

NDRP 2025 Research Grant Funding Overview

Safety of people with disability

Plain language



NDRP 2025 research funding

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## Acknowledgement of Country

The National Disability Research Partnership (NDRP) acknowledges the traditional custodians of Country throughout Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have lived on and cared for Country for thousands of generations. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, values and worldviews, and to Elders past and present. We respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the world’s first researchers and acknowledge the wisdom and diversity of Indigenous knowledge systems.

## 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 and practices that promote the rights of people with disability.

We are a not-for-profit charitable organisation.

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

For more information about our roles and responsibilities, visit our [website](https://www.ndrp.org.au/research/research-policy).

## Our 2025 research topic – safety of people with disability

In 2025, the research we fund and support will focus on the safety of people with disability in Australia.

To be safe means having the support and resources to take part in society and live an independent life. To feel safe means feeling respected, valued, heard and protected.

## Background

### Australia’s Disability Strategy

We share the vision of Australia’s Disability Strategy for an inclusive and accessible society.

### Disability inquiries

There have been many inquiries into the lived experiences of people with disability in Australia. For example, the Disability Royal Commission. Too often, these inquiries have not led to change. We will support research led by and done with people with disability that will lead to change.

## 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.

There is more information about our research agenda [on our website](https://protect.checkpoint.com/v2/r04/___https://www.ndrp.org.au/researchagenda___.Y3A0YTpuZHJwOmM6bzozMTdkYzg1YTlkZTJmM2NhZjM5YWZiMWRlMzAxZTI1NDo3OmRlYTU6NzU3ZWI0ZWMxOTg2Y2I2NTYyZjVmNjE4Y2MyMjhmZTE2NGQyMmFhMWZlZTQxYWVkMzA1YjIwNDg5ODMxNmIyZDpwOlQ6Tg).

## Our principles

We have developed [principles](https://protect.checkpoint.com/v2/r04/___https://www.ndrp.org.au/principles___.Y3A0YTpuZHJwOmM6bzozMTdkYzg1YTlkZTJmM2NhZjM5YWZiMWRlMzAxZTI1NDo3OjM2YmQ6ZTVmZDEzNjQxYmVmMmZjNzExZjFhM2ExNzc4NzY3NGIzMjYwMTUyMGViZDI2ZjkxMWQ5NTE4Njc0NDVlODI4NjpwOlQ6Tg) 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 will 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)

## Grant funding rounds in 2025

We will have 2 rounds of grant funding in 2025.

### Round 1 – opens March 2025

We will fund and support research projects that will take 6 to 10 months to complete. All projects will use co-design approaches.

There will be 2 streams of funding.

**Stream 1 – co-design of research proposals**

Develop research proposals that outline future research projects about the safety of people with disability.

**Stream 2 – knowledge synthesis projects**

Find evidence and knowledge that already exists about the safety of people with disability. Bring this knowledge together and review it. Use the information from the review to make useful materials that can help change policy and practices.

#### Round 1 budget

You can apply for up to $60,000 per project. Total funding available is $600,000.

### Round 2 – opens October 2025

We will fund larger research projects about the safety of people with disability. These projects will focus on creating new knowledge and solutions. The projects will take up to 18 months to complete.

#### Round 2 budget

You can apply for up to $300,000 per project. Total funding available is $1,300,000.

## The research we will fund and support

We will fund and support disability-inclusive research that prioritises the skills and knowledge of people with disability. We will fund different types of research, including community-led and university-led projects.

## Who can apply for funding?

We want people and organisations to work together on research projects.

The project team must nominate one organisation to apply as the ‘Lead Organisation’. Any organisation that has an Australian Business Number (ABN) can do this role. The Lead Organisation must be able to manage and deliver the research project.

The project team should include:

* people with disability, including people with direct experience of the topic, issue or opportunity that the project will address (sometimes called ‘consumers’)
* people who can help to change disability policy and practices
* researchers who understand inclusive disability research.

## How to apply for funding

**Step 1:** Read this document.

**Step 2:** Read the relevant grant guidelines.

**Step 3:** Plan your grant application with your project team and partners. It’s important to do this step well so your project will be inclusive and collaborative.

