

ASSC EARLY CAREER ENABLING GRANTS GUIDELINES

The Australian Skin and Skin Cancer Research Centre (ASSC) Early Career Grants seek to fund projects that are strategically aligned with the ASSC priorities: to improve the prevention, early detection or treatment of skin cancers or skin diseases. The objectives of this scheme are to:

- Support early to mid-career researchers to progress their research careers by funding high-quality research projects (including pilot projects)
- Encourage collaboration between UQ and QIMR Berghofer to accelerate translational outcomes in skin disease and skin cancer
- Enhance ASSC members' competitiveness in bidding for external research funds
- Provide experience in preparing a grant application for peer review

With the increasingly competitive nature of NHMRC Ideas grants and other funding schemes, the ASSC Executive has made some changes to this internal funding scheme this year to help encourage and support Early Career Researchers to submit creative, novel projects with an emphasis on rigorous hypothesis testing and clearly articulated methods. The changes are described below.

FUNDING AVAILABLE

This grant round has an \$80,000 pool with no pre-determined number of grants to be awarded. There is no minimum size of grant, but the maximum award for any single grant will be \$40,000.

FUNDING RULES

Funding will follow institutional rules of internal funding. Funds can be spent on personnel (including applicant salary), laboratory consumables and external providers when appropriate. All expenses must be related to the project. This funding cannot attract institutional overheads and cannot be used for travel, or other routine laboratory equipment usually provided by the research group or the institution (e.g., information technology). Funding for successful applicants will commence in August 2025 and end 30 June 2026.

ELIGIBILITY

Successful applicant must:

- Be staff on payroll (<10 years of receiving MD or PhD);
- Be conducting research in the skin and skin cancer field;
- The lead UQ or QIMR Berghofer applicant must not have received the ASSC grant in the past 3 years;
- For previously successful applicants, please include a summary report of research outcomes from your most recently successful grant in your application.

***NEW* EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)**

Applicants are required to submit a one-page EOI by the specified deadline, using the EOI form available on the ASSC website. This EOI serves as an introduction to your grant proposal for the ASSC Executive Committee, enabling them to review your idea and provide guidance and feedback ahead of the grant pitch meeting.

***NEW* GRANT PITCH MEETING**

Following the submission of an EOI, all eligible applicants will be invited to participate in a pre-submission grant pitch meeting with the ASSC Executive Committee. This supportive meeting offers the opportunity to discuss your ideas with the committee, as well as identify potential collaborators across UQ and QIMR Berghofer. The Executive Committee will provide guidance to help refine and enhance your proposal before the final grant submission.

NOTE: *The Executive Committee will not be assessing or scoring the grants at the grant pitch meeting, and nor will they play any role in formally reviewing the grants during the grant assessment process. Submission of an EOI and participation in a pre-submission grant pitch meeting is mandatory to submit a final application.*

SCORING CRITERIA

- Clearly defined aims (20%)
- Clear and appropriate methods (40%)
- Significance & innovation (20%)
- Feasibility, including the team's ability and capacity/time to carry out the research (20%)

Applications must include evidence of meaningful collaboration between researchers at UQ and QIMR Berghofer. Budgets must be justified clearly to the satisfaction of the review panel and ASSC Executive.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

At the conclusion of funding, the grant recipient must provide a report to the ASSC, outlining an overview of the project, what has been achieved, how the grant has furthered the research potential, any presentations and publications, and any current grant applications, by the grant end date.

PRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The recipient will present at an ASSC Scientific Meeting, held annually.

REQUIREMENTS TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE ASSC

Acknowledgement of the ASSC funding should be given in any future publications, presentations, advertising material, reports, and public announcements, where relevant. Please use the statement below:

"This research was conducted with the support of the Australian Skin and Skin Cancer Research Centre through the ASSC Enabling Grant Scheme".

MORE INFORMATION

For more information please email: contact@assc.org.au

KEY DATES

APPLICATIONS OPEN: Monday 03 March 2025

EOI DUE: 5pm, Monday 14 April 2025

GRANT PITCH MEETINGS: Thursday 15 May 2025 (*Grant Pitch Meetings will be held between 12:30pm and 4.00pm, at the Translational Research Institute (TRI), Woolloongabba.*)

APPLICATIONS CLOSE: 5pm, Friday 13 June 2025

ANNOUNCEMENT

Successful applicants will be notified by email.

GRANT APPLICATION TIMELINE

