

The National Centre for Clinical Research  
on Emerging Drugs

**NCCRED Clinical Research Scholarship  
Program**

**Information and application process**

*August 2020*

**NCCRED**

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National Centre for Clinical  
Research on Emerging Drugs

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## **1. Executive Summary**

To build on the success of the 2019 Fellowship program, NCCRED is establishing a multidisciplinary scholarship program. The NCCRED Clinical Research Scholarship program intends to provide a Scholar with mentoring to pursue a research project through salary buy-back and research project funds. NCCRED are offering two concurrent scholarship rounds, the first round is open to clinicians working within the AOD sector, preferred candidates for this competitive scholarship round will be practising alcohol and other drugs (AOD) nurses and allied health clinicians, though applications are open to all. The second is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' Scholarship, which is only open to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples Applicants. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are encouraged to apply for both rounds. To apply, applicants will need to meet a selection criteria and submit National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs Clinical Research Scholarship Form which will include a project outline and budget at the time of application. Scholars will be selected through a competitive application process which will be overseen by the NCCRED Methamphetamine and Emerging Drugs Clinical Research Network Working Group (WG). In addition to the clinical research project funding, the scholarship program aims to engage clinicians in research through funding clinicians at 0.5FTE for 12-months (or equivalent) to undertake clinical research.

## **2. Introduction and Background of NCCRED**

The National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs (NCCRED) was established as a national entity to support clinical treatment and build clinical research capacity within the Australian AOD services sector with an emphasis on responses to users of methamphetamine and emerging drugs of concern.

The Centre is funded to a consortium: St Vincent's Health Australia (SVHA); The National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA, Flinders University); The National Drug Research Institute (NDRI, Curtin University); and The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC, The University of New South Wales).

NCCRED has a Board led by an independent chair, and nominees from the four consortium members: NDARC; NCETA; NDRI; SVHA; and external members who have experience of:

- Australian alcohol and other drugs non-government organisation clinical service delivery
- Australian alcohol and other drugs clinical research network
- Australian alcohol and other drug consumer organisation and/or person with relevant lived experience
- Australian public sector alcohol and other drug clinical service delivery
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander alcohol and other drug clinician and/or researcher

A representative of the Australian Government Department of Health is invited to attend meetings of the Board. The Board meets at least four times annually.

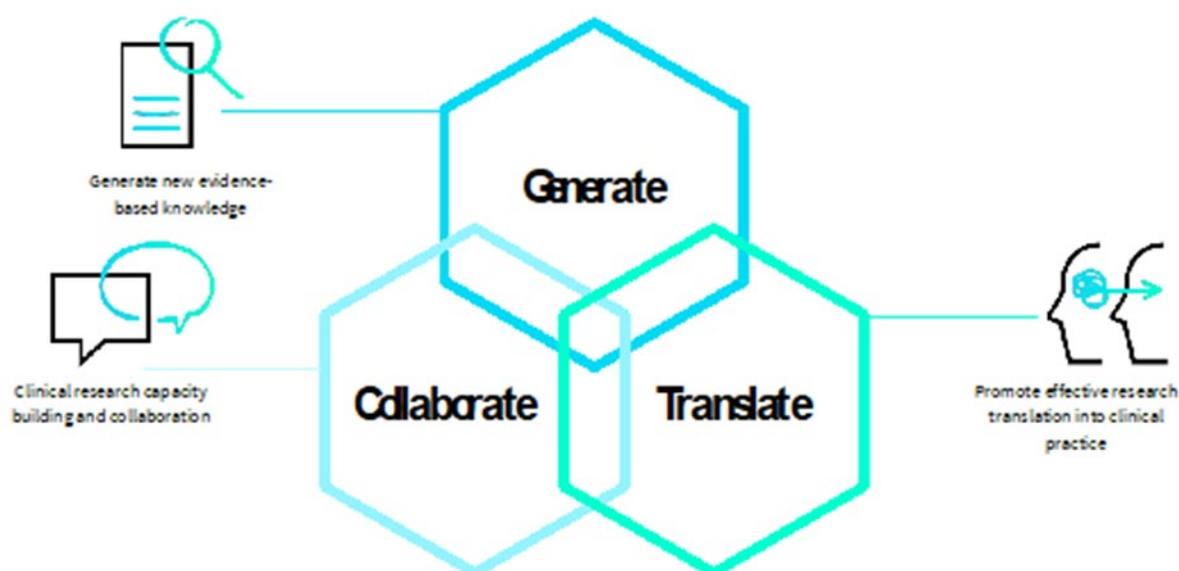
NCCRED is funded by the Australian Commonwealth Department of Health as part of the Government's National Ice Action Strategy.

