

# Postdoctoral Fellowship 2012



**GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS**

**NATIONAL BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION  
POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP**

**Commencing 2012**

**Application deadline: Close of business 28 July 2011**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are indebted to all our wonderful individual, community and corporate donors, and would like to acknowledge their kind support for the National Breast Cancer Foundation (NBCF) and their commitment to research into the prevention and cure of breast cancer.

## FUNDING PARTNERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This year we continue our partnership with Cure Cancer Australia Foundation (CCAF). CCAF has agreed to contribute their research funds towards innovative young breast cancer researchers under the NBCF Postdoctoral Fellowship scheme. The Fellows awarded will receive CCAF's contribution of \$90,000 for the first year followed by up to 3 years of NBCF funding of \$90,000 from the second year onwards. Other successful Fellows will receive NBCF funding of \$90,000 p.a. throughout the term of the Fellowship. The awardees of the Fellowships will be recognised as the recipients of 'co-funding from NBCF and CCAF'.



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## **1) About The National Breast Cancer Foundation (NBCF)**

### **1.1. Our mission**

In partnership with the Australian community, the NBCF is leading the pursuit for new knowledge in the prevention and cure of breast cancer.

### **1.2. Our Purpose**

- Support and promote excellent research that is relevant to the causes and the direct care of women and men with breast cancer
- Act as an advocate for breast cancer research
- Facilitate consumer participation in all aspects of our work
- Provide opportunities for all Australians to contribute to breast cancer research.

### **1.3. Our Approach**

To achieve our mission and purpose we are committed to improving breast cancer prevention and treatment by:

- Funding excellent research.
- Maintaining national and international outlooks.
- Advocating responsible use of supporters' funds and time.
- Employing highly professional, caring and capable staff.
- Operating in a flexible non-bureaucratic, innovative, creative and entrepreneurial manner while remaining accountable, measured, strategic and open.
- Using trust, cooperation and dedication to overcome difficulties in the interests of achieving our mission.
- Taking top-level scientific, medical and business advice so we achieve the best possible outcomes on behalf of women.
- Maintaining a caring and professional approach.

## **2) NBCF National Action Plan For Breast Cancer Research**

NBCF committed to a national leadership role in breast cancer research with the publication of the inaugural National Action Plan for Breast Cancer Research and Funding in 2004. This plan, the first for Australia, outlined several actions that researchers believed would accelerate efforts to answer some of the key questions about breast cancer. Since then, NBCF has acted on the majority of these recommendations. Examples of this include addition of Novel Concept Awards and the National Collaborative Breast Cancer Research Program to the NBCF research grant portfolio and establishment of external funding partnerships with Cancer Australia and the Cure Cancer Australia Foundation.

NBCF's ongoing commitment to advocating a nationally coordinated approach to breast cancer research was demonstrated by the publication of a second National Action Plan for Breast Cancer Research in 2010, entitled "Prevention has to Start Somewhere: Our 30-year Challenge". This revision of the plan, including a commitment to work towards its implementation, places prevention of breast cancer clearly on the research agenda.

In order to be effective, research into breast cancer prevention must be conducted across the prevention continuum. This includes research into preventing mortality to reduce deaths from breast cancer, preventing morbidity to improve the lives of those living with breast cancer and preventing the disease itself so that future generations are free from breast cancer.

Applicants are encouraged to read the National Action Plan for Breast Cancer Research “Prevention has to Start Somewhere: Our 30-year Challenge” which can be found on the NBCF website ([www.nbcf.org.au](http://www.nbcf.org.au)).

### **3) NBCF Research Priorities 2011**

Applicants requesting funding from the NBCF are advised to consider the following NBCF research priorities in their applications:

- The needs of all women, and their families, living with a diagnosis of breast cancer. This also includes underserved populations such as women aged less than 50 years, women over 70 years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- All aspects of advanced breast cancer.
- Translational research, with the potential to deliver outcomes that are clinically relevant or otherwise ready to be implemented to facilitate prevention or to improve the care of those with breast cancer.
- Multidisciplinary research, which encourages research across disciplines and academic boundaries.
- Novel health service delivery.

Particular consideration will be given to projects that are innovative, non-duplicative of other efforts and have the potential for national application.

