2026 HOLCKNER FAMILY IMPACT GRANT GUIDELINES

Cure4 Cystic Fibrosis exists to accelerate life-extending and life-transforming solutions for those with cystic fibrosis (CF). We do this by funding innovative research that builds on existing knowledge and has a clearly identified path and a commitment for translational impact.

This research would be considered within the technology readiness levels of 3 to 7.

FUNDING STREAMS

Cure4 Cystic Fibrosis is offering funding under two streams. In 2026, a total of $1,300 000 is available to be awarded across all projects.

Stream A – Seed funding projects

Purpose: To support high potential projects that translate research outcomes into practice or lay the groundwork for future translational research.

Cure 4 Cystic Fibrosis actively supports the career development of early and mid-career researchers (EMCR) and encourages them to lead project submissions. Applications from senior researchers should include an EMCR as a co-Chief Investigator (CI) and provide detail of how they will support the leadership development of the EMCR in this project.

Duration: 2 years

Funding: $300,000 maximum per project

Stream B – Major collaborative projects

Purpose: To accelerate high quality CF research with a clear and feasible pathway to human studies and clinical impact. The stream supports researchers who are ready to initiate early phase clinical trials, translate strong pre-clinical findings into studies involving people with CF, or advance highly meritorious proposals that narrowly missed funding through national competitive grant rounds (for example an NHMRC or MRFF grant must have a total score of 5 or more to be eligible).

This grant stream is not suitable for health services or public health focussed research.

The stream prioritises collaborative, multi-centre research that brings together CF clinical services and research teams, demonstrates meaningful consumer engagement, and strengthens national and international partnerships. Funding is intended to de-risk promising ideas, enable timely trial commencement, and outline a plan for successful progression to larger competitive funding and/or clinical translation within two years.

Duration: 1 year (with an opportunity for an additional 12-months funding subject to progress).

Funding: $300,000 maximum per project (with maximum of $600,000 available over 2 years).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible to apply for funding, the following conditions must be met:

- The applicant must complete and submit the application form by 1 June 2026.
- The application must be led by an applicant who is an Australian permanent resident or citizen, with research to be conducted primarily in Australian-based research facilities.
- The proposal must align with Cure4CF's statement of research priority which can be found here.
- The application must demonstrate meaningful engagement with people affected by cystic fibrosis during the development of the research question and project design.
- Only one application will be considered from each lead Chief Investigator per grant round.

Eligible expense items include salaries and on-costs, consumables, consumer engagement costs, equipment, travel and other direct costs associated with delivering the project. Salary on costs include superannuation, workers compensation and payroll tax. Overheads, capital works, and non-essential items such as trade subscriptions and catering etc will not be funded. Commercialisation and/or marketing costs will also not be supported.

An application will be considered incomplete if it fails to comply with the instructions.

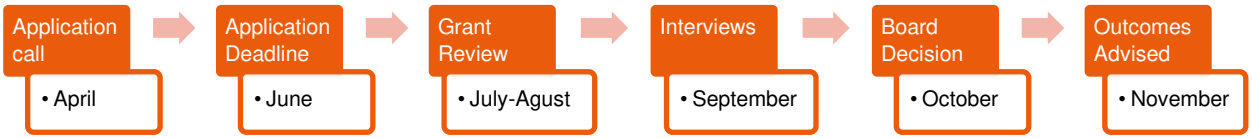
All applicants are responsible for ensuring institutional sign off before the submission date.

It is highly desirable that outcomes from projects funded by Cure4CF generate sufficient data to support applications for subsequent funding from other sources (e.g. NHMRC) to support further research translation.

Successful applicants will ensure research is conducted in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations and codes of practice and all necessary licences and approvals must have been obtained and are adhered to. This includes those concerning the use of animals and the obtaining of patient consents and ethics committee approvals, as relevant to the research.

REVIEW AND AWARD PROCESS

The grant review timeline is as follows:



Full applications will be evaluated by Cure4CF's Research Committee.