NCCRED aims to collaborate to build the capacity and scope for new clinical research into emerging drugs, generate new evidence, and rapidly translate these findings into best clinical practice. NCCRED facilitates and enhances a national network of best clinical research and practice, responsive to the complex health challenges associated with changing patterns of substance use and harm.

To achieve this, NCCRED implements three strategic actions (**Figure 1**):

- **Collaborate**
  - Engage with key stakeholders to build adaptive clinical networks that allow for a rapid, flexible and collaborative response to emerging substances that have prevalent, persistent and harmful health and community impacts
- **Generate**
  - Through collaborative clinical research, seed funding, scholarships and mentorships, to develop effective interventions directed towards identified research priorities
- **Translate**
  - By means of strong clinical networks, implement and disseminate these evidence-based interventions / methodologies to develop and equip the health and medical research workforce to address prevalent, persistent and harmful health and community impacts of emerging drugs

Figure 1 – NCCRED Strategic actions



### 3. The NCCRED Clinical Research Scholarship Program

The NCCRED Clinical Research Scholarship program has been developed in partnership with NCCRED staff, the WG, the NCCRED Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Working Group and NCCRED's Board of Management with the aim to build capacity across the drug and alcohol sector.

The scholarship program has two main goals:

1. Enhance the research capacity and networks of clinicians in the AOD sector
2. Support translatable clinical research driven by clinicians

In order to achieve these goals, the scholarship has two distinct and complementary components: (1) Clinical Research Project (see 3.1); and (2) Salary buy-back (see 3.2). (Figure 2)

#### 3.1. Clinical Research Project

Applicants will apply with a clinical research proposal, detailing their scholarship project - which will receive non-renewable funding of \$5,000–\$100,000. The NCCRED Scholarship program is seeking proposals for projects that:

- Enable clinical research to be embedded within ongoing clinical practice across multiple settings
- Develop evidence-based treatments and treatment models in response to prevalent, persistent and harmful emerging substances
- Monitor and evaluate innovative new treatment interventions

Projects must include engagement with people with lived experience and applications will ideally create networks or build partnerships (e.g. academic, clinical, consumer) to maximize reach and opportunities.

Research priorities for this funding round were developed following the NCCRED research priority setting study ([nccred.org.au/generate/clinical-research-projects](http://nccred.org.au/generate/clinical-research-projects) ).

These are:

*For methamphetamine clinical research:*

1. Overcoming barriers to intervention uptake (e.g. at time of crisis in emergency departments or primary health care)
2. Pilot pharmacotherapy trials for adults seeking treatment
3. Effective communication strategies to consumers on available treatments and the evidence-based options.

