

**St GEORGE & SUTHERLAND MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION**

**GRANT IN AID**

**DESCRIPTION, ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND APPLICATION  
PROCESS**

**for funding commencing in 2011**

**Key dates:**

**Applications open 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2010**

**Applications close 5pm, Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2010**

**Late or incomplete applications will not be considered**

## **1. Description and Objectives of Foundation Grants in Aid**

The aim of the Foundation Grant in Aid scheme is to assist clinicians and biomedical scientists, to purchase equipment, consumables or fund other expenses or services necessary to conduct their research, but which are not fully funded by existing research funds available to the researcher or the research group. The grants are NOT intended to fund infrastructure or travel.

## **2. Eligibility Criteria**

Applicants must meet the following criteria, **at the time of application**:

- Be Australian citizens or permanent residents or New Zealand citizens holding a Special Category Visa. Applicants who have applied for but not yet been granted permanent residency or a Special Category Visa may apply for the award. Evidence of the appropriate status must be provided before the commencement of the award;
- Currently hold an appointment at St George and/or Sutherland Hospital; and
- Must be the leading chief investigator on the proposed research project that forms the basis of this application

Reasons for ineligibility to apply include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- applicants already in receipt of grant support from alternative sources to support this specific project.

## **3. Terms and Conditions of Award**

### **3.1 Level and Duration of Funding**

Grants in Aid provide a single quantum of funds up to a maximum of \$10,000. The award can only be granted to an individual once in any 3 year cycle.

The Board of the St George and Sutherland Medical Research Foundation, on an annual basis, depending upon its discretionary budget, will determine the overall number and mix of Foundation Grants to be made available. The number of Grants in Aid to be made available and the amounts awarded will depend on the total annual grant allocation by the Board, the merit of individual grant applications and the overall mix of applications. Hence the actual number of Grants in Aid and other grant categories that can be funded may vary significantly from year to year. It is intended that the funds will be used within the 12 month stipulated in the award. Except under special circumstances, and only with prior approved by the Foundation Scientific Advisory Committee, there is no provision for carry-over of funds beyond the 12 months. Unused funds as of the termination date of the award must be returned to the Foundation.

## **4. Process of Application Review**

The Foundation is committed to ensuring that all conflicts of interest, where they may exist, are dealt with consistently and transparently. All participants in the peer review process for the Foundation will respect confidentiality in relation to the applications and to the peer review process, and will not disclose any confidential information, including the outcomes of considerations. (Refer Appendix 1: *“Guidelines for treatment of conflict of interest”*).

Applications will be subjected to an internal review process by the Foundations Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), which will rank and prioritise proposals. Where possible or necessary (eg where there is insufficient internal expertise to objectively evaluate an application), applications will be sent for external expert review. The SAC will then submit its findings to the Board of the St George & Sutherland Medical Research Foundation. The final approval on awards and funds allocated will be made by the Board. All decisions by the Board in the relation to awardees, and allocated funds, and any related conditions that is sees fit to implement, will be final.

## **5. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION**

Applicants should lodge a brief outline of the project or projects that are intended to be supported by the Grant under the headings below. The proposal should be no longer than **TWO A4 pages** in length. The document is to be **saved and converted in PDF format** and **submitted electronically** to:

Prof Ian Cook Chair of Scientific Advisory Committee  
Email: [Kerrie.Smyth@SESIAHS.HEALTH.NSW.GOV.AU](mailto:Kerrie.Smyth@SESIAHS.HEALTH.NSW.GOV.AU)

### **5.1– Applicant’s Name; Qualifications and Contact Details**

*(Mailing address, current email address; fax, phone and mobile phone where applicable).*

### **5.2 - Location of proposed research:**

Name and address of the department in which research is to be conducted:

Head of Department: (Name and contact details including email, phone, fax)

### **5.3 - The Research Proposal**

*Scientific Title:*

*Aims and Significance of the Work:*

**Research Plan – Methods and techniques to be used** – Outline the research plan briefly and indicate how the assistance sought from the Foundation Grant in Aid is relevant.

