimer must also be included in all publications arising from the Research: “Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Research Foundation or the Ministry of Health”.
- 81. Information on disclosures of Research IP, programmes and publications arising from the Research should be provided to the NIC(PO) as part of the regular annual and final progress reports submitted.
- 82. The Grantor requires that all peer-reviewed publications arising from the Research be made publicly available no later than 12 months after the official date of publication. A copy of the publication shall also be sent to the NIC(PO).

## **Final Report & Final Statement of Account**

### Final Report

83. All Lead PIs are required to submit a final report in the format required by the NIC(PO).
84. The report must be duly endorsed by all Institutions, Investigators and Collaborators, as well as the Host Institution, before submission to the NIC(PO). Each report must be accompanied by a soft copy of each relevant publication as well as abstracts for any presentations.
85. The report must be submitted within 3 months of the End Date of the Research. The Project Team may be required to make a presentation on the completed Research to the Grantor to ensure that the Research has been completed satisfactorily.

### Final Statement of Account

86. The Host Institution is required to submit a Final Statement of Account within 6 months of the 'End Date' of the Research.

## **Termination**

87. The prompt submissions of progress and final reports relating to the Research will form part of the Project Team's track record with the Grantor. The Grantor reserves the right to terminate the Grant for any Research at any time if the Research is deemed unsatisfactory in progress or achievement of its stated objectives.
88. In the event that a Research is terminated, the Host Institution shall submit a Final Statement of Account with all supporting documents and a cheque for the unutilised funds, to the NIC(PO) within 3 months of the termination date. The Grantor reserves the right to recover additional funds for expenditure deemed to be non-fundable by the Grant. A final report shall also be submitted by the Host Institution to the Grantor through the NIC (PO) for terminated Grants so long as Funds had been drawn down from the Grant.

## **Accounting and Audit Requirements**

### Yearly Audit Report

89. The Host Institution is required to submit a Yearly Audit Report of the preceding financial year ending 31 March, by 30 September of each year.
90. The Yearly Audit Report must be prepared by each Institution's internal or external auditors and certified by the director of research and chief financial officer (or an authorised nominee).
91. The Yearly Audit Report should confirm that the Host Institution's requisitions are made in accordance with the terms and conditions in the Letter of Award. The appointed auditors will also perform yearly checks on the co-funding items, which must be at least 20% of the total approved qualifying costs.

92. Each Institution shall keep and maintain full and detailed records and accounts relating to the Funding and the Research, including all items of expenditure incurred for or in connection with the Research. The Host Institution shall be wholly responsible for monitoring the expenditure of the Funding by the Institutions, ensuring that the Funding is utilized in accordance with the terms and conditions in the Letter of Award and certifying in the annual progress report the amount of Funding actually utilised and that the progress of the Research is satisfactory. In the event that the Funding is not utilised in accordance with the Contract, the Host Institution shall immediately inform the Grantor and provide full details of the same, and take all action necessary to minimise further use of the Funding and inform the Grantor of the action taken.
93. The Host Institution shall manage the use of the Funding for indirect cost in accordance with the terms and conditions in the Letter of Award. Investigators should refer to their Host Institution for their policy of managing such use. The Grantor does not directly manage indirect cost funding.

#### Debarring of Investigators

94. Investigators who fail to submit the Final Progress Report and/or Final Statement of Account within the stipulated timelines at paragraphs 85 and 86 will be debarred. Debarred Investigators will not be eligible to submit new grant applications for a minimum of 1 year starting from the end of the respective deadlines. The period of ineligibility will continue until the Final Progress Report and/or Final Statement of Account are submitted to the Grantor.

#### **Disclaimer of Liability**

95. The Grantor shall not be liable to the Host Institution and Project Team in its role as funding agency, or for any reasons whatsoever and will hold the Host Institution receiving the Grants responsible for all acts and conducts relating to the Research, including but not limited to ethical issues.

#### **Changes to Guidelines**

96. The Grantor reserves the right to make changes to these guidelines and the NIC(PO) templates as and when it deems fit. Changes will be announced by the issuance of a notice.

