



**ANZBMS**



# Application Guide - 2026 Health Innovation Grant Application 2026 Early Career Researcher Grant Application

Expression of interest open	<b>7 April 2026</b>
Expression of interest close	<b>8pm (AEST) Monday 18 May 2026</b>
Invitation to apply	<b>mid-June 2026</b>
Application close date	<b>8pm (AEST) Friday 7 August 2026</b>
Grants announced	<b>September 2026</b>

## 1. Introduction

The Bone Health Foundation (BHF) and the Australian and New Zealand Bone and Mineral Society (ANZBMS) jointly support research aimed at improving bone and musculoskeletal health.

The program supports innovative research across clinical, biomedical, public health and health services domains, with the aim of improving the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of bone and musculoskeletal disease.

These grants support innovative research concepts and emerging researchers developing independent research programs.

## 2. Grant Schemes

Two grant schemes are available in the **2026 round**.

### 1) Health Innovation Grant (Up to 2 x Grants)

- Funding up to \$50,000
- This scheme supports innovative or translational research projects that test new concepts, technologies, interventions or models of care relevant to bone and musculoskeletal health.

Projects should demonstrate the potential to:

- improve clinical care or public health outcomes
- generate pilot data for larger competitive grants
- translate new knowledge into policy or practice.

### 2) Early Career Researcher (ECR) Grant (Up to 2 x Grants)

- Funding up to \$25,000
- This scheme supports early career investigators to generate preliminary data or test novel research ideas relevant to bone and mineral health.
- Applicants should normally be within 10 years of PhD award, adjusted for career disruption.
- Applicants who have submitted their PhD but have not yet been awarded may apply, provided the degree is expected to be conferred prior to commencement of funding.
- Projects should strengthen the applicant's competitiveness for future national or international funding.

### 3. Project Scope

Projects may include:

- biomedical research
  - clinical research
  - health services research
  - public health research
  - translational research.
  - Projects must clearly relate to bone, mineral or musculoskeletal health.
  - Projects should be feasible within the grant period and normally completed within 12–18 months.
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### 4. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

- hold a continuing, fixed-term, or formally recognised adjunct/affiliate appointment at a University, Hospital or Research Institute in Australia or New Zealand for the duration of the award. Casual appointments may be eligible where the administering institution confirms appropriate affiliation, resources, and capacity to lead the project
- reside in Australia or New Zealand
- be a financial member of ANZBMS for the duration of the award
- submit only one application as Principal Investigator per grant round (may appear as AI)

Additional conditions:

- Principal Investigators who currently hold an active BHF or ANZBMS/BHF grant are not eligible to apply but may participate as Associate Investigators.
  - Career disruptions and relative to opportunity will be considered in the assessment.
  - The administering institution must agree to support the application, administer the funds, and confirm that the applicant has sufficient time and resources to undertake the project
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### 5. Consumer and Community Involvement (CCI)

Consumer involvement is increasingly expected by major funders and journals. Beyond meeting requirements, meaningful involvement can strengthen research relevance, improve feasibility and enhance impact. For discovery scientists and clinicians alike, early engagement can shape research questions, refine study design and improve communication and translation pathways.

Applicants are encouraged to consider the involvement of consumers (people with lived experience of bone disease, their carers, family or community)

Examples include:

- involving consumers in shaping the research question and study design
- establishing consumer advisory groups or consumer partnerships
- identifying and prioritising outcomes that matter to consumers
- involving consumers in interpretation of findings and dissemination of results (e.g. co-presenting to community audiences)

***Consumer and community involvement is not mandatory, but well-integrated CCI can strengthen applications across all assessment areas.***

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## 6. Funding Conditions

Grant funds may be used for direct project costs, including:

- research personnel (e.g. research assistants or technical staff)
- consumables and laboratory costs
- equipment required for the project
- data collection and analysis
- project-related travel.
- Salary support
- Consumer and community involvement including honorarium

Salary support policies differ between the two schemes:

- Health Innovation Grant:
  - Funding is intended to support project costs rather than salary support for the Principal Investigator.
- Early Career Researcher Grant
  - Partial salary support for the ECR Principal Investigator may be included where clearly justified and directly related to the conduct of the project.
  - Salary support should normally not exceed 50% of the total grant value.

