NUHS Clinician Scientist Programme V3.0 (NCSP)

Frequently Asked Questions

Pre-Grant Call

1. **Can Senior Consultants apply for the NCSP3.0?**
   NCSP3.0 aims to support beginners or explorers of research and to serve as a bridge to AF or the NMRC Transition Award (TA). The key elements are enthusiasm, commitment and good mentorship. Senior consultants may apply if they are in an early research career stage. NCSP3.0 reviewers will assess based on the applicant's research career trajectory and likelihood for success.

2. **I am currently a postdoctoral fellow/research fellow with clinical registration overseas. Can I apply for NCSP3.0.**
   Applicants must be locally registered clinician/dentist/ healthcare professional to be eligible for NCSP3.0 since the priority for grant recipients is protected time away from clinical work.

3. **Am I still eligible for NCSP3.0 if I have clinched the NMRC Research Training Fellowship (RTF) and/or the New Investigator Grant (NIG)?**
   If you have been awarded the NMRC RTF/NIG, the NCSP3.0 could still be useful to provide you with grant funding to substantiate or extend your research project. You will still have to explain very clearly how this is not duplicative funding. For NIG awardees, the NSCP3.0 will offer backfill time for research since it is not offered with the NIG. If you do not have an NMRC RTF/NIG or you are currently waiting for RTF/NIG results, NCSP3.0 is obviously entirely suitable as your springboard.

4. **Am I still eligible for NCSP3.0 if I am already awarded the NMRC Transition Award (TA)?**
   The purpose of the NCSP3.0 is to nurture clinicians as they build their research portfolio to eventually compete and clinch a national level competitive award, especially talent awards. If you have been awarded the NMRC TA or any NMRC talent award, you will not be eligible for NCSP3.0.

5. **Who is qualified to be a mentor? Is PhD or national level grant a pre-requisite?**
   NCSP3.0 does not mandate a mentor to have a PhD or national grant, but these would be signs of likely success. The panel will assess the applicant and mentor pair, with the objective that the mentor should lift your research to an international (or at least national level). This is the same way that a mentor is judged for NMRC talent grants and CS awards.

6. **How long is the NCSP3.0 award, and is there any bond with the award?**
   The NCSP3.0 award is intended for 3 years. There is no bond associated with the award.

7. **I have been awarded NCSP previously, may I reapply for NCSP3.0?**
   Previous NCSP award recipients can apply for renewal for a period of up to three years.

Frequently Asked Questions

Grant Call Application

8. **What is the proposed utilisation of budget?**

    The total funding is up to **$350K,** comprises of 3 components, including:
    - **Grant Funding:** Manpower, Equipment & Consumables, Training
    - **Salary Backfill:** Up to 0.8FTE
    - **Award to Mentor:** Up to $40K

    PI has the flexibility of allocating the $350K among the 3 components with the above cap. The start of the grant may be delayed by up to 6 months from the recommended start date, but the grant duration will remain unchanged. The review panel reserves the right to adjust funding quantum or award partial funding component to selected awardees. Please refer to NUHS Non-fundable items for more information (Appendix 1).

9. **When does the Financial Year (FY) starts?**
    Every financial year starts from 1 April to 31 March of the following year.

10. **Can I use NCSP funding for overseas conference?**
    PI who allocated overseas travel expenses for conferences must be a speaker or presenting a poster at the conference on a topic relevant to the research project under the award.

11. **What is the interview format for NCSP3.0?**
    Applicants will be invited for an interview with the review panel in an open oral presentation. Mentor and HOD are strongly encouraged to attend the session. Each candidate will be given up to 20 minutes for the presentation (8 minutes presentation + 10 minutes Q&A with the review panel + 2 minutes open floor Q&A).

12. **What is CS Academy Research Concierge services? Am I eligible for it?**
    The Research Concierge service supports CS-es who does not have administrative support from department. Services may include (a) Grant Management and Finance and (2) Clinical Research Coordination. Candidates who are not under any TRPs may apply for Research Concierge Services. The review panel will assess suitability of candidates who request for the service. Research Concierge Services is complementary for approved candidates.

13. **Where else can I seek assistance for clinical trial management, research support services and facilities for the conduct of clinical trials?**
    PIs may approach Investigational Medicine Unit (IMU) for clinical trial management, research support services, or facilities (if required), e.g., budgeting and costing preparation/negotiation for trials/observational study, or to factor study monitor, database cost, mode of randomisation, etc.

    Please contact IMU at imu@nuhs.edu.sg or call +65 6601 2471 if you have any queries or to engage their services for your research. Please note that charges apply.

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Post Grant Call

14. Can I open research grant account under NUS (for NUHS staff)?
Anyone not salaried by NUS should not park their grant at NUS. Only staff under the following category are eligible to park their grant under NUS (1) NUS Tenure track, (2) NUS Research track, (3) NUS Practice track, (4) NUS Educator track (not CFS, not adjunct appointment), or (5) PI who has at least > 0.25 FTE at NUS.

15. Can we park NCSP3.0 funding outside of NUHS, such as A*STAR, etc?
No, transferring and parking NCSP grants outside of NUHS is not permitted. The Principal Investigator may coordinate with other institutions to arrange payment for their services through invoices.

