**Daniel McLoone MND Research Prize** **- Guidelines and Application Form 2024-2025**

**Closing date: Thursday 31st August 2023, 6:00 pm AEST**

Late or incomplete application forms will not be accepted.

Please read these instructions carefully before completing the application form.

1. **Introduction**

The Daniel McLoone MND Research Prize aims to reward an outstanding mid-career researcher with a demonstrated background of excellence in neuroscience research. The Prize will be a grant of up to $500,000 for an innovative and collaborative two-year project to advance the understanding, treatment and care of [classical forms of MND](https://www.mndaustralia.org.au/getattachment/80b04404-6103-4d3a-81ce-806438ffd3b7/Definition-of-MND-for-website.pdf?lang=en-AU).

The Daniel McLoone Research Prize has been made possible as a result of an incredibly generous bequest by Daniel McLoone’s family from his estate following his death.

1. **Objectives of the Daniel McLoone MND Research Prize**
   1. To enable an exceptional mid-career scientist to become established as a leader in the field of MND research.
   2. To initiate a scientific research project which is innovative and fulfils one of the following objectives;
      1. **Advance MND research to understand its causes:** Research that improves knowledge of the underlying disease mechanisms causing MND and the development of representative laboratory models.
      2. **Foster treatment development and clinical trials:** Research that aims to lead to new treatments, including research that is linked to or involves conducting clinical trials.
      3. **Enhance clinical and healthcare research and the evidence-base for clinical and healthcare practice:** Clinical and healthcare research to promote innovation and best practice to improve quality of life for people living with MND and their families and carers.
   3. To encourage a collaborative approach. While the applicant must be the Principal Investigator and have the lead role in directing the project, participation of other mid-career researchers from multiple institutions in Australia or internationally will be considered favourably. The project must be conducted predominantly in a recognised Australian Institution(s). No funding will be provided for international collaborators who may participate in the project.
   4. To participate in the International Symposium on ALS/MND either in 2024 or 2025 if being held face-to-face.
   5. The research focus should be directed towards classical MND. Research investigating other forms of MND should demonstrate a potential benefit to the classical forms of MND. Classical MND includes amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) & bulbar palsies (progressive bulbar palsy and pseudobulbar palsy), progressive muscular atrophy (PMA) and primary lateral sclerosis (PLS).
   6. The Daniel McLoone MND Research Prize is offered to a maximum value of $500,000 for a two-year project.
2. **Application**
   1. **Key eligibility criteria**
      1. The applicant should be a mid-career scientist who has a track record in MND research or in areas of neuroscience related to MND.
      2. A mid-career researcher is defined as a person with a PhD or equivalent research doctorate who, at 31st August 2023, has at least five years but no more than 12 years postdoctoral research experience from the date their doctoral thesis was passed. Career disruptions can be taken into account when calculating the 12-year eligibility as outlined in the [MND Research Australia Relative to Opportunity Guidelines](https://www.mndaustralia.org.au/getattachment/102adb27-a05a-4ab8-83de-b24a3aa7a6a4/MNDRA-Grant-Review-Criteria-and-Relative-to-Opportunity-2022-Final.docx)
      3. The applicant must be one of;
         1. An Australian citizen;
         2. Have permanent resident status;
         3. Be a New Zealand citizen with Australian work rights;
         4. A foreign researcher with a work visa extending for a minimum of 12-months after the grant concludes (this is to maximise the opportunity to realise grant outcomes).
      4. The applicant must be based in Australia for the duration of the grant.
   2. **Application process**
      1. **Applications will only be accepted through** [NHMRC administering institutions](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/funding/manage-your-funding/nhmrcs-administering-institutions). **Applications should be submitted by the institution research office**. Applications submitted by the applicant will not be accepted.
      2. The applicant must be the Principal Investigator and will also have the lead role in directing the project.
      3. The level of contribution and role of the Principal Investigator and the Co-Investigators must be clearly defined in the application.
      4. Applicants must use this application form.
      5. If the **applicant** has received previous funding from MNDRA **in the past five years**, reports on this previously funded work must be sent with the current application.
      6. Only one larger 2-year award (such as the Daniel McLoone or Betty and John Laidlaw Research Prizes) can be held during a researcher’s career. A maximum of one Innovator and one 2-yr project grant can be held since 2021 (inclusive).
      7. If the **applicant** is named as an investigator on other proposals for MNDRA funding for 2023, list the project title and principal investigator for those other applications.
      8. If the applicant has received or will be receiving funding for a similar project from another funding body, the application must clearly define what additional benefit will result from the MNDRA funding.
      9. Researchers should not apply if they are unable to provide a financial acquittal for previously funded work before 30th June 2024.
      10. All applications will be assessed by the [MNDRA Research Committee](https://www.mndaustralia.org.au/research/our-research/about-mnd-research-australia) and external reviewers against the selection criteria as outlined in these guidelines and on the MNDRA website. Applicants must meet all of the eligibility criteria. Applicants who fail to meet any one of the eligibility criteria will be deemed to be ineligible.
      11. The MNDRA Research Committee is responsible for the final ranking of applications and making their recommendation for funding approval to the Board of MND Australia.
   3. **Applications close at 6:00pm AEST Thursday 31st August 2023**.
      1. Proposals are to be sent to Dr Gethin Thomas, Executive Director Research by email to [research@mndaustralia.org.au](mailto:research@mndaustralia.org.au).
      2. All sections of the application, including the cover sheet, must be saved and forwarded as a single PDF document.
      3. Font must be Arial and at least 11 pt.
   4. **Incomplete or misleading information**
      1. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that applications are complete and accurate. If an application is incomplete or inaccuracies are identified, MNDRA will exclude it from further consideration.
      2. If any application is found to have been intentionally completed (or failed to be completed) in such a way as to mislead MNDRA, or is otherwise false or misleading in any material respect, the applicant will be disqualified from the grant.
3. **Proposal**
   1. **Research proposal for a 2-year project (maximum 5 pages) should include:**
      1. **Aims and hypotheses (maximum 1 page)**
         1. The aims of the research must be clear to the reviewers, and be relevant to classical forms of MND.
         2. State clearly which hypotheses are to be tested.
      2. **Background**
      3. **Preliminary data**
      4. **Research Plan**
         1. Provide a detailed outline of the 2-year project.
         2. The contribution and role of the people doing the research must be clearly defined.
   2. **Significance (1 page)**

