

Guidelines

June 2017

Project Expression of Interest Application Guidelines

(GA218S)

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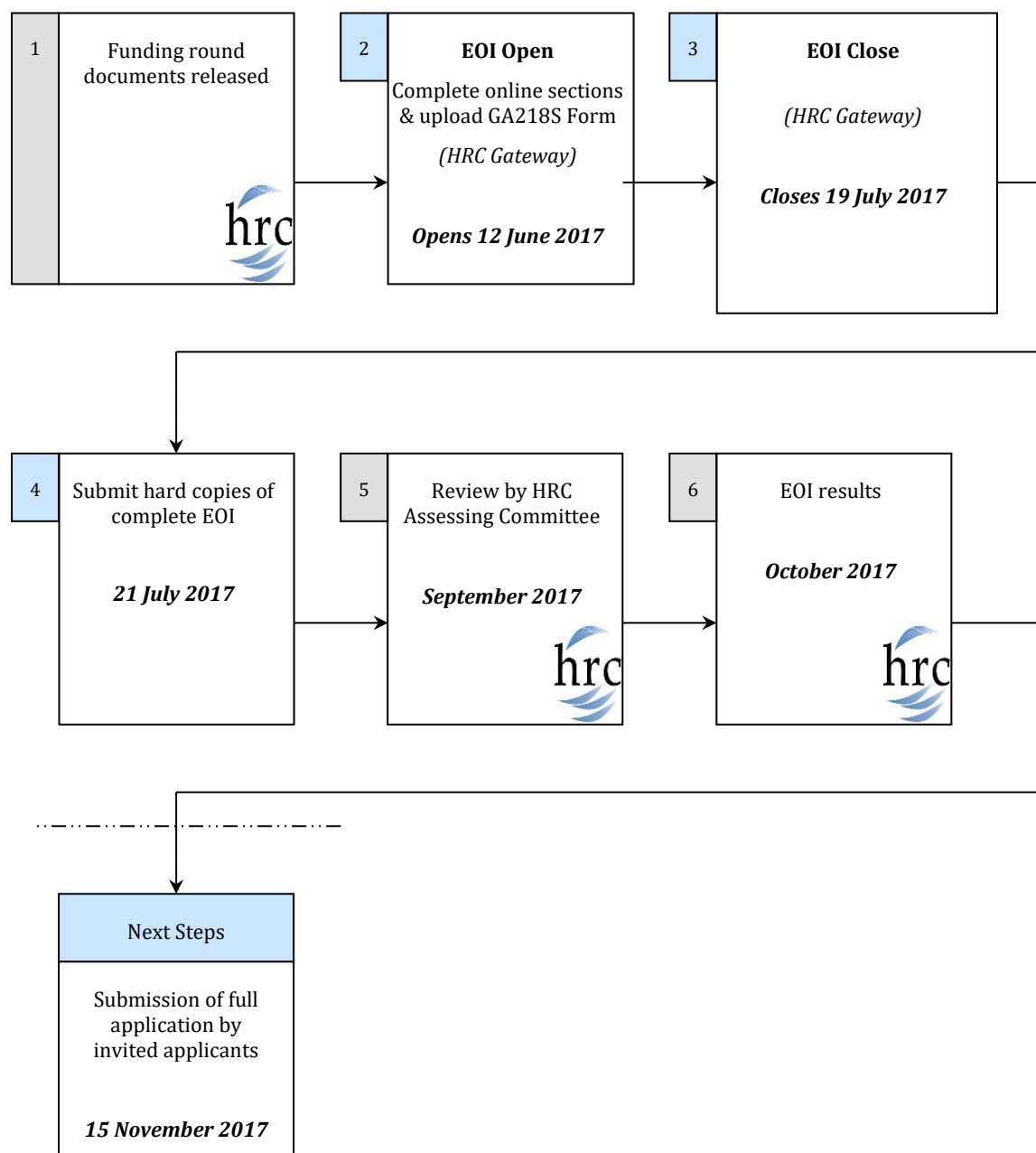
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Part A: What is an Expression of Interest (EOI)?