## ANNEX A

### NON-FUNDABLE DIRECT COSTS<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. EOM Related Expenses

Type of Expenses	Description
General Policy	<p>EOM costs and related benefits (as per employment contract) can be supported as long as it is in line with the Host Institution's prevailing human resource policies, which should be consistently applied regardless of the source of funding.</p> <p>This will extend to Host Institution policies that govern staff recruitment and related costs (e.g. costs associated with the onboarding of staff, staff insurance, overtime claims, staff relocation, employment benefits, employment levy, employment pass, pre-examination medical check-up and housing allowance.)</p> <p>All manpower related costs that fall under Other Operating Expenses (OOE) should be accurately reflected in the budget.</p> <p>Fractional charging for staff costs based on time commitment to the project must be practised.</p>
Principal Investigators / Co-Investigators / programme managers' EOM cost	Not allowed.
Unconsumed leave	Provision for unconsumed leave is not allowed.
Staff Benefits	Not allowed unless costs are incurred under the Host Institution's prevailing human resource policies, which should be consistently applied regardless of the source of funding.
Staff Insurance	Not allowed unless they are incurred under the Host Institution's prevailing human resource policies, which should be consistently applied regardless of the source of funding. The Host Institution may be requested by the Grantor to certify that such payments are in accordance with its established policy or on the same terms as the other staff.
Staff Recruitment and related cost	Not allowed. Examples of such costs are advertisement, recruitment agency cost, staff relocation, housing allowances, etc. unless specifically approved by the Grantor.
Student Assistants / Interns	Not allowed unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor and is only allowed for full-time students enrolled in local institutes of higher learning, and who are not receiving any stipends or awards.

<sup>1</sup> This list provides general guidance on items that are considered non-fundable direct costs. MOH may tailor this list to suit the objectives of a particular Grant Call.

## 2. Equipment Related Expenses

Type of Expenses	Description
General Policy	<p>No purchase of equipment is allowed unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award approved by the Grantor.</p> <p>The procurement of such equipment must be made according to the Host Institution's prevailing policies, which should be consistently applied regardless of the source of funding.</p> <p>No purchase of equipment shall be made, including items provided for and approved by the Grantor, within 6 months of the End Date stipulated in the LOA, unless specifically approved by the Grantor.</p>
Cost of capital works and general infrastructure (including the costs associated with the establishment and running of a Grant Administration Office)	Not allowed unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor.
IT Equipment (including computer equipment and printers)	<p>Not allowed under direct costs unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor.</p> <p>Purchase of IT equipment must be in accordance with the IT policy of the Host Institution, which should be consistently applied regardless of the source of funds.</p>
Office Equipment, Furniture & Fittings, etc	Not allowed.
Purchase of mobile devices	Not allowed unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor.

## 3. OOE Related Expenses

Type of Expenses	Description
General Policy	<p>Not allowed for expenses that are <b><u>not directly related</u></b> to the Research.</p> <p>All procurement of such items must be made according to the Host Institution's prevailing policies, which should be consistently applied regardless of the source of funding.</p>

Type of Expenses	Description
Visiting Professors/Experts	<p>Not allowed unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor. The visiting professor must be identified and his/her contribution to the Research must be clearly defined and described in the Project Proposal.</p> <p>Expenses incurred for overseas experts invited to participate in the Research and staying in Singapore <u>for at least 6 months</u> per year must be budgeted separately in the Research budget.</p> <p>For other overseas experts staying for less than 6 months per year, the cost of his/her stay is allowed if the costs are specifically provided for and approved in the Research.</p> <p>Examples of such costs are honoraria, salaries, staff relocation, settling-in allowances and other related cost.</p> <p><u>However, superannuation contributions for such staff are not allowed under both direct and indirect costs.</u></p>
Audit Fees	Not allowed. This includes both internal and external audit fees.
Entertainment & Refreshment	Not allowed.
Equipment Usage Charges	<p>Not allowed for internal (intra-institution) equipment usage charges unless the equipment/service is part of the Host Institution's central/shared facilities, such as animal holding units and central laboratory, and specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor.</p> <p>However, external (inter-institution) equipment usage charges are allowed.</p>
Fines and Penalties	Not allowed.
Insurance Premiums	<p>Not allowed. This includes insurance premiums for equipment, work injury compensation and professional indemnity of Research staff funded from the Grant.</p> <p>The Host Institution is responsible for the insurance of the equipment, relevant work injury compensation and professional indemnity insurance which are in line with the Host Institution's risk policies.</p> <p>However, personal travel insurance for approved overseas trips is claimable.</p>

