



Australia and New Zealand Batten Disease Research Grant Program 2020

GUIDELINES

1. Background

BDSRA Australia is the Australian Chapter of the Batten Disease Support and Research Association Inc. (BDSRA). Founded in 1995, BDSRA Australia is dedicated to improving the well-being of patients and families affected by Batten disease in Australia through family support, advancing awareness and education and through funding of vital research.

The objective of BDSRA Australia's Batten Disease Research Grant Program is to advance local research across Australia and New Zealand that has the potential to:

- (1) further our understanding of the disease mechanisms for all or any of the Neuronal Ceroid Lipofuscinoses (NCLs);
- (2) advance therapeutic strategies; or
- (3) improve current diagnosis, treatment, education and/or management practices or family support practices (including those that improve quality of life, palliative care or other).

2. Funding

For the 2020 grant round, BDSRA Australia intends to award up to **AU\$100,000** (in total) across one or more projects. Exceptional applications may be funded beyond this. Grants will be awarded for a one-year period with potential, but no guarantee, of renewal based on progress made during the first year.

3. Grant Process

BDSRA Australia will open the annual grant round, seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) in March/April each year (due to COVID-19, opening of the grant round has been delayed to May for 2020). EOIs will be reviewed by the BDSRA Australia Grants Committee in consultation with our Medical & Scientific Advisory Board and will be short-listed on the basis of relative merit; alignment with objectives of the grant program; and available research funding. Chief Investigators of short-listed projects will be invited to submit a full Research Proposal using the standard application form (provided at time of invitation), which will be subject to full review by our Medical & Scientific Advisory Board.

BDSRA Australia will consider projects that pull together multiple funding sources, tertiary co-contributions (especially for PhD scholarships), cross-lab collaborations, and projects that have promise of future NHMRC or other government, or industry funding.

4. Funding Decisions

The BDSRA Australia Management Committee will make the final funding decision on each project, based on recommendation of the Medical & Scientific Advisory Board. BDSRA Australia reserves the right to award no grants in any funding round.

5. Assessment Criteria

Research proposals will be assessed by the following criteria:

| Criteria | Description | Weight |
|------------------------------------|--|--------|
| Research Quality | Are the hypotheses and objectives clearly defined? Is the project well designed and feasible? | 40% |
| Significance and/or Innovation | Will the research increase our understanding of Batten disease, develop potential therapeutic strategies, and/or improve our current diagnosis, treatment, education and/or management practices or family support practices? How readily can it be translated into clinical or practical application? | 40% |
| Research Team Quality and Capacity | Do the researchers have the required skills and experience and capacity to carry out the project? | 20% |

6. Eligibility

Eligible applicants must hold relevant professional qualifications in the proposed field of research and hold a relevant current position at any level (clinician or other health practitioner assistant/associate/full professor, post-doctoral research scientist, allied therapist, educator, etc.). Applicants will be considered from both Australia and New Zealand.

7. Submission Requirements

Expressions of Interest (EOI) should be submitted according to the application requirements set out in the *Expression of Interest – Information for Applicants* document.

For short-listed EOIs, Chief Investigators will be invited to submit a **full Research Proposal** using the standard application form (to be provided at time of invitation).

All Expressions of Interest and full Research Proposals are to be submitted in PDF format by **email only** to: research@bdsraaustralia.org

8. Acknowledgement of Receipt

BDSRA Australia will acknowledge receipt of all EOI and full Research Proposal submissions by email within two working days of receiving it. If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your submission, please follow up with a "Request for Confirmation of Receipt of Submission". The acknowledgement of receipt will include an application number which should be used on all future correspondence. BDSRA Australia manages all correspondence by this application number. Acknowledgements will be sent to the Chief Investigator nominated on the EOI submission.

9. Use of Funds

Grant money may be used for:

- Personnel
- Equipment and/or consumables that are essential to the proposed research
- Animal costs that are a direct requirement of the research project
- Travel costs directly related to achieving the objectives of the grant
- Grant funds may not cover institutional overheads or indirect costs

10. Confidentiality

Subject to clause 11, information contained in EOIs and applications is regarded as strictly confidential unless otherwise indicated and will be received and treated as confidential by BDSRA Australia.

11. Reports

A mid-year progress report is to be submitted to BDSRA Australia (max. 1000 words).

On completion of the project the following documents must be submitted to BDSRA Australia:

- A final report (max. 1000 words), plus a copy of any publications, published conference abstracts, conference posters and presentations; and
- A short description (max. 250 words) or poster written in language able to be understood by a lay person, setting out the objectives and results of the project, and accompanied by figures or images suitable for inclusion in BDSRA Australia's newsletter and on the website; and
- A basic financial acquittal report

BDSRA Australia reserves the right to publish the above reports and documents.

12. Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of the support of the **Batten Disease Support and Research Association Australia** in relation to the funded research is required wherever possible, such as in publications, posters or presentations arising from the funded research.

13. 2020 Funding Timeline

Grant round opens **11 May 2020**

Deadline for submission of Expressions of Interest (EOI): **5pm (AEST) Monday 22 June 2020**

Successful EOIs will be notified by **late July 2020**

Deadline for full Research Proposals: **5pm (AEST) Wednesday 30 September 2020**

Funding announcements will be made in **early December 2020**

14. Additional Conditions of Award

Research grants shall be awarded under the conditions specified above, together with the following additional conditions:

1. Each grant shall be named 'Australia and New Zealand Batten Disease Research Grant'.
2. Grant recipients must be citizens or permanent residents of Australia or New Zealand. Applicants are to provide, where appropriate, evidence of residential status.
3. The decision to award any grants shall be wholly at the discretion of the Australian Chapter of the Batten Disease Support & Research Association Inc., based on the recommendations of its Medical & Scientific Advisory Board.
4. Funding will commence as per the grant agreement within one month from funding announcements. Projects are to commence within three months following initial payment of funding.
5. For projects pulling together multiple funding sources or tertiary co-contributions, documentation confirming receipt of other funding/contributions must be provided.
6. Members of the BDSRA Australia Medical & Scientific Advisory Board are not excluded from applying but must recuse themselves from consideration of any EOI and/or application in that grant round.

15. Further Information

Queries should be directed to research@bdsraaustralia.org