

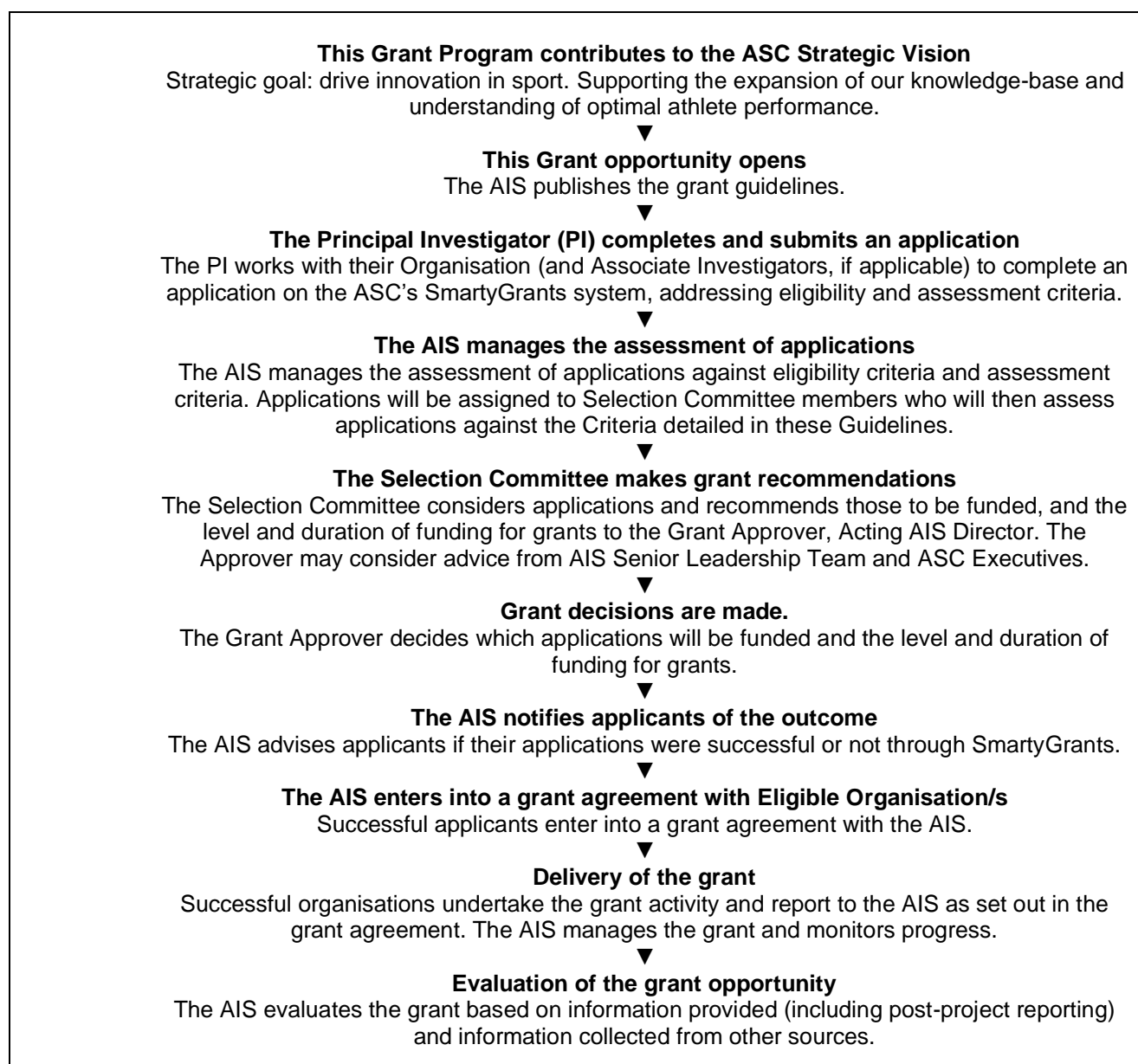


AIS Research and Development Grant
Program Guidelines 2023



2023 AIS R&D Grants Program	Timeframe
Guidelines Release	10 th October 2022
Applications Open	17 th October 2022
Applications Close	9 th December 2022, 5pm AEDT
Notification of Successful Applicants	January 2023

1. Application process



2. About the program

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 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.*

In 2022 the AIS awarded grants to six leading research teams around the country. Further information can be found here: [AIS backs research projects to optimise sporting performance | Australian Institute of Sport](#)

Purpose

The purpose of the 2023 AIS Research and Development (R&D) Grant Program is to support the undertaking of quality R&D projects delivering outcomes aligned to the NHPSRA, in particular activities addressing the practical challenges (i.e. sub-themes, see below) that have a positive impact on Australia's sporting success. The AIS aims to grant funding to support at least two R&D projects per each of the four research priorities in the NHPSRA.

