SPECTRUM & SPARK One Health Seed Funding Grant Guidelines 2022

About SPECTRUM & SPARK

SPECTRUM & SPARK are closely affiliated consortia focusing on the prevention and control of the spread of emerging and endemic infectious diseases both in Australia and in the Asia Pacific region. SPECTRUM & SPARK use quantitative methods and modelling to strengthen health systems, increase capacity, develop innovative tools for adaptive decision making and to inform the prevention, control and elimination of infectious diseases. Collaboration and partnerships are key to the success of these consortia.

Please refer to Annex 1 for areas of focus for both SPECTRUM & SPARK.

Purpose of seed funding grant scheme

The SPECTRUM & SPARK seed funding scheme is intended to facilitate growth in collaborative research across the consortia key themes, in particular One Health, and to support early to mid-career academics to develop their track records.

Grants to the value of **AUD$20,000** each will be available. Applications will be judged on competitive merit by a panel as described in the selection criteria.

Key dates

Applications open: Monday 5th September 2022
Applications close: until funds are expended (on or before 12th December 2022).
Grant funds are limited so we strongly encourage you to apply as soon as possible.
Maximum time for expenditure of funds: Funds to be spent prior to 30th June 2023.

Project team

The scheme is open to all One Health affiliated researchers, with preference given to early- and middle career researchers and late-stage PhD students who have not held a Category 1 grant as Chief Investigator A (CIA) at the time of application.

Project teams must include a minimum of two investigators, each from the Asia Pacific region. Preference will be given to applicants from low- and middle-income countries. Each investigator must be considered equal on the team (ie., there is no Lead/CIA). Teams can comprise more than two investigators, but consideration should be given to whether this spreads the funds too thin.

Investigators should be a member of the SPECTRUM & SPARK network as a postdoctoral researcher, PhD candidate or Master's student. Prospective applicants will be accepted into the network upon application for grant funding if they are not current SPECTRUM & SPARK network members.

Investigators may be named on more than one application each year. Priority will be given to applicants who have not previously received SPECTRUM & SPARK seed funding.

Proposals

Proposals should adhere to word limits advised in the application form. All proposals should include the following elements:

- One Health problem to be addressed and significance (800 words)
- Methods (300 words)
- Timeline
- Budget with brief justification (150 words)
- Clear description of collaboration (150 words)
- Expected outputs, including Category 1 or equivalent application planned (150 words)

Projects will be funded to a maximum of AUD$20,000 and all funds must be expended by June 30th 2023. Funds may be requested to support stakeholder consultations, grant writing retreats, workshops, software, data requests, conduct of pilot studies, or other collaborative activities that strengthen SPECTRUM & SPARK national and international collaborations and support larger project/fellowship applications.

Selection criteria

Grants will be assessed against three main criteria:

1. Project quality **(50%)**

2. Demonstration of genuine collaboration **(25%)**

3. Demonstration of how the grant will contribute to securing future Category 1 or international equivalent funding **(25%)**

Project quality

Assessment on project quality will be guided by the definitions of major ARC and NHMRC grants, scaled appropriately for the scope of the seed funding grants. Proposals should thus be framed in terms of the significance of the problem to be addressed, merit of the proposed methods and feasibility, including the proposed timeline and budget. In addition, applicants should demonstrate how their proposal fits within the scope of SPECTRUM & SPARK.

Collaboration

The proposal must demonstrate a genuine collaboration and both investigators must outline their equal contribution to the project. For example, two academics with different areas of expertise or skills in One Health may partner to pilot a project of joint interest that will lead to a project grant application. Another possibility is a more experienced mid-career academic may work closely with an early career researcher on a small project to assist with a fellowship application.

Future funding potential

Proposals must describe how the seed funding will contribute to securing Category 1 or international equivalent funding. This may include schemes that fund projects (e.g., NHMRC Project Grants, ARC Discovery Grants) or fellowships. Proposals should integrate noteworthy parts of the current track records of investigators, plans for application to Australian or international major grant schemes, and how the seed funding will improve competitiveness.

Assessment

A panel of at least two independent academics will be appointed to assess applications against the selection criteria. The panel will work towards a consensus for each application to develop a ranking and the top-ranked applications will be recommended for funding, subject to availability.

Application process

1. Submit application/expression of interest to: https://forms.gle/tSC5f3fgSbPuEeYC7
2. Round 1: Applications will be reviewed by the SPECTRUM & SPARK One Health Committee
3. Round 2: Successful applicants in Round 1 will be invited for a brief interview where the project team will discuss their project proposal in a 5-minute presentation.
4. The SPECTRUM & SPARK One Health Committee will deliberate and provide relevant feedback to applicants
5. Funding is announced and awarded to successful applicants in a timely manner.

Annex 1

<table>
<tr><th>SPECTRUM AREAS OF FOCUS</th><th>SPARK AREAS OF FOCUS</th></tr>
<tr><td>Endemic infections (including scabies)</td><td rowspan="2">Develop regional capacity in quantitative methods and modelling</td></tr>
<tr><td>Emerging infectious diseases (including COVID-19, pandemic influenza)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Constraining the emergence of and selection for Antimicrobial Resistance (including AMR and multidrug resistant tuberculosis)</td><td rowspan="2">Develop innovative methods and tools for adaptive decision-making to inform disease prevention, control and elimination</td></tr>
<tr><td>Reducing the risk and burden of vector-borne diseases (including malaria)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Control of Transmissible Diseases through: Biosecurity and risk mitigation, Decision science, Optimal study design, Computational infectious diseases modelling, AI and machine learning, Data augmentation</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Training and partnership development including quantitative skills development</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Health economic evaluation & policy</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Cross cutting issues relating to infectious disease prevention and control in our region including Gender issues, Disability inclusiveness and Climate change</td></tr>
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Annex 2

Eligible Countries

Pacific
Cook Islands
Federated States of Micronesia
Fiji
Kiribati
Nauru
Niue
Papua New Guinea
Marshall Islands
Samoa
Solomon Islands
Tokelau
Tonga
Tuvalu
Vanuatu
East and South-East Asia
Cambodia
Indonesia
Laos
Mongolia
Myanmar
Philippines
Timor-Leste
Vietnam
Middle East
Palestinian Territories
South and West Asia
Bangladesh
Bhutan
Maldives
Nepal
Pakistan
Sri Lanka