

2025/26 RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

PART A – GENERAL INFORMATION

1. DEADLINES

Type	Description	Date/Time
Applications open:	Application forms and information will be accessible via Cabrini Cabinet and on the Cabrini Research web.	Week commencing Monday 17 March 2025
Application deadline:	Completed, approved application and supporting documentation lodged. <i>No further rework permitted</i> unless instructed by a Cabrini Approver.	Noon, Thursday 1 May 2025

Late applications will not be accepted.

2. LODGING YOUR APPLICATION

Submit your completed application to: grants@cabrini.com.au

If you do not receive an email acknowledgment of receipt within one business day, contact Cabrini Research via: grants@cabrini.com.au OR call 9508 3451.

3. BACKGROUND

Cabrini Research introduced an annual grant funding round in 2015 with the support of Cabrini Foundation and our generous donors. The aim was to provide a single, centralised mechanism for accessing research and quality improvement projects for funding via uncommitted research reserves in Foundation. Cabrini Research encourages innovative projects and collaborative studies that align with its [research themes](#) and fosters the sharing of skills and expertise.

The funding categories in 2025/26 include:

- General Research Projects (three (3) grants of up to \$50,000 each)
- Oncology Research Projects (two (2) grants of up to \$70,000 each)

4. ABOUT CABRINI FOUNDATION

The Cabrini Foundation raises funds to support the strategic priorities of Cabrini Health. The Foundation is supported by the generosity of hundreds of donors, and donated funds are used to support major building projects, purchase of equipment for diagnostic and treatment purposes, medical and health services research, quality improvement, and health promotion/illness prevention. Cabrini Foundation is governed by the Cabrini Foundation Board, a sub-committee of the Cabrini Health Board. Ms Sylvia Falzon currently serves as Chair of both the Cabrini Board and Cabrini Foundation Board.

5. ABOUT CABRINI RESEARCH

Cabrini Research supports a wide range of clinical research activities across the organisation. Current research programs focus on cancer, cardiology, critical care medicine, mental health, musculoskeletal health, nursing, surgery, and urology but we open to other areas of investigation. Cabrini Research's successor Strategic Plan developed in 2024 outlines our mission to 'transform patient lives through clinically impactful research' and is underpinned by:

- Clinical Research (improving standards of clinical care through research)
- Translational Research (translating research findings into clinically meaningful outcomes)
- Research Capacity (enabling capacity for community aligned research)
- Research Sustainability (to support a strong research culture for current and future patients)

6. GRANTS PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Cabrini Research is committed to supporting prospective research AND quality improvement activities and to facilitating the goals articulated in the successor Strategic Plan. Other key objectives are to:

- Facilitate a high-quality research culture across the organisation that addresses Cabrini's research priorities.
- Encourage multidisciplinary research.
- Encourage research partnerships with external organisations; AND
- Contribute to quality and safety in healthcare.

7. WHO IS ELIGIBLE

Cabrini employees working in a discipline impacting clinical outcomes and visiting medical officers (VMO's) are eligible. Projects funded by a previous Cabrini Foundation Research and Quality Improvement Grant Round will not be considered.

PART B –THE APPLICATION

1. THE PROJECT TEAM

The Principal Investigator/lead applicant must be a Cabrini employee or VMO.

Applicants must ensure members of the project team can commit the required time to the project if successful.

Group Directors will be asked to confirm their support for team members to participate in this project, and written approval must be included with applications.

The applicant must detail the level of expertise of each team member, relative to opportunity, to undertake the proposed research. We encourage novice researchers to apply and recommend they seek mentoring to achieve optimal outcomes.

Engagement with health consumers will be looked upon favourably. It is important to outline what contribution consumers are expected to provide to project design and delivery.

Cabrini Health and Cabrini Research are not responsible for providing any administrative support or resourcing e.g., providing access to medical records, organising of catering, etc. The applicant must include all stakeholder contributions in the budget, whether monetary or in-kind.

2. PROJECT PROTOCOL

ALL sections of the research protocol must be completed before proceeding to the following sections.

Methods

Methods should utilise appropriate study design sub-headings. Novice researchers needing guidance can access checklists for various study designs via numerous educational sources online. Researchers must seek expert advice from a biostatistician prior to submission to ensure that the proposed methodology is statistically robust.