The Expression of Interest (EOI) provides an overview of intended research and is the first stage of a two-stage application process for HRC Projects. EOI will be assessed and top-ranked applicants will be invited to submit a Full Application for the second stage of the process. The proposed research in the EOI must be substantially the same as that in the Full Application. Failure to do so will result in the disqualification of the Full Application.

There are 4 sections in an EOI application form. All sections, except Section 2, are completed on the HRC Gateway. All investigators must have an HRC Gateway (<https://gateway.hrc.govt.nz>) account and profile so that they can be included on an application. Section 2 is on a separate document (GA218S) that is completed offline and then uploaded using the HRC Gateway. Figure 1 outlines the process for submitting an EOI. Applicants must allow time for host Research Office approval and processing of applications prior to final submission to HRC.

Figure 1: Diagram for submitting an EOI



1. HRC Projects

HRC Projects should address well-defined research questions with the aim of making significant improvements in, or developing knowledge contributing to, health outcomes. The HRC will offer contracts worth \$0.4 M per year to a maximum value of \$1.2 M for a three-year term or pro rata for a shorter contract. For example, a two-year project may have a budget of up to \$0.8 M. Most projects have a term of three years with a maximum budget of \$1.2 M but up to five years is acceptable.

Applicants who submit clinical trial project applications are able to request an increase in budget cap to a maximum of no more than 20%, if required. At the EOI stage applicants must include a statement in their application that they anticipate seeking an increase in budget cap (should the EOI be successful) but no specific budget details are required at this stage. At the Full Application stage applicants must provide full budget details and justification for an increase in budget cap in their application; this will only be considered if an initial notification was received at the EOI stage. Final approved budgets will be subjected to full assessment processes.

There is now a limit of **three** applications for any one First Named Investigator.

2. Research Investment Streams

The HRC has established four Research Investment Streams (RIS) for the annual funding round:

- Health and Wellbeing in New Zealand: Keeping populations healthy and independent throughout life
- Improving Outcomes for Acute and Chronic Conditions in New Zealand: Improving outcomes for people with illness or injury
- New Zealand Health Delivery: Improving health and disability service delivery outcomes over the short-to-medium term
- Rangahau Hauora Māori: Supporting Māori health research that upholds rangatiratanga and utilises and advances Māori knowledge, resources, and people.

Applicants **must** select one of the HRC RIS. Assessing committees may score out of scope applications at the bottom of the scale for Research Impact (*HRC Peer Review Manual*) because those applications will not advance the goals or priorities of the RIS. This applies to applications that are **clearly** out of scope, not those that could be considered to fall within a 'grey' area (are relevant to more than one investment stream).

The HRC will not provide advice on choice of RIS, as the final decision is that of the investigator. Applicants may change this at any time until final submission.

3. Previous Funding Round Success Rate

Success rates for the 2017 funding round in each RIS are presented below:

RIS	EOI	Full	Funded
Health and Wellbeing in NZ	128	57	18
Improving Outcomes for Acute and Chronic Conditions in NZ	167	70	22
New Zealand Health Delivery	34	14	8
Rangahau Hauora Māori	15	9	6
Total	344	115	54

Part B: Rules for Submitting the GA218S Application Form

1. Use of GA218S Form

1.1 When to Use GA218S Form

The GA218S form must be used when submitting a Project Expression of Interest for all investment streams except Rangahau Hauora Māori (use the RHM218S form).

1.2 Prior to Submission

The HRC only accepts applications online (HRC Gateway) (<https://gateway.hrc.govt.nz>). Prior to any submission, Named Investigators must have a Gateway account and register the application to receive an application reference number (HRC Ref ID #) before they can complete and upload their application form. Key opening and due dates are in Section 4 below.

