



## **Australian Government**

### **Cancer Australia**

## **CONSUMER REVIEWERS FOR CANCER AUSTRALIA'S PRIORITY-DRIVEN COLLABORATIVE CANCER RESEARCH SCHEME**

### **EXPRESSION OF INTEREST: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Consumers and consumer representatives are defined as “*Patients and potential patients, carers, organisations representing consumers’ interests, members of the public who are targets of health promotion programs and groups asking for research because they believe that they have been exposed to potentially harmful circumstances, products or services*”.

This definition is in accordance with National Health and Medical Research Council “NHMRC’s” *Statement on Consumer and Community Participation in Health and Medical Research*.

Consumers play an integral role in Cancer Australia’s research programs. In Cancer Australia’s Priority-driven Collaborative Cancer Research Scheme (PdCCRS), consumer involvement in the design and conduct of research is required, and consumers are actively involved in the assessment of grant applications.

Cancer Australia seeks to invite consumers interested in assessing grant applications for the PdCCRS to submit an Expression of Interest to Cancer Australia. Although experience in the review of research grants is desirable, these skills are not essential because Cancer Australia will provide access to training for the review and assessment of cancer research grant applications.

This background document has been developed by Cancer Australia’s Research & Clinical Trials Team, in consultation with consumers to provide information on the PdCCRS and the call for Expressions of Interest from consumers who wish to act as reviewers in the PdCCRS.

Please ensure that you complete all the questions in the Expression-of-Interest Form and that your form reaches Cancer Australia by the closing date.

### **1. Cancer Australia’s Priority-driven Collaborative Cancer Research Scheme**

#### **1.1 Background**

Cancer Australia’s PdCCRS has been developed to offer a coordinated approach to funding and supporting priority-driven cancer research at the national level. Cancer Australia established the scheme in 2007 to partner with other organisations that fund cancer research to:

- Provide a coordinated, national approach to funding cancer research;
- Foster research that deals with national policy and practice priorities;
- Provide an avenue for rigorous and transparent assessment of grant applications for organisations who raise money for cancer research; and
- Foster collaboration of researchers in similar areas of inquiry.

The PdCCRS offers research project grants in priority areas identified by Cancer Australia and its Funding Partners. Cancer Australia's Funding Partners for the 2009 Round of the PdCCRS are *beyondblue: the national depression initiative*, CanTeen, Cancer Council Australia, Cure Cancer Australia Foundation, the Leukaemia Foundation, Meat and Livestock Australia, the National Centre for Gynaecological Cancers, the National Breast Cancer Foundation, the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, Starlight Children's Foundation Australia, and Radiation Oncology Section of the Department of Health and Ageing. The research priorities of the Funding Partners can be found at [http://www.canceraustralia.gov.au/media/27558/revise\\_2009\\_pdccrs\\_research\\_priorities.pdf](http://www.canceraustralia.gov.au/media/27558/revise_2009_pdccrs_research_priorities.pdf)

## **1.2 PdCCRS grant application and review process**

- The call for research applications opens in December each year and closes mid-March the following year, in line with the National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Project Grants application process.
- Grant applicants complete the NHMRC's *Informed Filler Project Grant Application Form* plus the PdCCRS's *Additional Questions Form*.
- Grant applications are assessed in a two-step process.
  - Step One: The NHMRC's grant review panels review the NHMRC's *Informed Filler Project Grant Application Form* and score grant applications against NHMRC criteria of scientific quality, significance and/or innovation, and track record of the chief investigators.
  - Step Two: Cancer Australia and its Funding Partners' Grant Review Committees assess the Additional Questions against criteria developed by Cancer Australia in conjunction with Funding Partners. The Additional Questions relate to: the extent of collaborations, the potential outcomes and impacts of the research, consumer involvement and the translation of the research to impact on cancer control or cancer care in Australia. Applications must relate to at least one priority identified by Cancer Australia or its Funding Partners. Each Funding Partner's Grant Review Committee only reviews grant applications relating to its own research priority areas.
- Scores for the Additional Questions are weighted and added to weighted NHMRC scores to provide a final overall score for the grant application. Applications are then ranked according to their final overall scores. Funding is awarded against the final ranking list.