Budget

The budget requires an accurate representation of expenditure over the grant period. If the project cost has the potential to exceed the value of grant funding, the applicant must detail how any additional costs will be supported. All project expenses should be itemised including salaries and on-costs (add 27% on-costs for Cabrini employees and 40% for Monash employees), travel related to data collection at multiple sites, patient resources essential to the project, software development, survey subscriptions, organisational data (e.g. business intelligence and clinical governance units), printing, expert advice (e.g., \$120 per hour for Cabrini biostatistician), economic evaluations, pathology, transcription of data, journal publishing, registration and travel for conference attendance and any other items (subject to approval). Ensure all internal and external contributors and experts have been consulted and their correct rates applied. Applicants may be asked to provide evidence of this.

Catering that is essential to project execution must not exceed \$20pp for lunch and \$15pp for morning or afternoon tea, or \$30pp for dinner. All costs are GST-inclusive.

Note: Additional documents other than literature references and Gantt charts will NOT be read.

Expenses the grant will not cover include (but are not limited to) equipment, infrastructure, permanent salaries, operational costs, and alcohol.

Applicants should apply in advance to carry over funds for journal publishing, conference presentation and community engagement activities for financial accrual purposes. Retrospective requests to carry over funds may not be approved.

Journal publication fees in the budget should not exceed \$3,000, however, where funds can more effectively be spent on direct project outcomes, Cabrini Research strongly encourages investigators use free, peer-reviewed journals to submit papers. Cabrini Research does acknowledge the unpredictable nature of journal publication acceptance and will apply flexibility within reason.

An international travel budget for conference presentation should not exceed \$5,000, while domestic travel should be capped at \$1,500 although exception may be made if a conference has unusually high registration fees. **Only economy flights will be covered.**

Any funding provided by Cabrini must be spent on achieving activity outcomes as specified in the project protocol and not on seeking further grant monies or other activities and items not previously specified.

If successful, funding will be available in accordance with the project's executed timeline and scheduled budget.

Refer to **PART D – GRANT RECIPIENT INFORMATION, section 2. Cost Centre/Accessing the Funds** for important information about cost centres and the coding of project expenses if successful. Applicants must reference the approved cost centre in the budget section of the application.

Timeline

Although the recommended funding period is 12 months, Cabrini Research will consider 24-month applications if the project schedule and protocol accurately reflect a legitimate need for the extended duration. **Applicants should use a GANTT chart to track project deliverables and upload this in support of their application.** The timeline must record key project delivery dates e.g., ethics submission, recruitment, data collection, analysis, publications, abstract submission/conference attendance... etc.

Ethics

It is recommended that ethics applications are made early, so funding is not depleted prior to project commencement. The ethics approval timeframe should be factored into the project schedule. Projects may not commence, and funding will not be accessible until ethics and research governance approval are granted. Visit our [Research Ethics and Governance](#) page to determine the ethics requirements for your proposed project. Utilise the [Risk Assessment Checklist](#) to distinguish whether your project is deemed lower or higher risk and in need of full Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) review.

For low-risk projects, follow the prompts on our [Research Ethics and Governance](#) page to complete the requirements.

Any enquiries can be directed to: researchgovernance@cabrini.com.au OR call the Cabrini Research Governance Office on Tel: 9508 3412

Applications for higher-risk or multisite ethics approval can be obtained through an NHMRC-certified HREC such as Monash Health HREC or Alfred Health HREC.

Monash Health

<https://monashhealth.org/research>

Contact: Monash Health Research Support Services

Email: research@monashhealth.org

Alfred Health HREC

<https://www.alfredhealth.org.au/research/ethics-research-governance>

Contact: The Office of Ethics and Research Governance

Email: research@alfred.org.au

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CABRINI'S RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Funding proposals will only be considered from teams who have the capacity to deliver completed research OR quality improvement projects that align with the Cabrini Research Strategic Plan, available for download [here](#). Key areas of focus should include one or more of Cabrini Research's research themes which currently include cancer, cardiology, critical care medicine, mental health, musculoskeletal health, nursing, surgery, and urology.

Innovation is a central tenet of Cabrini Research, and the application should address if the project is identifying innovative treatments and methods of care for patients.

4. MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Applicants must demonstrate how their project fosters Cabrini's mission and values – the promise Cabrini employees make to their patients and residents, their families, and colleagues. View these missions and values in the 'Our promise' booklet which can be found on the [Our mission and heritage](#) webpage.

