



John Gavin Post-Doctoral Fellowship: A guide for applicants

Please read these notes carefully before completing your application in our application portal <https://grants.cancerresearchtrustnz.org.nz/>.

Goal

The John Gavin Post-Doctoral Fellowship is a prestigious award that supports an outstanding researcher with a doctoral level degree who plans to focus their scientific career in fields relevant to cancer. Projects may be in any field of cancer-related research including public health, biomedical, clinical, epidemiological or psychosocial aspects of cancer. The expectation is that this Fellowship will support their journey to become established as an independent researcher in New Zealand. In order to support the transition to independence, the Fellowship provides full salary support for two years, which may be spread over a maximum of four years. This flexibility enables the researcher to secure additional sources of salary support and provides a stepping stone to independence.

Value of Fellowship

Maximum value is two years of post-doctoral salary, awarded over a period of two to four years. Postdoctoral Fellowships are tenable within New Zealand and overseas universities, hospitals or research institutions approved by the Trust. If the applicant plans an overseas tenure, there must be a clear and sustainable pathway to becoming a New Zealand-based researcher within the timeframe of the award. If overseas tenure is requested the salary will be paid in New Zealand dollars and based on that which would have been applicable had the Fellow been employed as a post-doctoral position or equivalent research fellow position in New Zealand. The salary component does not cover institutional overheads.

Applicants are expected to develop their research independence and advance their own hypotheses. Therefore if the Fellowship is to be taken in the same department or institution in which the applicant is currently/previously based, the applicant must very clearly demonstrate independent thinking and independent approaches. All recipients must seek permission from the Trust to hold any additional grants and/or salary support throughout the course of the Fellowship. The permission of the Trust will not be unreasonably withheld.

The Fellowship may be taken at an approved Host Institution either in New Zealand or overseas. Applications must be accompanied by the formal agreement with the Host Institution to support the Fellow. This includes a letter of support from the relevant Head of Department to provide appropriate facilities for the research. The proposed mentor should also provide a letter of support outlining their commitment to supporting the applicant develop an independent research career. Provision of equipment and working expenses for research is the responsibility of the Host Institution.

Who can apply

Applicants for the John Gavin Postdoctoral Fellowship should be New Zealand citizens or permanent residents who have recently completed a Doctor of Philosophy or equivalent degree. Applications would normally be made within five years of graduating PhD or equivalent.

In exceptional circumstances applications will be considered from persons who have not yet received the results of their thesis examination, but the award and commencement of the Fellowship will be conditional on award of their doctoral degree. Usually the thesis will have been submitted for examination at the time of application.



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Number of grants awarded

The Trust will usually award only one John Gavin Postdoctoral Fellowship per year, and reserves the right to not award the Fellowship.

How to apply

- All applicants need to create an account on our grants portal. Note that if you have been previously named as a co-investigator, you may get a message to contact an administrator. This prevents duplicate applicant profiles for individual researchers. The issue can be quickly resolved, please just call or text message General Manager Michelle Sullivan on 027 434 0926.
- Once the funding round opens, the applicant dashboard will display available funding opportunities. Typically this is around two months prior to the closing date. Note that host institutions may have internal deadlines prior to the Trust's closing date so applicants are advised to check with their institution's research office.
- Applicants should pay attention to any details in the subheadings of each section of the application. If unclear, contact the Trust's General Manager for advice and guidance.
- Applicants may attach any images, figures, charts or diagrams referred to in the body of the application. Clinical trial protocols may also be attached. Applicants *must not* use these attachments to exceed the application word limit (3,000 words = 6 pages) to supply additional details. In such cases, the Committee will be instructed to *disregard all attachments* and the application may be rejected.
- Applicants must upload their Curriculum Vitae (CV). This should be in the New Zealand Standard Curriculum Vitae template available online: <https://www.hrc.govt.nz/resources/hrc-standard-cv-template>.
- Attachments may include details of other sources of partial funding, ethics approval letters, quotes for items of equipment, sub-contracts with other institutions, and letters of support for collaborations.
- Applications should be accompanied by a letter of support that should comment on the facilities and mentoring available for the applicant. As the Fellowship provides salary only, letters of support should also detail how the proposed research will be supported (equipment, consumables, travel costs, animals, institutional overheads etc.) or describe a clearly defined strategy for obtaining any additional funding necessary to carry out the research project. The letter should also comment on the suitability of the applicant for a research position within the department.
- All Fellowship Applications are reviewed by the Trust's Assessment Committee which has a broad range of cancer researchers and clinicians. Applicants with limited previous experience of writing competitive funding applications are strongly advised to seek the help and input of colleagues who are successful grant writers.
- Short-listed Fellowship applicants may be invited to an interview with a panel from the Assessment Committee.
- All applications must be submitted through the grants portal and late submissions cannot be accepted under any circumstances.