**References to the work of other scientists relevant to this proposal**

*(A maximum of 5 most important references relevant to this work).*

**Publications by applicant**

*(A maximum of 5 publications that the applicant feels best represents of his/her recent research achievements).*

**Contact for additional information or queries related to awards:**

St George Medical Research Foundation website: [www.stgeorgemrf.com.au](http://www.stgeorgemrf.com.au)

Prof Ian Cook

Chair, SGMRF Scientific Advisory Committee

C/- Mrs Kerrie Smyth

Email: [Kerrie.Smyth@SESIAHS.HEALTH.NSW.GOV.AU](mailto:Kerrie.Smyth@SESIAHS.HEALTH.NSW.GOV.AU)

Tel: (+61 2) 9113 2817. Fax: (+61 2) 9113 3993

## APPENDIX 1:

### GUIDELINES FOR TREATMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1. The SGMRF is committed to fair review of all grant applications ensuring any Conflicts of Interest are dealt with consistently and transparently. The essence of a quality peer review process demands all participants act in good faith, in an open and sensible manner. The ensuing guidelines will assist in the interpretation and implementation of the Foundation's policy. The Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) acknowledges that there are many forms of Conflict of Interest. It is an important fundamental of the peer review process that people within the field have access to other grant applications. It is also recognised that most SAC and many of the Foundation Board members are actively engaged in research considered to be of significant importance to St George and/or Sutherland Hospital. As such it is not reasonable that SAC members nor members of their research group be excluded from submitting applications for funding for consideration by the SAC.

2. When formally accepting the role as a reviewer for one or more applications received by the Foundation, each reviewer (eg SAC member; external reviewer) must first determine that no potential conflict of interest might arise. Where such potential exists, the invited reviewer will notify the Chair of the SAC where indicated on the invitation document, stating reasons for that opinion. If there is no conflict of interest, he/she must sign the invitation document to indicate this and that he/she can abide by the Foundation's policies and guidelines.

3. The following are the principal areas where conflicts may arise:

- Direct involvement in the application as Chief Investigator or Associate/Principle Investigator.
- Direct or potential involvement due to a personal financial interest in the outcome of the granting process <sup>a,b</sup>.
- Potential involvement as a scientific <sup>a</sup>, or organisational group colleague<sup>b</sup>.
- Perceived involvement due to a family/ personal relationship, either currently or during the past five years <sup>a,b</sup>.
- If at any time there has been a verbal or written dispute between an applicant and the individual acting for the Foundation.
- Any other perceived conflicts.

4. All members of the SAC will be provided with the information on all applicants, their departmental and other affiliations, the assigned reviewers and each reviewer's signed conflict of interest declaration for each application. The full SAC will review this information; all conflicts of interest will be recorded and clarification sought where necessary before finalising reviewers for each application. No reviews can commence until the SAC has approved the matching of applicants and reviewers.

---

a. a scientific colleague is defined as another scientist with whom the collaborator has published papers, held grants or acted in a Higher Degree by Research student/Supervisor relationship with any of the applicants during the past five years.

b. a colleague within an identifiable organisational group from which joint benefit may follow award of the grant, ie. Members of the same research group or hospital department.

5. After discussing any conflicts of interest, the SAC may decide that:
- a) the SAC member with conflicts must not be present during any discussion of the application;
  - b) the SAC member has unique knowledge of the research area of the application and may only be present to answer direct questions relating to scientific issues, and is not to be present, or take any further part in the application review process. Note that questions are to be directed after the conflicts of interest have been identified and prior to discussion of the application; or
  - c) no action is deemed necessary.

### **Examples of Conflicts of Interest**

Some examples of conflicts of interest and appropriate SAC decisions:

**Example 1:** A SAC is required to review an application where Prof Brown is an applicant. Dr Smith, a member of the SAC, is also a member of Prof Brown's research unit.

**SAC Action:** Dr Smith is not to be present when Prof Brown's application is being reviewed by the SAC.

**Example 2:** A departmental colleague of Dr Jones (a member of the SAC) has submitted an application for funding for a research area related to hypogeniology. The SAC is required to review this application.

**SAC Action:** Dr Jones has exceptional knowledge in this particular field and her exclusion from discussions may result in the application not receiving fair representation. The SAC decision should be that Dr Jones be directed to answer only specific scientific questions related to the application, and not be present for or take part in general discussions, nor score or have input on the final ranking decision.

**Example 3:** Prof Wilson is the Head of the Department of Interesting Disorders at St George Hospital and is also a member of the SAC. Prof Wilson's Department has submitted an application for the peer review process by the SAC.

**SAC Action:** If the application from Prof Wilson's Department were successful, Prof Wilson could receive financial gain, and therefore should not be present whilst that particular application is being reviewed.