



THE KIDS' CANCER PROJECT

SURVIVAL STARTS WITH SCIENCE.

FUNDING GUIDELINES

FY28 Col Reynolds Fellowship Funding Round

1. Purpose

Founded in 1993, The Kids' Cancer Project (TKCP) has invested more than \$76 million in childhood cancer research. As an independent national charity, we fund high-quality research across Australia, across tumour types and across the cancer journey from discovery and translation through to supportive care and survivorship. We also work collaboratively, using partnerships and co-investment to extend the reach and impact of our funding.

Named in honour of founder Col Reynolds OAM, the Col Reynolds Fellowships invest in people as well as research. They aim to attract, develop and retain talented researchers, clinicians, nurses and allied health professionals, building the capability needed to improve outcomes and care for children and young people with cancer.

Through the FY28 Fellowship Round, TKCP aims to:



Build on research capability

Support talented people to develop sustainable careers in childhood and AYA cancer research.



Support research across Discover, Translate & Support

Strengthen the research pipeline, from new discoveries through to better treatments, care and survivorship.



Strengthen connections between researchers & clinical practice

Bring Fellows and Research Alumni together to encourage collaboration, mentoring, knowledge sharing and future research leadership.



Connect The Kids' Cancer Projects' research community

Support researchers and health professionals to translate evidence into meaningful improvements for children and young people with cancer.

The Fellowships are an investment in the person, their development and future potential, as well as the research they undertake. Through this investment, TKCP is building a diverse and connected community of research leaders across Discover, Translate and Support, strengthening Australia’s capacity to improve outcomes for children and young people with cancer.

2. Funding available

TKCP intends to invest \$2.70 million in seven (7) three-year Col Reynolds Fellowships over FY28–FY30. Funding amounts are maximum annual amounts per Fellow and include salary, employment on-costs, research support and professional development. All amounts exclude GST.

Fellowship stream	Proposed awards	Research FTE	Maximum per Fellow / year	Maximum per Fellow / 3 years
Early Career Research	3	0.8–1.0 FTE	\$180,000	\$540,000
Clinical Research (Medical)	2	At least 0.3 FTE	\$105,000	\$315,000
Nursing & Allied Health Research	2	At least 0.3 FTE	\$75,000	\$225,000

The number of Fellowships in each stream is indicative. TKCP may vary the final allocation between streams based on the quality of applications, provided applicants meet the relevant eligibility requirements and the total approved funding envelope is not exceeded.

3. Research Pillars and Strategic Alignment

All three Fellowship streams are open to research aligned with The Kids’ Cancer Project’s 2024–2029 Research Strategy pillars: Discover, Translate and Support. The research question determines pillar alignment rather than the applicant’s profession.

Discover	Translate	Support
Hypothesis-driven, innovative research that advances understanding of childhood and AYA cancer biology and enables future translation.	Translational and clinically focused research that bridges critical gaps and accelerates readiness for clinical application or implementation.	Research that improves quality of life, care delivery, supportive care and survivorship outcomes for children and AYAs with cancer.

4. Eligibility

4.1 Common eligibility requirements

- An Australian university, medical research institute or health service must administer the Fellowship.
- Fellows must be based in Australia and have work rights covering the Fellowship period.
- The proposed research must demonstrate a direct benefit to childhood or AYA cancer, including survivorship. Adult-only cancer research without a clear childhood/AYA application is ineligible.
- The Administering Institution and employer must confirm the appointment, agreed research FTE, actual salary and on-costs, any employer contribution, appropriate infrastructure, mentoring and career development support. For Medical and Nursing & Allied Health applicants, this must include release or backfill arrangements to maintain at least 0.3 FTE protected research time throughout the Fellowship.
- Applicants may submit one application only and must select the stream that best matches the proposed role. Clinicians seeking 0.8–1.0 FTE research may apply to the ECR stream if they meet the ECR eligibility requirements.
- All current and pending funding must be disclosed. The same salary time cannot be funded twice. Institutional salary supplements and distinct project grants are permitted.
- Previous Col Reynolds Fellows may apply if otherwise eligible and all previous reporting requirements are complete but may not hold overlapping TKCP Fellowship awards.

4.2 Early Career Research Fellowship

Purpose: to develop emerging researchers towards independence and a sustained childhood and/or AYA cancer research program.

- A PhD must be awarded by the EOI closing date.
- Applicants must have no more than five years of post-PhD research experience calculated on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis as at the EOI closing date. Eligible career disruption will be taken into account when assessing research experience*.
- Applicants may enter childhood/AYA cancer research from another discipline where they demonstrate relevant capability and a credible transition plan.
- The Fellowship supports 0.8–1.0 FTE dedicated research time. Salary funding must reflect the agreed research FTE and actual costs. Requests for lower FTE or flexible working arrangements may be considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to appropriate justification and institutional support.