## **4) NBCF Postdoctoral Fellowship**

### **4.1. Aim**

The purpose of the Postdoctoral Fellowships is to provide outstanding researchers who have recently completed a PhD with support to pursue their breast cancer research interests and increase their research capability. The overall aim is to attract, train and retain our most talented breast cancer researchers of the future.

### **4.2. Eligibility**

At the time of application the applicant must:

- Hold an MD or PhD in a health-related field of research.
- Be actively engaged in breast cancer research.
- Have no more than five years postdoctoral experience.
- Be Australian citizens, or hold permanent Australian resident status.
- Nominate an institution and research group different from where they obtained their PhD.
- Incorporate a clear indication of the training component in the application.

Fellowships are tenable within Australia.

### **4.3. Administering Institution eligibility**

Research supported by a NBCF Postdoctoral Fellowship must be operated under the auspices of an Administering Institution. An Administering Institution must comply with the following eligibility criteria:

- The proposed project must be located/managed/operated under the auspices of a University, hospital or major research institution(s) located within Australia
- The institution must have in place, policies and procedures for the management of public funds, for the management of Intellectual Property, for the proper conduct of research in relation to ethics and good scientific conduct
- A single institution must be nominated as the Administering Institution

### **4.4. Selection Criteria**

Selection will involve an assessment of applications against the following criteria:

- The quality of the applicant's academic record.
- The significance of the research proposal to contribute to breast cancer research.
- The quality of the intended research institution, including supervision.

### **4.5. Review Policies**

All applications will be reviewed for completeness and adherence to the guidelines. The NBCF Research Advisory Committee (RAC) and its Postdoctoral Fellowship Peer Review subcommittee (PRC) will score and rank applications based on consideration of the merit as assessed against the selection criteria.

#### **4.6. Amount and Duration**

Postdoctoral Fellowships are available for up to four years at \$90,000 p.a. including salary stipend, oncosts and some research-related expense. This year we continue to announce our partnership with Cure Cancer Australia Foundation (CCAF) who will contribute \$90,000 for the first year of each fellowship.

#### **4.7. Award of Postdoctoral Fellowship**

A decision on Fellowships will be made by December each year and applicants will be notified in a Letter of Offer that will indicate the Funding to be provided. Applicants will be required to advise of the expected commencement date of the Fellowship.

Upon acceptance of the offer, a Funding Agreement will be prepared and issued to the Administering Institution for review and signing.

### **5) Your Responsibilities**

Prior to the initial award of a Postdoctoral Fellowship the NBCF must receive a report from the Administering Institution that facilities and services will be available to Fellow and certification that the institution endorses the application and is willing to administer the Research.

A decision on Postdoctoral Fellowships will be made by December each year and applicants will be advised as soon as possible thereafter. The Administering Institution will be notified in a Letter of Offer that will indicate the Funding to be provided.

Upon acceptance of the offer, a Funding Agreement will be prepared and issued to the Administering Institution for review and signing. A Fellow who does not reply to an Offer of Fellowship by the specified date will forfeit the award in favour of a reserve candidate. Chief Investigators must also advise of the expected commencement date of the Research.

### **6) Privacy and confidentiality**

All documents containing personal information will be handled and protected in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act 1998 (Cth). Personal information may be disclosed only with permission of the individual to whom it relates or where the Act allows.

All information contained in applications, progress and final reports will be regarded as confidential.

## 7) Completion of Application

Please ensure you follow the step-by-step instruction below when filling out the application form. Application forms can be sourced from the NBCF Website [www.nbcf.org.au](http://www.nbcf.org.au)

### Item 1 – Project Title

Please provide a succinct title that captures the key aspects of the proposal.

### Item 3 – Citizenship

Please refer to “Eligibility to hold a Postdoctoral Fellowship.” Applicants must be Australian citizens or have Australian residency at the time of application. Evidence of residency must be provided with your application.

### Item 7 - Budget

Postdoctoral Fellowships are available for up to four years at \$90,000 p.a. including salary stipend, oncosts and some research-related expense.

Please provide a summary of your annual budget under Item 7.

### Item 8 - Project Key Words

Please provide five key words that best describe your project.