Type of Expenses	Description
IT Peripherals	Not allowed unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor (e.g. thumbdrives, optical media, data storage devices).
Legal Fees	Not allowed.
License Fees	Not allowed (e.g. radiation license from HSA) unless the license is required for the handling of machines funded under the Grant.
International Students' fees or other stipends or awards to students	Not allowed.
Local Training	Not allowed unless the training is directly required for the Research and is specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by Grantor.
Overhead Expenses	Not allowed unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by Grantor based on the nature of the Research. This includes rental, utilities, facilities management, telephone charges, internet charges, etc.
Outsourcing	Not allowed under direct cost unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor
Overhead expenses - rental, utilities, telephone charges, facilities management, repairs and maintenance, etc	Not allowed under direct cost. These expenses may be claimed under indirect costs.
Patent-related expenses	Not allowed under direct and indirect costs.  Such cost should be borne by the Host Institution unless specifically stated in the Public Document or specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor
Patent Application	Not allowed.  This includes patent application filing, maintenance and other related cost.

Type of Expenses	Description
Payments to Volunteers and Subjects recruited for the Project	<p>Not allowed unless necessary for the R&amp;D work. This should be specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor.</p> <p>Examples of such payments may include inconvenience fees, transport and meal reimbursement, etc.</p> <p>Press advertisements for subjects are allowed under indirect costs only.</p>
Professional Membership Fees	<p>Not allowed.</p> <p>This applies to PI and Co-Investigators as well as all Research staff funded from the Grant.</p>
Publications	<p>Not allowed for costs of reprints and publishing in media such as books, monographs and pamphlets unless it is specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and for publication in professional journals.</p>
Repairs and Maintenance of Equipment	<p>Not allowed unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor. The period of maintenance funded from the Grant, if approved, should be only for the funding period and for equipment purchased or used for the Research.</p>
Software	<p>Not allowed under direct cost for generic software unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor. Software licenses, if approved, should only be for the funding period.</p>
Professional fees (including fees to consultants)	<p>Not allowed unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor.</p>
Staff retreat	<p>Not allowed.</p>
Staff Benefits	<p>Not allowed unless costs are incurred under under the Host Institution's prevailing policies, which should be consistently applied regardless of the source of funding.</p>
Stationery and Printer Consumables	<p>Not allowed under direct costs unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor. This includes printing and photocopying charges.</p>

Type of Expenses	Description
Transportation, Postage & Courier services	<p>Not allowed for general transport, postage &amp; courier charges.</p> <p>Only allowed for postage, courier and freight charges for bringing in equipment, specialised research consumables, and the submission of manuscripts and posters.</p> <p>Not allowed for rental of vehicles (land/sea/air) unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor.</p>
Vaccinations	Not allowed for routine health vaccinations. Only allowed when working with micro-organisms carrying infectious diseases.

#### 4. OOE - Overseas Travel Related Expenses

Type of Expenses	Description
General Policy	Not allowed unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor. Travel must be by <b>economy class airfare</b> ; for all other travel-related claims, the Host Institution's policies must be consistently adhered to.
Meeting Overseas Collaborator	Not allowed.
Overseas Conferences	<p>The conference should be directly relevant to the area of the Research or necessary to accomplish the Research objectives.</p> <p>Not allowed for students unless they are PhD students who are presenting papers.</p> <p>Funding is capped at S\$18,000.00 for the funding period.</p>
Overseas Training	Not allowed unless specifically provided for in the Letter of Award and approved by the Grantor.

#### 5. OOE – Research Scholarship

Type of Expenses	Description
General policy	<p>Not allowable unless specifically provided for in the grant and approved by the Grantor.</p> <p>Postgraduate stipend must align with the prevailing rates set by the Ministry of Education. Postgraduate stipend and tuition support will not attract indirect costs.</p>
Undergraduate stipend and tuition support	Not allowable.

## **6. Indirect Costs**

- a. Funding support of 20% of the total qualifying approved direct costs (i.e., less research scholarships, if any), on top of the supportable approved qualifying costs will be provided as indirect costs to Singapore-based institutes of higher learning (IHLs) and not-for-profit entities (including public healthcare providers), unless otherwise stated in the Public Documents.
- b. Funds approved under indirect cost shall not be used for patent costs, commercialisation expenses, fines and penalties, and other activities not related to the Research.
- c. The Host Institution will be responsible for administering and managing the support provided by the NIC(PO) for the indirect costs of the Research.