

FUNDING GUIDELINES

The Kids' Cancer Project 2026/27 Childhood & AYA Cancer Project Grant

1. Purpose

This funding round reflects The Kids' Cancer Projects' strategic priorities and vision to accelerate progress where it is most urgently needed, supporting high-quality research that has the potential to transform outcomes for children and adolescents and young adults (AYAs) with cancer.

The 2026/27 Project Grant Round focuses on low-survival childhood and AYA cancers, defined as those with less than 50% five-year overall survival. Funding is intended to support **clearly defined research projects** with a realistic pathway to translation, implementation or measurable impact

2. Funding Available

Total funding available for the 2026/27 Project Grant Round will be approximately **AUD \$1.875 million**

Projects funded:

- One (1) project per research pillar (Discover, Translate and Support), and
- Two (2) additional “next-best” projects, selected on overall merit
- Funding per project: up to approximately AUD \$375,000
- Maximum project duration: three (3) years

Projects must be clearly scoped and designed to deliver defined outcomes and milestones within the approved funding period. Budgets should be appropriate to the scale and complexity of the proposed research and include clear milestones and deliverables.

3. Research Pillars and Priorities

Applications must align with one of The Kids' Cancer Projects three [2024-2029 Research Strategy](#) priority pillars and clearly address a childhood or AYA cancer or molecular subtypes with <50% 5- year overall survival.

Discover

Hypothesis-driven, innovative research that advances understanding of childhood cancer biology and enables future translation.

Translate

Translational and clinically focused research informed by discovery, designed to bridge critical translational gaps and accelerate readiness for clinical application.

Support

Projects that improve quality of life, care delivery, and survivorship outcomes for children and AYAs with low-survival cancers.

4. Eligibility

For detailed eligibility requirements, applicants should refer to the *Eligibility Guidelines*.

To be eligible, projects must:

- Be administered by an Australian research organisation
- Be led by a Chief Investigator who holds Australian citizenship, permanent residency, or an existing right to work in Australia for the duration of the project
- Focus on a childhood or AYA cancer (or molecular subtype) with <50% survival supported by a contemporary survival reference*
- Align with a The Kids' Cancer Project research pillar
- Demonstrate a clear and realistic pathway to translation or implementation
- Include meaningful consumer involvement, appropriate to the project
- Be feasible within the proposed budget and timeframe

Eligibility screening is undertaken **prior to peer review**.

* A contemporary survival reference is a recent, credible source (such as a peer-reviewed publication or recognised cancer registry report) that reflects current survival outcomes for the cancer or subtype under investigation.

5. Application Process

The Kids' Cancer Project 2026/27 Project Grant Round will be conducted through a **two-stage application process**.

Stage 1 – Expression of Interest (EOI):

Applicants submit a short proposal outlining the proposed research concept and demonstrating eligibility, alignment with funding priorities, and team capability. EOIs must address the project rationale, research aims and approach, translational or implementation pathway, consumer involvement, and include a high-level budget.



EOIs are submitted via **SmartyGrants** using the published EOI application link: [Project Grants FY27](#).

Stage 2 – Full Application:

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a detailed proposal for peer review. Applicants invited to this stage will be provided with a **separate SmartyGrants link** for the full application following the EOI outcomes announcement.

6. Key Dates



7. Application Limits

To ensure equitable access to funding:

- Each administering institution may submit **one application per pillar**
- No more than **three applications per administering institution** will be accepted

8. Budget Guidance

Funding may be requested for **direct project costs** that are necessary to deliver the approved research and represent value for money.

Eligible costs include:

- **Personnel** – salaries for project-specific staff, including approved salary oncosts (see below)
- **Project costs** – consumables, reagents, assay or service fees, data collection and analysis
- **Travel** – essential project-related travel, where clearly justified

At the EOI stage, applicants are required to provide a high-level indicative budget. Applicants invited to submit a Full Application will be required to provide a detailed and itemised budget with justification.

The Full Application budget:

- May be refined from the EOI budget
- Must not exceed the maximum funding amount available under this scheme

- Must remain broadly consistent with the scope proposed at EOI, with any substantive changes clearly justified

Indirect Costs and Oncosts

Salary oncosts may be requested up to a **maximum of 20% of the funded salary component** and should be prorated to the funded FTE. Oncosts should be clearly itemised and linked to the delivery of the project. Indirect costs, overheads and infrastructure charges beyond approved salary oncosts are not supported and are expected to be provided by the administering institution as an in-kind contribution.

9. Assessment

- All applications undergo independent peer review by The Kids' Cancer Project Research Advisory Committee ([Research Advisory Committee](#)).
- Each application will have a **minimum of two reviewers**. Funding recommendations are approved by The Kids' Cancer Project Board.

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

Criterion	Weight
Alignment with priorities and unmet need	20%
Scientific quality and feasibility	35%
Team capability and environment	20%
Pathway to translation or implementation	15%
Consumer involvement and equity	10%

Further information on the assessment approach is provided in the [FY27 Assessment Criteria Rubric](#).

10. Administration and Reporting

10.1 Administration

The administering institution is responsible for the financial and governance oversight of the funded project.

By accepting funding, the administering institution confirms that:

- Appropriate infrastructure, facilities and support required to undertake the research will be available for the duration of the project
- All infrastructure and indirect costs associated with the research will be met from sources other than The Kids' Cancer Project's grant, unless otherwise agreed in writing

10.2 Reporting

Funded projects must submit reports using The Kids' Cancer Project's online reporting templates:

- **Annual progress and financial reports, due 1st August each year**
 - Continued funding is dependent on satisfactory progress
 - Failure to submit reports may result in suspension or termination of funding
- A **final scientific and financial report**, due within **three months** of the agreed project completion date

10.3 The Kids' Cancer Project Research Alumni

Chief Investigators funded through this scheme will be considered part of The Kids' Cancer Project **Research Alumni** and may be invited to:

- Participate in periodic promotional, professional development or advocacy activities
- Provide a brief update on research and professional outcomes every two years following project completion

11. Contact

For questions about eligibility, priorities, or the application process, please contact:

research@tkcp.org.au