



AIS

**AIS Research Grant Program Guidelines
2021-2022**



Background

Led by the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), the National High Performance Sport Research Agenda (NHPSRA) has been developed in partnership with the National Institutes Network (NIN). The NHPSRA will form a significant element of the National Sport Research Agenda outlined in the Australian Sports Commission's 2021-25 Corporate Plan. The aim of the NHPSRA (see Appendix 1) is to prioritise resources and promote applied research in areas of critical importance to Australia's high performance sport system. The identified research priorities are: *successful athlete, coaching science, sports performance optimisation, and practice enhancement*.

Purpose

The AIS Research Grant Program supports the undertaking of quality research to deliver outcomes aligned to the NHPSRA, in particular activities addressing the research practical challenges ("sub-themes", see below). The intended outcomes of the AIS Research Grant Program are research activities that will lead to:

The successful athlete.

1. Developing frameworks for identification and confirmation of sport-specific talent.
2. Evidence-informed holistic athlete development plans.
3. Optimising athlete wellbeing, physical and mental health to support sustained sporting performance.
4. Understanding and supporting the needs of a diverse athlete population.
5. Developing a return to play and sport performance framework, ensuring safe and efficient post-injury and post-illness recovery.

Coaching Science.

1. Effective and impactful coach development.
2. Developing optimal learning environments in the HP landscape.
3. Enhancing people development skills.

Sports performance optimisation.

1. Increasing the understanding of performance determinants to better support and facilitate an interdisciplinary approach to athletes' preparation.
2. Improving individualisation of training planning and implementation, including an interdisciplinary approach to periodisation.
3. Enhancing targeted athlete monitoring.
4. Enhancing execution during competition, with an interdisciplinary approach to facilitating optimal performance states in a complex environment.

Practice enhancement.

1. Increasing the impact and quality of scientific research (i.e., metascience).
2. Solving strategic performance issues via applied research.
3. Promoting the systematic uptake of research findings and other evidence-based practices into routine practice (i.e., implementation science).

The objectives of the AIS Research Grant Program are to:

- Establish programs of research aligned to the NHPSRA that have a positive impact on Australia's sporting success.
- Develop sustainable relationships and/or build new networks with research programs/teams to help strengthen research quality and impact on sport.

The total budget for the AIS Research Grants program in 2021-22 is \$500,000 [exclusive of GST].

Important Dates

2021-22 AIS Research Grants Program	Timeframe
Applications Open	21 March 2022
Applications Close	22 April 2022
Notification of Successful Applicants	By mid-May 2022

Grant Amount Awarded

Applicants may seek funding to develop a partnership with the AIS to address a practical challenge from the NHPSRA. It is anticipated that the funding could be used to engage PhDs and / or Post-Doctoral students who will work in collaboration with their supervisory teams, the AIS and its stakeholders. Funding will be provided as follows:

- at a minimum \$30,000 (exclusive of GST), and
- at a maximum \$125,000 (exclusive of GST).

The final grant amount will be determined by the AIS as part of the assessment process. The amounts may vary between applicants and may not be the full amount applied for, and the project duration may differ from that requested in the application. The total duration of the proposed research activities might extend to a maximum of three years.

Each organisation listed in the application is required to make a commitment of significant resources to the proposed research application. The level of contribution from organisations must take into consideration the total cost of the proposed grant application and the relative contribution of each participant at the organisation. We do not specify the type or level of contribution.

Application Process

The application process is a two-stage process:

Stage 1 – Applicants to submit an application form by the deadline. No applications will be accepted after the published deadline.

Applicants to this grant opportunity should propose research activities that addresses one or two of the practical challenges within the same priority theme. An application may only be submitted to one of the above four priorities. The four priority themes have equal priority, while practical challenges are listed in order of priority. Applicants must specify the Priority and Practical Challenge(s) to which they are applying in their application.

Stage 2 – Successful applicants will engage with the AIS to enter a 'Collaborative Research Agreement' as the preferred partner to address a priority of the NHPSRA. The Agreement will set out the terms of the partnership, with provision of specific research projects to be undertaken within 'Project Schedules' of the Agreement. Funding will be granted upon signing the Agreement, but specific project funding will be allocated by mutual agreement in accordance with the relevant provisions in the Agreement.

Eligibility Criteria

The AIS will only accept applications from Eligible Organisations.

Eligible Organisations can submit more than one application if there are groups within the organisation who have expertise in more than one of the areas of the NHPSRA.

The Eligible Organisation that submits the application will be the 'Administering Organisation' and all other Eligible Organisation(s) listed on the application will be an 'Other Eligible Organisation(s)'.

Eligible Organisations

To be eligible, the Administering Organisation and Other Eligible Organisation must:

- Not be an organisation named by the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (www.nationalredress.gov.au) on its list of "Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme";
- Have an Australian Business Number; and
- Able to demonstrate capabilities to undertake quality research to deliver outcomes aligned to the NHPSRA, in particular activities addressing the research practical challenges.