5. COLLABORATION

Multidisciplinary projects are encouraged. This includes collaboration:

- between departments;
- between campuses; AND
- between clinical/business and research departments;
- with health consumers.

Applicants should first explore clinical/business and research expertise relative to discipline within Cabrini when establishing their project team. A significant goal of this program is to nurture multidisciplinary collaboration and break down work silos. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how this is being achieved in their proposed projects. Similarly, partnerships with external organisations such as universities, hospitals, and other institutions (government or otherwise) are encouraged as well as with health consumers. **In all instances, the Principal Investigator must be a Cabrini employee or VMO.**

6. CABRINI SUPPORT – GROUP DIRECTORS

Applicants must obtain project support from their relevant Group Director (GD) prior to submission.

Support needs to be secured prior to the **final deadline: Noon, Thursday 1 May 2025**. As GDs need time to review, provide feedback, and approve or deny support it is recommended you contact your relevant GD in advance to discuss your project and determine if they may be away during this approval period. It is the responsibility of the applicant to communicate such absences to Cabrini Research so alternate arrangements to obtain support can be made.

Prof Gary Richardson OAM – Group Director, Cabrini Research, Neil Beauglehall Endowed Chair: Director of Medical Oncology Research, Professor of Medicine, Monash University

Group Directors

Margaret Stewart – Mission and Identity

Derek Price – Information Technology

Cathryn Ryan – Health Funding & Patient Services

A/Prof Vineet Sarode – Medical Services & Clinical Governance

Tim Staker – Cabrini Technology Group

Fiona Chapman – People & Culture

Paul Vine – Legal and Corporate Affairs

Kirby Young – Allied Health and Ambulatory Services

Megan Mills – Nursing and Clinical Education

Sharon Sherwood – Mental Health & Cabrini Outreach

Where potential conflict of interest arises, the applicant should contact Cabrini Research for further advice if alternate project endorsement is required.

Support from Cabrini GDs is required to:

- Endorse the merit of the project and its need, priority, and alignment with Cabrini's strategic priorities;
- Approve the ability for the project to be conducted in the areas (wards and campuses) that it involves, and permit use of resources (time, equipment, and consumables) related to the project within those areas;
- Provide guidance and support in the project as required;
- Endorse the scientific rigour of the protocol and its ability to answer the research question; AND
- Approve progression of the application for panel review.

Approval does not indicate preferential support of the project. The applicant can seek advice from Cabrini Research if they feel their project does not fall under a specific academic department or directorate.

Once GD approval is received the application cannot be edited or altered and must be submitted in its current state unless more information has been requested.

PART C – REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION

1. REVIEW OF APPLICATION

Submitted applications will undergo preliminary administrative assessment to ensure that:

- All questions have been answered fully, and required or supporting documentation is attached;
- Correct directorate and research support has been obtained, as has participation approval from each investigator;
- An ethics application is underway OR approved; AND
- The project is broadly aligned to Cabrini's strategic priorities.

Applications meeting these criteria will progress to the Scientific Review Panel (SRP), comprised of the following people:

1. Group Director, Cabrini Research
2. Group Director, Medical Services and Clinical Governance
3. Director of Research Operations
4. Director of Medical Research
5. Data Governance and Registries Manager
6. Biostatistician
7. Chair of Cabrini Research Committee
8. VMO representatives
9. Consumer representatives

Grant review panellists will score applications based on key assessment criteria (Appendix 1 – page 8). Applications meeting the minimum level will be ranked for final review by an Executive Review Panel (ERP) meeting. The composition of the executive panel will be:

1. Chair, Cabrini Foundation Board & Cabrini Board
2. Chief Executive
3. Chair of Cabrini Research Committee
4. Director, Cabrini Foundation (or delegated representative)
5. Director of Research Operations (administrative support)

It is the prerogative of the ERP to award an alternate grant that they deem more appropriate to the one selected by the SRP.

2. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The 2025/26 Research & Quality Improvement Grant Assessment Criteria are provided in Appendix 1 (page 8). This schema outlines the rationale behind scoring and stipulates the minimum points per section required to be eligible for shortlisting.

3. NOTIFICATION

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in June.

4. FEEDBACK

Unsuccessful applicants can contact Cabrini Research for feedback via grants@cabrini.com.au.

