

# **National Research Grant Round**

**2026**

## **Expression of Interest Guidelines**

### **Post-Doctoral Fellowship**

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Document purpose .....	3
About the Cancer Society of New Zealand .....	3
Research and Innovation at the Cancer Society .....	3
Contact information .....	4
1.Scope .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.Eligibility .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.Application process and timelines.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Submission .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Reporting .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Privacy provisions .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.Assessment criteria .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.Grant Portal .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

# Introduction

## Document purpose

The aim of the Cancer Society's National Research Grant Round is to fund high-quality research across the cancer continuum (including prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and supportive care). This guide is for those who wish to apply for the Post-Doctoral Fellowship.

## About the Cancer Society of New Zealand

The Cancer Society's vision is "Working together towards a future free from cancer."

The Cancer Society's mission is to reduce the incidence and impact of cancer. We support anyone, anywhere, with any cancer. Our focus areas include:

**Providing community support** to people affected by cancer, their families/whānau and carers.

**Advocating for better outcomes:** we drive change that achieves equitable outcomes across the cancer continuum.

**Supporting research and innovation:** by increasing investment in research, and driving targeted, equitable and evidence-based outcomes.

**Partnering for impact:** by working collaboratively with organisations who share similar goals to the Cancer Society.

The Cancer Society is reliant on funding support from the communities in which it works.

## Research and Innovation at the Cancer Society

The Cancer Society's [Research and Innovation Strategy](#) highlights our big dream to build the research foundations for a national comprehensive cancer network that connects people, knowledge, and resources, to enable coordinated research activity, for increased access and equitable health outcomes. This network will be equity-led, uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi and embed Māori leadership.

### Priority populations

Our strategy prioritises Māori, Pacific peoples and those living in rural areas, as these populations experience the greatest inequities in cancer outcomes across Aotearoa.

### Our Strategic Priorities:

- **Strengthening the cancer research workforce** by supporting early career researchers, clinical professionals, and medical students to engage in research.
- **Elevating lived experience in research and innovation** to ensure the research we support reflects real world needs.
- **Increasing access to clinical trials** by increasing support for and engagement with clinical trials from the bench to bedside.

### Contact information

Please contact the Cancer Society's Research and Innovation team with any questions during the grant application process at [research@cancer.org.nz](mailto:research@cancer.org.nz)

## 1.Scope

The Cancer Society will consider any research grant application that is relevant to cancer outcomes across the continuum. Applications peripheral to cancer research should not be submitted.

## 2.Eligibility

Description	Maximum value of award	Maximum grant duration
Post-Doctoral Fellowships provide support for outstanding individuals who have recently completed a degree at doctoral level.	Up to \$300,000  Consisting of up to 1.0 FTE salary at a Post-Doctoral Fellow level for three years, plus working expenses, fully justified.	36 months

All Cancer Society Post-Doctoral Fellowships are for applicants within six years of gaining their research degree (excluding parental leave), in line with the Health Research Council Emerging Researcher criteria.

Grant applications will be considered from any person who holds a PhD or will have their PhD degree conferred by the time the contract starts, as long as the applicant is a resident in New Zealand or intends to become a resident.

Applicants should include letters of collaboration outlining how the collaborator intends to provide material or support for the research, where appropriate. Applicants should ensure the named collaborator(s) recognise their intended commitment to the proposed research and timeline of their involvement.

Please note the Cancer Society only funds 'direct costs' of the research and does not pay any

‘indirect costs’ of the research, such as institutional overhead recovery.