*For emerging drugs of concern clinical research:*

1. Fixed-site community located drug checking / pill testing (connected to an early warning system)
2. Feasibility of social media and other creative opportunities to alert consumers and reduce harm
3. GHB withdrawal management (ranked equally for third highest scoring priority)
4. Early warning system/shared information system – pooling and sharing of information impact on reducing harm (ranked equally for third highest scoring priority)

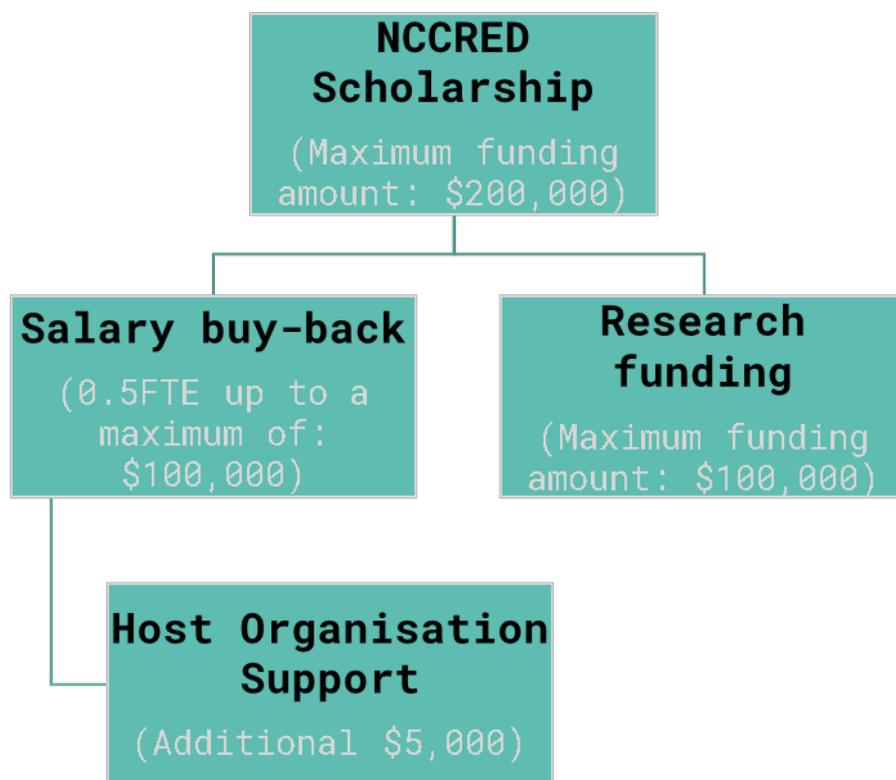
Projects should aim to answer clinical questions, build research capacity, and produce translational research results. The project should produce fundable research that has the capacity to attract further funding (as required).

### **3.2. Salary Buy-Back**

To facilitate the conduct of the applicants clinical research, NCCRED will contribute to the Research Scholar's salary to the equivalent of 0.5 full-time (FTE) to a maximum of \$100,000.00, replacing half of the candidate's salary for the 1-year scholarship term. That is, the Scholarship represents a 0.5 FTE commitment for 12

months. This will be awarded to the candidate via their employing organisation as a “buy-back” of their time. The candidate will be required to negotiate / make arrangements with their primary employment institution / organisation to release them for the 0.5 FTE that they will be undertaking the scholarship. Evidence of this organisation-level support will need to be demonstrated in the application, in the form of a letter of support from the applicant’s supervisor. The candidate and host organisation will negotiate how this is structured. In addition, the host organisation will receive \$5,000 of funding for the Research Scholar’s placement to compensate the organisation for administrative costs associated with the Scholarship.

Figure 2 - NCCRED Clinical ResearchScholarship program



### 3.3. Mentorships

The candidate will be partnered with a senior clinician-researcher at a participating clinical site (the “Mentor”). Mentors will be chosen in collaboration with the Scholar and NCCRED depending on the project topic and location. The candidate may choose to undertake research at their place of employment, however locations and projects must be agreed to by The NCCRED Director and The NCCRED Chair.

### **3.4. Outcomes**

The outcomes for the NCCRED Clinical Research Scholar on completion of the 1-year term may include:

- Writing a literature review on the chosen topic / project focus
- Conducting clinical research (as defined in the chosen and agreed-upon project)
- Drafted a first-author manuscript based on the project's results
- Presented at the NCCRED National Symposium
- Attendance at the APSAD or equivalent conference
- Participated in the active learning network / journal club activities at the clinical site

It is anticipated that the NCCRED Scholarship program will provide Scholars with the practical skills required for undertaking clinical research (from concept to publication). This will translate into the Scholar becoming a more confident consumer of research and ready to operationally facilitate their own research or participate as a site for other clinical research studies.