Before submitting this application form, applicants should read:

- This document for eligibility and specific instructions
- Research Investment Stream signals, the General Guidelines and the Frequently Asked Questions documents
- *Peer Review Manual* to understand application assessment
- Guidelines on Ethics in Health Research
- Guidelines for Researchers on Health Research Involving Māori
- Guidelines for Pacific Health Research.

The regularly updated reference documents and forms are on the HRC web site (www.hrc.govt.nz).

1.3 New Host Organisation

New host organisations (e.g. Independent Hosts), that have not previously been funded by the HRC, will be required to provide “due diligence” information before their applications are processed. Please contact the HRC for further information.

2. Format

2.1 General Formatting

Proposals must be written in a clear, concise manner with sufficient detail to enable the reviewers to understand the scope and implications of the proposal.

Applications must be in English or te reo Māori; if in te reo Māori a translation in English must also be provided (any translation will not be included in the page limit).

Use the correct HRC form as it contains special features.

Applicants must:

- Use Arial 10-point type font or larger (CV must be Arial 12-point type font*)
- Use default margins
- Use single line spacing
- Not exceed any page limits.

**The CV is not an HRC document and has different formatting requirements.*

2.2 Compliance

The HRC will not process any application that does not comply with stated page limits and font sizes/styles.

2.3 Additional Documents

No other documents are to be included.

3. Copies of Applications Required

3.1 Paper Application

Applications must be submitted on the HRC Gateway and two printed copies sent to the HRC.

The two complete printed applications must be double-sided and stapled.

3.2 No Faxed Copies

The HRC will not accept faxed applications.

3.3 Electronic copy

Upload the GA218S file using the HRC Gateway.

Submit the form as a .pdf file created by using the pdf function in MSWord or other pdf generator. Ensure that the pdf version meets page limits and that graphics and tables are satisfactorily presented.

HRC Gateway will allocate file names.

Important

The application is submitted to the host Research Office when the applicant uploads the files through the HRC Gateway. The application will be forwarded to the HRC after host Research Office approval. Always allow sufficient time before the HRC closing date for this approval step.

3.4 Do Not Send Files

Do not send files directly to the HRC. Independent researchers and research providers requiring assistance should contact the relevant HRC Manager for information if they have difficulty.

4. Closing Dates

4.1 Registration and Submission of GA218S

All Named Investigators must have a user account on the HRC Gateway (<https://gateway.hrc.govt.nz>).

The closing date for online submission to the HRC is **1 pm on 19 July 2017**. The EOI is released to the HRC only after approval by the Research Office. It must be submitted to the **HRC** online by closing date and time.

4.2 Submission of Paper Copies

The online system creates a single PDF document of the complete application by merging the uploaded application form with the online registration details for processing and printing. Send two copies of the system-generated version to the HRC by **5pm on 21 July 2017**.

4.3 Incomplete Applications

Incomplete applications will be deleted from the HRC Gateway after the closing date.

5. Privacy Provisions

5.1 Statistical Purposes

The information requested in an application will be used for the purpose of assessing that application and, in a non-identifiable form; some information will be used for HRC statistical purposes. The HRC undertakes to store all applications in a secure place and to destroy declined applications after due process to preserve confidentiality, unless applications are required to be kept by the National Archives.

5.2 Peer Review

Personal information contained in the application will be made available to members of the HRC Committees relevant to the review of the application. This includes electronic and paper copies of the application.

5.3 Media Release

In the event that an application is successful, the HRC reserves the right to release First Named Investigators' names, details of the host institution, contact details (work phone or email), contract title, lay summaries and funding and overheads awarded for public interest purposes and to meet the statutory requirements of the Health Research Council of New Zealand Act 1990.

5.4 Official Information Act

Should the HRC receive requests for information in an application via the Official Information Act then we will consult with the host institution in handling the request. Where appropriate, or in certain circumstances the request may be transferred by the HRC to the host institution.

