



# **2023 FightMND Research Fellowship – Early-Career**

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# Acronyms and Definitions

**Administering Institution:** Organisation responsible for administration of the fellowship, and the receipt and distribution of fellowship funds. An Early-Career Research Fellowship can have either one or two Administering Institution(s).

**Applicant:** Researcher leading the research – the Primary Investigator (PI), who is responsible for the overall direction of the fellowship, completion and lodgement of the application, and progress and reporting on the fellowship and research activity. The applicant must obtain written commitment from their laboratory Head(s) and Heads of Departments/Administering Institution(s), and must assume responsibility for undertaking and completing the activities outlined in the application. Where research activity for the fellowship involves multi-site research, the applicant must obtain written commitment from all Heads of Departments/Administering Institution(s) of collaborative partners and co-Investigators not within the Administering Institution(s).

**Collaboration and Collaborator/Collaborative Partner(s):** All people, Investigators and Organisations involved in the research activity for the Early-Career Research Fellowship are considered to be collaborators. Collaboration may be between a combination of disciplines, Departments and/or Organisations and can include Organisations or individuals that provide specific resources that contribute to the research. Collaborators may be directly involved in the conduct of the fellowship's research activity but are not responsible for the direction and progress of the research. By encouraging collaborative agreements, FightMND is seeking that researchers consider looking beyond their discrete Departments, Organisations and disciplines, and to seek out people who may be doing similar research. This may allow for stronger and higher quality research proposals and reduce research duplication.

**Career Disruption:** A career disruption involves a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work, due to: Parental leave; Major illness/injury; or Carer responsibilities.

**ECRF:** Early-Career Research Fellowship.

**Early-Career Researcher (ECR):** A post-doctoral researcher who has obtained their PhD within the last 5 years (excluding career disruption). PhD completion letters from Universities or Institutions must be submitted with applications to provide evidence of date of completion. ECRs must be within 5 years of PhD completion at the time applications are due.

**Goods and Services Tax:** Goods and Services Tax (GST) imposed in accordance with the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999*, and related Acts and Regulations. GST will be paid on top of grant amounts where appropriate. This will be determined by the Administering Institution's GST status.

**Laboratory Head(s):** Head of the Laboratory in which the Early-Career Research Fellow will perform their research. The Laboratory Head will provide laboratory space, equipment and support to the Early-Career Research Fellow.

**Motor Neurone Disease (MND):** For the purposes of these Early-Career Research Fellowships, the definition of MND includes the following progressive neurological disorders that selectively target motor neurons: Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS); Primary Lateral Sclerosis (PLS); Progressive Muscular Atrophy (PMA); Progressive Bulbar Palsy; and Pseudobulbar Palsy.

**Sponsor:** An individual with expertise in the MND field who may work in the same or different laboratory or even a different Institute or Organisation. They will be prepared to act as a mentor to the Fellow throughout the term of the awarded fellowship.

**Supporting Host Institution:** The Institution that will host the ECRF for two years and is not named as the Administering Institution. For ECRFs with one (1) Administering Organisation, the Supporting Host Institution is the Institution where the Fellow is based for either Years 1 and 2 of the ECRF, or the final two years of the ECRF (as selected in the ECRF application).

**Translational Research:** Research facilitating the transfer or translation of new basic knowledge of disease mechanisms gained in the laboratory into the development of new methods for the treatment and/or prevention of MND in humans.

Within this scope, research projects may include:

- the preclinical development of new treatments and interventions for MND; and/or
- testing the effectiveness of treatments for MND



# Introduction

## FightMND call for proposals:

In 2022, FightMND launched a new battleground for outstanding researchers focused on defeating Motor Neurone Disease. Over a 3 year period (2022-2024) FightMND's Research Capacity Building program is supporting Australian MND researchers through competitive scholarships and fellowships at all stages of their career. This program will provide the stability, certainty and environment that is essential for the most promising and elite research to thrive, flourish, and significantly impact MND.

## Early-Career Research Fellowship (ECRF)

FightMND supports biomedical research in the field of Motor Neurone Disease (MND) in all relevant research disciplines. The objective of this FightMND Non-Clinical Fellowship is to support research aimed at understanding the causes of MND, elucidating disease mechanisms and facilitating the translation of therapeutic strategies from the laboratory to the clinic. Additionally, FightMND aims to attract and retain promising scientists within the field of MND research.

We invite post-doctoral, ECRs (within 5 years following awarding of their PhD, excluding career disruption) with relevant experience, who are ready to lead a research project as Primary Investigator, to apply for this ECRF.

This is a 4-year full-time Fellowship.

**APPLICATIONS OPEN:**  
03 November 2022

**APPLICATIONS DUE:**  
16 March 2023 at 17:00 AEDT

**RECIPIENTS NOTIFIED:**  
July 2023

Support will not normally exceed 4 years and applicants should submit proposals that are focused and compatible with a 4-year time frame, and compatible with performing research at two Research Institutions (or independent laboratories) for a period of two years per Institution (or laboratory).

**Reporting is an important requirement of FightMND Fellowships (see Terms and Conditions 15). Please consider this when planning your research and experiments.**

*FightMND only supports work carried out in bona fide research institutions.*

# Objectives

## Purpose of the FightMND Early-Career Research Fellowship

The FightMND ECRF is aimed at supporting researchers with outstanding ability to choose or continue to focus on MND as their selected field of endeavour. The essential purpose of this fellowship is to provide the opportunity for an early-career MND researcher (within 5 years of their PhD being awarded) with relevant experience and demonstrated expertise and ability, to apply for funding in their own name, build collaborations and further establish themselves as a MND researcher.