## **2. PdCCRS Grant Review Committees**

### **2.1 Composition of the Grant Review Committees**

Each Grant Review Committee comprises a maximum of seven people. Up to four individuals are nominated by the Funding Partner, one individual is nominated by Cancer Australia, one individual is nominated by the NHMRC and at least one member is a consumer representative trained or experienced in reviewing research applications. The Chair will be nominated by the relevant Funding Partner.

Each Funding Partner has the opportunity to nominate a consumer for the Grant Review Committee, who is trained or experienced in the review of research grants. However, Cancer Australia also provides trained consumer reviewers for Funding Partners' Grant Review Committees.

### **2.2 Role of the consumer on the Grant Review Committee**

All members of the Grant Review Committee are responsible for reviewing only the *Additional Questions Form* for each application assigned to their Committee. Each member will assess how the proposed project addresses the following criteria:

- the alignment of the planned research to the research priorities of Cancer Australia and/or the Funding Partner/s;
- collaborations;
- potential outcomes and impact of the research;
- consumer involvement; and
- the translation of the findings of the research into clinical practice, policy, or further research in order to impact on cancer control and/ or cancer care.

The consumer representative will be expected to voice the consumer perspective and contribute to the Grant Review Committee discussions.

The scores and comments of the consumer representative are of equal weighting to those provided by other members of the Grant Review Committee.

The Cancer Australia Chief Executive Officer may approve a payment fee to any consumer who acts as a member of the Grant Review Committee. Each request will be considered and payment will be based upon the Category 1 (member) rate as set by the Remuneration Tribunal (Determination 2008/07). More information can be found [here](#).

### **3. Consumer Research Training Workshop**

To ensure that consumers who are appointed to the Grant Review Committee can competently review and rank research applications, Cancer Australia will offer successful consumers the opportunity to attend a Consumer Research Training Workshop, organised by The Cancer Council NSW. The workshop will be held in Sydney Wednesday 26 August (pm) to Friday 28 August 2009, and is expected to span two and a half days. Participants are expected to attend the entire workshop. Cancer Australia will cover travel and accommodation costs incurred by the participant.

### **4. Expressions of Interest**

Cancer Australia is looking to recruit up to 11 consumers for the PdCCRS Grant Review Committees. Consumers must complete the *Expression of Interest Form* to be considered.

Applications may be emailed, faxed or posted to Olfat Girgis (email: [Olfat.Girgis@canceraustralia.gov.au](mailto:Olfat.Girgis@canceraustralia.gov.au) , fax: 02 6289 1355 or posted to Olfat Girgis (Cancer Australia, PO Box 1201, Dickson, ACT, 2602).

#### **Applications must be received by 5pm (AEST), on 8 July 2009.**

Please note that Cancer Australia will not accept applications received after the closing deadline. Cancer Australia must receive a faxed, emailed or posted copy of your application by 5pm AEST 8 July 2009.

If you fax your application, please send an additional copy via email or post.

Please note that all information provided in the *Expression of Interest Form* will be treated with the strictest confidence and will not be used for purposes other than identified in this document without permission of the applicant.

Selection of consumers will be made by an assessment panel and will be based on the answers provided in the *Expression of Interest Form*. The assessment panel will include consumer representation.

Cancer Australia subscribes to the principles outlined in the Commonwealth Consumer Affairs Advisory Council's "*Principles for the Appointment of Consumer Representatives: Process for Governments and Industry*" (published June 2005). These principles include the following:

- Appointments will be made on merit;
- Appointees will be independent of industry;
- Consumer organisations will be involved in the appointment;
- An appropriate range of candidates will be sought,
- The appointment process will be consistent with good corporate governance; and
- The appointment process will be transparent, accountable and cost effective.

#### **5. Further information**

More details regarding the function and operation of the Grant Review Committees can be obtained from the Grant Review Committee *Terms of Reference* and *Code of Conduct*. Please email Olfat Girgis on [Olfat.Girgis@canceraustralia.gov.au](mailto:Olfat.Girgis@canceraustralia.gov.au) or call on 02 6289 1367 to request copies of these documents.