6. Mailing Address

The application should be sent to the HRC office address:

Mailing Address:

Research Investments & Contracts Group
Health Research Council of New Zealand
P O Box 5541
Wellesley Street, AUCKLAND 1141

Physical/ Courier Address:

Research Investments & Contracts
Health Research Council of New Zealand
3rd Floor, ProCare Building
110 Stanley Street, AUCKLAND 1010

The HRC Gateway will show the status of any proposal. Do not contact the HRC for application status.

7. Enquiries

All enquiries related to HRC applications should be directed in the first instance to the Research Office of the applicant's host institution.

Where the Research Office cannot assist, or for technical enquiries relating to applications, contact the HRC:

Vernon Choy	Telephone: (09) 303 – 5206	Email: vchoy@hrc.govt.nz
Melanie Duncan	Telephone: (09) 303 – 5215	Email: mduncan@hrc.govt.nz
Luke Garland	Telephone: (09) 303 – 5214	Email: lgarland@hrc.govt.nz
Miguel Jo-Avila	Telephone: (09) 303 – 5223	Email: mjo-avila@hrc.govt.nz
Tolotea Lanumata	Telephone: (09) 303 – 5224	Email: tlanumata@hrc.govt.nz
Lucy Pomeroy	Telephone: (09) 303 – 5216	Email: lpomeroy@hrc.govt.nz
Stacey Pene	Telephone: (09) 303 – 5225	Email: spene@hrc.govt.nz

Part C: Completion of the GA218S Form

Sections 1, 3 and 4 of the EOI application must be completed on the HRC Gateway. The RHM218S Form contains a coversheet and Section 2 of the EOI application. The form can be downloaded and completed before being uploaded to the HRC Gateway as a pdf file. The completed application (Sections 1-4) will be compiled by the HRC Gateway; it can then be accessed for downloading and printing.

Note: an applicant checklist has been added to the end of Section 2 of application form. Every point must be checked off to acknowledge compliance with application guidelines.

1. Use of GA218S Form

Please use the original GA218S form as it contains special features:

- Complete all sections following the instructions on the form and described in this Guideline.
- Enter the HRC Ref ID and NI Surname on coversheet.

2. Section 1: General Information

This Section must be entered using the HRC gateway.

Research Investment Stream

Create a new application by selecting the round Name, then the Proposal Type from the selection list, e.g., Project – Health & Wellbeing.

The HRC cannot re-assign applications that are entered into the wrong stream. If you wish to change streams while applying you need to create a new registration on Gateway. Assessing committees may score an application that is out of scope at the bottom of the Research Impact scale as such applications will not advance the goals or priorities of the RIS. This applies to applications that are **clearly** out of scope, not those that could be considered to fall within a 'grey' area (are relevant to more than one investment stream). Consideration should be given to clinical trial outcomes, which may meet the 5-year time-frame requirements of the NZHD RIS.

Research Title

The research title should be succinct and clearly describe the proposed project. The title must not exceed 80 characters, including spaces and punctuation (e.g. 'growth factors' contains 14 characters). Do not use all uppercase type.

Named Investigators

All NIs must be registered users of the HRC Gateway before they can be added to the application.

Include the First NI and other NIs involved in the proposed research (e.g. supervisors, academic colleagues). Do not include here research support staff, such as technicians and research assistants, who will be directly funded from this award. The First NI will be considered the first point of contact during the application and assessment process, and will be understood to be acting for, and in concurrence with, the other NIs. All correspondence for the application will be addressed to this person and the host. Only the First NI will be cited by the HRC in its press release on successful applications. Please ensure that the names of NIs are consistent in the form and CV.

Information on ethnic identity, gender and whether the researcher is a clinician (and is practicing) is used for HRC information purposes only. The ethnic identity and gender information is optional.