Researchers with more than 5 years post-doctoral experience may be eligible to apply for a **FightMND Mid-Career Research Fellowship**.

Research proposals should be aimed at understanding the causes of MND and elucidating disease mechanisms, with the ultimate goal of developing more effective treatments for MND. Proposals from both discovery and translational stages of research will be considered.

## FightMND Early-Career Research Fellowship

This research fellowship will provide full-time training in discovery and/or translational research within the field of MND, that will be based in Australia. The initial two years should be undertaken at an Institution that is different to the Institution in the final two years. Applicants may also propose to undertake the entire fellowship at the same Institution, in two independent laboratories.

## Financial Structure of ECRFS - Salary, Allowances and Budget

ECRFs will provide support to Fellows for a period of four (4) years, up to a value of **\$585,000 AUD**.

- ECRF Salary - \$120,000 per year (inc. salary oncosts – e.g. superannuation, payroll tax, work cover);
- Direct Research Costs - \$50,000 per year in years 3 and 4 of the ECRF;
- National Relocation Costs – up to \$5000 (receipts to be provided to FightMND for approval and reimbursement).



# Eligibility Criteria

## Applicants

Applications are invited from prospective Fellows for research based in Institutions in Australia, where the initial two years should be undertaken at an Institution or laboratory that is different to the Institution or laboratory in the final two years. A proportion (6 months max.) of research activity outside of Australia may be permitted where justified (see below).

Eligible candidates and projects for the ECRF must fulfill the following criteria:

- I. Applicants must be an ECR (within 5 years of their PhD being awarded at time applications are due) with an emerging and developing track record of research impact and output in MND research or related neuroscience research.
- II. Applicants are expected to demonstrate outstanding research ability and potential for independent thought.
- III. Proposals must be MND-focused.
- IV. Within the scope of the fellowship, the research plan demonstrates a “bench-to-bedside” potential for outcomes obtained focused on understanding disease and/or disease control or cure.
- V. Where possible, the fellowship’s research activity demonstrates a collaborative approach where applicants will seek to conduct team-based research and collaborate with more senior colleagues to develop their research career in MND.

VI. Research activity of successful fellowship applications **must primarily** be conducted in an Australian institution. A proportion of research activity (6 months max.) may be conducted at a research Institution overseas if justified (note costs of travel, accommodation, insurance etc for overseas research activity are not covered by the FightMND ECRF). At the time of submission, the applicant may be based overseas.

VII. Applicants/Laboratory Heads and their Institutions must commit to funding all on-costs and administrative overheads as a contribution to the fellowship and research activity. 100% of FightMND’s funding towards the salary component of the ECRF must be spent on the full-time salary and support of the Fellow (salary on-costs e.g. superannuation, payroll tax, work cover can be included).

VIII. Capital equipment, depreciation, or maintenance of equipment will not be funded by awarded FightMND Early-Career Research Fellowships.

IX. Any other actual or proposed sources of funding to support the Fellow and research activity relevant to the application must be disclosed.

The research activity outlined in, and directly associated with, the ECRF application can commence as soon as the fellowship is awarded and **must** commence within 3 months of the agreed start date (or the fellowship shall lapse).

# Laboratory Heads and Administering Institution

While the prospective Fellow will be the primary applicant, the Heads of Laboratories in which they intend to work must be named as co-applicants, and provide guarantee that suitable space, facilities and equipment resources are available for the duration of the ECRF. The Laboratory Heads must be prepared to commit time to support and advise the prospective Fellow. Applicants must also nominate the Administering Institutions that will be responsible for the monitoring of the ECRF.

**Letters of support from the Laboratory Heads and Administering Institutions must be submitted with the application.**

Applicants must select and provide details for:

- Two Administering Institutions, the first being the Institution that the Fellow will be based over years 1 and 2 of the fellowship, and the second the Institution the Fellow will be based over years 3 and 4 of the fellowship; or
- Each Institution, nominating one as the Administering Institution and the other as the Supporting Host Institution. The Fellow can be based at the Administering Institution during the first two years, or years 3 and 4, of the ECRF.

It is recommended (but not mandatory) that a co-applicant additional to Laboratory Heads is named as “sponsor”. This individual may work in the same or different laboratory or even a different Institute. They will be prepared to act as a mentor to the Fellow throughout the term of the ECRF. **A letter of support from this “sponsor” should be submitted with the application.**

Both the Laboratory Heads and Sponsor must have contracts of employment that extend beyond the proposed end date of the ECRF.

# Collaborators

Where the viability of a research project depends on collaboration/involvement with investigators not named as applicants, the exact role of the collaborator(s) should be clearly stated and confirmation from each collaborator indicating their willingness to participate must be enclosed with the full application.



# Privacy, Conflict of Interest

## Privacy and Confidentiality

All information contained in applications forwarded to FightMND will be regarded as confidential. Documents containing personal information will be handled and protected in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic). Personal information will only be disclosed with the permission of the individual to whom it relates, or where the Act allows.