Eligibility

- In any funding round, an applicant can be named on no more than two applications, with a maximum of one as the Principal Investigator. Submitting a John Gavin Post-Doctoral Fellowship application will be counted as a Principal Investigator application, which means a maximum of one further application is allowed and this must be as a co-applicant.



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- The Trust expects that an individual will only be a Principal Investigator on one active Project Grant at a time. The individual may also be a named investigator on one or more active grants at the same time.
- Only one resubmission of a previously unsuccessful Project Grant or Fellowship application is permitted. It is an expectation that the applicant addresses all concerns raised by the referees and assessment committee in their re-submission. The stable composition of the Trust's Assessment Committee helps to eliminate year-to-year variations in Committee perspectives. An applicant who has been unsuccessful twice may submit further proposals in their chosen field of research, but it will need to be based on a new or substantially revised hypothesis.

Preparing your Budget

- Salary costs for John Gavin Postdoctoral Fellows are intended to allow the recipient to develop a sustainable research component to their career. Salary costs can either support the Fellow on a full-time basis for two years, or a fractional basis spread over up to four years. Should a tenured position be secured while holding the John Gavin Fellowship, funding from the Trust will cease. Under no circumstances will salary buy-out for permanent staff be an allowable expense.
- The Trust does not fund overheads including: property costs; depreciation; utility charges such as lighting, heating and water; telephone line charges; library; office stationery and accessories; or laboratory "bench fees".
- Only actual costs for ACC and superannuation should be included in salary associated costs. Annual salary adjustments will be covered by the Trust.
- Attendance at conferences and training courses cannot be included. A separate funding application (Professional Development Award) should be submitted to request support.

Māori Health Advancement

Cancer Research Trust is committed to transforming cancer outcomes in Aotearoa New Zealand. By upholding its responsibilities under te Tiriti o Waitangi the Trust is helping to achieve equitable cancer outcomes for Māori. The Trust urges all cancer researchers to actively consider how their efforts can contribute to this goal.

The Trust's Assessment Committee takes a firm view on the need to engage with Māori when developing research project concepts. While it can be challenging for researchers to connect in a meaningful way with Māori communities, the Committee nevertheless requires every researcher to demonstrate a commitment to Māori Health Advancement. This may take many different forms, depending on the type and stage of the research project.

Every application in every funding category is assessed for Māori Health Advancement. To promote consistency, the Trust has adopted the Health Research Council's Māori Health Advancement criteria. The HRC model explores Māori Health Advancement across four domains: Relationships, Significance, Research Team and Research Characteristics. Applicants should refer to guidance provided by the Health Research Council:

https://gateway.hrc.govt.nz/funding/downloads/HRC_Maori_Health_Advancement_Guidelines.pdf

The Trust acknowledges that Māori Health Advancement expectations will vary across the different funding categories. Some examples of this variation are given below. Over time, the Trust will provide additional guidance to support applicants in the journey to deeper and more meaningful partnerships with Māori. Some examples include:

- **For a proposal focused on development of a potential new treatment/test for cancer:**
There is a clear opportunity to consider consulting with Māori and bringing Māori advisors



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into the research planning at the outset. That way, if a treatment/test is eventually developed there will already be a high degree of trust in the process and the involvement of Māori throughout, and hence in the treatment being offered.

- **For a Professional Development Award proposal to attend an international conference:** The applicant might consider ways to include te reo in an oral presentation, such as an opening mihi to spark a conversation about indigenous populations' involvement in the field. Or alternatively how the knowledge gained from the conference can be communicated to colleagues on return and how this dissemination might contribute to Māori health advancement.
- **For all researchers:** Everyone has a responsibility to consider their own personal journey in learning about tikanga and incorporating this into their research. This could be reflected in diverse ways, such as how the research is conceived and planned, how the Principal Investigator creates a welcoming research environment, how principles of tikanga can be applied to teaching and graduate student supervision.