### Item 9 - Location of Proposed Study

The research for a Postdoctoral Fellowship must be conducted in Australia. A Postdoctoral Fellow must be a resident of Australia for the duration of the Fellowship. However, this does not preclude periods of collaborative activity being undertaken overseas. Applicants must notify the NBCF if they spend more than three months per year overseas.

### Item 10 – Administering Institution

Please refer to point 4.3 Administering Institution Eligibility. The contact person will be responsible for coordinating the Funding Agreement, invoices and annual reports.

### Item 11 - Public Title and Summary of the Project

Maximum 200 words

Applicants are required to include a brief description of the research proposal, **in LAY TERMS**. It is essential that care is taken to provide a non-scientific summary in **simple, easy-to-understand, non-technical language**, which explains the rationale, research objectives and the relevance to breast cancer.

This non scientific summary will be used for a number of purposes including:

- To facilitate full understanding of the project by the NBCF RAC and PRC members;
- To be used in the production of a range of printed communication materials promoting NBCF Research. These materials may include our website, annual report and media releases.

## **Item 12 – Explanation of Circumstances for Requested Part-Time Fellowship**

### **Full time**

Applications are open to all researchers. Applicants for the NBCF Postdoctoral Fellowship are generally expected to be working full-time on the development of their careers in breast cancer research (at least 80% of their time).

### **Part time**

Applicants contributing less than 100% of their time to the Postdoctoral Fellowship will need to provide a strong justification. In general, applications for part-time (60/40 or minimum 60% time committed to the fellowship) are likely to have a clinical component to their career, such as medicine, nursing and other allied and public health professionals (for example, nursing, psychology, public health, medicine, physiotherapy, veterinary science, social work, pharmacy, engineering and occupational therapy).

For part-time awards, payments are adjusted pro rata to the level of the part-time award. The applicant's employer (e.g. hospital or government agency) is expected to fund the balance of the applicant's time. If the employer's support is withdrawn, the award will terminate unless there is support from another employer for the remaining term of the award. Applicants for part-time awards must submit a written undertaking from their employer confirming that they have an appropriate and complementary salaried position for the period of the award.

If any uncertainty exists regarding the requirements for successful applicants under this rule, please inform the NBCF outlining your circumstances, and we will advise the appropriate course of action.

The Fellow must inform the NBCF of any changes to their work agreement and any long term (more than 1 month) leave. Applications for full or part-time leave will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Fellow's administering institution must agree to the leave and support the application. The requested leave must not exceed a total of one year of full-time equivalent work and the applicant must still be able to achieve the research objectives. The period of the award may be extended for up to one year to offset the leave but there will be no change in the value of the award.

## **Item 13 – Career Chronology**

Please summarise your career under the headings in Item 13 in the application form. Selection will involve an assessment of applications against the following criteria:

- The case made for an innovative approach
- The project's scientific excellence: scientific basis, feasibility, and significance
- The professional background, experience, and achievements of the candidate
- Quality of publications - especially in the recent past
- Training, especially graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.
- Knowledge translation, including commercialisation, clinical application and health policy and practice.

- Current research team and evidence of building and maintaining it.
- Potential to deliver - leadership, collaborations (National/International) and team expansion
- The commitment to and likelihood of an enduring breast cancer research career
- The case made in relation to a shortage of senior researchers in the specific area of research
- Evidence that majority of the proposed work will be in the area of breast cancer.

#### **Item 14 - Summarise Undergraduate and Postgraduate Performance**

Please provide a summary of your education and training. Include honours or equivalent. Transcripts must be included as an attachment. Applicants who have overseas degrees should have their degrees accredited by their institution. Include other professional qualifications during this time, if relevant.

#### **Item 15 - Research Output**

Please provide full titles, authorship, journal, volume, year and pages of your publications within the last 5 years.

#### **Item 18 – Project Proposal**

The proposal should be made up of Aims, Background, Proposed research program (proposed methods and timeframe) and relevant critical references. Include a Gantt Chart.

Please provide a summary table outlining specific Deliverables and Milestones. These are important as they will be used to determine the progress and success of your research project. Milestones should outline significant events or outcomes that you aim to reach throughout the research period. Deliverables are be of a short term nature and should be measurable goals throughout each reporting period (usually annually).

