

Appendix B: Submitting Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Grant Variations for MRFF grants administered by Business Grants Hub

MRFF grants administered by Business Grants Hub (BGH) are managed under the [MRFF Grant Variation Policy](#). Variation requests for MRFF grants will be considered within the scope of the MRFF Grant Variation Policy and advice included within this appendix. This appendix will be subject to regular review by the Department of Health and Aged Care (the Department).

Research Administration Officers (RAOs) and Grantees should refer to the MRFF Grant Variation Policy, this appendix, the grant agreement, and the relevant grant opportunity guidelines before preparing and submitting a variation request.

RAOs and Grantees should note the possibility that variation requests involving the movement of MRFF funds across financial years may not be possible without loss of some grant funding, depending on the availability of funds to accommodate any revisions to payment schedules in the relevant financial years.

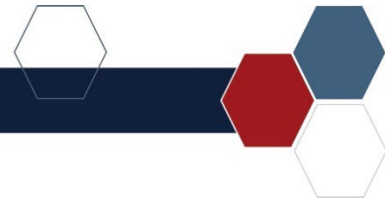
All variations should be requested using the *MRFF Grant variation request form* (the request form). The request form must be certified and sent by email by the administering organisation's RAO to BGH well in advance or at least one month before the proposed date of effect. Requests for variations with retrospective effect will only be approved in exceptional circumstances, and such circumstances should be well justified in the request.

Grantees should direct questions to their RAO in the first instance. The RAO may then contact BGH if further advice is needed.

Variation Process:

The grant variation process involves the following steps:

1. The CIA/Project Lead creates, completes, and submits the request form and supporting evidence to the administering organisation's RAO.
2. The RAO from the administering organisation reviews the request form and any attachments. The administering organisation must maintain a record of, and keep, any relevant supporting documentation.
3. Once the request form is ready for submission, the RAO certifies the request form, including entering RAO comments, and submits it along with any attachments to the program-specific email address found in the relevant grant agreement, Grant Details section F *Party representatives and address for notices*, with the subject line 'MRFF Variation Request – [Grant ID] – [Variation request type name(s)].'
4. BGH undertakes a preliminary review of the request and provides the request to the Department for consideration and decision by the Delegate. Additional information and evidence may be sought from the RAO to inform the Delegate's decision. The final decision to approve or reject a variation request is at the sole discretion of the Delegate.
5. BGH notifies the RAO by email of the Delegate's decision.



6. If the variation request is approved, the relevant variation or novation instrument, as applicable, will be issued to the RAO for signature. Once the variation contract or deed is fully executed, the grant information in the Business.gov.au online portal will be updated to reflect the details of the approved variation (e.g. Grant Period dates, reporting milestones, and/or budgets, as required). In instances where an agreement of variation or deed of novation is not required, a Notice of Outcome outlining the Delegate's decision will be provided. Note that changes to the Grant Period will only be made in calendar month increments.
7. If the variation request is not approved, the RAO will be asked to confirm in writing that the grant will continue as originally awarded or as previously approved.

Submitting a variation

MRFF grant variation requests should not be submitted in the Business.gov.au online portal (see variation process above).

Additional information on requesting variations to MRFF grants, including the minimum required supporting evidence for each variation type and the deferral and extension periods that apply to the variation types (1, 2, and 3), is provided below. Grantees should read this information in conjunction with the [MRFF Grant Variation Policy](#). Note, additional supporting evidence may be included beyond what is listed below if integral to substantiating a request.

Program administration organisations that manage large MRFF-funded grant programs (such as the BioMedTech Horizons Program, Early Stage Translation and Commercialisation Support, Researcher Exchange and Development within Industry, and Targeted Translation Research Accelerator) are required to provide further evidence in addition to that specified under each variation type. Where a variation request impacts sub-awardees, the Program administration organisation submitting the variation should also provide a risk management plan and any relevant detail of impact on sub-awardees.

1. Defer grant commencement date

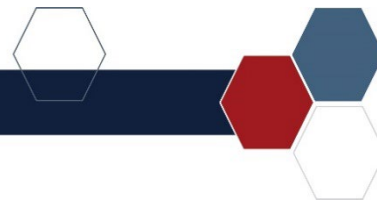
MRFF grants are expected to commence on the commencement date specified in the MRFF grant agreement. This variation type should be used where a grant agreement has been executed, but the commencement date has not passed, and grant activities and expenditure have not commenced on the grant.

