

5.10.1.2 Research Impact

Applicants are assessed based on:

- the significance and reach of their claimed research impact (7%)
- the contribution of their research program to the research impact (6%)
- the contribution of the applicant to the research program (7%).

NHMRC defines the impact of research as the verifiable outcomes that research makes to knowledge, health, the economy and/or society. Impact is the effect of the research after it has been adopted, adapted for use, or used to inform further research.

Research impact is the verifiable outcomes from research and *not the prospective or anticipated effects of the research*. For example, a prospective publication linked to the applicant's research program is not demonstrated or corroborated impact.

Research impact also includes research that leads to a decision not to use a particular diagnostic, treatment or health policy.

<p style="text-align: center;">Research Impact</p> <p>The verifiable outcomes that research makes to knowledge, health, the economy and/or society. Impact is the effect of the research after it has been adopted, adapted for use, or used to inform further research.</p> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Research Program</p> <p>A cohesive body of research by the applicant, not limited to an individual case study (as used in a clinical context) or a single publication. It may be recent or in the past.</p> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Research program's contribution to the research impact</p> <p>The degree to which the applicant's research program was necessary to achieve the impact(s) (knowledge, health, economic, and/or social impact).</p> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Applicant's contribution to the research program</p> <p>The level of the applicant's contribution (e.g. leadership, intellectual and/or technical input) to the research program.</p>

Figure 1: Key definitions for the assessment of Research Impact

NHMRC identifies four specific types of impact (**Table 1**).

Examples of evidence are listed in **Table 1**. Evidence examples may be relevant to more than one research impact type.

Table 1: Types of Research Impact and Examples of Evidence of Research Impact

Type of impact	Description of research impact	Examples of evidence (not exhaustive)
Knowledge impact	New knowledge, demonstrating the benefits emerging from adoption, adaption or use of new knowledge to inform further research, and/or understanding of what is effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognition of research publications (e.g. citation metrics, particularly field weighted) • data sharing • contribution to registries or biobanks • prizes and conference presentations • uptake of research tools and techniques • evidence of uptake of the research by other disciplines
Health impact	Improvements in health through new therapeutics, diagnostics, disease prevention or changes in behaviour; or improvements in disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment, management of health problems, health policy, health systems, and quality of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy or program adopted • a clinical guideline adopted • international or national practice standards adopted • improved service effectiveness • Phase I, Phase II and Phase III clinical trials underway or completed • improved productivity due to research innovations (e.g. reduced illness, injury) • Quality-Adjusted Life Years, Disability-Adjusted Life Years, Potential Years of Life Lost, Patient Reported Outcome Measure and other relevant indicators • relative stay index for multi-day stay patients, hospital standardised mortality ratio, cost per weighted separation and total case weighted separation • reports (including community and government)
Economic impact	Improvements in the nation's economic performance through creation of new industries, jobs or valuable products, or reducing health care costs, improving efficiency in resource use, or improving the welfare/well-being of the population within current health system resources. An economic impact may also contribute to social or health impacts, including human capital gains and the value of life and health.	<p>Health Care System Savings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relative stay index for multi-day stay patients, hospital standardised mortality ratio, cost per weighted separation and total case weighted separation • reduction in Medicare Benefits Schedule/Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme costs • improved productivity due to research innovations (e.g. reduced illness, injury) • improved service effectiveness <p>Product Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a research contract with an industry partner and an active collaboration • granting of a patent • execution of a licensing agreement with an established company • income from intellectual property • raising funding from venture capital or other commercial sources or from government schemes that required industry co-participation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • successful exit from start-up company (public market flotation, merger or acquisition) • development of pre-good manufacturing practice prototype • successful generation or submission of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a regulatory standard data set ○ applications for pre-market approval of a medical device ○ a new drug or device for registration (e.g. by Food and Drug Administration, European Medicines Agency, Therapeutic Goods Administration) • product sales
Social impact	Improvements in the health of society, including the well-being of the end user and the community. This may include improved ability to access health care services, to participate socially (including empowerment and participation in decision making) and to quantify improvements in the health of society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uptake or demonstrated use of evidence by decision makers/policy makers • qualitative measures demonstrating changes in behaviours, attitudes, improved social equity, inclusion or cohesion • improved environmental determinants of health • improved social determinants of health • changes to health risk factors

Indicate which of the following research impact types you would like considered in the assessment of your application

Select one or more impact types.

How to demonstrate Research Impact

Applicants must only include **one research program** to demonstrate research impact(s) across **one or more of the four types of impact**. Applicants will be asked to indicate in the application which of the four research impact types they would like considered in the assessment of their application. If the research program can be used to demonstrate multiple impacts, the overall research impact score is determined holistically and on balance across the four types (it is not additive). This means that an applicant with one type of impact can score as well as or better than an applicant with multiple types of impact.