Further guidance on Māori Health Advancement is available in the Research Project Grant application guidelines.

The Role of Host Institutions

Host Institutions must have the necessary governance structures, financial processes, and research capacity to employ research staff, oversee the research, and administer the Grant Funds. Host Institutions are required to:

- Manage and administer Cancer Research Trust grants to an auditable standard, and supply a provide a detailed financial acquittal at the conclusion of the grant.
- Ensure that the research is conducted to the highest ethical standards and complies with all applicable legislation and regulations governing health research.

Host Institutions have designated representative/s (e.g. research office staff) and typically set their own internal deadline ahead of the Cancer Research Trust closing date. Please take note of the internal deadline, which allows for institutional compliance processes including budget review, and approval of the application, and acceptance of Cancer Research Trust's standard Terms and Conditions for Research Project Grants.

When a Principal Investigator finishes their application, clicking 'submit' will send the application to the Host Institution for completion of their requirements. The Host Institution can return the application to the Principal Investigator for further editing if needed, or proceed to formal submission of the application to the Cancer Research Trust. Applicants and/or Host Institutions can request an application be returned for further editing prior to the closing date.

Regulatory Requirements

- Research involving human subjects requires approval from an accredited ethics committee. Research involving animals requires approval from a registered animal ethics committee. Applicants must either attach the approval(s) to the application, or indicate that approval is being sought.
- For clinical trials, applications should provide details of the trial registry and data safety monitoring committee if applicable.

Publicity

The Cancer Research Trust is a charity (CC23672) supported entirely by donations from the public. The Trust has an obligation to donors and supporters to report on the impact of the research it has



funded. This includes updates through print and online media, our newsletter subscribers and our social media channels. By accepting a Cancer Research Trust grant, the awardee automatically agrees to the research team members and media summary of the project being made publicly available. They also automatically agree to be included as an available guest speaker for Cancer Research Trust public outreach, which includes research presentations to the general public.

How your Application is Reviewed

Applicants are strongly encouraged to include as much information as possible within the wordcount to enable the proposal to be assessed. Clearly written proposals are highly valued.

The Trust's Assessment Committee is a diverse group of cancer researchers and clinicians that considers the peer review input (where relevant), local impact and responsiveness to Māori in order to make funding recommendations to the Cancer Research Trust Board. The Assessment Committee uses the same criteria as the Health Research Council of New Zealand to assess Responsiveness to Māori.

All applicants will receive access to written feedback from the Assessment Committee at the conclusion of the funding round. The intention is to provide constructive feedback to help applicants develop their grant writing skills.

Grant Conditions

Successful applicants will be informed of the nature and amount of the grant being offered and the conditions under which it will be contracted, and asked for a formal acceptance. The conditions of the grant include:

- The grant covers a specified expenses, for a specified period. Grants are paid in arrears and any expenditure incurred outside the contracted scope or period will not be reimbursed.
- Host Institutions may elect to invoice the Trust either monthly or quarterly in arrears.
- Any person engaged to work on the grant must be made aware that if for any reason the project is terminated their engagement concludes, that any leave due must be taken during the period of the grant and that payment will not be made for leave taken after the period of engagement is ended.
- If the grant covers salary, this may not be used to finance study towards further qualifications without the agreement of the Trust.
- All appropriate regulatory approvals must be in place before the grant can be activated.
- Annual progress reports are required on the anniversary of the start date. A final report will be required within 12 months of the grant's end date. Reports should be submitted to the Cancer Research Trust through the portal. The reports should be endorsed by the supervisor at the host institution.
- The Fellow may be involved in several research projects that develop during the course of the fellowship. If the contractual details of the fellowship change a variation request will need to be submitted to the Trust through the grants portal.
- All presentations and publications resulting from Cancer Research Trust funding must acknowledge the Trust's support.

Contact us

The Trust welcomes all researchers planning to apply to get in touch with any questions and to seek guidance where needed. Contact General Manager Michelle Sullivan directly for a confidential chat.

- Email: michelle.sullivan@crtnz.org.nz
- Phone: 027 434 0926