The intended outcomes of the Grant Program are R&D 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).

3. Grant amount and period

The total budget for the 2023 AIS R&D Grants program is \$500,000 (exclusive of GST).

Funding will be provided as follows:

- at a maximum \$50,000(exclusive of GST).

The AIS will determine the final grant amount as part of the assessment process. The amounts may vary between applicants and may not be the total amount applied for.

It is intended that the projects will commence in early 2023 and be completed by 31 December 2023, however the time frame may vary subject to written agreement with the AIS.

4. Eligibility Criteria

The AIS encourages collaboration between 'value add' partners including National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) and / or National Sporting Organisations for people with a disability (NSODs) as recognised by the Australian Sports Commission, as well as Games Partners, State Institutes and Academies of Sport, other research organisations and other industry partners. The AIS is focused on optimal outcomes, so any Eligible Organisation that can deliver on the Grants objectives are encouraged to apply.

- The Eligible Organisation submitting the application will be the 'Administering Organisation' (which is the Organisation linked with the Principal Investigator).
- Eligible Organisation linked with Associate Investigator(s) listed on the application will be an 'Other Eligible Organisation'.
- Eligible Organisation supporting the application without the direct involvement of an Investigator from their organization (e.g. endorsing the project, or providing cash and/or in kind support only) will be 'Partner Organisations'.

An investigator may only be named Principal Investigator on one application. There is no limit to the number of applications on which an investigator may be named as an Associate Investigator.

AIS staff and/or AIS affiliates are ineligible to apply or provide advice to research groups.

The AIS will only accept applications from Eligible Organisations as identified below.

Eligible Organisations

To be eligible, Organisations, 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

Additionally, the Administering Organisation and Other Eligible Organisation(s) must:

- Have demonstrated capabilities to undertake quality R&D projects to deliver outcomes aligned to the NHPSRA.

5. What the grant money can be used for

Eligible grant activities

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

Grant funds are for the explicit use of supporting the research proposal that has been submitted. The AIS encourages the use of part of the funds to engage a statistician and/or expert(s) in research methodology (e.g. trialist and/or epidemiologist with accreditation, formal education or documented experience), unless already part of the research team (i.e. Principal or Associate Investigator).

Ineligible grant activities

Funds are not to be used for the purchase of capital expenditure of any kind including computer hardware, office furniture or clinical machinery unless approved in writing by the AIS. Funds are not to be used for the purposes of covering organizational overhead costs. Funds are not to be used for costs not directly related to the project, including but not limited to, professional membership fees, fees for patent application and maintenance.

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

6. How to Apply

Applications must be submitted online during the application period.

To apply, you must:

- Complete and submit your application form online on the Australian Sports Commission website,
- Provide all the information requested on the application form.

It is recommended that applications by State Institutes and Academies of Sports be supported in writing by the relevant NIN Research Group representative, and it is recommended that applications from NSOs be supported in writing by the relevant Performance Director.

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@sportaus.gov.au. You cannot change your application after the closing date and time, unless invited to by the AIS.

The AIS will not accept applications submitted after the published deadline, unless it is satisfactorily proven that a technical issue has prevented the applicant from submitting their application in time.

If you have any questions regarding the 2023 AIS R&D Grants Program, please contact the AIS Research Office via aisresearch@ausport.gov.au

7. The grant selection process

The AIS adopts the ARC's Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) Statement, supporting equitable access to research funding. The AIS is seeking to increase equity in grant programs through improved advertising mechanisms and changes to the application and selection processes.

The AIS will appoint a Selection Committee to:

- assess applications; and
- make a recommendation related to the successful applicants.

The Selection Committee comprises of:

- AIS Chief Science Officer
- A member of the AIS Performance Science Team
- A current or former elite athlete
- A representative from the Australian Sport Sector
- An expert in research design and/or statistics

During the assessment, the AIS may request additional information, which does not change the nature of the application. Applications will undergo a preliminary review by AIS R&D Administration to determine eligibility, prior to being scored and ranked by the Selection Committee. Final determination of grant allocation will be decided by the Grant Approver.