PART D – GRANT RECIPIENT INFORMATION

1. AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING

The funding period will commence on 1 July 2025 and cease on 30 June 2026 for projects spanning 12 months unless project extension has been applied for and approved. Funding for successful projects with a 24-month duration will cease on 30 June 2027. **Appropriate ethics approval must be secured before any funding can be accessed.**

2. FINANCIALLY MANAGING YOUR GRANT

A. Coding:

Successful applicants should obtain a cost centre (4-digit number) against which project costs can be coded from Cabrini's Research Operations Administration Assistant. The project will remain **cost neutral** i.e., any project expenses charged against the cost centre will be acquitted using grant funding. Successful projects will be assigned a unique subledger code for the purposes of financially managing and reporting the project. Finance will also provide a list of expense accounts against which project expenses can be matched and coded.

The PI or delegate (i.e., a member of their research team) must ensure invoices reference the PI name, project name/nickname, cost centre, appropriate expense code and subledger coding prior to being sent to the Cabrini Research for processing. Invoices coded incorrectly will not be processed. Income, up to the amount awarded, will be recognised in the subledger as the grant is acquitted/spent.

Sample coding below:

Dr John Citizen

'X Project' Cabrini Foundation Research Grant

9015 (cost centre) – 7340 (radiology services)

B. Frequency of Invoicing:

- Cabrini Research prefers quarterly, 6-monthly, or annual invoicing of collated expenses. A master invoice must be evidenced by supporting documentation from subcontractors and suppliers.
- Should the PI hold dual positions at both Cabrini and a partner institution (i.e., university or research institute), the partner institution may wish to settle invoices first and invoice Cabrini at agreed intervals or during grant acquittal.
- Cabrini Research does not have capacity to process payment of large numbers of invoices individually.
- Cabrini's standard payment terms are within 30 days from month end (i.e., up to 60 days), unless otherwise advised by the supplier.
- Invoices will not be paid prior to a service being delivered or an item received.
- All travel must be booked via Cabrini travel provider to comply with Cabrini's Corporate Travel Policy.

C. New Suppliers:

The PI or delegate should determine if suppliers are known to Cabrini by emailing Gayle Pettigrew, Administration Assistant – Research Operations (GPettigrew@cabrini.com.au). Gayle can assist with setting them up as a new supplier with Accounts Payable if they have not dealt with Cabrini previously. Once approved, email relevant supplier invoices to grants@cabrini.com.au with a cc to Chris Norman, Finance (CNorman2@cabrini.com.au) for processing.

D. Budget/Timeline Adherence:

- Equipment is not an eligible grant expense and will not be covered.
- Expenses must align with those itemised in the approved grant application budget – invoices that deviate significantly will not be honoured.
- Funding is accessible from the start of July 2025 until the project's conclusion as per the project timeline.
- The PI or delegate is expected to track project expenses and provide a quarterly update to grants@cabrini.com.au

E. Salaries:

If your project budget requires Cabrini employee salaries to be allocated to the grant, please indicate the following to the Chris Norman, Research Finance Business Partner (CNorman2@cabrini.com.au) so he can divert grant monies to the cost centre from which the staff members salary is being paid at the end of each month:

- the employee's name;
- project hours worked per fortnight;
- duration of salary payment; AND
- project coding (list cost-centre if different to employee's contracted cost centre and subledger code).

3. REPORTING AND KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION

Recipients are required to:

- Produce an interim progress report;
- Produce a final report and grant acquittal;
- Submit an abstract for Cabrini Research Week within 12 months of completing their project;
- Submit ethics reports (as required);
- Present project outcomes to the organisation and/or project donors through an agreed forum;
- Present project outcomes in a suitable peer-review journal within 12 months of completion; AND
- Present project outcomes at an appropriate conference or scientific meeting.

Publications should be provided to Cabrini Foundation to share with relevant donors.