## **4. Scholars**

Scholars can be clinicians of any multidisciplinary background, and scholarships will be open to clinicians in the AOD sector. This funding round, preferred candidates will be nursing or allied health professionals, though any clinician within the sector is welcome to apply. Candidates should meet the below selection criteria:

### **4.1. Selection Criteria**

Candidates should meet the below selection criteria:

1. Current AHPRA registration or qualified as a multi-disciplinary clinician.
2. Clinician providing services in the area of Alcohol and Other Drugs (can include inpatient, outpatient or non-governmental services, etc.)
3. Not currently completing a fellowship or scholarship program with another organisation.
4. Must be employed in a clinical setting

## **5. Funding**

Funding for the NCCRED Clinical Research Scholarships program is sourced from the Commonwealth Department of Health, as an initiative of the National Ice Action Strategy (2015). Funds will be transferred from UNSW to the host institution and must be used for achieving the objectives outlined by the applicant in their application.

Applicants chosen for a Scholarship will not enter into any agreement between UNSW (as contracting entity for the Centre) until a formal written Agreement (in accordance with the Terms and Conditions sent at time of notification of award) is executed by the host organisation on behalf of the successful applicant and UNSW.

The maximum funding amount available for one application is \$200,000.00. This is inclusive of the Scholar's salary buy-back (to a maximum of \$100,00) and project budget (to a maximum of \$100,000). In addition, the host organisation will receive \$5,000 of funding for the Research Scholar's placement to compensate the organisation for administrative costs associated with the Scholarship. Applicants can not transfer from one funding stream to another in order to fund the other. Neither the project budget or salary buy-back can exceed \$100,000.00.

### **5.1.1. Dissemination Plan**

Applications should include a results dissemination plan that should be included in their overall budget. It is anticipated that all successful applicants will present their research findings (interim or final) at the NCCRED annual research symposium, which will be held as a one-day symposium following the annual APSAD conference. The budget should include funding for attendance at the NCCRED symposium (e.g. travel and accommodation), as well as peer-review publication costs. The total funding requested for data dissemination should not exceed \$5,000.

## **6. Application**

Applicants must send in an application pack which includes the details listed below as well as a completed Clinical Research Scholarship Form beginning on page 15 of this document. Research proposals outlined in the NCCRED Clinical Research Scholarship Form should be substantive, and where possible, cross-disciplinary initiatives. They should enable research collaborations with early career researchers

or research-inexperienced sites. Applications must provide all requested information, and adhere to the guidelines and word / page limits indicated.

## 6.1. Application Details

The application will consist of:

- The applicant's curriculum vitae (CV)
- Brief Bio which should include:
  - The candidate's clinical role and experience The candidate should outline any research research experience, clinical or other. Please note: *It is not mandatory for applicants to have an extensive research background.*
  - What the candidate seeks to gain from the NCCRED Clinical Research Scholarship (max 400 words)
  - Scholarship preference for location of scholarship (i.e. organisation, city and State)
  - Preference for buy-back period (i.e. 6 months FTE, PTE equivalent over xx months, preferred days of the week, etc.) *please note: the scholarship program and associated research will need to be completed by 30 June 2022. Any part-time arrangements must consider this and adhere to this timeline.*
- 1 letter of support
  - This should be from the applicant's direct reporting supervisor/manager, and should indicate that the unit, service and organisation are supportive of the applicant receiving an NCCRED Clinical Research Scholarship, and an acknowledgement that this will require the applicant be released from clinical duties for the duration of the scholarship (negotiable for FTE or PTE 6-12 months)
- 2 Referees and their contact details
- The NCCRED Clinical Research Scholarship Form

To ensure a clear and efficient review process, applicants are encouraged to use Arial / Calibri font, 11-point or above. Please note: the application form has been developed in Microsoft Office 2013 (for Windows), and fidelity of the formatting cannot be guaranteed in other versions – please contact the NCCRED team if you have any concerns. Only information in the following application will be used in selecting projects for funding.