4.3 Clinical Research Fellowship (Medical)

Purpose: to protect research time for medical practitioners to build research leadership alongside patient care.

- Applicants must hold a recognised medical qualification, current Australian medical registration and a clinical appointment caring for children/AYAs with cancer or survivors. Relevant specialist trainees may apply with supervisor endorsement and evidence of appointment continuity.
- A PhD is not mandatory. Applicants must demonstrate research capability through a substantive research contribution.
- Applicants should be developing clinician-researchers with no more than ten research-FTE years since their first medical qualification*.
- Each award requires a minimum of 0.3 FTE protected research time for three years. Applicants may propose a higher research FTE, provided the associated salary and on-costs are covered by the Fellowship funding and/or institutional contributions. The maximum Fellowship funding available remains unchanged.

4.4 Nursing & Allied Health Research Fellowship

Purpose: to develop nurse-led and allied health-led research while maintaining a strong connection to clinical services.

- Eligible professions include (not limited to) nursing, psychology, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dietetics, exercise physiology, social work and speech pathology.
- Applicants must have completed relevant professional training and hold current AHPRA registration where required, or relevant professional accreditation/eligibility for disciplines outside AHPRA.
- Applicants must hold a clinical appointment in, or be formally linked to, childhood/AYA cancer care or survivorship services.
- Applicants should have no more than ten research-FTE years since first qualifying in their profession*.
- Each award requires a minimum of 0.3 FTE protected research time for three years. Applicants may propose a higher research FTE, provided the associated salary and on-costs are covered by the Fellowship funding and/or institutional contributions. The maximum Fellowship funding available remains unchanged.

*Career disruptions, including parental or caring leave, illness, disability, or other significant interruptions to research activity, will be considered when assessing eligibility and career stage. Applicants should provide a brief explanation of relevant disruptions and their impact on research time. Supporting documentation may be requested where necessary.

5. Application process

The FY28 Col Reynolds Fellowship Round will use a two-stage application process.

Stage 1 – Expression of Interest (EOI)

EOIs will be submitted through SmartyGrants and will capture eligibility, CV, research vision, career goals, proposed research program, indicative budget and institutional

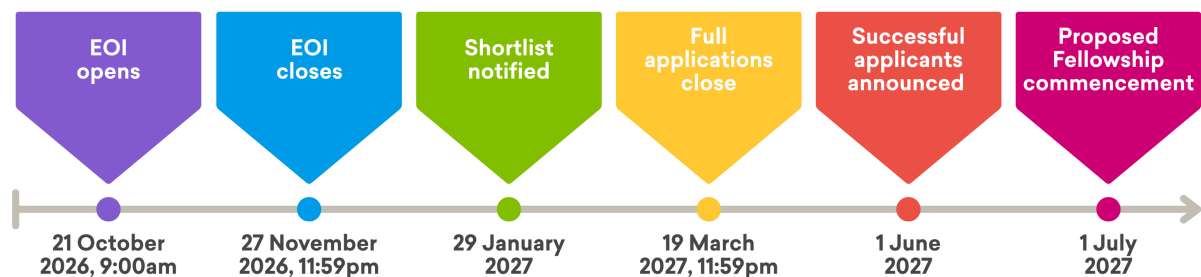
endorsement.

Stage 2 – Full Application

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a detailed Full Application, including research and career development plans, funding disclosures, protected-time commitments and detailed costings.

6. Key dates

All dates are Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT) where a time is specified.



7. Institutional Nomination Limits

Each Administering Institution may submit a maximum of seven (7) Fellowship Expressions of Interest (EOIs) in total, comprising no more than:

- Three (3) Early Career Researcher (ECR) applications
- Two (2) Medical applications
- Two (2) Nursing/Allied Health applications

The nomination limit applies to each Administering Institution as a legal entity, including its departments, campuses and internal units. Affiliated hospitals, universities and research institutes that operate as separate legal entities may each submit applications up to the permitted limit, provided they are responsible for administering the Fellowship.

Each applicant may be nominated only once across the entire funding round. Applicants with joint appointments or affiliations across multiple institutions must nominate a single Administering Organisation. Duplicate nominations will not be accepted.

There are no additional nomination limits across the Discover, Translate and Support pillars. However, organisations are encouraged, where possible, to nominate applicants across all three pillars. TKCP recognises that this may not always be feasible and will consider the distribution of nominations on a case-by-case basis.

Administering Organisations are responsible for coordinating nominations within their

organisation, confirming applicant eligibility and ensuring compliance with the nomination limits. Each application must include a signed letter of institutional endorsement.