The information required for this variation type includes:

- number of months for deferral
- detailed justification for the proposed change
- updated activity (milestone) schedule
- updated activity budget (use template) if the change moves funds across financial years – *If the activity budget is changing significantly beyond movement of funds across financial years, then see grant variation type 9 below.*

The grant end date will be automatically adjusted to account for the deferred period if the variation request is approved.

RAOs and Grantees should note that grant payments will continue to be paid as per the relevant payment schedule in the grant agreement, and administering organisations



(Grantees) will be required to manage the flow of funds in accordance with the varied arrangements.

2. Defer an in-progress grant

This variation type should be used where a grant agreement has been executed and the grant activities and/or expenditure have commenced on the grant. This variation type should be used where grant activity will be significantly delayed, and some or all of the grant activity will be suspended for a period of time to account for the delay.

The information required for this variation type includes:

- proposed date of effect
- number of months for deferral
- detailed justification for the proposed change
- updated activity (milestone) schedule
- updated activity budget (use template) if the change moves funds across financial years – *If the activity budget is changing significantly beyond movement of funds across financial years, then see grant variation type 9 below*
- updated risk management plan.

The grant end date will be automatically adjusted to account for the deferred period if the variation request is approved.

3. Extend end date

This variation type should be used to request an extension to the grant activity end date. Such requests are generally made within the last 12 months of grant activity. The information required for this variation type includes:

- number of months for extension
- detailed justification for the proposed change
- updated activity (milestone) schedule
- updated activity budget (use template) if the change moves funds across financial years – *If the activity budget is changing significantly beyond movement of funds across financial years, then see grant variation type 9 below*
- updated risk management plan.

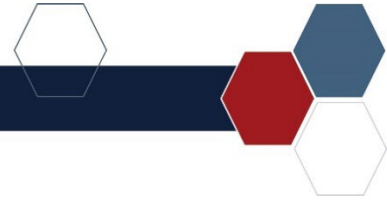
4. Relinquish grant

Program administration organisations must contact BGH to discuss any potential requests under this variation type.

The information required for this variation type includes:

- proposed date of effect
- total MRFF funds expended by the administering organisation as at the time of the request
- detailed justification for the proposed change.

The RAO must hold evidence that all CIs have been notified of the proposed relinquishment.



5. Transfer administering organisation

Program administration organisations must contact BGH to discuss any potential requests under this variation type.

The information required for this variation type includes:

- proposed date of effect
- new administering organisation
- reason for the proposed transfer
- total MRFF funds expended by the administering organisation as at the time of the request
- confirmation from the new administering organisation that it accepts the administering responsibilities for the grant. Note that the relinquishing RAO will need to obtain this confirmation from the new administering organisation and upload it with the variation request.

Where the Delegate approves a request to transfer the administering organisation on a grant:

- the relinquishing administering organisation advises the new administering organisation of the value of any unspent funds
- the new administering organisation invoices the relinquishing administering organisation for the value of the unspent funds
- the relinquishing administering organisation pays the invoice raised by the new administering organisation
- BGH issues a deed of novation to the new administering organisation for acceptance (this may occur before the transfer of funds between organisations)
- the relinquishing administering organisation submits the Transfer Acquittal statement to BGH, disclosing the unspent funds to be paid/that have been paid to the new administering organisation.

Note that the Department will not commence making payments to the new administering organisation until the deed of novation has been fully executed.

6. Change to grant activity

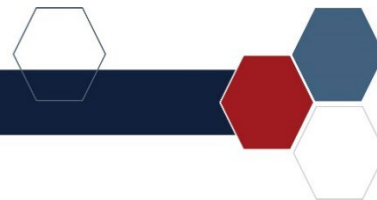
The *Change to grant activity* variation type should also be used for:

- proposing the addition or removal of a Partner Organisation
- proposing changes to grant activity and project milestones
- proposing changes to mandatory Other Contributions required to be provided and spent as outlined in the grant agreement.

As indicated in the MRFF Grant Variation Policy, requests to vary the grant activity will only be approved in exceptional circumstances.