Include FTE when describing **Role in Project** as the assessing committee needs to know the level of commitment or responsibility of each team member. It is particularly important to identify more junior investigators who may undertake key components for the proposed research.

A **clinician** is defined as a health professional involved in the clinical practice of medicine, psychology, dentistry, physiotherapy/occupational therapy or pharmacy. This includes all qualified doctors, nurses, midwives, dentists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists,

dieticians and psychologists. Dieticians and psychologists are only considered clinicians if they have been involved in clinical practice (evidence of this must be provided in the CV). Dental nurses and physiotherapy assistants are not considered to be clinicians. A **practising clinician** is an individual who is contractually obligated to treat patients or clients, and does not engage with patients only for the purposes of research.

You may wish to designate a hapu, iwi or Māori **organisation** conducting the research that needs to be acknowledged in their own right as investigators on the application. It is still essential to list supporting NIs.

Host Organisation

The host organisation is the institution or organisation that will be responsible for administering any contract awarded. For example, for those applicants at Wellington School of Medicine, Dunedin School of Medicine or Christchurch School of Medicine, the host institution is the University of Otago.

Research Location(s)

This is the specific department(s) and organisation where the majority of research or data analysis will be undertaken.

Type of Research

Choose from the drop down list what you consider the most appropriate term for broadly describing the research proposal for assessment purposes. The HRC reserves the right to assign applications to the most appropriate Science Assessing Committee.

Discipline

Select from the drop down box or type in your own words.

Lay Summary

Provide a summary of the research (150-word limit). Include research objectives, principal methodologies (especially for randomised controlled trials and population interventions) and potential health outcomes or impact. This may be modified for the full stage application.

3. Section 2: Proposed Research

The page limit for this Section is **three pages**.

The section headings should be used as they correspond to the assessment criteria. The assessing committee membership is broadly discipline-based, matched to the range of applications assigned to that committee, so not all members will have working knowledge of every research topic. Write the proposal for scientists with a general understanding of the research area.

The use of graphics and tables is an efficient use of space. Ensure that the format of non-text content is compatible with pdf conversion software.

Rationale for Research

Provide the research rationale and a statement of purpose or research aims for scientific enquiry, hypothesis, new knowledge, technical advance and innovation.

Include information that is essential for the reader to better appreciate or understand why your proposed research should be undertaken. What is the significant/important gap in knowledge, policy, practice or service delivery that your research will address? How does your proposed research build on existing knowledge and evidence, and how will it contribute to, or align with, research currently being undertaken either nationally or internationally? For example, is it unique to New Zealand? What is the significance of the health issue for New Zealand health and society? Has responsiveness to Māori been considered? Is this an extension of current ongoing research, e.g., additional tests or sampling? Preliminary or published data?

Research Design and Methods

Provide sufficient details for technical assessment of scientific protocol, feasibility and validity of data.

Include sufficient detail of study design and methods such that an assessment can be made of its appropriateness, robustness and/or innovativeness. This might include a description of subject recruitment and characteristics (including number, gender and ethnicity where relevant), study methodology, and proposed methods of data collection and analysis. Clinical trial applications are to include a description of data and safety monitoring arrangements. Where appropriate, provide an estimate of the likely effect size and the sample size required to detect this (power analysis). Indication of timelines for the research should be included. Consultation with specialists such as methodologists, statisticians, health economists and Māori (if appropriate) before finalising your research design is recommended. The Science Assessing Committees need this information to judge and appropriately score this criterion, so ensure that the practicalities are clearly stated, i.e. what will be done, how, by whom, where and when. Science Assessing Committees are also reassured when methodologies have been used/trialled before.

Research Impact on HRC Investment Stream Goals

Include the anticipated outcomes of the research, and how they will advance at least one Investment Goal (New Zealand Health Delivery only has one goal). Comment on knowledge transfer.