The Kids' Cancer Project reserves the right to reject duplicate or non-compliant applications.

8. Institutional Endorsement

A signed letter of endorsement from the Administering Institution must accompany each EOI, using the template provided by The Kids' Cancer Project.

The letter must confirm that the Administering Institution:

- Endorses the application and confirms that the applicant meets the relevant institutional and Fellowship eligibility requirements.
- Supports the proposed Fellowship FTE and will provide protected research time for the duration of the Fellowship, including appropriate arrangements for release from clinical or professional duties, where applicable.
- Will provide an appropriate research environment, including access to the expertise, resources and infrastructure required to undertake the proposed research.
- Will support appropriate research mentoring and career development
- Confirms that salary support will not be duplicated through another fellowship, grant or funding source for the same research FTE.
- Has not exceeded the maximum number of EOI applications permitted under the Fellowship Guidelines.

9. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

- Applicants may use AI tools for drafting or editing assistance when preparing their application.
- Applicants remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality and integrity of all submitted content, including scientific claims, references and proposed methods.
- AI use must not result in fabricated, misleading or unsubstantiated content. Inaccuracies or misrepresentation may result in exclusion from consideration.

10. Funding Use and Budget Guidance

The maximum annual Fellowship funding amounts are inclusive of salary, employment on-costs, research support and professional development. TKCP will fund salary on-costs up to a maximum of 20% of the funded salary, with any additional on-costs or salary shortfall to be met by the Administering Organisation.

At EOI stage, applicants must provide an indicative annual budget outlining the funding requested from TKCP. Detailed budgets, based on actual costs and the

proposed research FTE, will be required at Full Application stage.

- Indicative annual allocations: ECR – up to \$130,000 for salary/on-costs plus \$50,000 for research/development; Medical – up to \$85,000 plus \$20,000; Nursing & Allied Health – up to \$55,000 plus \$20,000. These allocations are indicative and must remain within the relevant annual Fellowship funding ceiling.
- Professional development: Up to \$15,000 per Fellow over three years may be allocated to approved professional development, with expenditure able to vary between years.
- Eligible professional development: Research methods or leadership training, structured mentoring, relevant conferences and domestic or international research exchanges, including reasonable associated travel, accommodation and additional caring costs.
- Eligible research costs: Consumables, specialised equipment, software, research personnel and project-specific clinical trial costs directly related to the proposed research.
- Budget requirements: Salary, employment on-costs, research support and professional development must be itemised separately. Professional development expenditure must not reduce the agreed protected research FTE.
- Exclusions: General institutional overheads, infrastructure levies and indirect administrative costs are not eligible.

11. Assessment and Governance

11.1 Administration

Applications will be assessed relative to the applicant's career stage, discipline and research opportunity. Assessment criteria are tailored to each Fellowship stream. For more information, please refer to the [CRF Assessment Rubric](#).

Assessment criterion	ECR	Medical	Nusing & Allied Health
Applicant capability and potential	35%	35%	30%
Career development, mentoring and research environment	20%	20%	30%
Research significance, benefit and alignment	25%	25%	25%
Research quality, feasibility and translation	20%	20%	15%

11.2 Governance

All eligible applications undergo independent peer review overseen by The Kids' Cancer Project's Research Advisory Committee (RAC). Applicants are assessed

relative to their career stage, research experience and professional pathway, recognising career disruptions and achievements relative to opportunity.

- Expression of Interest (EOI): Each application is reviewed by at least two independent reviewers.
- Full Application: Each shortlisted application is reviewed by at least three independent reviewers.
- Funding Decisions: The RAC moderates assessments and makes funding recommendations, with final decisions approved by The Kids' Cancer Project Board.

Learn more about the Research Advisory Committee and governance process [here](#).

12. Administration and Reporting

12.1 Administration

The Administering Institution is responsible for financial and governance oversight of the Fellowship and for ensuring the approved research FTE, infrastructure, supervision/mentoring and other agreed support are maintained throughout the funding period.

12.2 Reporting

- Annual scientific progress and financial reports will be required using TKCP's online reporting templates.
- Continued funding is dependent on satisfactory progress and compliance with the Funding Agreement.
- A final scientific and financial report will be due within three months of the agreed Fellowship completion date.
- Failure to submit satisfactory reports may result in suspension or termination of funding.

12.3 Engagement and Research Alumni

Fellows are expected to acknowledge TKCP support in publications and presentations arising from the Fellowship and, where reasonable, participate in research communication, donor engagement, professional development and TKCP research community activities. Fellows will become part of the TKCP Research Alumni community following completion of their Fellowship.

13. Contact

For questions regarding this funding round, please contact research@tkcp.org.au.