## **6.2. Evaluation of Applications**

Applications for the 2020 scholarship round will be reviewed by the NCCRED Methamphetamine and Emerging Drugs Clinical Research Network Working Group. The review process is independent of NCCRED staff and the NCCRED Board. Following the Working Group's recommendations, funding will be awarded by the NCCRED Board.

Specific assessment criteria for applications are (1 through 4):

1. The proposed project
  - the project is novel and innovative – seeks to answer a contemporary and clinically relevant question
  - has the potential to attract research funding from other sources at the conclusion of the scholarship funding period (as required)
2. Clear research proposal with logical aims
  - research question is clearly stated
  - if there is an intervention, this is explicitly stated
  - participant eligibility (and controls if applicable) defined
  - methods to measure outcomes or test hypothesis are appropriate
  - has merit, value and impact
3. Project budget
  - a study budget is included
  - realistic funding has been requested (including for dissemination of results)
  - budget and deadlines are achievable
  - measurable milestones
4. Research team
  - builds research capacity, for example: establishes a project in a research-inexperienced site; and/or involves a junior/inexperienced researcher, early or mid-career researcher and/or multi-disciplinary researcher in substantial roles; enables clinician researchers; develops meaningful partnerships
  - develops research foundations in an organisation or site
  - involves consumer input (e.g. in study design, partnership, etc.)
  - creates networks and builds partnerships (e.g. academic, clinical, consumer)

## **6.3. Successful Applicant/s**

The successful applicant/s will undergo a 1-week FTE induction program. The induction content will be delivered by NCCRED staff, and academic and clinical

staff at the partnering consortium organisations. The induction curriculum will include:

- ICH-GCP
- The Australian Research setting
- HREC applications and oversight
- Public institution governance application and oversight
- Research Methodology
- Basic statistics to read and understand research
- EndNote referencing software
- Research databases and library tools

## 7. Application Timeline Scholarship

Key dates	Process / step
2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2020	Applications open
16 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	NCCRED Scholarship webinar
6 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Applications close
13 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	WG review of applications
23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2020	NCCRED Board of Directors meeting – to review Working Group sub-committee recommendations for appointment
27 <sup>th</sup> December 2020	Acceptance notification
4 <sup>th</sup> December	Deadline for acceptance
February 2021	Scholarship begins

## 8. Contact

Submit completed applications by email to [jemma.hallen@unsw.edu.au](mailto:jemma.hallen@unsw.edu.au) by no later than 2359hrs (11:59 pm) on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October.

To discuss the application, or for further information, please contact:

Krista Siefried

Clinical Research Lead

National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs

[Krista.siefried@svha.org.au](mailto:Krista.siefried@svha.org.au)

# National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs Clinical Research Scholarship Form

## 1. Selection Criteria

Scholarship Selection Criteria	
<p>Current AHPRA registration or qualified as a multi-disciplinary clinician</p>	<p>Yes: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes please outline below</p> <hr/> <p>No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Clinician providing services in the area of Alcohol and Other Drugs</p> <p><i>can include inpatient, outpatient or non-governmental services, etc.</i></p>	<p>Yes: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes please outline below</p> <hr/> <p>No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Currently completing a fellowship or scholarship program with another organisation</p>	<p>Yes: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes please outline below</p> <hr/> <p>No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Currently employed in a clinical setting</p>	<p>Yes: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes please outline below</p> <hr/> <p>No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>