Grant funds cannot be used for:

- institutional overheads
  - infrastructure costs
  - PhD stipends
  - projects already funded by major national or international funding bodies.
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## 7. Application Process

Applications are assessed in two stages.

### Stage 1 – Expression of Interest (EOI)

Applicants submit an EOI describing:

- the research concept
- expected impact.
- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a full application.

### Applicants are encouraged to complete the CCI eCourses

CCI in Health Research free online [eCourse](#)

CCI and Grant Writing free online [e-Course](#)

### Stage 2 – Full Application

Invited applicants submit a detailed proposal including:

- research plan
- methodology
- budget
- timeline.

***If you are invited to submit a full application, we require completion of CCI eCourses above***

Applications are reviewed by independent assessors and the ANZBMS/BHF Research Advisory Panel

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## 8. Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria.

### Scientific Quality and Feasibility

- clarity of research question
- appropriateness of methodology
- feasibility within the proposed timeframe and budget.

### Significance and Innovation

- potential to advance knowledge in bone and mineral research
- novelty of the research concept
- translational or clinical relevance.

### Impact

- potential benefit to bone health research or clinical practice
- potential benefit to patients or communities
- likelihood of supporting future research funding.

### Applicant and Team Capability

- track record relative to opportunity
  - suitability of the research team and environment.
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## 9. Project Duration

- Projects should normally be completed within 12-18 months of commencement, unless otherwise agreed.
  - Funding will not be released until all required ethics and governance approvals are obtained.
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## 10. Reporting

- Grant recipients must submit:
    - a progress report midway through the grant period
    - a final report and financial acquittal within 60 days of project completion.
    - All publications and presentations arising from the funded work must acknowledge ANZBMS and the Bone Health Foundation.
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## 11. Enquiries

- Bone Health Foundation: [research@bonehealth.org.au](mailto:research@bonehealth.org.au)
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## 12. 2026 Grant Round Timeline

- The grant program is assessed through a two-stage process.
  - Expression of Interest (EOI) opens 7 April 2026
  - EOI deadline 8pm (AEST) 18 May 2026
  - Review of EOIs May/June 2026
  - Invitation to shortlisted applicants Mid June 2026
  - Full application deadline 8pm (AEST) 7 August 2026
  - Peer review and panel assessment August 2026
  - Approval by BHF Board and ANZBMS Council September 2026
- Successful applicants may be acknowledged at the ANZBMS Annual Scientific Meeting.*
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### 13. Approvals required prior to funding commencement

Research must comply with:

- NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research
  - Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
  - all relevant institutional ethics and governance requirements.
  - Funding will not be released until all approvals are received.
  - Funding will be released in 4 quarterly instalments unless otherwise arranged on confirmation that all required ethics and governance approvals have been obtained.
  - Quarter 3 instalment will be paid upon submission of a satisfactory progress report midway through the project, with final payment made at the completion of the project
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### 14. Acceptance of Grant Conditions

- Research Grants are offered in accordance with the ANZBMS/BHF Grant Agreement.
  - Upon acceptance of funding:
    - a Letter of Award and Grant Agreement will be issued to the administering institution
    - the Head of Department must sign the agreement on behalf of the institution.
  - Recipients and administering institutions agree to:
    - undertake research at the nominated institution
    - honour any in-kind support commitments
    - acknowledge ANZBMS/BHF in all presentations and publications
    - submit quarterly invoices
    - submit progress and final reports in format provided by ANZBMS/BHF
    - provide information for communications or promotional purposes where appropriate.
  - The signed Grant Agreement must be returned by the date specified in the Letter of Award.
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### 15. Variations to a Grant

A variation may be required where changes occur to:

- budget allocation
  - personnel
  - project scope
  - project timeline.
  - Requests must be submitted to: [research@bonehealth.org.au](mailto:research@bonehealth.org.au)
  - If additional funding for the same project is obtained during the award period, the recipient must notify BHF within 7 days.
  - If significant overlap occurs, remaining funding may be reduced or withdrawn.
  - Extensions will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and are usually limited to 6 months.
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### 16. Duration of Grant and Expenditure

ANZBMS/BHF grants are up to 18-month awards, commencing from the start date specified in the Grant Agreement.