Applicants consent to the information supplied as part of their ECRF application being disclosed for the purposes of its evaluation and administration. Such disclosure includes but is not limited to independent reviewers/assessors, the FightMND Grant Review Panel (GRP), the FightMND Board, and relevant employees of FightMND involved in the administration and review process for the ECRF application.

Applicants acknowledge that announcement of the awarded ECRF will involve a dissemination of information to the public about the general nature of the ECRF and its research.

## Conflict of Interest – Reviewers and GRP

FightMND requires its independent reviewers and the GRP to act in an ethical manner, declare conflicts of interest, and withdraw from considering applications where such conflict does or may exist.

## Acknowledgement of Support

Successful applicants are required to acknowledge FightMND in any publications, public announcements, media, and scientific meeting presentations or discussion forums pertaining to research conducted. FightMND materials, logos, and images can be supplied for this purpose, if required.



# Application Procedure

ECRF proposals are submitted to FightMND and are independently peer-reviewed prior to consideration by the FightMND GRP. As part of the review process, applicants may also be required to complete a presentation to a review panel, including people with lived experience of MND. Funding recommendations are then considered by the FightMND Board.

Key factors in the determination of awarding an ECRF will include the:

- i) Research track record of the applicant;
- ii) Quality and strength of the research project/ plan; and
- iii) Alignment of the project and applicant towards the core aims and mission of FightMND.

## Submission of Applications (New in 2023)

FightMND will only accept applications submitted via the Fluxx Grant Management System, which can be accessed at the following link <https://fightmnd.fluxx.io>.

All administrative information and project proposals as outlined below are to be entered into the application forms in Fluxx. Resources are available to help you with this new submission procedure.

- How to register a new user account in Fluxx (manual)
- How to submit an Early-Career Research Fellowship in Fluxx (written manual)
- How to submit an Early-Career Research Fellowship in Fluxx (guided video)

If you experience any issues or have questions regarding the submission process, please contact the FightMND Cure team at [researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au)

## Requirements for Applications

Applications must include the following:

### Application Form

Details on the application form will be entered directly in to the Fluxx Grant Management System, and will include the following details:

- Applicant, Laboratory Heads, and Sponsor.
- Title of fellowship.
- Administering Institution information.
- Name of the Research Institutions where the fellowship and research will be undertaken.
- Other collaborators (not listed as Investigators).
- Details of any career disruptions where relevant (max 100 words per disruption), including upload of supporting evidence.
- **A lay summary** of the ECRF and research suitable for media release if the application is successful (300 characters).
- **A lay summary** of the ECRF and research suitable for publication on the FightMND website and newsletter if the application is successful (1500 characters).
  - Provide background information necessary for readers without scientific or medical training to understand the rationale and feasibility of the proposed research. It should also clearly describe the scientific objective the research is designed to achieve.
- Statement on the potential **IMPACT** of the fellowship and research (1250 characters).

## Project Proposals

Proposals must be uploaded as a single pdf file onto Fluxx (max 5MB) and contain the following details:

### Background and Project Plan

(max. 4 pages).

Include:

- Research Aims and Hypotheses;
- Background/Supporting Data;
- Research plan; and
- Description of the potential impact of the research.

### References

(max. 2 pages).

### Curriculum Vitae

(max. 2 pages).

- Provide a CV of max. 2 pages for the ECRF applicant, including details of community engagement.

### Letters of Support

#### ▪ Administering Institutions

Provide a letter of support from each Administering Institution confirming that appropriate infrastructure, equipment, and consumables will be available and provided for the proposed project to completion.

#### ▪ Supporting Host Institutions

Provide a letter of support from the Supporting Host Institution confirming that appropriate infrastructure, equipment, and consumables will be available and provided for the proposed project to completion.

#### ▪ Laboratory Heads

Provide a letter of support from each Laboratory Head, outlining their willingness to mentor the Fellow, the suitability and potential impact that the Fellow will have on their laboratory and MND, and detailing how their support will benefit the Fellow's career aspirations in MND research.

## Referees

- Provide names and contact details of **two** academic referees. A letter of support from each is required. At least one of the referees should be independent.
- In their letter, referees should comment on:
  - Whether the applicant has the expertise to pursue the proposed research program;
  - How they see the applicants future in Australian research;
  - The applicants position relative to peers – relative to opportunity;
  - Particular achievements of the applicant making them worthy of this award;
  - Their views on the quality of the research proposal.

Referees may choose to provide their letter of support in one of the following ways:

- 1) As part of this application. Referees will provide their letters of support to the applicant, who will attach the two letters to the pdf file; or
- 2) Directly to FightMND, by email to [researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au).

The Letter of Support (LoS) from each referee must be received by the due date of the application. In the subject line of the email, please include the Applicant's Surname and the phrase 'ECRF LoS'.

### Collaborators not Named as Investigators

- Where the viability of the ECRF depends on collaboration/involvement with researchers or investigators not named as Investigators on the application, the exact role of the collaborator(s) should be clearly stated within the Background and Project Plan section of the application, and a confirmation letter (email) from each collaborator indicating their willingness to participate must be attached to the full application.



## **Declaration of Research Funding from Other Sources**

Details of research funding obtained from other sources (actual or proposed) that relate to the ECRF's Hypothesis, Aims and Research Plan must be declared.

Include:

- Investigator, and Title of other Application;
- Funding Source/Organisation and Application ID;
- Role of Investigator on other Application;
- Total amount requested;
- Status – i.e. funded/under consideration.

**The following components are to be uploaded in to the Fluxx application form separately to the project proposal:**

## **PhD Completion**

- Provide evidence of the date that PhD was accepted (note: this is the date of the letter notifying your PhD was accepted/passed, and not the date of graduation).

## **Timeline**

(max. 1 page).

- Include a detailed timeline for the research during the fellowship period, in Gantt chart format. Explanations relating to the timeline of the project, order of experiments and feasibility may be included.
- Note: An extension of the body of the 'Background and project plan' into the timeline page will make the application ineligible.

## **Budget**

- Provide an itemised budget with breakdown of annual expenditure, for the \$50,000 AUD allocated towards direct research costs per year in years 3 and 4 of the ECRF. This is entered into an excel spreadsheet template downloaded from the Fluxx application form (see page 7 of instruction manual, or instruction video at 4:05).

AND

- Provide a high-level budget summary of total expenditure per year for the \$50,000 AUD allocated towards direct research costs per year in years 3 and 4 of the ECRF, entered directly into Fluxx (see page 6 of instruction manual, or instruction video at 4:50).

Budget items **can** include:

- Direct research costs (reagents, consumables, etc);
- Travel for attendance and participation at academic conferences (max. \$5,000 during years 3 and 4);
- Costs that enable open access for publications relevant to the ECRF (but no other publication costs).

Budget items **cannot** include:

- Equipment;
- Indirect, overhead or oncosts of the Administering/Host Institutions.

## **Confirmation of Budget Prior to Commencing Year 3**

No less than ninety (90) days prior to commencing year 3 of the ECRF, the Fellow must confirm the itemised budget for years 3 and 4 with FightMND. Updates to the itemised budget provided with the application will be allowed where justified for the research to be carried out during years 3 and 4 of the ECRF. An updated breakdown of annual expenditure will be required if the original budget requires modification.

## How to Submit (New in 2023)

**All applications are to be submitted through the FightMND Grant Management System Fluxx (<https://fightmnd.fluxx.io>).**

- Select “Fellowship grants” then “Apply for a grant – ECR Fellow” in the Fluxx Grant Management System to access the Early-Career Fellowship application form;
- The PROJECT PROPOSAL should be submitted as a single PDF (minimum size 12 font – calibri preferred, minimum 1 cm page margins), uploaded into the Application form on the Fluxx Grant Management System (pdf size not to exceed 5MB);

The PROJECT PROPOSAL should include the following components:

- Background and Project Plan;
- References;
- Applicants Curriculum Vitae;
- Letters of support from the Laboratory or Department Head, and Administering Institution;
- Name and Contact details of two Referees
- Referee Letter's of Support (if submitting with the application);
- Collaborators not named as Investigators;
- Declaration of research funding from other sources;
- The EVIDENCE OF PHD ACCEPTANCE, TIMELINE and BUDGET should be uploaded separately into the Application form in the Fluxx Grant Management System.

Application deadlines are described in this guideline.

**Applications will NOT be accepted if submitted via email**



# Reporting

Funding recipients will be required to submit reports on a regular basis via the Fluxx Grant Management System (details will be provided to successful applicants). The reporting schedule is outlined in the following table.

REPORT	REPORTING FREQUENCY	DUE
Progress against pre-determined milestones and/or targets *	6-monthly	Every 6 months from receipt of funds
Financial Reports (to be included in progress report) *	Annually	Every 12 months from the receipt of funds
Final Report	Once Only	At project completion, or within 12 weeks after project completion
Ad hoc reports *	As requested by FightMND	On request with a negotiable time frame not greater than six weeks
FightMND Research Symposium Presentation	Biennially	During FightMND Research Symposium

\* These reports will be used to assess whether the ECRF is proceeding satisfactorily, whether funds are being acquitted in accordance with the original application goals, and to ascertain the ongoing value of FightMND funding.

Funding may be suspended if progress is considered unsatisfactory, or if funds have not been utilised in accordance with the ECRF Agreement.



# Terms and Conditions

## FightMND Grants

### Terms and Conditions

All communication concerning FightMND Grant applications and administration should be addressed to The FightMND Cure Team, by email to [researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au).

#### 1. Funding Arrangements

1.1. FightMND research Grants are time-limited and applicants should ensure that proper consideration is given to this in the proposal. When the project is approved in principle, the initial sum awarded by FightMND will be for the first six (6) months only. Approval of funding for subsequent invoices at six (6) monthly intervals will be subject to availability of funds and the receipt, from the awarded Fellow and/or Administering Institution, of satisfactory project progress and financial reports. Members of the FightMND team and Board will review progress reports to decide outcomes.

1.2. If the applicant under-spends in any year, FightMND can, at its discretion, give approval for the balance to be carried into the following year. Expenditure beyond the end date will only be permitted if authorised by FightMND in advance. Requests must be made by contacting FightMND at least eight weeks prior to the original completion date, by email to the FightMND Cure Team at [researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au).

1.3. The value of an ECRF is up to \$585,000 AUD. Funds are for the full-time salary support of the Fellow of \$120,000 AUD per annum for 4 years (inc. salary oncosts – e.g. superannuation, payroll tax, work cover). Research costs for the first two years must be covered through other funding sources. For the final two years of the ECRF \$50,000 AUD per annum is awarded for direct research costs, which may include reagents and consumables (etc), travel for attendance and participation at academic conferences (max. \$5,000 AUD per ECRF), and costs that enable open access for publications relevant to the ECRF (but no other publication costs). Budget items cannot include equipment or indirect, overhead or oncosts of the institution. It is assumed and mandatory that the usual equipment, facilities, consumables and materials are available at the research institute/organisation where research activity is to be undertaken. For an Australian based ECRF, up to \$5,000 AUD has been allocated towards National Relocation Costs for the Fellow (receipts must be provided to FightMND for approval and reimbursement, by email to The FightMND Cure Team at [researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au)).

1.4. FightMND will not meet indirect or overhead costs or on-costs of the Administering Institution, such as: general travel, finance services, staff facilities, staff development, public relations, institutional libraries, routine secretarial work, personnel services, stationery or contributions to general departmental costs, and publication costs (except for those necessary to enable open access for publications).

1.5. Conference attendance: FightMND will allow up to \$5,000 (AUD) per annum towards the cost of relevant conference attendance and participation by the Fellow to be drawn from the total sum awarded (i.e. from salary allocation during Years 1 and 2 of the ECRF, and from salary or direct research cost allocation during Years 3 and 4 of the ECRF. Note max. \$5,000 AUD may be drawn from direct research costs per ECRF for conference attendance). This may be used during the life of the fellowship towards the costs of registration fees and travel, but not to cover separate hotel accommodation or other subsistence costs. Invoices, receipts or other evidence of spending must be provided. The Fellow is encouraged to present their work. The Fellow is expected to attend at least one relevant meeting per year.

1.6. Payment of instalments is conditional on receipt and approval of satisfactory progress and financial reports (see Terms and Conditions 1.1 and 15.1).

1.7. Funding from other sources: financial support for clearly defined aspects of a project from separate funding sources is permitted under FightMND grants. Such supplementary funding must be disclosed at the time of the grant application or at the time such funding is received.

## **2. Equipment**

2.1. FightMND will not fund any equipment purchased as part of a FightMND Grant.

## **3. Ethical Considerations**

3.1. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to have ethical committee approval for all or part of the planned research. This should ideally be in place at the time of applying for funding.

3.2. Approvals must be received, and copies provided to FightMND upon request, prior to the Fellowship commencing.

## **4. Personal Direction of the Project**

4.1. It is expected that the Fellow and named Laboratory Heads will be actively engaged in directing the FightMND Fellowship research activity. Continued use of FightMND funds during a prolonged absence of either the Fellow and relevant Laboratory Heads requires written agreement to continue the research under the direction of another qualified Investigator, ideally

obtained prior to the absence. The Fellow, Head of Department, or an approved representative of the Administering Institution must apply to and notify FightMND by email to the FightMND Cure Team at [researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au), with an explanation of the situation, providing details of the arrangements for conducting the research during their absence (see Terms and Conditions 11.2).

## **5. Recruitment and Employment of Staff**

5.1. FightMND does not act as employer and, therefore, in all cases where financial support is provided for the employment of staff, the Administering Institution undertakes to issue a contract of employment in accordance with any other relevant Act relating to the conditions of employment.

5.2. FightMND will not be responsible for claims under statute or at common law, nor will they indemnify the Administering Institution against a claim for compensation or against any claims for which the Institution may be liable as an employer or otherwise.

## **6. Staff Management Responsibility**

The Administering Institution must accept full responsibility for:

6.1. The management, monitoring and control for all staff (permanent, temporary and students) employed or involved in any research funded by a FightMND fellowship;

6.2. The management, monitoring and control of all research work funded as a result of a FightMND grant.

## **7. Termination of Employment**

7.1. If the tenure of the appointment of staff recruited to work on the FightMND-supported project continues beyond the defined period of the Grant, the Administering Institution will be solely responsible for all costs beyond the period of the Grant. FightMND accepts no liability for contracts and costs extending beyond the defined Grant period.

## 8. Employment Term Contracts

8.1. Where members of staff have been under contract to the Administering Institution prior to the activation of the FightMND Grant, FightMND will not reimburse costs attributed to any prior commitment. This includes any redundancy payments due for service prior to the Grant period.

8.2. The contract of employment offered must not extend beyond the termination of the Grant (unless the Administering Institution wishes to extend the contract at its own expense).

## 9. Parental and Other Long-Term Leave

9.1. The Administering Institution will meet the cost of any long-term leave, other than holiday, and will ensure that all annual leave entitlement is taken within the Grant period. Long-term leave may include parental or long-term sick leave.

9.2. Parental leave is the responsibility of the Administering Institution employing staff undertaking a FightMND-funded project. Leave will be provided according to the Administering Institution's local terms and conditions of employment. The costs of such leave are the responsibility of the Administering Institution and are not provided for by FightMND.

9.3. If a FightMND-funded employee is due to take any planned long-term leave, the ECR Fellow should inform FightMND of the dates in advance. This will enable discussion to decide whether the Grant should be suspended for the period of absence until full-time employment can be resumed (see Terms and Conditions 4 and 11.2). If unplanned long-term leave occurs, the Fellow, Head of Department or an approved representative of the Administering Institution should contact FightMND by email to [researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au) as soon as possible to discuss the situation.

## 10. Activation of an Awarded FightMND Grant

10.1. FightMND Grants are activated on receipt of a signed Grant Agreement and receipt of the first invoice. If, for any reason, the start date of the project is delayed after the Grant Agreement has been returned, FightMND must be informed at once, a Grant Agreement Deed of Variation form completed, and a new start date agreed (see Terms and Conditions 11.2). If necessary, a revised Grant Agreement will need to be completed and returned.

10.2. If the project does not start within three (3) months of the original agreed start date, FightMND may withdraw the grant offer. The applicant and/or Administering Institution will have to reapply for funding in a future grant round, in competition with other applicants at the time.

10.3. Ethical Approval: It is the responsibility of the Fellow to have ethical approval for the proposed research (where required) and this should ideally be in place at the time of applying for funding.

## 11. Change of Terms of an Awarded FightMND Grant

11.1. Reallocation of funds from one expense heading of the approved budget to another, as detailed in the Grant Agreement and budget submitted to FightMND no less than 90 days prior to commencement of year 3 of the ECRF, requires written permission from FightMND.

11.2. Fellows will be required to submit a letter to FightMND detailing any and all proposed changes to the ECRF, and complete a *Grant Agreement Deed of Variation*. Letters/*Deeds of Variation* must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to the changes taking place, and submitted for approval to FightMND by email to The FightMND Cure Team at [researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au). FightMND must be kept informed at all times of any changes to the original Grant funded and the Grant Agreement.

11.3. Any request for major changes in the terms of the grant, e.g. for additional staff or budget items, must be made in the form of a new and separate grant application, which will be considered in competition with all other new applications.



## 12. Changes to Conditions of an Awarded FightMND Grant

12.1. FightMND reserves the right to change the Terms and Conditions of FightMND Grants at any time. If this occurs during the lifetime of a Grant, the revised Terms and Conditions may be applied in place of those issued at the commencement of the Grant.

12.2. Successful applicants will be given at least 8 weeks' notice of any change to conditions of the grant.

## 13. Early Termination of an Awarded FightMND Grant

13.1. FightMND reserves the right to terminate an awarded grant at any time. Circumstances which might lead to termination include:

- Any breach in the Terms and Conditions under which the grant was awarded;
- If the project has not started within three months of the agreed start date;
- The work is diverging markedly from the original approved project. The Fellow, the Laboratory Head or an approved representative of the Administering Institution must inform FightMND immediately when they are aware of a change of direction (see Terms and Conditions 11.2). There may, however, be circumstances in which the change is acceptable on scientific grounds;
- Failure to submit adequate progress reports, or serious and unresolvable problems identified by a site visit; and/or
- Work has stopped on the Grant, or the Fellow has ceased to be actively involved in the project. FightMND must be informed immediately if the situation arises (see Terms and Conditions 11.2).

FightMND will endeavour to give 60 days prior notice before termination of an awarded Grant.

13.2. If a Grant is terminated, FightMND will meet costs properly and necessarily incurred under the Grant Agreement up to the termination date. However, payments will not, in aggregate, exceed the amount of the Grant remaining to be paid at the time of its termination.

13.3. In the event of work being discontinued by the Administering Institution, written notification must be sent to FightMND, together with a report on the work carried out to date, setting out reasons for the termination.

## 14. Extension to an Awarded FightMND Grant

14.1. It is the responsibility of the Fellow to apply for further support before the end of the Fellowship period, if this is required.

## 15. Reports

15.1. The Fellow is required to submit the following reports, countersigned by the Laboratory Head:

- **Annual progress reports:** due every 12 months from the Grant start date, as stated on the executed Grant Agreement (see Terms and Conditions 1.1). A short summary in language intelligible to the lay reader should also be submitted for possible use in FightMND publications and on the FightMND website;
- **Interim reports:** brief six-monthly reports of no more than three pages on project progress;
- **Final report:** required within twelve weeks after completion of the Fellowship. A detailed final report covering all Fellowship-related research and the Fellow's Career development will be substituted for the annual report. In addition, a summary should also be provided in language intelligible to the lay reader. Fellows must avoid the use of jargon and technical language and should pitch the summary at the level of a science feature in a broadsheet newspaper. The summary may be used in FightMND publications; and
- **FightMND Research Symposium:** the Fellow is required to present progress of the Fellowship research activity annually, and at the FightMND Research Symposium.

15.2. Instalments for the Grant will be paid only after receipt of progress reports and their approval by FightMND. Payment may be delayed if reports are not submitted on time and/or if clarification is required.

15.3. Feedback to people living with MND and/or Carers. All Fellows are encouraged to provide regular information on their research to be circulated by FightMND for patients and carers. Where volunteers are involved in research, Fellows are required to provide regular feedback to the participants and FightMND, in addition to annual reports and publications.

## 16. Site Visits and Progress Meetings

16.1. FightMND reserves the right to visit the Fellow's laboratory during the period of the Grant to discuss research and career development progress, and welcomes invitations to do so.

16.2. The Fellow may be asked to attend six-monthly progress meetings to discuss progress with FightMND representatives and donors. These may be arranged in conjunction with site visits.

16.3. The Fellow may be asked to take part in FightMND communication projects such as video content to help facilitate feedback to FightMND's donors on outcomes related to the Grant.

## 17. Publications, Presentations, Acknowledgments and Publicity

17.1. Fellows are expected to seek publication of findings in refereed journals during and as soon as possible during and after conclusion of the Fellowship (subject to Term and Condition 18). FightMND and the Fellow and/or Administering Institution jointly undertake to notify each other before published reference is made to the findings of the project, and to discuss the form of publication wherever possible.

17.2. Fellows and/or the Administering Institution must inform FightMND immediately when results from FightMND-funded research are accepted for publication or presentation. The Fellow and/or Administering Institution must provide FightMND with reprints, photocopies or electronic copies of the final version of any such publications.

**17.3. Open Access Policy:** Fellows are mandated to make their peer-reviewed papers, directly arising from the Grant, available through open access. These research papers should be available within the PubMed Central repository as soon as possible, but definitely within six months of publication. Costs to enable open access for publications can be included in the project budget during final two years of the ECRF.

### 17.4. Posters – costs and accessibility:

If FightMND-funded research is accepted for presentation as a poster, the costs of poster production may be claimed as part of the consumables budget (to a maximum of \$500 per ECRF). The poster must acknowledge FightMND as a source of funding and should include FightMND's logo. FightMND should be provided with an electronic copy of the poster for use on our website and social media.

17.5. To ensure the long-term sustainability of income for research and to reflect and maintain our reputation for funding research of the highest scientific excellence and of greatest relevance to MND, all opportunities to promote FightMND must be pursued. The Fellow and Administering Institution are obliged to co-operate with FightMND over any publicity or fundraising activity arising from research funded by FightMND. Where it is the main funder of the research, FightMND reserves the right to lead on publicity.

17.6. Fellows and/or the Administering Institution must notify the FightMND Cure Research and Programs Director, Dr Bec Sheean, by email to [bec.sheean@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:bec.sheean@fightmnd.org.au), the FightMND Cure team at [researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au), and the Marketing and Communications Director Anthea Hargreaves at [anthea@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:anthea@fightmnd.org.au), at least five working days in advance of any publicity arising from research wholly or co-funded by a FightMND Grant. FightMND must be given at least 24 hours' notice of any media release in connection with the funded project. Any press release or other material including reference to FightMND-funded research must be approved by our team before it is released to the media.

17.7. In any oral or written report or poster presentation relating to FightMND-funded research, the Fellow and/or author must acknowledge FightMND's support and display the FightMND logo where practical. All references to FightMND-funded work placed on websites, electronic bulletin boards and similar platforms must state clearly that the work is funded by "FightMND" and ideally a link should be included to the FightMND website: [www.fightmnd.org.au](http://www.fightmnd.org.au).

17.8. Fellows must ensure that FightMND's support is acknowledged in all publications, presentations and similar communications. It is essential for Fellows to acknowledge that their research has been supported wholly or in part by FightMND, either in the text or in a footnote. The Grant reference/ID must also be provided.

17.9. When speaking publicly and to representatives of the media about FightMND-funded research, Fellows and researchers should ensure they make it clear to the media and others that they should be presented as a “FightMND-funded scientist”. Fellows and researchers should consult with FightMND’s Cure Research and Programs Director, Dr Bec Sheean, at [bec.sheean@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:bec.sheean@fightmnd.org.au) and Marketing and Communications Director Anthea Hargreaves at [anthea@fightmnd.org.au](mailto:anthea@fightmnd.org.au), before speaking to the media.

17.10. There is a subtle but important difference between speaking as a “FightMND-funded scientist” and acting as a spokesperson for FightMND. Representatives of the media may not always be aware of this difference. Fellows and Researchers who speak to the media must ensure that their personal views are not misrepresented as being attributable to FightMND.

## **18. Patents, Copyright and Other Intellectual Property**

18.1. If ideas, processes or products of potential commercial value are generated as a result of the project, the Fellow and/or Administering Institution must obtain the written consent of FightMND before taking any steps to exploit the results commercially. The Fellow and Administering Institution accept that FightMND may require a share of financial gain in return for its consent. This restriction shall continue to bind the parties notwithstanding any termination of the Grant. For further detail, please see Appendix 1 - Intellectual Property rights and Commercial Activities.

## **19. FightMND Meetings and Events**

19.1. Fellows are asked to make themselves or other appropriate research team members available to report on the Fellowship and its research outcomes at FightMND meetings, fundraising events and occasionally at other times by invitation.

19.2. There may be occasions where the Fellow or other appropriate research team members will be asked to present their work relating to the Fellowship at scientific and/or health care professionals’ meetings.

19.3. When speaking and presenting at FightMND events, Fellows or other appropriate research team members are expected to make it clear in the presentation their funding connection with FightMND.

## **20. FightMND Case Studies**

20.1. Fellows are asked to make themselves available as case studies reflecting the work of FightMND for its wide-ranging communications and fundraising activities.

## **21. Scientific Integrity**

21.1. In the rare event of scientific fraud occurring, FightMND wishes to make it clear that it is the responsibility of the employing authority to investigate any suspected case of fraudulent activity. FightMND agrees to provide funding providing the employing authority can produce evidence of a procedure for dealing with scientific fraud. If fraud should be proven the Grant must be repaid in full to FightMND forthwith.

## **22. Indemnity**

22.1. FightMND does not provide cover for negligent or non-negligent harm for participants in FightMND-funded studies. The Administering Institution should ensure that local arrangements are in place should claims arise.



# Appendix 1

## Intellectual Property Rights and Commercial Activities

As a charity, FightMND is obliged to ensure that the outcomes of its funded research are applied for the public benefit. In some circumstances, this obligation may be best achieved through the protection of Intellectual Property resulting from the research and the facilitation of commercial exploitation of this Intellectual Property. The term 'Intellectual Property' (IP) describes any work or invention that results from original creative thought.

IP falls into different categories:

- Copyright: protects written, dramatic and artistic work, software, films, sound recordings and broadcasts.
- Patents: protects technical inventions, novel products or processes.
- Trademarks: distinguish the goods and services of one organisation from another.
- Design rights: protects the visual appearance of products.

Some of these protections need to be registered (trademarks, patents) and some do not (copyright, design rights). If the IP is not protected, another individual or organisation may copy the design or commercialise and sell the invention without consent or payment.

Therefore, for Grants where FightMND funding may lead to the generation of Intellectual Property, the following additional conditions shall apply:

**1.1.** Any Intellectual Property developed during the course of conducting research supported by FightMND Grants under this agreement (Project IP) shall be owned by the Administering Institution.

**1.2.** The Administering Institution must comply with the National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research by having in place strategies, policies, and procedures for the identification, protection, management, and exploitation of Intellectual Property, including that resulting from funding by charities such as FightMND.

<http://www.arc.gov.au/national-principles-intellectual-property-management-publicly-funded-research>

**1.3.** The Administering Institution should ensure that all persons in receipt of funding from FightMND, or working on funded activity (including employees, students, visiting staff and sub-contractors), are employed or retained on terms that vest in the institution all Intellectual Property arising from funding by FightMND.

**1.4.** The Administering Institution, Fellows, Grant holders, Laboratory Heads, co-Investigators and Sponsors should inform FightMND of any pre-existing arrangements of which they are aware, and which could lead to a breach of FightMND-funded standard conditions. The Institution should take reasonable endeavours to ensure that no consultancies, third party restrictions or arrangements which might impact on a FightMND-funded grant are entered into in relation to any FightMND-funded person or activity without prior agreement of FightMND. FightMND-funded investigators, or individuals involved in a FightMND-funded project, should not use materials or compounds (other than those obtained commercially), on terms which would place restrictions on the publication of the results. Institutions should take reasonable endeavours to ensure that "reach-through claims" have not been granted on any FightMND-funded IP in favour of commercial organisations providing materials or compounds to FightMND-funded individuals for research purposes. However, FightMND recognises that companies providing materials may often require exclusive rights to any Intellectual Property arising from use of that material, and that this requirement is often non-negotiable. Where Intellectual Property arises from research linked indirectly to the use of material provided under such agreement, the provider should be offered a time-limited opportunity to take out a revenue generating licence.

**1.5.** The Administering Institution and Fellows are bound to notify FightMND promptly in writing when new Project IP arises from the Grant and take reasonable steps to ensure that such IP is protected and not published or otherwise disclosed publicly prior to protection (whilst at the same time ensuring that potential delays in publication are minimised).

**1.6.** The Administering Institution should seek FightMND's consent to commercially exploit the results of any research FightMND has funded. Consent will not be unreasonably withheld, and FightMND will only refuse an Administering Institution's request where it considers that the proposed commercial exploitation would run counter to its interests and charitable objectives. In the event that FightMND does not provide a response to the Administering Institution's request within thirty (30) business days, the Institution or its technology transfer subsidiary will automatically have the right to proceed with such commercial exploitation. The Administering Institution is not required to seek FightMND's consent in assigning Intellectual Property to its technology transfer company.

**1.7.** Within thirty (30) business days of receiving the notification from the Administering Institution, and prior to the Administering Institution applying for registration of any Project IP, FightMND will advise the Administering Institution in writing which one of the following financial arrangements will apply in relation to commercialisation of the Project IP:

I. All of the costs associated with commercialising of the Project IP (including patent and legal costs) will be paid by the Administering Institution. Out of any net proceeds received by the Administering Institution from commercialising the Project IP (after all of the Administering Institution's costs associated with commercialising the Project IP have first been deducted), the Administering Institution will pay 10% of all net commercialisation proceeds to FightMND until such time as FightMND has received an amount equal to the amount of the Grant funding provided under this agreement multiplied by five (5).

II. Ten per cent (10%) of the costs associated with commercialising the Project IP (including patent and legal costs) will be paid by FightMND as and when the costs fall due, and the remaining 90% of the commercialisation costs will be paid by the Administering Institution. Out of any net proceeds received by the Administering Institution from commercialising the Project IP (after all the Administering Institution's costs associated with commercialising the Project IP have first been deducted and FightMND's costs have been reimbursed), the Administering Institution will pay 10% of all net commercialisation proceeds to FightMND in perpetuity.

III. FightMND will not seek any payment from the net commercialisation proceeds arising from commercialisation of the Project IP.

**1.8.** If the Administering Institution does not wish to protect, manage or exploit the IP, or fails to comply with the agreed strategy, FightMND may direct the Administering Institution to take steps to protect the IP at the Administering Institution's expense or to transfer the IP to FightMND.

**1.9.** If the Administering Institution wishes to use any third party (other than its recognised technology transfer company) to carry out its obligations with respect to IP, it must notify and provide details to FightMND.