NDRP Research funding policy

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**Plain language**

NDRP Research Funding Policy

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## About us

The National Disability Research Partnership (NDRP) funds research that is:

* led by people with disability
* done with people with disability.

The research will create evidence to help shape policies that promote the rights of people with disability.

We are a not-for-profit charitable organisation.

An independent board leads our organisation. Our Research Committee oversees our research program. Our staff support the research activities.

## Our research funding policy

This policy gives people clear information about how we manage, support and check our research funding program. It explains the work we do to ensure the research is high quality and useful.

## Who is this policy for?

This policy is for our Board, Research Committee, staff and people who apply for funding and do the research projects.

## Our principles

We have developed [principles](https://www.ndrp.org.au/principles) to guide how we work. Our principles reflect the human rights framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

We want to improve systems, cultures and practices in disability research. We want people with disability to lead and make decisions about research.

Our principles guide the work we do, including how we invest in research and the standards we set.

We encourage applicants to read our principles. You can also visit our website to read an [Easy Read version of our principles.](https://www.ndrp.org.au/principles)

## Our research agenda

Our research agenda guides the research we fund and support. We consulted with the disability community to develop the agenda. The agenda has 12 major areas of research. It also outlines themes that underpin the research we fund, including:

* upholding the rights of people with disability
* focusing on safety
* addressing ableism and improving attitudes
* understanding intersectionality
* applying a gendered lens.

Visit our [website](https://www.ndrp.org.au/researchagenda) for more information about our research agenda.

## How we fund and support research

We fund research that is collaborative and inclusive. We support people and organisations to work together to produce high quality research.

We fund projects that address research gaps and are likely to create change.

### Open funding rounds

We have open funding rounds to fund short-term and long-term projects.

### Funding for researchers with disability

We also fund fellowships and higher degree by research (HDR) scholarships for people with disability.

We support a mentoring program for people with disability with fellowships and scholarships. And we work with governments and universities to increase funding for researchers with disability.

### Targeted research funding

Sometimes our board decides to fund a priority topic from the research agenda or fund other types of research.

### Commissioned research

Sometimes government or other stakeholders fund research about important topics. We follow our principles when we oversee these research projects.

## How we monitor our research program

We have a process to monitor and evaluate our research program. We use the data we collect to learn and improve the way we work.

## How we support applicants

We provide grant guidelines and other resources in accessible formats. We explain:

* the funding opportunity
* the funding round and topic
* the objectives and outcomes
* who can apply
* how we choose the research projects.

We also offer applicants accessible activities, such as online information sessions. And we have a webpage with useful information, including answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs).

### SmartyGrants

We use the SmartyGrants platform for our grant activities. We make sure the application forms and other functions are accessible and easy to use.

## Support for funded projects

We support project teams by:

* hosting meetings to help people connect and share ideas
* helping people source and use relevant evidence
* introducing teams to policy makers, regulators and end-users
* sharing knowledge about how to do quality research with people with disability.

## Ethical and responsible research

All research we fund and support must be done, or ‘conducted’ in ways that are ethical and responsible. There are Australian codes for responsible research and ethical standards. Some research must go through a formal ethics review process and get approval from a human research ethics committee (HREC). Research teams should get advice about what ethics review processes will be needed for their projects.

For more information about the ethical and responsible conduct of research, refer to the detailed version of this [Policy document](https://www.ndrp.org.au/research/research-policy), or visit the National Health and Medical Research Council’s [website](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/research-policy/ethics-and-integrity).

## Sharing research outcomes

Research teams will use our templates to share research outcomes on our website. This means everyone can access the information without having to pay. The teams should also share research outcomes in ways that are useful and accessible to end-users.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Our Board

Our Board is responsible for our research program, including:

* setting our vision, purpose and values
* providing leadership
* overseeing our strategic direction
* approving the research budgets and funding approach
* approving the strategic and policy framework for funded projects
* overseeing risk for our research program
* approving the research committee recommendations.

### Our Research Committee

Our Research Committee provides advice and recommendations to our Board. For example:

* the strategic and policy framework for funded research
* our funding processes
* funding applications
* other funding support, including fellowships
* commissioned funding proposals
* our research agenda
* advocacy for disability inclusive research.

The Research Committee appoints Independent Review Panels to assess applications.

### Independent Review Panels

Independent Review Panels assess open round funding applications.

The panels include people with different expertise and backgrounds. For example, researchers, people with disability and people from disability representative organisations.

### Our staff

Our staff:

* develop the strategic and policy framework for the research program
* promote funding rounds to disability and research communities
* support research project teams
* support our board, research committee and independent review panels
* coordinate research funding and reporting.

## Related policies and documents

* [Complaints policy](https://www.ndrp.org.au/about/complaints-policy)
* [Privacy policy](https://www.ndrp.org.au/about/privacy-policy)
* [Research committee terms of reference 2025](https://www.ndrp.org.au/about/our-people/research-committee)
* [Our 2025 research funding](https://www.ndrp.org.au/research/2025-research-funding#round-one-key-documents:~:text=Guide%20for%20SmartyGrants.-,Round%201%20key%20documents,-To%20apply%20for)
* [2025 research funding grant rules – round 1](https://www.ndrp.org.au/research/2025-research-funding#round-one-key-documents:~:text=Guide%20for%20SmartyGrants.-,Round%201%20key%20documents,-To%20apply%20for)