- The project must commence within 3 months of the award date, unless otherwise agreed.
  - All expenditure must occur within the approved grant period.
  - If a project ends early or funds remain unspent, remaining funds must be returned within 30 days.
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## **17. Reporting Requirements**

- A progress report must be submitted before the release of the quarter 3 & 4 instalments.
  - At project completion, a final report and financial acquittal must be submitted within 60 days of final invoice.
  - Reports must use the templates provided by ANZBMS/BHF.
  - Failure to submit satisfactory reports may result in:
    - repayment of funding
    - ineligibility for future grant rounds.
    - Information from reports may be used for internal reporting, communications or publications.
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## **18. Enquiries**

Any enquiries regarding grant administration should be directed to:

Linda Stanton, Bone Health Foundation

Email: [research@bonehealth.org.au](mailto:research@bonehealth.org.au)

## 1. Appendix 1: FAQ's

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### 1. Who is eligible to apply?

Applications may be submitted to either the ANZBMS/BHF Health Innovation Grant or the ANZBMS/BHF Early Career Researcher (ECR) Grant.

For both schemes:

- The Principal Investigator (PI-A) must be a financial member of ANZBMS for the duration of the award. Applicants who are not members at the time of application must agree to join ANZBMS and remain a member for the duration of the grant.
- Principal Investigators who currently hold an active BHF or ANZBMS/BHF grant are not eligible to apply as PI-A but may participate as an Associate Investigator (AI).
- A researcher may be Principal Investigator on one application only per grant round, but may be listed as an Associate Investigator on multiple applications.
- ANZBMS Council members, committee members, and BHF Board members may apply, but must declare conflicts of interest and will not participate in the grant assessment or endorsement processes.

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### 2. Who is eligible to apply for the Early Career Researcher (ECR) Grant?

Applicants must normally be within 10 years of the award of their PhD (or equivalent research doctorate) at the time of application.

Applicants who have submitted their PhD thesis but have not yet been formally awarded their degree may apply, provided the PhD is expected to be awarded prior to commencement of funding. In such cases, applicants must specify their thesis submission date and expected award date.

Career stage will be assessed relative to opportunity, taking into account career disruptions and periods not spent actively conducting research.

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### 3. Can Early Career Researchers apply for the Health Innovation Grant?

Yes.

Early Career Researchers may apply for either scheme provided they meet the relevant eligibility requirements. However, applicants may be Principal Investigator on one application only per grant round.

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### 4. Must applicants have an established track record in bone research?

No.

Applicants from related disciplines are encouraged to apply where the proposed research clearly aligns with musculoskeletal health.

Applications will be assessed based on:

- significance and innovation of the proposal
- feasibility of the research
- research team and environment
- track record relative to opportunity

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### 5. How is “relative to opportunity” assessed?

The ANZBMS/BHF uses principles similar to those used by NHMRC.

Assessment may consider:

- time spent as an active researcher
- career disruption
- clinical, teaching or administrative workload

- access to research resources
- relocation of research programs
- research productivity relative to opportunity
- time spent working in other sectors (e.g. industry or government)

A career disruption generally involves either:

- a continuous absence from work of 28 days or more, or
- a formal long-term partial return to work arrangement.

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6. Can I apply if I have another funding application pending?

Yes.

However, if the applicant subsequently receives funding for the same or a substantially overlapping project parameters the ANZBMS/BHF must be notified within 7 days. Funding may be reduced or withdrawn at the discretion of ANZBMS/BHF.

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7. Can previously unsuccessful applicants apply again?

Yes. Previous applicants are encouraged to submit a reviewed/revised application.

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#### Applications

8. How should applications be submitted?

Applications must be completed using the ANZBMS/BHF-approved application template and submitted in PDF format.