16. Are budget variations allowed for the NCSP3.0 Grant?
Budget variation within research grant is permissible with the approval from HOD and mentor. Please note that not more than 2 budget variations are allowed for the entire grant period. Any budget variation is subjected to review and approval by the CS Academy Head. Please approach Ms. April Sim at aprilspy@nus.edu.sg for the grant variation form if budget variation is required.

17. Can we request for extension for the NCSP3.0 Grant?
Each extension request is capped at 12 months and such approvals are limited to 2, subjected to review and approval by the CS Academy Head. No extension will be considered upon receipt of any NMRC competitive grant. Please submit extension requests at least 6 months before project end date and contact Ms. April Sim at aprilspy@nus.edu.sg for the grant extension form if project extension is required.

18. What are the deliverables for NCSP3.0?
Please refer to the following table for NCSP3.0 deliverables. NCSP3.0 awardees are required to:

1	**Complete formal research training**
	• Successful application/completion of MBA/ MPH/ MCI/ PhD/ MSc (Nursing)/ PhD (Nursing).
2	**Progress in research career over a 5-year period, as demonstrated by at least one of the following:**
	• Progress to National CS, secure **NMRC Talent Awards** (i.e. minimally a TA).
	• Secure **NMRC Competitive Grants** (i.e. NIG, CS-IRG).
	• Progress to **NUS Medicine AF or NUS tenure track** (in partnership with CSDU).
	• Progression to **Cluster CS**.
3	**Ensure successful publication**: At least 1 publication in the NUSMed Journal Whitelist (first author) within 1-year post grant end date.

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19. **What happens to my existing NCSP3.0 grant after I am successful with the NMRC TA?**
    Upon successful award of the NMRC Talent Award (i.e. TA and above), funding from NCSP will cease. This applies to all 3 components of the award – research grant, salary backfill and mentor award. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Appendix 1

NON-FUNDABLE DIRECT COSTS

1. **EOM Related Expenses**

Type of Expenses	Description
General policy	The general principle is that grants should support EOM costs and related benefits (as per employment contract) as long as it is in line with the consistently applied NUHS' (or NUS' if applicable) HR policies. This will extend to NUHS' (or NUS' if applicable) policies that govern staff recruitment and related costs (e.g. costs associated with the onboarding of staff, staff insurance, overtime claims, staff relocation, employment benefits, employment levy, employment pass, pre-examination medical check-up and housing allowance.) All Manpower related costs that fall under Other Operating Costs (OOE) should be accurately reflected in the Budget. Fractional charging for staff costs based on time commitment to the project must be practised.
Salaries of Lead PI/ Investigators / Collaborators/ general administrative support staff	Not allowable.
Research scholarship / stipend top-up for existing post-graduate scholarship holders	Not allowable.
Undergraduate stipend and tuition support	Not allowable.
Unconsumed leave	Provision for unconsumed leave is not allowable.

2. **Equipment Related Expenses**

Type of Expenses	Description
General policy	No purchase of equipment is allowed unless specifically provided for in the grant approved by the Grantor. The procurement of such equipment must be made according to the formal established and consistently applied policies of NUHS (or NUS if applicable). The invoices for all claims must be dated before the end of the Term.
Cost of capital works, general infrastructure, general purpose IT and communication equipment, office equipment, and furniture and fittings	Not allowable under direct costs, unless specifically provided for in the grant and approved by the Grantor. Examples of such costs are computers, office productivity software, PDAs, mobile phones, photocopier machines, workstations, printers, etc.
Software (≥ SGD3,000 per unit)	Not allowable unless specifically provided for in the proposal and approved by the Grantor.

3. OOE Related Expenses

Type of Expenses	Description
General policy	Not allowable for expenses that are not directly related to the Research. All procurement of such items must be made according to the formal established and consistently applied policies of NUHS (or NUS if applicable).
Visiting Professors/Experts	Not allowable unless specifically provided for in the grant and approved by the Grantor. The visiting professor must be identified and his/her contribution to the project must be clearly defined and described in the proposal.
Audit fees	Not allowable. This includes both internal and external audit fees.
Entertainment & Refreshment	Not allowable
Fines and Penalties	Not allowable
Legal Fees	Not allowable
Overhead Expenses	Not allowable unless specifically provided for in the grant and approved by the Grantor based on the nature of the research. This includes rental, utilities, facilities management, telephone charges, internet charges, etc.
Patent Application (all patent-related expenses)	Not allowable. This includes patent application filing, maintenance and other related costs.
Professional Membership Fees	Not allowable. This applies to Lead Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators as well as all research staff funded from the grant.
Software (< SGD3,000 per unit)	Not allowable, unless these are deemed essential to the project, specifically provided for in the grant and approved by the Grantor.
Professional fees (including fees to consultants)	Not allowable unless specifically provided for in the grant and approved by the Grantor.
Staff retreat	Not allowable.
Non-cash items such as depreciation cost, amortisation cost, loss on revaluation, etc.	Not allowable.

4. **Overseas Travel Related Expenses**

Type of Expenses	Description
General policy	Not allowable unless specifically provided for in the grant and approved by the Grantor. Conference participation should be directly relevant to the research area outlined in the project and necessary to accomplish project objectives. PIs should furnish proof of participation or attendance of conferences to Grantor. All travel must align to the existing and consistently applied NUHS (or NUS if applicable) institutions' travel policies regardless of the source of funds.