Explain what is innovative about this project and how it will meet one or more of the objectives;

* + 1. To advance MND research to understand its causes;
    2. To foster treatment development and clinical trials; or,
    3. To enhance clinical and healthcare research and the evidence-base for clinical and healthcare practice.
    4. The potential benefit and relevance of the research to the MND community should be very clearly delineated.
  1. **Power Calculation**
     1. To support the validity of the study or, alternatively, justification is required for why a power calculation is not needed (maximum 8 lines).
  2. **References (maximum 2 pages)**
  3. **Curriculum vitae (maximum 2 pages).** 
     1. The people who will be doing the research are identified by their role in the research and by a **brief but adequate CV** for each investigator. The CV should include at least:
     + Academic background
     + Present and past employment positions
     + Research grant support (past 5 years)
     + Selected publications included in the two-page CV should be restricted to the past five years. This list should not include publications 'in preparation' or 'submitted'.
  4. **Budget and justification (1 page maximum)**

The budget must be directed to the aims of the project.

* + 1. Budget items up to $500,000 can include:
       1. Salary for team members in Australia
       2. Direct research costs (reagents and consumables)
       3. Attendance of the applicant at the International Symposium on ALS/MND in 2024 or 2025 if the meeting is held face-to-face.
    2. Budget items cannot include:
       1. Attendance at meetings (other than 4.5.1.3 above)
       2. Travel (other than 4.5.1.3 above)
       3. Computers
       4. Equipment (except small items included in 4.5.1.2 above)
       5. Indirect or overhead costs.
    3. Other proposed sources of funding to support the project should be disclosed.
  1. **Name(s) of institution(s) where the work will be carried out** 
     1. State in which department(s) and which institution(s) this project will primarily be undertaken.
  2. **Completed cover sheet**
     1. Applicants must complete all sections of the cover sheet as part of the application form.

1. **Review process**
   1. Applications will be reviewed by a minimum of three independent reviewers as part of a competitive, peer review process.
   2. Applications will be scored according to 1) Research Quality; 2) Innovation and creativity; 3) Significance and 4) Capability. Further information on these criteria is available on the MNDRA website.
   3. Funding decisions will be made by the MNDRA Research Committee at a Grants Allocation Meeting in late 2023. The successful applicant will be notified after this meeting.
   4. The decision of the Research Committee is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
2. **Commencement of the Daniel McLoone MND Research Prize**
   1. The successful applicant must commence the Daniel McLoone Prize no later than 30th June 2024 or the grant will lapse.
   2. **Payment and reporting**
      1. The grant will be paid in four equal amounts. The grant will commence with the first payment at the beginning of 2024 on signing a contract with MNDRA. Subsequent 6-monthly payments will be made on receipt of satisfactory 6-monthly progress reports.
      2. If the progress report is not concordant with the grant proposal, then no further funds will be forthcoming. If the grantee wishes to change the emphasis of the study, then that must be with the approval of the MNDRA Research Committee.
      3. A final report and financial acquittal must be submitted on completion of the project.
      4. Lay reports may be included on MNDRA’s website and newsletters to members, patients, carers, the MND Associations and others who provide funds to MNDRA.
   3. **Alterations to the Daniel McLoone MND Research Prize project** 
      1. The Grant-holder must adhere to the approved project.
      2. Any proposed alterations should be submitted in advance for approval by the MNDRA Research Committee.
      3. MNDRA must be notified immediately if circumstances change during the tenure of the Prize, particularly if this affects the ability to undertake the project. MNDRA retains the right to review the Prize in light of these changes and reserves the right to terminate the Prize should this be deemed appropriate.
   4. **Publications, presentations and acknowledgements**
      1. The successful applicant will be expected to publish their findings in an appropriate scientific or professional journal.
      2. Publications and presentations must acknowledge MNDRA and the Daniel McLoone MND Research Prize.
3. **Privacy of individuals / confidentiality**
   1. All personal information provided in the application and assessment details will be kept by MNDRA and only be used for the purposes of administering this application, and if successful, the Prize.
   2. Applicant’s personal information will be disclosed to reviewers as noted above.
   3. Some details of the successful application will be published on the MNDRA website, including name, location, project title and a brief description of the project.
   4. Information contained in applications will be regarded as confidential unless otherwise stated by MNDRA.