The information required for this variation type includes:

- details of exceptional circumstances
- details of how the proposed change will affect the completion of the grant
- details of how the proposed change still meets the objectives and outcomes of the grant as outlined in the assessed application. Grantees should refer to Section 1.3 of the grant opportunity guidelines under which the grant was awarded, as well as the MRFF Measures of Success (if applicable)



- *where Commonwealth Commercialisation clauses apply as indicated in the grant agreement*, indication of whether the proposed change will affect the Commercialisation Plan
- proposed date of effect
- updated activity (milestone) schedule
- updated activity budget (use template) if the change moves funds across financial years – *If the activity budget is changing significantly beyond movement of funds across financial years, then see grant variation type 9 below*
- updated risk management plan.

7. Change to personnel

Program administration organisations should only use this variation type to request a change to the Project Lead, Chief Investigator A or equivalent role.

As indicated in the MRFF Grant Variation Policy, requests to change personnel will only be approved in exceptional circumstances.

The information required for changes to Chief Investigators includes:

- details of exceptional circumstances
- *if a Chief Investigator is changing role or requesting removal from the grant*, evidence that demonstrates how the change prevents the Chief Investigator from continuing in their role as outlined in the assessed application or approved variation to grant activity
- *if a Chief Investigator is being added to the grant*, justification and evidence that demonstrates how the added Chief Investigator will be able and is necessary to implement the grant as outlined in the assessed application or approved variation to grant activity
- details of how the proposed personnel change will affect the completion of the grant while still meeting the objectives and outcomes as outlined in the assessed application or approved variation to grant activity. Grantees should refer to Section 1.3 of the grant opportunity guidelines under which the grant was awarded, as well as the MRFF Measures of Success (if applicable)
- updated Chief Investigator template
- proposed date of effect.

In addition, the administering organisation must retain the following:

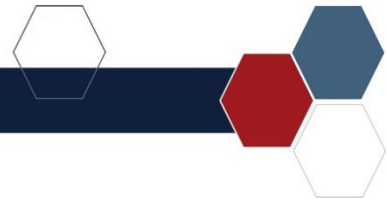
- confirmation from all affected Chief Investigators that they agree to the proposed change
- confirmation from new Chief Investigator(s) that their addition to the team will not result in eligibility issues.

8. Change in Full-Time Equivalent, Salary or Research Support Package

This variation type is only applicable to MRFF-funded fellowships. Program administration organisations should not use this variation type.

The information required for this variation type includes:

- month of commencement for the proposed change
- reason for the proposed change
- type of change:



- current FTE and proposed new FTE
- proposed change to research support package
- proposed change to salary
- duration of the proposed change (e.g. for X months or for the remaining duration of the grant)
- updated activity budget (use template) if the change moves funds across financial years – *If the activity budget is changing significantly beyond movement of funds across financial years, then see grant variation type 9 below.*

9. Change to expenditure, including overseas expenditure

This variation type should be used when:

- Delegate pre-approval of that expenditure is required under the grant opportunity guidelines, especially for overseas activity
- changes to grant activity, grant period and/or the grant milestones are being made which materially impact the grant budget
- new expenditure is being requested that was not previously approved and is not functionally equivalent with or does not serve the same purpose as a previously approved expenditure.

Such requests are still subject to what is indicated as eligible and ineligible expenditure in the relevant grant opportunity guidelines and grant agreement.

In addition to the *MRFF Grant variation request form*, an *MRFF Change to expenditure request form* and a revised *MRFF Activity Budget* (using template) must be submitted as supporting documentation for this variation type with an explanation of the exceptional circumstances.

Resources and Contacts

- [MRFF Grant Variation Policy](#)
- [Appendix B: Submitting Medical Research Future Fund \(MRFF\) Grant Variations for MRFF grants administered by Business Grants Hub](#)
- [MRFF Grant variation request form for BGH-administered MRFF grants](#)
- [MRFF Activity Budget template](#) – *for use with variation requests only*
- [MRFF Chief Investigator template](#)
- [MRFF Change to expenditure request form for BGH-administered MRFF grants](#)
- [MRFF Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Strategy](#)
- Contact the Customer Service Manager at BGH using the program-specific email address found in the grant agreement, Grant Details section F *Party representatives and address for notices*