- Cure4CF Grants team will collate the scores and determine the rankings to generate a shortlist.
- Lay project description and consumer engagement responses of shortlisted applications reviewed by the Cure4CF Consumer Advisory Committee.
- Short-listed applications reviewed by an Independent Research Advisory Committee composed of representatives from clinical practice, industry, research and consumers.
- Research Committee will determine a second shortlist of applications for interview.
- Second shortlisted applicants will attend interview.
- Research Committee will make a recommendation to the Cure4CF Board.

- Applicants will be notified of the outcome and feedback will be provided.

Successful applicants must formally accept the Cure4CF grant by signing and returning the research funding agreement. The grant will not be activated, nor any monies released until this has been received and the on-boarding meeting is completed.

The grant must be activated within three (3) months of the date of the issue of the Notice of Success Letter. If the grant has not been activated within this timeframe, Cure4CF reserves the right to withdraw the offer of the grant, unless an extension has been approved.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND SCORING

The following scoring framework will be used to assess applications.

		SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE	CLINICAL RELEVANCE & IMPACT	TRANSLATIONAL POTENTIAL	Consumer Engagement
1	Poor	Based on poor scientific rationale, methodology or planning. Single centre or minimal collaboration between CF teams.	May be relevant in clinical practice, but likely requires significant adaptation	Potential translational pathway, but with major challenges	Consumers are informed only. Minimal engagement with little or no influence on the project.
2	Adequate	Feasible project, sound rationale and plan, but little innovation. More than one CF team but limited evidence of active partnership.	Relevant in clinical practice, but will not realise significant outcomes	Sound translational pathway	Limited consultation at specific points. Consumer input is sought but has minimal influence on decisions.
3	Good	Good scientific rationale and plan, evidence of innovation. Demonstrated multicentre involvement with clear roles for collaborators.	Relevant in clinical practice, potential to realise significant impact.	Good translational pathway with some consideration of IP and partners.	Consumers contribute to research design and are engaged at key stages. Input is considered and informs decisions.
4	Very Good	Very good scientific rationale and plan, innovative, good preliminary data. Strong multicentre collaboration with well-defined and complementary roles and integration.	Highly relevant in clinical practice, highly likely to realise significant impact and life extension	Excellent translational pathway, clear strategies for IP and partners in place	Consumers are active partners throughout the project, contributing to decisions, interpretation, and translation.
5	Exceptional	Excellent rationale and plan, highly innovative, extensive evidence to justify potential outcomes. Robust, strategic multi-centre collaboration with integrated teams.	Addresses high need, would result in significant impact to many, clear path for clinical adoption, exceedingly likely to realise significant life extension	Excellent translational pathway, IP generated, partners in place, regulatory strategy determined	Consumers and end users are integral partners with shared or leading roles in shaping priorities and outcomes.

OBLIGATIONS OF GRANTEES

Reporting

Grantees must maintain accurate financial records to reconcile all expenditures related to the Cure4CF grant.

Cure4CF will require a verbal quarterly update, a written report every six months and an end of year financial acquittal each year to ensure responsible use of the Cure4CF grant by the Grantee. Funds will be released on completion of milestones as outlined in the agreement. A final report will be required from all Grantees within one months of the project's end. Grantees will be transitioned to the Cure4CF Alumni program at the completion of their project.

Grants will be closed, and any remaining balances returned unless an extension is approved in advance of the grant end date.

Intellectual Property

Cure4CF will not seek ownership of intellectual property developed by Grantees. However, Cure4CF will seek a beneficial return including financial benefit, of value realised from intellectual property commercialisation, to support our charitable objectives. The terms for such beneficial return will be outlined in the research funding agreement.

As a charitable foundation, Cure4CF must ensure that the results of the research we fund have maximum impact in terms of public good, which includes translation of findings to substantially extend the lives of those living with CF. Often, translation requires some form of commercialisation. Cure4CF asks that award holders obtain our consent before commercialisation events occur so that we can ensure that the commercialisation terms align with this interest.

Engagement in Cure4CF Activities

Cure4CF is seeking a partnership with successful grant recipients and encourages grantees to consider other resources, expertise, and support Cure4CF may offer during and beyond the funding period.

Grantees must be willing to contribute to Cure4CF promotional activities as requested.