

Peer Review: 2026 Early- to Early-Mid-Career Researcher Seed Grants
7-Category Descriptor Scale

Seed Grants of up to \$80,000 each are available for early- to early-mid-career researchers, for projects of up to 18 months addressing (at least) one of our Priority Areas below.

1. Research in priority populations (as defined in the Application Guide) in any stage of care.
2. Translational and implementation research.
3. Long-term community support beyond 6 months post-stroke.
4. Long-term social and emotional wellbeing beyond 6 months post-stroke.

Category	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Category Descriptor	Highest International Quality and Research Performance	Excellent	Highly Competitive	Good	Satisfactory*	Marginal*	Poor*
Notes	<i>It is anticipated that only 1-5% of applications will fall into this category.</i>	<i>The panel regards these applications as in the “absolutely must fund” category. It is anticipated that 5-10% of applications will fall into this category with a maximum of 10% in categories 6 & 7.</i>	<i>The panel regards these applications as in the “strong desire to fund” category. It is anticipated that approximately 15% of applications will fall into this category.</i>	<i>The panel regards these applications as in the “fundable” category, budgetary restrictions aside. It is anticipated that approximately 25% of applications will fall into this category.</i>	<i>*It is anticipated that approximately 50% of applications will fall into categories 1, 2 or 3.</i>		
Criteria:							
Relevance See Sections 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, and 2.6	The planned research: • directly targets one of the priority areas of research listed above • is outstanding in the degree to which recruitment is inclusive across diverse groups • has very advanced procedures in place to ensure participation of people with lived experience and/or community	The planned research: • directly addresses one of the priority areas of research listed above • is excellent in the degree to which recruitment is inclusive across diverse groups • has advanced procedures in place to ensure participation of people with lived experience and/or community	The planned research • addresses one of the priority areas of research listed above • is very good in the degree to which recruitment is inclusive across diverse groups • has adequate procedures in place to ensure some participation of people with lived experience and/or community	The planned research • although it addresses one of the priority areas of research listed above, this is only 40-60% of the focus of the application • is adequate in the degree to which recruitment is inclusive across diverse groups • has little or no established procedures to promote participation of people with lived experience and/or community	Category 3 includes applications which, budgetary restrictions aside, are fundable, based on a satisfactory research approach and design. There is no question that the applicant(s) will be able to undertake the research. However, on balance the application is one that is not competitive in the Stroke Foundation round this year.	These applications display a number of good features but are not competitive.	Unfundable grants (reasons must be clearly articulated to applicants).
Research Program See Section 2	The proposal has a research plan that : • is well-defined , highly coherent and strongly developed. • has a near flawless study design. • is highly feasible with all of the required expertise, research tools and techniques established. • would be highly competitive with the best, similar research proposals internationally.	The proposal has a research plan that : • is clearly defined , coherent and well developed. • has a strong study design. • is feasible with all required tools, techniques and expertise established. • is likely to be competitive with strong, similar research proposals internationally.	The proposal has a research plan that : • is generally clear in its scientific plan and is logical. • raises only a few minor concerns with respect to the study design. • is feasible in all, or almost all areas - required techniques and tools either established or nearly established. • may not be highly competitive with similar research proposals internationally.	The proposal has a research plan that : • is generally solid in its scientific plan, but may not always be clear in its intent and may lack some focus. • raises several concerns regarding the study design. • raises doubts about the feasibility in some areas. • is not likely to be competitive with similar research proposals internationally.			
Impact As a guide, please consider Sections 1.7 and 2	The planned work will result in a highly significant advance in knowledge which addresses an issue of great importance to the prioritised area of stroke and will translate into fundamental outcomes in the science and practice of clinical medicine, public health, or in health policy. The planned research: • will almost certainly result in highly influential publications • will almost certainly be the subject of invited plenary presentations at national and international meetings, often with relevance across several fields. • is highly innovative and introduces advances in concept(s) • will use very advanced approaches which will optimize outcomes nationally	The planned work will result in a significant advance in knowledge which addresses an issue of importance to the prioritised area of stroke and is likely to translate into fundamental outcomes in the science and practice of clinical medicine, public health, or in health policy. The planned research: • will likely result in influential publications • will likely be the subject of invited plenary presentations at international and national meetings. • is highly innovative in concept • will use advanced approaches to enhance outcomes with wide reach	The planned work will advance knowledge in this field which addresses an issue of importance to the prioritised area of stroke and may translate into fundamental outcomes in the practice of clinical medicine, public health or in health policy. The planned research • is likely to result in some very strong publications • could be the subject of invited plenary presentations at international and national meetings • is innovative in concept • Will use well established approaches to good effect with potential for wide reach	The planned work may incrementally advance knowledge which addresses an issue of some importance to the prioritised area of stroke, but is unlikely to translate into fundamental outcomes in the practice of clinical medicine, public health or in health policy. The planned research • may result in some good but not excellent publications • Is unlikely to be the subject of invited plenary sessions at international meetings • less solid in concept • Will in the main use standard approaches with somewhat limited reach			
Team Track Record See Section 3	Relative to opportunity , the applicant(s): • has expertise that specifically targets the proposed research both in terms of its depth and/or breadth. • has over the last 7 years, a combined record of research achievement quality and productivity and/or translation into practice that is outstanding by international standards commensurate with their field of research. • if junior members are involved they are supported by outstanding senior members who will provide a very strong mentoring environment.	Relative to opportunity, the applicant(s): • has expertise that is highly relevant to the proposed research both in terms of its depth and/or breadth. • has over the last 7 years, a combined record of research achievement quality and productivity and/or translation into practice that is excellent by international standards commensurate with their field of research. • if junior members are involved they are supported by excellent senior members who will provide a strong mentoring environment.	Relative to opportunity, the applicant(s): • has expertise that is relevant to the proposed research, and there are only minor concerns regarding the depth and/or breadth of expertise. • has over the last 7 years, a combined record of research achievement quality and productivity and/or translation into practice which places it well above average for their peers or cohort. • if junior members are involved they are supported by members with very good and growing reputations who may provide some mentoring	Relative to opportunity, the applicant(s): • has expertise that is relevant to the proposed research, but there are some significant concerns regarding the depth and/or breadth of expertise. • has, over the last 7 years, a combined record of research achievement quality and productivity and/or translation into practice, that places them at an average level for their peers/cohort. • if junior members are involved they are supported by members with good and growing reputations, but there is little or no evidence of a mentoring framework to support them			