In agreement with the Australian Research Council's suggestion, the AIS recommends all assessors undergo a process to identify and raise awareness of personal biases, question the basis for thoughts and feelings, build skills in cultural diversity and reflect on the strength of a culture that embraces differences.

Assessment Considerations

All applications will be considered through a competitive process, based on how well they meet the assessment considerations and how they are ranked against each other.

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

Criterion 1 – Impact – 35%

- Reach (potential beneficiaries of the proposed activity and inclusive design)
- Impact (output with measurable impact on HP sport)
- Confidence on the expected impact (including feasibility and limitations)
- Effort & resources required; proposed leverage of AIS funds

Criterion 2 – Quality – 35%

- Detailed high-quality R&D project, with a clear research question (needs-driven) and information related to the appropriate design, data management procedures, data analysis, reporting, and a plan for dissemination of outputs.
- Commitment to conducting the research activity according to the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#) and, when applicable, in line with the [“Recommendations for conducting AIS-supported research in high performance sport”](#).

Criterion 3 – Investigator(s) – 30%

*Assessment against the ‘investigator’ criterion should include consideration of the opportunities the applicant has had to build their profile.**

- Demonstrable expertise and capability to address an element of the NHPSRA, including assessment of publications[#] and/or R&D impact.
- Access to resources needed to complete the project (including but not limited to, for example: labs, equipment, peers support, statistician, etc)

** For example, researchers who are early in their research career or have had an interrupted research career, including employment outside academia, unemployment, child birth, carers’ responsibilities and other personal circumstances, will have this taken into account. Similarly, researchers whose current or previous conditions of employment have allowed them a relatively large amount of research time will have this considered when assessors are examining opportunity to build a research profile. This provides assessors with information to determine whether a Principal Investigator (PI) has had extensive opportunity for research compared to a PI who may have had more limited time for research. In this way, the quality and benefit of achievements are given more weight than the quantity or rate of particular achievements enabling excellent researchers to be competitive regardless of their career path. (from: <https://www.arc.gov.au/funding-research/peer-review/assessment-process>)*

For example, assessment of the publications track record will not include a list of all publications from the past 5 years, and will instead focus on up to 5 of the applicant’s nominated best publications from the past 5 years (taking into consideration career disruptions). This will help to ensure that assessment of publication track record focuses on the quality and contribution to science rather than the quantity of publications. (adapted from: <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/funding/peer-review-system/publication-assessment-track-record>)

Approval of Grants

The Chief Science Officer, following the Selection Committee recommendations, will submit a proposal to the Grant Approver, 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.

Non preferred assessor process

Applicants may name up to two persons whom they do not wish to assess an application by submitting a 'Request Not to Assess' letter to AISResearch@ausport.gov.au. This letter must be received by the AIS at least two weeks prior to the grant opportunity closing date. Only one request containing the names of up to two individual assessors may be submitted per application. There is discretion about whether the 'Request Not to Assess' is accepted or refused. The AIS will not notify applicants of the outcome.

8. Successful grant application

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 section above.

The AIS has a strategic mandate to generate knowledge for the benefit of the National High Performance Sport System (NHPSS) through its research funding. Therefore, the research funding agreement for successful applicants seeks a licence for the AIS to share the results of research with the NHPSS. More broadly, research applicants are expected to be compliant with the [National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research](#).

Applicants should also be aware that breaches to the funding agreement or failure to comply with agreed obligations may effect the eligibility of future grant applications.

At its absolute discretion, the AIS may contact unsuccessful applicants to discuss elements of their application, unless otherwise indicated in the application process.

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 ["Recommendations for conducting AIS-supported research in high performance sport"](#);
- 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.

- Seek written approval from the AIS in case of any changes to the project.

9. Probity

Appeals process

The AIS will only consider appeals against the administrative process and not against Committee decisions, assessor ratings and comments, or the assessment outcome. Appellants must identify the specific guideline/legislative instrument clause, policy or procedure which they believe has been incorrectly applied. Applicants must submit an appeal and email it to aisresearch@ausport.gov.au. Appeals must be received by 5.00pm (AEDT/AEST) within 30 days of the date the applicant is notified of the outcome of the application.

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 2023 AIS R&D 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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