### 3. Application process and timelines

All grants will be administered via a competitive grant round (for all individuals who meet the eligibility criteria to apply for funding. Applications will be assessed by the Cancer Society’s National Scientific Advisory Committee (NSAC). The Cancer Society’s National Board will make the final funding decision. Applications will be assessed through several stages:

June 22 2026	Open for Expressions of interest (EOI) via the Grant Portal
3 August 2026	Deadline for EOI (1 pm, submitted via the Grant Portal)
August 2026	NSAC meeting to assess Expressions of Interest
7 September 2026	EOI Results, Requests for Full Proposals (RFP) sent
12 October 2026	Deadline for RFP (1 pm, submitted via the grant portal)
October 2026	Applications sent for external peer review
22 December 2026	Applicants receive peer review comments and are given the opportunity to provide a rebuttal (no more than one page in total).
18 January 2027	Deadlines for rebuttal to be returned
February 2026	The NSAC meet to review the applications and make a recommendation to the Cancer Society’s National Board.
March 2027	The Cancer Society’s National Board consider the NSAC’s recommendation and make a final funding decision.

April 2027	Applicants notified of outcome
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The Cancer Society may refuse to consider an application if it considers actions of the applicant to be contrary to the interests of the Cancer Society or may bring the Cancer Society into disrepute.

## Submission

The EOI application form should be completed and submitted on the grant portal by **Monday 3 August 2026**.

## Reporting

Successful applicants will be required to submit annual progress reports, a final report upon completion of the research grant, and a one-year post-Fellowship update report. These reporting requirements support the Cancer Society's impact reporting and evaluation. Reports will include a lay person's summary which may be used to inform the public about the work we support, an update on the project's timelines and milestones; whether they are met, partially met, or delayed, and an explanation for any delays. The Cancer Society recommends writing lay summaries at the **reading age of twelve years old**. Annual reports in Te Reo Māori must also provide the English translation. Funding for the subsequent year will only be released upon receipt of a satisfactory annual report.

## Privacy provisions

The information requested in an application will be used for assessing that application and, in a non-identifiable form, some information will be used for Cancer Society statistical purposes. All research applications will be stored in a secure place. Security and confidentiality will be preserved for any application declined. Personal information contained in the application may be made available to external referees and members of the Cancer Society National Scientific Advisory Committee reviewing the application. When an application is successful, the Cancer Society reserves the right to publish the applicants' names, details of the Host Institution, lay summary and funding awarded. You can find the Cancer Society's privacy policy online [here](#).

## 4. Assessment criteria

Applicants should address the following criteria in their application

- **Suitability of the applicant:** The application represents an independent research stream, the applicant is able to carry out the proposed work, has a strong track-record of achievement to date relative to opportunity, and demonstrates strong potential for a career in cancer research. The applicant is likely to make a significant contribution to the wider research environment and research community.
- **Training environment:** Opportunities for training and career development are actively identified and supported by strong commitment from supervisors, mentors and the Host Institution.
- **Strong rationale for research:** addresses important research questions, likely to result in significant benefit for people affected by cancer or advancement in the scientific understanding of cancer.
- **Research design:** clear objectives and deliverables, excellent and appropriate research design.
- **Research impact:** the expected outcomes of the proposed research will add value and contribute to achieving the “big dream” and ultimately the vision of the Cancer Society. For further information on the “big dream,” please refer to the Cancer Society’s [Research and Innovation Strategy 2026 – 2031](#).
- **Equity:** clear identification of how the research will contribute to equitable cancer outcomes across the continuum for priority populations identified by the Cancer Society. For further information on the equity goals of the Cancer Society, [Research and Innovation Strategy 2026 – 2031](#).
- **Te Tiriti o Waitangi:** the application should demonstrate commitment to and application of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and responsiveness to Māori. For an example of the type of considerations you could consider, please consult this document: [Te Tiriti o Waitangi in Health Research in Aotearoa](#).

## 5. Grant Portal

Applications must be submitted through the Cancer Society Grant Portal. User guides for the Grant Portal can be found [here](#). If you are having any issues accessing or using the portal, please contact the Research and Innovation Team at [research@cancer.org.nz](mailto:research@cancer.org.nz)

A note on word limits for each section of the application form

Lay Summary of Research: 150 words

Career Plans: 250 words

Training Environment & Support: 250 words

Aims & Objectives: 100 words.

Rationale: 200 words

Research Design: 300 words.

Research Impact: 200 words.

Equity: 200 words

Te Tiriti o Waitangi: 200 words