For Health and Wellbeing in NZ and Improving Outcomes for Acute and Chronic Conditions in NZ:

Describe how the expected outcomes of your proposed research will add value, and contribute to at least one of the goals for knowledge, health, society and the economy set out in the relevant Investment Stream. For example, what will be the significance and contribution of the new knowledge to the concepts, methods or evidence-base that drive the research field? Where relevant, how could the research impact upon clinical practice, community health, health policy and/or the provision of health services? Does the research have potential for economic gain?

Applicants should clearly and realistically describe the type of impact and the likely timescale for impact. Assessing committee members will clarify, confirm and moderate your provided information, but are not asked to extrapolate from other sections or their own knowledge. Assessing committees are aware when the description of impact is too broad, overstated, or unrealistic; and will score such proposals poorly.

The uptake and utilisation of research findings is a key component of impact and this is reflected in the assessment criterion. Include a statement regarding knowledge transfer providing sufficient detail relative to this stage of planning.

For NZ Health Delivery:

How will the expected outcomes of your proposed research lead to direct improvements in the NZ health and disability sector in the short-to-medium term? Describe realistically how this will be achieved within the specified five years of the contract commencing. Describe how the outcomes will make a difference - will they change policy, inform clinical decision-making, or improve productivity, for example. How widely applicable will the findings be? Comment on end-user engagement, and other plans and processes that will be used to support the uptake of research findings. **The last point tends to be the weakness and most common reason for poor scores in applications to this stream.**

Responsiveness to Māori

Sufficient details relative to this stage of planning. Indication of consideration is useful, but a formulaic response is less so.

It is expected that research providers at the earliest planning stage indicate the quality and extent of their relationship with Māori in their research proposals. For example, would Māori be involved, should the application proceed to the Full application stage and beyond? How does the research address inequalities? We recommend that you obtain advice or collaboration to ensure that Māori involvement is appropriate.

Expertise and Track Record of the Research Team

Evidence that the team has the experience, qualifications and infrastructure to deliver the research. The role of each team member is required.

Include a brief description of the team's track record, related to the proposal area, to demonstrate the ability to deliver proposed study outcomes. Highlight important skills and/or expertise in the team that would support delivery of the proposed research. Clearly define the role, expertise and track record of each member of the team giving particular weight to those with high FTE commitments to the project. Team members' unique identifiers on publication databases such as Scopus or Google Scholar may be provided in relation to their FTE. Justification for staff roles should be provided. The role and FTE of each team member is required. Please state if you have previously collaborated with the team assembled for this proposal. Note that changes in the research team between the EOI and the Full application require HRC's prior approval. In addition, state how you have utilised previous funding resources and your productivity.

Applicants to NZ Health Delivery MUST provide information on the capability of the research team with regard to research outcomes AND research uptake (a weakness of most applications in this RIS). What is the dissemination pathway to changes in health delivery and who will be responsible for this?

References (one page)

Put references in this part of the form after the 3 pages describing the proposed research. Do not extend the research description onto the references page. A complete citation, with all author names and title, is required. Reference to Māori terms in the application with brief interpretation should be included here.

4. Section 3: First Named Investigator NZ Standard CV

Note: New for this round, TWO CVs can be provided at this stage.

Upload the CV of First Named Investigator, who has overall responsibility for the Project, and another Named Investigator, who may be most involved in the day-to-day research activity of the Project, on the HRC Gateway. The NZ Standard CV template is downloadable from the HRC website.

Take care to use the original CV formatting including the default font and page limits. The HRC will not accept any other form of CV.

The information provided in the CV **must be the same** as that provided in Section 1. For example, title and contact details may need updating in the CV before submission.

5. Application Checklist

A checklist is provided at the end of the form to assist applicants in completing applications. This must be checked off – applications will be rejected if this is not done.

Completion of the checklist by applicants indicates that the submitted application complies with all requirements as the HRC will no longer undertake this compliance check due to time restraints at the due closing date.