## 2. Overview

Project Overview	
Project Title	
Project Summary / Brief Description (max 350 words)  <i>Summarise research            questions and            proposed methods.</i>  <i>Outline the potential            benefits, including            how this project will            be translated into            practice</i>	
Project Lead – Chief Investigator (if not the Scholar)	
Name and Title	
Employing Organisation (i.e. to be named sponsor on funding agreement)	
Employing Organisation ABN	
Other affiliations	
Phone	
Email	
Postal address	

### 3. Project and Proposal

Project Description	
<p>Background (max 600 words)</p> <p><i>Describe the background and the research question, the problem addressed by the project and this proposal, and why this research is a priority. Describe any preliminary findings.</i></p>	

<p>Project HREC plans</p> <p><i>List all HRECs to which the project will be submitted</i></p>	
<p>Target recruitment, recruitment plan</p>	
<p>Research project aims and objectives <i>(max 300 words)</i></p>	
<p>Study Design and Research Plan <i>(max 1,000 words)</i></p>	

*Provide a detailed description of the research design, including the setting, the participant selection criteria / eligibility, comparison / reference / control group(s), the primary and secondary outcome(s), outcome measures, study intervention and follow-up periods as appropriate, data sources or qualitative tools/instruments*

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<p>Study sites</p> <p><i>(Full name, location including State, of all sites where the project will be conducted)</i></p>	
<p>Project Duration</p>	
<p>Statistical Analysis <i>(max 350 words)</i></p> <p><i>Include power / sample size calculation(s), statistical analysis plan, including data linkage plan if required</i></p>	

<p>Outcomes and Significance (max 350 words)</p> <p><i>Outline what new evidence the research is anticipated to generate, describe how this is likely to impact patient care or health policy. Indicate how the research will be translational.</i></p>	
<p>Originality / value-add (max 350 words)</p>	

**4. If your project specifically relates to the health of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, or which includes distinct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, biological samples or data please fill in the sections below**

NHMRC Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria	
<p>Community engagement</p> <p><i>Describe how the proposed research processes will include Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander community engagement</i></p>	
<p>Benefit</p> <p><i>the potential health benefit of the project</i></p>	
<p>Sustainability and transferability –</p> <p><i>demonstrate how the results of the project have the potential to lead to achievable and effective contributions to health gain for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</i></p>	
<p>Building capability</p> <p><i>demonstrate how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and researchers will develop relevant capabilities through partnerships and participation in the project.</i></p>	



## 6. Research Capacity Building

Research personnel	
<p>How does this proposal build research capacity?</p> <p><i>(For example, indicate how early or mid-career researchers will be engaged in the research project; how multi-disciplinary researchers will be engaged in the research project; how the proposed research project will establish clinical research capacity in new or less-experienced research sites; how this proposal will develop or build on meaningful partnerships [e.g. with NGOs, consumers, academics, clinicians, etc.]</i></p>	

**7. Research Personnel (add additional boxes as necessary)**

Name	
Email	
Employer	
Affiliation(s)	
Role on project	
Qualifications and Experience	

Name	
Email	
Employer	
Affiliation(s)	
Role on project	
Qualifications and Experience	

Name	
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Affiliation(s)	
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Role on project	
Qualifications and Experience	

Name	
Email	
Employer	
Affiliation(s)	
Role on project	
Qualifications and Experience	

## 8. Signatures and Verification

<b>Applicant:</b> I confirm that the information included in this application is true and correct, and that if the application is successful the funding will be used for the stated purposes.	
Full name of Principal / Chief Investigator	
Signature	
Date	
<b>Department Head:</b> I confirm that the department is aware of the proposal and the applicants intended project, and supports the applicant in their application for funding.	
Full name of Departmental Head	
Signature	
Date	
Is the Principal / Chief Investigator a student? <i>If yes please complete below</i>	
<b>Supervisor:</b> <i>Only required if the applicant is a higher degree by research (HDR) candidate/student:</i> I confirm that I am in support of this application and that the applicant has capacity to undertake the proposed research in addition to their HDR research requirements.	
Full name of HDR Supervisor(s)	
Signature	
Date	