For more information, visit our website to:

* read the [frequently asked questions (FAQs)](https://www.ndrp.org.au/research/2025-research-funding#:~:text=Frequently%20Asked%20Questions%20(FAQs))
* join an [online learning or networking session](https://www.ndrp.org.au/resources/events)
* join a [drop-in question and answer (Q&A) session](https://www.ndrp.org.au/resources/events).

**Step 4:** Complete the [online application form](https://ndrp.smartygrants.com.au/).

The form opens on **17 March 2025**.

The form closes on **28 April 2025**.

## How we support applicants and project teams

We will support project teams to do disability-led research. We will provide opportunities for connection and shared learning throughout the projects.

We’ll support people to get and use the evidence needed for their projects.

To help applicants prepare and apply for the grants, we will:

* provide guidelines and resources outlining key requirements
* run meetings to explain the program and answer questions
* offer drop-in sessions for information and guidance
* provide accessible materials and other supports (e.g. alternative formats, assistive technology support).

## How we choose projects to fund and support

We will choose projects that are likely to create a large and positive impact. We will also consider:

* the proposed methods and approaches
* how people with disability will lead the project
* whether the project team has the skills required.

To learn more about the selection and assessment criteria, read the Grant Guidelines on our [website](https://www.ndrp.org.au/research/2025-research-funding).

Independent review panels will review and score the applications. The research committee will then decide which projects will have the biggest impact. Our board will make the final decisions.

## Ethical standards for research

All research must be done, or ‘conducted’ in ways that are ethical. Some research must go through a formal ethics review process and get approval from a human research ethics committee (HREC). You should get advice about what ethics review processes will be needed for your project. You do not need to get ethics approval before you apply for this funding.

For more information about the ethical and responsible conduct of research, visit our [website](https://www.ndrp.org.au/research/research-policy).

## Key terms and what they mean for research we fund

**Co-design**

Co-design means bringing people together to share what they know and share power whilst working together to make decisions about the questions their research should answer, and how it should be done. The ‘co’ is about being collaborative. The ‘design’ means making something. In the co-design of research, this means working together to come up with ideas, possible solutions, outcomes, approaches and methods that could be used in a future research project. Design usually means doing this over a few rounds of testing, and refining with each other, before final decisions are made. Co-design needs shared understanding, access and relationships to be established before the design can start.

**Person with disability**

The NDRP recognises the diversity of people with disability. Persons with disability include, but are not limited to, those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Disability can also be an integral part of someone’s identity. Some communities, such as Autistic and Deaf communities, may not identify as being disabled.

We recognise ‘disability’ is a western concept that does not translate well into First Nations communities and languages. We acknowledge that requiring First Nations people to label themselves as a ‘person with disability’ or as ‘other’ conflicts with the First Nations cultural value of inclusion.

For the purposes of this grant opportunity the NDRP aims to be inclusive of the diversity of disability, regardless of whether a person identifies as a person with disability.

**Disability-inclusive research**

Research in which people with disability are involved, valued and respected through all stages of the research process, from coming up with the concept, through the design and conduct of the research and in sharing research findings in ways that are accessible, relevant and appropriate to everyone who needs the knowledge.

**Ethical conduct**

Ethical conduct, according to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2023) means ‘more than simply doing the right thing. It involves acting in the right spirit, out of an abiding respect and concern for one’s fellow creatures.’

**Human research ethics committee (HREC) and ethics approval**

In Australia, many research institutions like universities but also other organisations have a registered human ethics committee (HREC). These committees either give an approval to say that research can start, or they give directions on what must be improved to make sure the research is ethically acceptable, before approval will be given.

**Ethics review**

A review of planned research by a person or committee, that seeks to make sure that the rights and cultures of people and communities involved in the research are respected, that the aims and methods of the research are clear and have merit, and that there are clear plans to share the findings. Ethics reviews can be done by HRECs, or other community-based or controlled, or organisational ethics committees.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research, it is a requirement to seek review with an HREC that has Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership and experience in reviewing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research[[1]](#endnote-2).

**Knowledge**

Knowledge includes:

* evidence from academic and community-based research,
* information, insights and story held by people and communities because of their lived, cultural, service and/or systems experience, and
* expertise from practice.

**Knowledge synthesis**

Knowledge synthesis is using rigorous and transparent methods to bring together what is known about a topic, assess it, and make sense of it in a context. It is about generating a summary of the body of knowledge available and establishing better understanding about what is known about a particular topic or area.

1. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)