



To: Minister Hunt

Subject: **POLICY APPROVAL MEDICAL RESEARCH FUTURE FUND (MRFF)
ACCELERATED RESEARCH INJECTION INVESTMENT PLAN (2018-19
TO 2023-24)**

Critical date: 15 March 2019 – waiver granted to expedite grant opportunities and implementation

Recommendation/s:

1. **APPROVE** expenditure of up to \$202.13 million over six years for the MRFF Accelerated Research Injection Investment Plan (2018-19 to 2023-2024) as agreed in the context of the 2018-19 MYEFO and 2019-20 Budget. **1. Agreed**

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3. **APPROVE** the Department to undertake closed, non-competitive ad-hoc grant opportunities, consistent with the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017*, for Accelerated Research projects commencing in 2018-19. **3. Approved**

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5. **NOTE** that the departmental delegate will exercise the relevant approvals under the *Public Governance and Performance Accountability Act 2013* (the PGPA Act) and the *Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015*. **5. Noted**

Signature 

Date: 15 March 2019

Comments:

Contact Officer:	Erica Kneipp	Assistant Secretary Office of Health and Medical Research	Ph: (02) 6289 s22 Mobile: s22
Clearance Officer:	Paul McBride	First Assistant Secretary, Health Economics and Research Division	Ph: (02) 6289 s22 Mobile: s22

Issues:

1. On 7 December 2018, a letter from the Prime Minister agreed to extend the MRFF Accelerated Research initiative over six years (2018-19 to 2023-24) with a number of specific projects
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2. On 25 January 2019, the Prime Minister (MC19-000147) agreed to commit \$10 million to enhance phenomics capability at the Australian National University.

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7. Ten out of the fourteen projects identified under the Investment Plan commence in 2018-19 or have a predetermined grant recipient. All of these ten projects will be addressed through closed, non-competitive ad-hoc grant opportunities consistent with the requirements of the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017*.
8. Ad-hoc grant opportunity guidelines do not require Ministerial approval or approval from the Department of Finance. Your approval of the Accelerated Research Injection Investment Plan (at [Attachment A](#)) and expenditure is sufficient for the Department to develop and issue the grant guidelines. To ensure you are given appropriate oversight, the Department will provide drafts of each of the guidelines to your Office before publication.
9. The appropriate departmental delegate will exercise the relevant approvals to commit relevant money under Section 23(3) of the PGPA Act.

Background:

The Accelerated Research initiative is designed to stimulate targeted research in areas of identified unmet need or research effort. By doing so it will nurture the development of new treatments and cures, providing hope to many Australians with debilitating conditions.

The Accelerated Research Injection Investment Plan (2018-19 to 2023-24) addresses four of the six strategic platforms of the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy* (Strategic and

International Horizons, Health Services and Systems, Capacity and Collaboration and Trials and Translation) and areas of the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2018-2020* related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, Ageing and Aged Care, Consumer-driven research, Drug Repurposing, and Translational Research Infrastructure.

Grants Administration:

The nature of this initiative and the requirement to address annual emerging priorities necessitates that funding is handled predominantly via closed, non-competitive ad-hoc grant opportunities, as per provisions under the Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines 2017.

The ad-hoc grant opportunity process involves developing the guidelines with reference to the proposal received and ensuring policy authority under the initiative. These guidelines are then published on GrantConnect and offered direct to the identified recipient, with a timeframe set for delivery of a formal proposal. The proposal is in turn assessed by departmental officers and the outcome advised to your delegate in the Department. Following a negotiated and successful outcome to the opportunity, a grant agreement is agreed and executed with the recipient by your departmental delegate.

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Attachments:

A: MRFF Accelerated Research Injection Investment Plan (2018-19 to 2023-24)

Budget/Financial Implications:

Nil, funding sourced from the MRFF.

Relevance to Election Commitments / Budget Measures:

In the context of MYEFO 2018-19 and Budget 2019-20 Government agreed to extend the MRFF Accelerated Research initiative over six years (2018-19 to 2023-24).

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Consultations:

Health Grants and Network Division, Primary Care and Mental Health Division s22 .

Communication/Media Activities:

You have already announced the majority of projects under the Accelerated Research Injection Investment Plan and the Department is in discussion with your Office about further announcements.

Impact on Rural and Regional Australians:

Rural and remote living Australians will benefit both directly through potential participation in research funded and indirectly via access to the result of research, primarily new approaches to tackling debilitating health conditions. In particular, the Eradicate Rheumatic Heart Disease Vaccine will benefit many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who disproportionately suffer from this condition.

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ATTACHMENT A: MRFF Accelerated Research Injection Investment Plan (2018-19 to 2023-2024)

	TITLE	RECIPIENT							
	ACCELERATED RESEARCH INITIATIVE		2018-19 \$m	2019-20 \$m	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	2023-24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
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4	Eradicate Rheumatic Heart Disease Vaccine	Telethon Kids Institute	15.00	10.00	10.00				35.00
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	NEW PROFILE FOR ACCELERATED RESEARCH INJECTION		83.80	34.67	35.67	21.00	16.00	11.00	202.13

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