Templates can be requested from:

research@bonehealth.org.au

Applications may be submitted by either the Principal Investigator or the applicant's institutional research office.

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#### Documentation

9. Are CVs, PhD certificates, or ethics approvals required at the time of application?

No.

Applicants should provide relevant information within the application template, including PhD award date and track record.

If the application is successful, ethics approval will be required before the project commences.

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10. Are references required in the Project Summary?

References are not mandatory but should be included where prior research is cited. References should be listed in the Reference Table section of the application form.

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#### Research Team

11. Is there a limit to the number of investigators included in an application?

No.

Applicants may include investigators from multiple institutions or disciplines where relevant.

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12. Can collaborators from outside Australia or New Zealand be included?

Yes.

International collaborators may participate as Associate Investigators or collaborators, provided the project is administered through an eligible Australian or New Zealand institution.

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13. Can investigators from other research fields apply?

Yes.

Applicants transitioning into musculoskeletal research are encouraged to apply where the proposed research aligns with the objectives of the grant scheme.

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#### Grant Funds

14. What expenses can the grant support?

Grant funding may support direct project costs, including:

- research personnel (e.g. research assistants)
- equipment required for the project
- consumables and laboratory supplies
- travel required to conduct the research
- Consumer honorarium

All costs must be justified in the project budget.

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15. Can the grant be used for salary support for the Principal Investigator?

#### Health Innovation Grant

Funding is intended to support project costs rather than salary support for the Principal Investigator. Funding may be used for research personnel such as research assistants, technical staff or students.

#### Early Career Researcher Grant

Partial salary support for the Early Career Researcher Principal Investigator may be included where justified and directly related to the conduct of the project.

Salary support should normally not exceed 50% of the total grant value.

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16. Are institutional overheads or infrastructure costs allowed?

No.

Grant funds cannot be used to cover institutional overheads, infrastructure charges, or administrative fees.

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17. Can salary on-costs be included?

Yes.

Reasonable salary on-costs may be included within the total grant value of \$50,000.

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18. Can severance payments be included in grant acquittals?

No.

Grant funds may only be used for direct project costs.

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#### International Eligibility

19. Can the project be conducted outside Australia or New Zealand?

No.

Applications must be submitted through an Australian or New Zealand institution, and the project must be administered primarily within those countries.

However, international collaborators may participate where appropriate.

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## APPENDIX 2. SELECTION CRITERIA

Criteria	Assessment
<b>Scientific Quality, Feasibility/</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly articulated aims aligned with the purpose of the Health Innovation / ECR Grant.</li> <li>• Objectives and methodology appropriately designed to test the hypothesis(es).</li> <li>• Feasibility within the proposed timeframe, including realistic milestones.</li> <li>• A well-justified budget demonstrating how the project will be delivered with available resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Significance and potential impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential to advance knowledge in bone and musculoskeletal research.</li> <li>• Novelty of the research concept or approach.</li> <li>• Addresses a significant or unmet need in musculoskeletal health.</li> <li>• Demonstrates how the work will lead to larger, more definitive studies or future funding.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact and Translation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential to translate findings into clinical practice, policy, or health outcomes.</li> <li>• Clear pathway for utilisation and development of outcomes beyond the grant period.</li> <li>• Plans for dissemination to consumers, clinicians, or end users.</li> <li>• Potential for meaningful health, social, economic, or academic impact.</li> <li>• Where appropriate, meaningful Consumer and Community Involvement (CCI) in interpretation, dissemination, or translation of findings.</li> </ul>
<b>Applicant and Team Capability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriateness of the applicant team, including expertise and roles.</li> <li>• Access to necessary resources, infrastructure, and support systems.</li> <li>• Research track record relative to opportunity (publications, grants, impact).</li> <li>• Evidence of leadership, collaboration, and contribution to the research community.</li> <li>• Institutional or collaborative support (financial or in-kind) where relevant.</li> <li>• Where appropriate, access to or engagement with consumers or community partners to support delivery of the project.</li> </ul>