The AIS encourages collaboration with 'value add' partners including National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) or National Sporting Organisations for people with a disability (NSOD) as recognised by Sport Australia, State Institutes and Academies of Sport, other research organisations and other industry partners. The AIS is focused on optimal outcomes, so any partners that can deliver on the objectives are encouraged to apply.

Joint applications are also eligible and encouraged.

All items for which grant money is sought must be justified in the application to the AIS's satisfaction.

The AIS may, in its absolute discretion, determine whether any project costs involve items not permitted. If such a determination is made, then the AIS may, in its absolute discretion, decide to not support part or all of the application for funding.

How to Apply

Applications must be submitted online during the funding application period. No late application submissions will be eligible after the application closing time.

To apply, you must:

- Complete and submit your application form online on Sport Australia website ([link](#))
- provide all the information we need to assess your application
- consider all assessment considerations, ensuring you have addressed relevant criteria

Please ensure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code 1995 (Cth). We will investigate false or misleading information and may not consider your application for the grant.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should notify us immediately at funding funding@sportaus.gov.au. The AIS does not have to accept any additional information nor requests from you to correct your application after the closing time.

Assessment of Applications

The AIS will appoint a Selection Committee to:

- assess applications; and
- make a recommendation to the Grant Approver of successful applicants.

The AIS is aiming to have at least one successful grant per research priority in the NHPSRA.

The Selection Committee comprises of:

- AIS Chief Science Officer
- AIS Research & Development Manager
- A current or former elite athlete
- A representative from the Australian Sport Sector
- A representative from Sport Australia.

Assessment Considerations

Below is a list of considerations that will guide decision-making by the Selection Committee.

The application will be considered on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the AIS Research Grant Program purpose;
- how it compares to other applications; and
- whether it provides value for money.

Criterion 1 – 40%

- Expertise and capability to address an element of the NHPSRA, also aligned to the various elements of the National High Performance Sport Strategy.
- Commitment to conducting research activity according to the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 and, when applicable, in line with the nine criteria proposed by Diong and co-authors (2021), including collaboration with expert in research methodology (e.g. statistician, epidemiologist, data scientist).

Criterion 2 – 30%

- Well justified and detailed budget
- Proposed leverage of AIS grants funds.

Criterion 3 – 30%

- Demonstrated implementation of previous research into practice
- Research output with measurable impact on HP sport

Approval of Grants

The Selection Committee will make recommendations to the Grant Approver, Director of AIS Operations, who makes the final decision including:

- The grant amount to be awarded;
- The duration of the grant, and

- The terms and conditions of the grant.

There is no appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant.

Notification and Agreement

All applicants will be notified by email of the outcome of their application including:

- Any funding amount to be awarded;
- The duration of the grant, if awarded; and
- The specific terms and conditions of any funding.

Successful applicants will enter into an agreement with the AIS in relation to the grant funding as described in the Application Process – Stage 2 section above.

Grant Recipient Responsibilities

Grant recipients are required to:

- Accept the grant agreement and abide by the Terms and Conditions of the agreement;
- Undertake the grant activity as set out in the grant agreement;
- Undertake the research activity according to the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#) and, when applicable, in line with the nine criteria proposed by [Diong and co-authors \(2021\)](#).
- Work with the AIS Research and Development Office for monitoring progress of the grant activity;
- Provide project reports and acquittals as specified in the grant agreement; and
- Promptly notify and seek approval from the AIS if the grant activity has been delayed/postponed due to circumstances, and/or there has been a change of grant activity.

Conflict of Interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or Program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if AIS staff, any member of the Assessment Panel, a committee or advisor, and/or you or any of your personnel, for example:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an AIS officer, or a member of an external panel;
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently; or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant Program.

Applicants will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest. If you later identify an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest, the AIS must be informed in writing immediately. Conflicts of interest for AIS staff will be handled in accordance with AIS's Conflict of Interest Policy. Selection Committee members will also be required to declare any conflicts of interest.

Disclosure of Information

The AIS will treat any personal information in accordance with the Privacy ACT 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles.

Personal information can only be disclosed to someone for the primary purpose for which it is collected unless an exemption applies.

Personal information submitted via the online application is collected by the AIS for the purpose of considering applications for and administering the Program.

The personal details of successful applicants (including name, home state, sport, the value of the grant awarded and a brief description of the purpose for the program) may be released by the AIS to the public and the media for the use of promotional and educational purposes.

To view the AIS Privacy Policy visit: https://www.sportaus.gov.au/legal_information/privacy_policy

Enquiries and Feedback

If you have any questions regarding the AIS Research Grants Program, please contact the AIS Research Office via aisresearch@ausport.gov.au

If you wish to lodge a complaint regarding the program, this can be done using the AIS complaints form.
- https://www.sportaus.gov.au/contacts/australian_sports_commission_complaint_form



[AIS.gov.au](https://ais.gov.au)



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