4. CONTACT

For all enquiries, contact: Gayle Pettigrew - Administration Assistant – Research Operations
Cabrini Research - Level 2, 154 Wattletree Rd, MALVERN VIC 3144

T: 03 9508 3451 E: grants@cabrini.com.au

APPENDIX 1 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA - 2025/26 RESEARCH & QUALITY IMPROVEMENT GRANT ROUND

CATEGORY	CRITERIA	SCORING	LOCATION	CONSIDERATIONS FOR REVIEW PANEL
MANDATORY CRITERIA – ADDITIVE SCORING out of 28 points. Must score ≥ 16pts to be shortlisted.				
Scientific Rigour	- comprehensively addresses the objectives and will deliver against all desired outcomes - has highly coherent and strongly developed research objectives - is exemplary in design - uses best practice in science methods including robust measures for monitoring and evaluating outcomes or generating long term economic efficiencies to the health system - is highly feasible and will provide outcomes that represent value for money - includes highly effective milestones and performance indicators.	7pts total (Must achieve at least 4/7 to be shortlisted.)	Section 3: Protocol	Is the project well-articulated? Does the protocol represent research of the highest quality? Has the applicant followed an appropriate methodology or study design checklist?
Innovation, Translation, Impact / Significance,	- innovative and includes a robust plan for research translation that will fundamentally advance the field - will translate rapidly into outcomes that significantly influence policy and/or practice - will result in outcomes that will be the subject of invited plenary presentations at national meetings - includes highly appropriate consumer, community, or end-user involvement throughout all stages of the research - involves highly effective engagement with the delivery sector to ensure a very high likelihood of uptake and integration of research outcomes If has Partner/s: - involves collaborations that demonstrate excellent team integration and cohesiveness and outstanding future promise	7pts* total (Must achieve at least 4/7 to be shortlisted.)	Section 3: Protocol Sub-section k.	Is the research project ambitious, creative, and innovative? Will it break new ground? Where does it sit in the context of the current state of knowledge and other projects currently underway in this field? Does it complement other research in this area? Is the research transformative and will it result in a significant advancement in knowledge that will have a major impact on this research area? Will it advocate for its area of health? Is it relevant to Australian healthcare practice, policy and/or health outcomes? Will it influence policy makers? Is the research project sustainable beyond the lifetime of the grant? Have the pathways to impact and knowledge dissemination been adequately identified? <i>*A project may not meet all 3 criteria however if it is strong enough in 2 and has the potential to meet the 3rd longer term, the reviewer may score enough points that the project remains eligible for shortlisting.</i>
Feasibility	- budget well detailed and covers costs; has the potential to attract large future funding - timeline outstanding	7pts (Must achieve at least 4/7 for each item to	Section 3: Protocol Sub-sections d., e., f.,	Has adequate detail been provided for each expense item? Will the budget cover the entire cost of the project? How will any shortfall be covered? Is this an application for seed funding and does this pilot study have the potential to attract larger future funding?

	- project management outstanding - ethical and aligns closely with Cabrini mission	be shortlisted.)	Section 6: Cabrini Outcomes & Collaboration Sub-section a	Is there a clear project management plan (including GANTT charts and other PM tools) ensuring that all resources and manpower are deployed in the most effective way to deliver high quality research in the projected timeframe? Does the timeline include ethics submission/approval and knowledge dissemination? Does this project align with the one or more of the research themes established to assist in the delivery of the Cabrini Research strategic plan? (Strategic plan and research priorities will be provided to grant review panellists.) Does this project address any of the National Safety and Quality Health Services Standards administered by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care? (National standards will be provided to grant review panellists.)
Team Capability and Diversity	Relative to opportunity, the applicant team: - has high level expertise in all aspects of the research - has a combined record of research achievement that is outstanding by international standards commensurate with their field of research: - research achievement including contributions to research activities and translation - research quality as exemplified in the publications of each CI - research productivity as exemplified by total outputs for the team - has some members with outstanding national and international reputations in the relevant research fields - has engaged with health consumers in the design and delivery of the project In relation to partners: - demonstrates extensive experience and success in drafting health policy or delivering a health program or health service - is highly likely to integrate outcomes into a health system or clinical practice, with minimal ongoing follow-up - is well placed to engage support from stakeholders including end-users and the wider community, and facilitate high uptake at all levels	7pts total (Must achieve at least 4/7 to be shortlisted.)	Section 2: Project Team	Rate the team quality and capability relevant to the application i.e., leadership capacity, management strategy, appropriate skill set within the team. Has an effective leader been identified to drive the project forward and ensure all team members are focussed on the overall vision? Is there health consumer input?
TOTAL SCORE = _____ / 28 points				
Admin preliminary assessment	- Completeness - GD support - HREC progress or approval			Has the applicant provided adequate, relevant, concise content and fully answered the question? Has the applicant sought written commitment from each investigator and project stakeholder? Has support from correct GD been sought and received? Has an approved cost-centre been sought? At what stage of ethics submission is this project?