#### **Item 19 – Referees**

Please provide referee reports from the following:

##### **Intended Supervisor**

Each applicant for a Postdoctoral Fellowship should arrange for this report form to be completed by the intended supervisor (without which the application is deemed ineligible). This referee is requested to comment specifically on how their supervision and institution will enhance breast cancer research and the career development of the applicant.

##### **Nominated referee with personal knowledge of the applicant**

This referee is requested to comment specifically on the applicant’s professional research skills and future research potential. Please justify your comments with regard to the applicant’s current research output. Comment also on the potential benefit of the proposed project to breast cancer and the future career development of the applicant.

### **Nominated independent referee, knowledgeable in the proposed field of research**

This referee is requested to comment specifically on the feasibility, originality and quality of the proposed project. Please comment on the potential of the project and the environment of the host institution to enhance breast cancer research and the career development of the applicant. This referee is to have had no substantive professional or private contact with the applicant or to have had any previous or current collaboration with the applicant's recent or future supervisors, but should be knowledgeable in the field of study. The referee should not be at the applicant's current institution.

Referees must complete the blank referee template available on the [www.nbcf.org.au](http://www.nbcf.org.au)

Reports must be submitted in confidence to NBCF as either an electronic version emailed to [research@nbcf.org.au](mailto:research@nbcf.org.au) OR as 3 x hard copies in a sealed envelope posted to the applicant (so they can submit reports within their application paperwork).

NBCF will accept electronic signatures in submitted electronic copies.

### **Item 20 - Funding Pending**

Please provide details of all requests made to other bodies to fund the proposed project, or other projects with major overlaps

### **Item 21 - Common Scientific Outlines**

The Common Scientific Outlines are the result of collaborative effort between the NCI in the US, the NCRI in the UK, and their partners. It is a classification system organised around seven broad areas of scientific interest in cancer research, plus subgroups. The NBCF now requires this to be completed for all applications. Click on the following link to view category descriptions in full. <http://www.cancerportfolio.org/cso.jsp>

Please allocate a percentage weighting to each relevant category. Please note that the total percentage should equal 100%.

### **Item 22 – Clearance Requirements**

Evidence of final ethics clearances is not required at the time of application, however will be required before the project is to commence and prior to research funds being released.

A brief statement of the ethical issues that arise from such experimentation, and an explanation of how these issues will be addressed, must be given. It is not sufficient to note that the 'the Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes/NHMRC Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research will be observed.'

### **Item 23 – 26 – Certifications**

Please arrange for the certifications to be completed. NBCF will accept electronic signatures in the electronic version.

## 8) Administration

### 8.1. How to apply

Applicants must use the NBCF Postdoctoral Fellowship application form. This is available from the NBCF website at: [www.nbcf.org.au](http://www.nbcf.org.au), from Research Investment on 02 8098 4800, or by emailing [research@nbcf.org.au](mailto:research@nbcf.org.au).

### 8.2. Format

- Paper: Single-sided, A4
- Font: 11 point, Arial

### 8.3. Submission date

- Applications must be received by close of business on Thursday 28 July 2011
- Three hard copies, stapled and hole punched of the application should be lodged with the NBCF Research Investment
- Applicants must submit an electronic version (Microsoft Word or PDF) of the application to [research@nbcf.org.au](mailto:research@nbcf.org.au)

### 8.4. Timeline

Milestone	Timetable
Call for full applications	6 May 2011
Full applications close	28 July 2011
Peer Review	August - November 2011
Advice to applicants	From 1 December 2011
Commencement	From 1 January 2012

### 8.5. Addresses

*Courier address*  
Grants Administrator  
National Breast Cancer Foundation  
Level 9, 50 Pitt Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

*Mail address*  
Grants Administrator  
National Breast Cancer Foundation  
PO Box 4126  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

### 8.6. Enquiries

Enquiries about the NBCF Postdoctoral Fellowship can be directed to the Grant Administrator, NBCF Research Investment at [research@nbcf.org.au](mailto:research@nbcf.org.au), Telephone 02 8098 4800, Fax 02 8098 4801.