A research program is a cohesive body of research by the applicant, as opposed to disparate bodies of research that each have different objectives and impacts. Applicants are required to provide evidence sufficient and strong enough to demonstrate their claims for all three impact criteria. Applicants may use the same evidence across the three impact criteria if appropriate. Peer reviewers will decide based on the evidence provided whether the impact claims have been sufficiently demonstrated and corroborated. A poorly corroborated or non-corroborated research impact or contribution to impact will receive a score of one, in alignment with the category descriptors.

For applicants who have provided impacts for more than one research program, peer reviewers determine whether any one of the research programs and their impacts have been sufficiently

demonstrated and corroborated, and score accordingly. Applicants are not scored in an additive method for multiple research programs.

Whilst it is expected that the research impact is recent, the research program that contributed to the research impact may be from any time in a researcher's career – there are no time limits on when a researcher made a contribution to the research program or when the research program contributed to the research impact.

Applicants should note that there is no requirement for their research impact to align with the research proposal/vision in their application – these are assessed independently against separate assessment criteria and category descriptors.

The assessment of Research Impact will be against the category descriptors at **Tables 2, 3 and 4** of [Appendix B](#).

Applicants should provide robust, verifiable evidence (qualitative and/or quantitative, see **Table 1**) to support the claimed research impact that can be independently assessed by peer reviewers.

Applicants should provide their best example of the impact within the field limit. Any references that are required as verifiable evidence of the impact need not be provided as a complete citation. For example, it would be sufficient to note the publication title and year to prove the existence of a publication.

Applicants should note that it is the quality of the corroborating evidence provided, not the quantity. Applicants only need to provide evidence sufficient and strong enough to verify the claims, not all evidence that may be on the public record.

An applicant who does not wish to provide research impact evidence because it is not in the public domain, or because it is commercially sensitive, may describe the evidence within their application, noting that it is commercially sensitive, without making it available. Any such evidence should be provided to RAOs who should ensure that such evidence is retained by their office to be made available to NHMRC, if requested.

In considering whether to provide such evidence, applicants should note that all NHMRC peer reviewers enter into a Deed of Confidentiality prior to the commencement of the peer review process which prohibits the discussion of applications or disclosure of any information contained therein, outside of their panel appointment. In addition, NHMRC staff are required under the APS Code of Conduct to observe rigorous confidentiality in relation to their day-to-day work.

Reach and significance of the research impact, supported by corroborating evidence

Describe the reach and significance of the research impact, including any corroborating evidence.

Reach is the extent, spread, breadth, and/or diversity of the beneficiaries of the impact, relative to the type of research impact.

Significance is the degree to which the impact has enabled, enriched, influenced, informed or changed the performance of policies, practices, products, services, culture, understanding, awareness or well-being of the beneficiaries (not the prevalence or magnitude of the issue).

Research program's contribution to the research impact, supported by corroborating evidence

Outline how the research program contributed to the research impact, including any corroborating evidence.

A *research program* is a cohesive body of research by the applicant. It is not limited to an individual case study (as used in a clinical context) or a single publication. A research program may be recent

or in the past. Applicants need to outline the research program with corroborating evidence that can be independently assessed by peer reviewers.

Research program's contribution to the research impact is the degree to which the applicant's research program was necessary to achieve the impact(s) (knowledge, health, economic, and/or social impact) based on robust and verifiable evidence. The relationship between the applicant's research program (including related activities) and the impact may be foreseen or unforeseen, and may be an end-product or demonstrated during the research process. Research impact examples may include the adoption or adaptation of existing research.

Applicant's contribution to the research program, supported by corroborating evidence

Outline your contribution to the research program, including any corroborating evidence.

An *applicant's contribution to the research program* is, relative to opportunity and to the applicant's field of research, the level of the applicant's contribution (e.g. leadership, intellectual and/or technical input) to the research program based on robust and verifiable evidence.

5.10.1.3 Research Leadership

For the assessment of leadership, applicants are required to outline their outputs over the past 10 years (taking into account Career Disruptions) across each of the four Leadership elements:

- Research Mentoring
- Research Policy and Professional Leadership
- Institutional Leadership
- Research Programs and Team Leadership.

The assessment of Leadership will be against the category descriptors at **Table 5** of Appendix B.

Research Leadership

Address each of the leadership elements in the free-text fields provided.

5.10.2 Knowledge Gain (30%)

NHMRC defines 'Knowledge Gain' for the Investigator Grant scheme as the quality of the proposed research and significance of the knowledge gained. It incorporates theoretical concepts, hypothesis, research design, robustness and the extent to which the research findings will contribute to the research area and health outcomes (by advancing knowledge, practice or policy).

Applicants must not include in any part of their application:

- links to external websites, apart from references to journal articles, guidelines, government reports, datasets and other outputs that are only available online; where links are included, provide the URL in full (e.g. the NHMRC website <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au>)
- publication metrics such as Journal Impact Factors, consistent with the recommendations from the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment.