

**FIGHT
MND.**
IT TAKES PEOPLE



**2025 FightMND
Discovery Research Grants**

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Acronyms and Definitions

Administering Institution: Organisation responsible for administration of the research project, and the receipt and distribution of grant funds. A grant can only have one Administering Organisation.

Applicant: Researcher leading the research – the Primary Investigator (PI), who is responsible for the overall direction of the project, leading and supporting co-Investigators (CIs), completion and lodgement of the application, and progress and reporting on the project.

The Applicant must obtain written commitment from their laboratory Head and Heads of Departments/Administering Institution, and must assume responsibility for undertaking and completing the activities outlined in the application. Where the project involves multi-site research, the Applicant must obtain written commitment from all Heads of Departments/Administering Institutions of collaborative partners and co-Investigators not within the Administering Organisation.

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.

Co-Investigator(s): Responsible for carrying out some aspects of the research under the guidance and leadership of the Applicant/Primary Investigator.

Collaboration and Collaborator/Collaborative Partner(s): All people, Investigators and Organisations involved in the Discovery Project are considered to be collaborators. Collaboration may be between a combination of disciplines, Departments and/or Organisations. It includes Organisations or individuals that provide specific resources that contribute to the research. Co-Investigators represent a specific sub-group of collaborators who are directly involved in the conduct of the project but are not responsible for the direction and progress of the project.

By encouraging collaborative agreements, FightMND is asking researchers to consider looking beyond their discrete Departments and Organisations, 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.

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.

Motor Neurone Disease (MND): For the purposes of these grants, the definition of MND includes the following progressive neurological disorders that destroy motor neurons: Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS); Primary Lateral Sclerosis (PLS); Progressive Muscular Atrophy (PMA); Progressive Bulbar Palsy; and Pseudobulbar Palsy.

Introduction

This document provides guidelines and information for the FightMND Discovery Grant scheme in 2025. Applicants should familiarise themselves with all areas prior to commencing an application.

FightMND call for proposals

Discovery Grant applications in support of novel, innovative projects seeking to discover and understand the cause/s of MND. Outcomes should provide significant advancements to the current understanding of MND.

Key Dates and Contacts

Applications open:
05 December 2024

Applications due:
24 March 2025, at 17:00pm AEDT

Recipients notified:
August 2025

FightMND Discovery Grants should be focused on defining the underlying cause/s of MND; and/or understanding the fundamental disease mechanisms that contribute to the progression of the disease in order to more effectively treat MND. FightMND Discovery Grants aim to support collaborative projects that challenge and advance current paradigms, and/or significantly progress the way that research dedicated to discovering a cure for MND is conducted.

FightMND Discovery Grants are offered to a value of between **AUD \$250,000 and \$1,000,000** in support for 3 years (projects being sought for less than 3 years will also be considered). Support will not normally exceed 3 years. Applicants should submit proposals that are focused and compatible with a 3-year time period. Continuation of a Discovery Grant will be subject review and approval by FightMND of satisfactory progress reports, which are required at six monthly intervals (**see Terms and Conditions 1.1 and 15**). **Please consider this when planning your experiments and project timelines.**

FightMND only supports work carried out in bona fide Research Institutions.

Discovery Grant Research Objectives

Discovery Grant projects must clearly aim to resolve one or more current unknowns in the MND research sector, focused on discovering why MND occurs and what contributes to its progression. Ultimately, outcomes should provide significant advancements in the understanding of MND, and substantially increase the likelihood of an acceleration in the development of more effective treatments or cure for MND.

Areas for investigation may include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying/Understanding the origins, fundamental cause/s and risk factors of MND through clinical, genetics and environmental/lifestyle studies.
- Understanding the molecular basis and disease causing mechanisms of MND including: genetics, protein misfolding and aggregation, toxicity, cell stress and immune response as well as novel disease mechanisms.
- Understanding how and why disease progresses in MND.
- Discovery of **novel** biomarkers of disease progression, prognosis, progression or stratification.

Applications should identify and clearly outline the impact of the proposal for people living with MND.

Applications must identify any barriers to the future implementation of research outcomes, and strategies for overcoming these barriers. Projects must demonstrate meaningful impact on a larger scale to be competitive.



Eligibility Criteria

Primary and Co-Investigators

- Investigators at all academic levels are eligible to submit applications..
- The applicant must be the Primary Investigator and have the lead role in directing the project.
- The level of contribution and role of the Primary Investigator and Co-investigators must be clearly defined on the application form and detailed in the grant application;
- The Primary Investigator must be based in Australia for the duration of the funding period. Co-investigators and collaborators may be based at overseas.
- Co-Investigators should remain active for the duration of the grant.
- A CV must be provided for all Co-Investigators (max. 2 pages per investigator);
- Applications must demonstrate a collaborative approach and involve new or established collaborations with MND researchers within Australia. Collaboration with researchers based overseas is also encouraged.
- Investigators with limited MND experience are strongly encouraged to collaborate with those having more substantial expertise in MND research and/or MND model systems.

Application limits

Applicants are limited to four (4) submissions as an Investigator, of which a maximum of two (2) can be as Primary Investigator, across all research schemes (excluding Fellowships).

Eligible Grant Activities and Expenditures

- The Discovery research project can commence immediately when awarded, and must commence within 3 months of the agreed start date (start date must be within 6 months of the notification of the award).
- Funding from FightMND for Discovery Grants must be spent on costs directly incurred for the project outlined in the Application.
- A full detailed budget for the project with a year-to-year breakdown must be provided if the application is successful. Note that FightMND does not fund Institutional indirect, overhead or oncosts. Salary oncosts are acceptable if itemised (e.g. superannuation, payroll tax, work cover).
- Salaries for the PI or co-Investigators will not be supported, unless they are early- or mid-career researchers no more than 7 years after their PhD was awarded. Salaries, where justified, will be supported up to a level equivalent to the 'Personnel Support Package 4' outlined by the NHMRC of Australia. See <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/funding/manage-your-funding/personnel-and-salary-support-packages>. Note: Salary oncosts may be included above the PSP4 limit where necessary and justified.
- Payment structure will be based on achievement of milestones, which will be finalised jointly with the investigators and FightMND if the Discovery Grant is approved for funding. A minimum of 6-monthly progress reports will be required.
- For Australian-based projects, funding to support specific Discovery Grant activities to be undertaken overseas may be requested. However, it must be clearly demonstrated that the overseas research activity is critical to the successful completion of the Discovery project, and the equipment/ resources required for the grant activity are not available in Australia.

- Travel costs of up to \$5,000 AUD per year to attend and/or present at scientific/technical meetings are allowed within the budget.
- Continuity of funding year-to-year will be depend on satisfactory progress reports from the PI and/or Administering Institution, and an itemised financial report at the end of each year. Regardless of the period of funding proposed, the application must not exceed the maximum allowable costs.
- Any other actual or proposed sources of funding to support the Discovery project must be disclosed.
- FightMND will not fund projects that duplicate research previously or currently being funded.
- Successful applicants will be required to present the planned research project/progress to FightMND donors and supporters at a research symposium to be conducted in Australia following funding announcements (dates to be confirmed).
- It is an expectation of successful applicants that project findings are to be published in appropriate peer-reviewed academic and professional journals with details sent to FightMND.
- Open-science standards are encouraged by FightMND where possible, and research proposals demonstrating open-science practise and information and knowledge-sharing will be considered favourably (for further detail, see <https://www.unesco.org/en/open-science/about>).
- FightMND reserves the right of refusal of any Discovery Grant applications that it deems fall outside these criteria.

Non-Eligible Grant Activities and Expenditures

- Capital equipment, depreciation, or maintenance of equipment will **not** be funded by FightMND Discovery Grants.
- Cost of computers will **not** be funded by FightMND.
- Institution overheads and major equipment are **not** funded by FightMND.



Review of Applications

Assessment Criteria for Review

FightMND has four assessment criteria categories to evaluate Discovery Grant applications:

- 1) Research Quality;
- 2) Innovation and Creativity;
- 3) Significance and Impact; and
- 4) Feasibility.

Each criteria is scored out of seven by peer reviewers, according to FightMND guidelines. Refer to Appendix 2 for scoring descriptors for Discovery Grants.

FightMND values

The alignment of research proposals with FightMND values are also considered when reviewing applications. These are:

Community – driving collaboration in the community, including knowledge sharing.

Integrity – supporting research excellence and research with high-impact potential.

Urgency – research that is driven by and demonstrates urgency.

Boldness – supporting innovative research that takes considered and justified risks aimed at developing a better treatment and/or cure for MND.

Efficiency – supporting research in a disciplined manner, being cognisant of proposed budgets and financial and non-financial costs.

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 application being disclosed for the purposes of the evaluation and administration of the application and grant. 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 research grant process.

Applicants acknowledge that announcement of funded Discovery Grants will involve a dissemination of information to the public of a general nature.

Conflict of Interest – Reviewers and GRP

FightMND requires its independent reviewers and grant review panel to act in an ethical manner, declare conflicts of interest, and withdraw from considering applications where such conflict does or is perceived to 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.

Discovery Grant – Application Procedure

Research proposals are submitted to FightMND and are independently peer-reviewed prior to consideration by FightMND's Grant Review Panel (GRP). The GRP's funding recommendations are then considered by the Board of FightMND. Key factors in the determination of awarding a Discovery Grant will include the: i) quality and strength of the research project/plan; ii) novelty of the proposed research; iii) research track record of the applicant(s) and project feasibility; and iv) the project's potential impact and alignment of the project and applicant towards the core mission of FightMND (see appendix 2)

Submission of Applications

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 a Discovery grant in Fluxx (written manual)
- How to submit a Discovery grant 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

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:

- Primary Investigator and co-Investigators.
- Name of the Institution where the project work will be undertaken.
- Other collaborators (not listed as Investigators).
- Administering institution information.
- **A lay summary of the project** suitable for media release if the application is successful (300 characters).
- **A lay summary** of the project 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 project. It should also clearly describe the scientific objective the project is designed to achieve.
- Statement on the potential IMPACT of the project (1250 characters).
- A summary of how you will engage with people living with MND about this research (750 characters)

Project Proposals

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

1. Project Plan and Background

(max. 6 pages)

A well-developed, well-integrated, and detailed research plan must be provided, supporting the translational feasibility and promise of the Discovery project. The research proposal should include:

- **Aims** of the Discovery project stating clearly and concisely the hypotheses being tested, and the applicability of results to the further development of a cure for MND;
- **Background**, demonstrating how the proposed research will provide significant advances to identifying and/or understanding the cause/s and risk factors for MND;
- **Preliminary and supporting data** relevant to Discovery project feasibility and expected outcomes;
- **Research Plan/Program;**
- **Collaboration Plan;**
- **Risks** associated with Research Plan/ Program and how they will be managed; and
- **Expected Outcomes.**

2. References

(max. 2 pages)

3. Timeline

(max. 1 page)

- Include a detailed timeline for the project in Gantt chart format. Explanations relating to the timeline of the project, order of experiments and feasibility may be included.
- An extension of the body of the 'Project Plan and Background' into the timeline page will make the application ineligible.
- The timeline should ALSO be uploaded as a separate file directly into Fluxx.

4. Budget

(max. 1 page)

Provide an itemised budget with justification and breakdown of annual expenditure.

Budget items **can** include:

- Salaries for team members. Salaries, where justified, will be supported up to a level equivalent to the 'Personnel Support Package 4' outlined by the NHMRC of Australia. See <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/funding/manage-your-funding/personnel-and-salary-support-packages>;

- Salary oncosts if itemised (e.g. superannuation, payroll tax, work cover). Note change in 2024: Salary oncosts may be included above the PSP4 limit where necessary and justified.
- Direct research costs (e.g. reagents and consumables etc.);
- Travel for attendance at relevant ALS/MND scientific meetings, to present the findings of the project each year for the duration of the grant (max. \$5,000 per year); and
- Costs to enable open access for publications within 6 months of publication can be included in the project budget (but no other publication costs).

Budget items **cannot** include:

- Salaries for Primary Investigators or co-Investigators (unless they are an early- or mid-career researcher within 7 years of PhD being awarded);
- Equipment items;
- Computers; and
- Indirect, overhead or oncosts of the Institution.

5. Statement on Innovation, Impact and Significance of Proposal

(max. 1 page)

Include:

- A statement detailing how you will engage with people living with MND about this research.

6. Statement on Collaboration Plan and Capability Relevant to this Proposal

(max. 1 page)

Include:

- Institution names and Departments where work will be carried out. Demonstrate how the proposed research aligns with the research strategies and direction of the Administering Institution;
- Specific roles of each collaborator with evidence they are equipped to fulfil proposed role. Provide a letter (email correspondence) from co-Investigators confirming their involvement in the project proposed in the application;
- Multi-organisational collaboration plan if applicable, including resolution of potential intellectual material and property issues and organisational barriers;

- The exact role of the collaborator(s) not named as Investigators on the application, where the viability of the Discovery Grant depends on their collaboration/involvement.

7. Letter of Support from the Administering Institution

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

8. Letters from Co-Investigators

Provide a letter (email correspondence) from co-Investigators confirming their involvement in the project proposed in the application.

9. Primary Investigator and Co-Investigator CV/Track Records

(max. 2 pages per Investigator)

Include:

- Academic background;
- Present and past employment positions;
- Awards and Prizes;
- Research grants support (past 5 years);
- Peer-reviewed publications in last 5 years, including Top 5 publications in last 5 years (do not include publications in preparation or under review). Please provide a DOI number for papers recently accepted;
- Details of any career disruptions.

10. Declaration of Research Funding from Other Sources – Awarded

Details of research funding awarded from other sources that relate to the Discovery Grant's Hypothesis, Aims and Research Plan must be declared (template provided in Table 1).

Include:

- Investigator, and Title of other Application;
- Funding Source/Organisation and Application ID;
- Role of Investigator on other Application; and
- Total amount requested.

11. Declaration of Research Funding from Other Sources – Requested/ Under Review

Details of research funding requested from other sources that relate to the Discovery Grant's Hypothesis, Aims and Research Plan must be declared (template provided in Table 2).

Include:

- Investigator, and Title of other Application;
- Funding Source/Organisation and Application ID;
- Role of Investigator on other Application; and
- Total amount requested.

Reporting is an important requirement for Discovery grants (see Terms and Conditions 1.1 and 15). Please consider this when planning your experiments and project.

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

Timeline

(max. 1 page)

- Upload a copy of the Gantt chart timeline page as a separate file directly into Fluxx.

Budget

- Provide a high-level budget summary of total expenditure (in AUD) per year, entered directly into Fluxx (see page 08 of instruction manual, or instruction video from 3:36).
- Note this should be the same expenditure as presented in the 1-page budget within the PDF proposal, but entered separately into Fluxx as high-level line items.

How to Submit

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

- Select “Discovery grants” in the Fluxx Grant Management System to access the Discovery application form;
- The PROJECT PROPOSAL should be submitted as a single PDF (minimum size 12 font – calibri preferred, minimum 1 cm page margins), uploaded onto the Application form in the Fluxx Grant Management System (pdf size not to exceed 5MB);

The PROJECT PROPOSAL should include the following components:

- Project Plan and Background;
 - References;
 - Timeline;
 - Budget;
 - Statement on Innovation, Impact and Significance of proposal;
 - Statement on collaboration plan and Capability relevant to this proposal;
 - Letter of support from the Administering Institution;
 - Letters from co-Investigators;
 - Primary Investigator and Co-Investigator CV/ Track Records;
 - Declaration of Research Funding from other sources – Awarded;
 - Declaration of Research Funding from other sources – Requested/Under review
- The TIMELINE should also be uploaded separately into the Application form on the Fluxx Grant Management System.

Applicants are limited to four (4) submissions as an Investigator, of which a maximum of two (2) can be as Primary Investigator, across all research schemes (excluding Fellowships).

Application deadlines are described in this guideline.

Applications will NOT be accepted if submitted via email.



Reporting

Funded 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 Discovery project completion, or within 12 weeks after project completion.
Ad hoc reports *	As requested by FightMND	On request with negotiable time frame not greater than 6 weeks
FightMND Research Symposium Presentation	Biennially	During FightMND Research Symposium

* These reports will be used to assess whether the Discovery project 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 FightMND Discovery Grant Agreement.

Terms and Conditions

FightMND Grants

Terms and Conditions

All communication concerning Discovery Grant applications and administration should be addressed to the FightMND Cure Team, by email to 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 grantee 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.

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.

1.3. The value of the FightMND Discovery Grant is between \$250,000 to \$1,000,000 AUD for project performance of three (3) years.

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 Primary Investigator to be drawn from the total sum awarded. This may be used during the life of the project 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 Investigators are encouraged to present their work. The Primary Investigator is expected to attend at least one relevant meeting per year.

1.6. Payment of instalments is conditional on receipt and approval of satisfactory project progress and financial reports (see Terms and Conditions 1.1 and 15).

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 Primary Investigator 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 Grant commencing.

4. Personal Direction of the Project

4.1. It is expected that the Primary Investigator will be actively engaged in directing the project. Continued use of FightMND funds during a prolonged absence of the Primary Investigator requires written agreement to continue the research under the direction of another qualified Investigator, ideally obtained prior to the absence. The grantee 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, 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 an 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 grant;

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 Grant Primary Investigator 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 Grant Primary Investigator or an approved representative of the Administering Institution should contact FightMND by email to researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au as soon as possible to discuss the situation.

10. Activation of an Awarded Discovery 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 grantee 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: FightMND must receive evidence that ethical approval (if required) is in place prior to the project starting. Payment of invoices will be delayed until evidence has been provided. It is the responsibility of the Primary Investigator to have ethical approval for the proposed research 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, requires written permission from FightMND.

11.2. Grantees will be required to submit a letter to FightMND detailing any and all proposed changes to the project, 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. 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 the awarded Grant at any time. Circumstances which might lead to termination include

- Any breach in the Terms and Conditions under which the award was made;
- 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 Grant Primary Investigator 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 ceased on the Grant, or the Primary Investigator has ceased to be actively involved in the project. FightMND must be informed immediately if this 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 Primary Investigator to apply for further support before the end of the Grant period, if this is required. Applications for an extension of support may be considered in isolation or as a new application in competition with other applications at the time of applying (see Terms and Conditions 11.2).

14.2. Adequate time (at least eight weeks), should be allowed for an application to be processed and FightMND accepts no responsibility for any costs incurred due to the failure of a grantee to make such an application in good time.

15. Reports

15.1. The Primary Investigator is required to submit the following reports:

- 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 our 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 Grant project. A detailed final report covering the whole project will be substituted for the annual report. In addition, a summary should also be provided in language intelligible to the lay reader. Researchers 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 Primary Investigator is required to present progress of the project 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 grantees are encouraged to provide regular information on their research to be circulated by FightMND for patients and carers. Where volunteers are involved in research, grantees 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 grantee's laboratories during the period of the Grant to discuss project progress, and welcomes invitations to do so.

16.2. Grantees 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. Grantees 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. Grantees are expected to seek publication of findings in refereed journals during and as soon as possible during and after conclusion of the Grant project (subject to Term and Condition 18). FightMND and the grantee 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. Grantees and/or the Administering Institution must inform FightMND immediately when results from FightMND-funded research are accepted for publication or presentation. The grantee 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: Grantees 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.

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 Grant). 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 grantee and the 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. Grantees 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, the FightMND Cure team at researchgrants@fightmnd.org.au, and the Marketing and Communications team at marketing@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 grantee 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.

17.8. Grantees must ensure that FightMND's support is acknowledged in all publications, presentations and similar communications. It is essential for grantees 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, grantees and researchers should ensure they make it clear to the media and others that they should be presented as a "FightMND-funded scientist". Researchers should consult with FightMND's Cure Research and Programs Director, Dr Bec Sheean, at research@fightmnd.org.au and Marketing and Communications team at marketing@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. Grantees 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 Grantee and/or Administering Institution must obtain the written consent of FightMND before taking any steps to exploit the results commercially. The Grantee 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. Grantees are asked to make themselves or other appropriate research team members available to report on the Grant project at FightMND meetings, fundraising events and occasionally at other times by invitation.

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

19.3. When speaking and presenting at FightMND events, grantees 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. Grantees 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, grant holders and co-Investigators 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 the Grant holders 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 it 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.

Appendix 2

Scoring Descriptors for Discovery Grants

The following descriptors are designed to provide peer-reviewers with benchmarks to aid in assessing and scoring individual grant applications. The descriptors are indicative rather than exhaustive.

EXCEPTIONAL SCORE – 7 DISCOVERY PROJECT ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTORS			
RESEARCH QUALITY	SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT	INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY	FEASIBILITY
<p>Project aims and research plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are defined extremely well with flawless study design and approach; • are extremely coherent and exceptionally justified by supporting hypothesis/ rationale; • are exceptionally competitive with elite research proposals internationally; and • have identified and resolved scientific and project risks in an exceptional manner. 	<p>The planned research, relative to the MND research field, will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address an issue of <i>critical</i> importance to, and <i>extremely significantly</i> advance capacity for, MND research; • result in <i>extremely significant</i> outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning MND; • lead to <i>extremely significant</i> research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, licensing etc.); • generate <i>extremely significant</i> developments in drug discovery that deliver <i>extremely significant</i> improvements to current treatments for MND; and • the proposal has an <i>exceptionally strong</i> and extremely well-defined plan to engage with people living with MND about the proposed research and outcomes. 	<p>Relative to the medical research sector and MND research field, the planned research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates <i>extremely</i> innovative project aims; • will impact the MND field by providing an <i>extremely substantial</i> shift in understanding the causes of MND; and/or • will lead to an <i>exceptional</i> breakthrough for MND, delivering <i>extremely substantially</i> improved effective treatments, or extremely significant steps towards a cure, for MND. 	<p>The applicant team (Primary Investigator, Co-Investigators and Associate Investigators) has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a research proposal that is supported by <i>exceptionally strong</i> theoretical and/or methodological foundations, with <i>exceptionally robust</i> pilot data to indicate a <i>strong</i> likelihood of success; • a lead Primary Investigator with <i>exceptional</i> scientific leadership and skills to achieve the project aims and deliver project outcomes; • access to <i>exceptional</i> technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and has access to additional support personnel necessary for the project; • an <i>extremely appropriate</i> balance of integrated expertise, experience and training that <i>specifically targets all</i> aspects of the proposed research; and • a detailed budget that aligns <i>exceptionally</i> with the delivery of the proposal.

OUTSTANDING SCORE – 6

DISCOVERY PROJECT ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTORS

RESEARCH QUALITY

Project aims and research plan:

- are defined *very well* with an *outstanding* study design/ approach that has only a few negligible weaknesses;
- are *very highly coherent* and justified very well by supporting hypothesis/rationale;
- are *very highly* competitive with elite research proposals internationally; and
- have identified and resolved scientific and project risks *very well*, with only a few *trivial* weaknesses.

SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

The planned research, relative to the MND research field, will:

- address an issue of *very high* importance to, and *very highly significantly* advance capacity for, MND research;
- result in *very highly significant* outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning MND;
- lead to *very highly significant* research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, licensing etc.);
- generate *very highly significant* developments in drug discovery that deliver *very highly significant* improvements to current treatments for MND; and
- the proposal has an *outstanding and very well-* defined plan to engage with people living with MND about the proposed research and outcomes.

INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

Relative to the medical research sector and MND research field, the planned research:

- demonstrates *very highly* innovative project aims;
- will impact the MND field by providing a *very substantial* shift in understanding the causes of MND; and/or
- will lead to a *very substantial* breakthrough for MND, delivering a *very substantially* improved effective treatment, and highly significant steps towards a cure for MND.

FEASIBILITY

The applicant team (Primary Investigator, Co-Investigators and Associate Investigators) has:

- a research proposal is supported by *outstanding* theoretical and/or methodological foundations, with *outstanding* pilot data to indicate a strong likelihood of success;
- a lead Primary Investigator with *outstanding* scientific leadership and skills to achieve the project aims and deliver project outcomes;
- access to *outstanding* technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and has access to additional support personnel necessary for the project;
- a *highly appropriate* balance of integrated expertise, experience and training that is *targeted towards all* aspects of the proposed research; and
- a detailed budget that aligns *very highly* with the delivery of the proposal.

EXCELLENT SCORE – 5

DISCOVERY PROJECT ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTORS

RESEARCH QUALITY

Project aims and research plan:

- are defined *well* with an *excellent* study design/ approach that has several *minor* weaknesses;
- are *highly coherent* and justified *well* by supporting hypothesis/rationale;
- are *competitive* with elite research proposals internationally; and
- have identified and resolved scientific and project risks *well*, with a *few minor* concerns.

SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

The planned research, relative to the MND research field, will:

- address an issue of *considerable* importance to, and *highly significantly* advance capacity for, MND research;
- result in *highly significant* outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning MND;
- lead to *highly significant* research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, licensing etc.);
- generate *highly significant* developments in drug discovery that deliver *highly significant* improvements to current treatments for MND; and
- the proposal has an *excellent and well-* defined plan to engage with people living with MND about the proposed research and outcomes.

INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

Relative to the medical research sector and MND research field, the planned research:

- demonstrates *highly* innovative project aims;
- will impact the MND field by providing a *substantial* shift in understanding the causes of MND; and/or
- will lead to a *substantial* breakthrough for MND, delivering a *substantially* improved effective treatment, and significant steps towards a cure for MND.

FEASIBILITY

The applicant team (Primary Investigator, Co-Investigators and Associate Investigators) has:

- a research proposal is supported by *excellent* theoretical and/or methodological foundations, with *excellent* pilot data to indicate a *strong* likelihood of success;
- a lead Primary Investigator with *excellent* scientific leadership and skills to achieve the project aims and deliver project outcomes;
- access to *excellent* technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and has access to additional support personnel necessary for the project;
- a *highly appropriate* balance of integrated expertise, experience and training *necessary for all* aspects of the proposed research; and
- a detailed budget that aligns *highly* with the delivery of the proposal.

VERY GOOD SCORE – 4

DISCOVERY PROJECT ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTORS

RESEARCH QUALITY

Project aims and research plan:

- are *well-developed* with a *very good* study design/approach that has a *few minor* concerns;
- are coherent and justified *well* by supporting hypothesis/rationale;
- are *likely to be competitive* with elite research proposals internationally; and
- have identified and resolved scientific and project risks, with a *several minor* concerns.

SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

The planned research, relative to the MND research field, will:

- address an issue of *importance* to, and *significantly* advance capacity for, MND research;
- result in *significant* outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning MND;
- lead to *significant* research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, licensing etc.);
- generate *significant* developments in drug discovery that deliver *significant* improvements to current treatments for MND; and
- the proposal has a *very good*, defined plan to engage with people living with MND about the proposed research and outcomes.

INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

Relative to the medical research sector and MND research field, the planned research:

- demonstrates *innovative* project aims;
- will impact the MND field by providing a *moderate* shift in understanding the causes of MND; and/or
- will lead to a *moderate* breakthrough for MND, delivering a *moderately* improved effective treatment, and steps towards a cure for MND.

FEASIBILITY

The applicant team (Primary Investigator, Co-Investigators and Associate Investigators) has:

- a research proposal is supported by *very good* theoretical and/or methodological foundations, with *very good* pilot data to indicate a *very high* likelihood of success;
- a lead Primary Investigator with *very good* scientific leadership and skills to achieve the project aims and deliver project outcomes;
- access to *very good* technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and has access to additional support personnel necessary for the project;
- an *appropriate* balance of integrated expertise, experience and training *necessary for all* aspects of the proposed research, with *some minor* concerns; and
- a detailed budget that aligns *very well* with the delivery of the proposal.

GOOD SCORE – 3

DISCOVERY PROJECT ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTORS

RESEARCH QUALITY

Project aims and research plan:

- are *logical* with a *generally clear* study design/approach that has *several minor* concerns;
- are *soundly* justified by supporting hypothesis/rationale;
- would be *somewhat competitive* with elite research proposals internationally; and
- have identified and resolved scientific and project risks, with *some major* concerns.

SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

The planned research, relative to the MND research field, will:

- address an issue of *some* importance to, and *moderately* advance capacity for, MND research;
- result in *moderately significant* outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy underpinning MND;
- lead to *moderately significant* research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, licensing etc.);
- generate *moderately significant* developments in drug discovery that deliver *moderately significant* improvements to current treatments for MND; and
- the proposal has a *good* plan to engage with people living with MND about the proposed research and outcomes.

INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

Relative to the medical research sector and MND research field, the planned research:

- demonstrates *some innovative* project aims;
- will impact the MND field by providing *somewhat of a* shift in understanding the causes of MND; and/or
- will lead to *somewhat of a* breakthrough for MND, delivering a *somewhat* improved effective treatment, and steps towards a cure for MND.

FEASIBILITY

The applicant team (Primary Investigator, Co-Investigators and Associate Investigators) has:

- a research proposal is supported by *good* theoretical and/or methodological foundations, with *good* pilot data to indicate a *high* likelihood of success;
- a lead Primary Investigator with *good* scientific leadership and skills to achieve the project aims and deliver project outcomes;
- access to *good* technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and has access to additional support personnel necessary for the project, with *minor concerns*; and
- a balance of integrated expertise, experience and training *necessary for most* aspects of the proposed research, with *some major concerns*; and
- a detailed budget that aligns *well* with the delivery of the proposal, but raises *some minor concerns* around the feasibility of delivery within the budget.

MARGINAL SCORE – 2

DISCOVERY PROJECT ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTORS

RESEARCH QUALITY

Project aims and research plan:

- are satisfactory but may lack clarity in some aspects, with a study design/approach that *may contain some major* weaknesses;
- are supported by a *satisfactory* hypothesis/rationale;
- would be *marginally* competitive with elite research proposals internationally; and
- have identified and resolved scientific and project risks, but there are *several major* concerns.

SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

The planned research, relative to the MND research field, will:

- addresses an issue of *marginal importance* to MND research, with minor advances in capacity;
- *may* result in outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy that benefit MND;
- *may* lead to significant research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, licensing etc.);
- *may* generate significant developments in drug discovery that somewhat improve current treatments for MND; and
- the proposal has *somewhat* defined a plan on how the team will engage with people living with MND about the proposed research and outcomes, but is *lacking in clarity*.

INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

Relative to the medical research sector and MND research field, the planned research:

- demonstrates *somewhat innovative* project aims;
- may impact the MND field by providing a *minor* shift in understanding the causes of MND; and/or
- may lead to a *minor* breakthrough for MND, *potentially* delivering a *somewhat* improved effective treatment, and/or steps towards a cure for MND.

FEASIBILITY

The applicant team (Primary Investigator, Co-Investigators and Associate Investigators) has:

- a research proposal is supported by *satisfactory* theoretical and/or methodological foundations, with *satisfactory* pilot data to indicate a likelihood of success;
- a lead Primary Investigator with *satisfactory* scientific leadership and skills to achieve the project aims and deliver project outcomes;
- access to *some* of the technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and *may have* access to additional support personnel relevant to the project, *raising some notable concerns*;
- *some but not all of the* expertise, experience and training essential to the proposed research, with *several major concerns*; and
- a budget that aligns with the proposal but raises *several minor concerns* around the feasibility of delivery within the budget.

UNSATISFACTORY SCORE – 1

DISCOVERY PROJECT ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTORS

RESEARCH QUALITY

Project aims and research plan:

- have *significant flaws*, with a study design/approach that has *several major* weaknesses;
- are supported by a *weak* hypothesis/rationale;
- are *unlikely* to be competitive with elite research proposals internationally; and
- have not *reasonably* identified and rationally resolved scientific and project risks.

SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

The planned research, relative to the MND research field, will:

- addresses an issue of *some concern* to MND research and *is unlikely* to advance capacity;
- *is unlikely* to result in outcomes in the science, knowledge, practice or policy to benefit MND;
- *is unlikely* to deliver significant research outputs (intellectual property, publications, products, services, conferences, licensing etc.);
- *is unlikely* to generate developments in drug discovery that improve current treatments for MND; and
- the proposal *does not* have a plan to engage with people living with MND about the proposed research and outcomes.

INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

Relative to the medical research sector and MND research field, the planned research:

- *does not* demonstrate innovative project aims;
- *is unlikely* to impact the MND field by providing a shift in understanding the causes of MND; and/or
- *is unlikely* to provide a breakthrough for MND, or deliver an improved effective treatment and/or steps towards a cure for MND.

FEASIBILITY

The applicant team (Primary Investigator, Co-Investigators and Associate Investigators) has:

- has a research proposal is supported by *weak* theoretical and/or methodological foundations, with *weak* pilot data that may indicate a likelihood of success;
- has a lead Primary Investigator with *weak* scientific leadership and skills to achieve the project aims and deliver project outcomes;
- *does not have* access to the necessary technical resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities, nor access to additional support personnel relevant to the project;
- *does not have* access to the expertise, experience and training essential to the proposed research; and
- has a budget that *lacks sufficient detail* and raises *major concerns* around the feasibility of delivery within the budget.