**APPLICATION COVER SHEET – Daniel McLoone MND Research Prize for 2024**

Please complete this cover sheet and submit with your application for funding before **6 pm AEST on Thursday 31st August 2023** to Dr Gethin Thomas at research@mndaustralia.org.au

Applications should not be submitted by researchers who will be unable to provide a financial acquittal before 30th June 2024 for previously funded projects.

**Please read the application guidelines before completing your application**.

**APPLICATION CHECK LIST**

Please check the three boxes below with an X.

1. I have read and understood the application guidelines
2. I comply with the residency/citizenship/visa requirements
3. Application has been saved as a single PDF document which includes:

* Cover sheet
* Aims and hypotheses
* Significance
* Background and Research Plan
* Reference list
* Budget
* Other sources of funding to support the project
* Other MNDRA applications for 2024 in which applicant is named as a co-investigator
* Principal Investigator CV
* Reports on MNDRA projects funded in the past five years if the applicant was the principal investigator for the project

**APPLICATION COVER SHEET – DANIEL MCLOONE MND RESEARCH PRIZE for 2024-2025**

**APPLICATION DETAILS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1** | Project title |  |
| **2** | Title, name and qualifications of applicant (Principal Investigator) |  |
| **3** | Date doctoral thesis was passed |  |
| **4** | Email address of PI |  |
| **5** | Mobile phone number of PI |  |
| **6** | Name, institution,  % contribution and role of Co-Investigators  Note: Associate Investigators should not be listed |  |
| **7** | Institution administering the grant |  |
| **8** | Name, email address and phone number of administrator lodging the application |  |
| **9** | Total budget funds requested (maximum $500,000) | $ |

**APPLICATION COVER SHEET – DANIEL MCLOONE MND RESEARCH PRIZE for 2024-2025**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **10** | | Mark one box (or **no more than two** boxes) in the grid below to indicate the category/stage that most closely describes your project. | | |
| Project category | |  |
| genetics | |  |
| genomics | |  |
| proteomics | |  |
| cell biology | |  |
| clinical measurement | |  |
| metabolism | |  |
| immunology | |  |
| environment | |  |
| epidemiology | |  |
| health care | |  |
| social research | |  |
| other (specify) | |  |
|  | |  |
| **11** | Check one box with an X to select the research priority that has the greatest relevance for your project | | | |  |
| 1) | **Advance MND research to understand its causes** | | |  |
|  | Research that improves knowledge of the underlying disease mechanisms causing MND and the development of representative laboratory models. | | |  |
| 2) | **Foster the treatment development process and clinical trials** | | |  |
|  | Research that aims to lead to new treatments. Research that is linked to or involves conducting clinical trials. | | |  |
| 3) | **Enhance clinical and healthcare research and the evidence-base for clinical and healthcare practice** | | |  |
|  | Clinical and healthcare research to promote innovation and best practice to improve quality of life for people living with MND and their families and carers. | | |  |

**12. Abstract** (100 words)

Briefly describe, in a manner the general public will easily understand, the overall aims, methods and expected outcomes of your project. It is also critical to explain how the research might lead to benefit for people with MND. Do not include a definition of MND as this is readily available.

**13. Social media: Proposed tweet should your application be successful** (280 characters max)

**APPLICATION FORM – DANIEL MCLOONE MND RESEARCH PRIZE for 2024-2025**

**Research proposal (maximum five pages)**

**Significance (maximum one page)**

1. What is new and/ or different about the proposed research plan?
2. What is the potential to significantly contribute to the knowledge base around the causes, treatments, cure or care for MND? A clear vision of how this research can be utilised and/or a path to translation is required.
3. The potential benefit and relevance of the research to the MND community should be very clearly delineated.

**Power calculation (maximum eight lines per power calculation)**

This section ensures applicants have thought about whether their study is powered sufficiently (the sample size is adequate) to answer the question to be addressed.

For the stated sample size, key features of a power calculation are:

1. the hypothesis to be tested
2. the effect size to be detected
3. the statistical test that will be conducted, including whether it is one-sided or two-sided
4. the alpha level – significance threshold, which should take into account the number of tests conducted.

Alternatively, applicants may provide justification why a power calculation is not needed or not appropriate. For example, in novel paradigms effect sizes may not be known, and hence one goal of a pilot study is to generate data for estimation of approximate effect size that can inform the design of a subsequent study.

Sometimes, the constraints of the grant funds available mean that it is not possible to conduct a well-powered study; in this case applicants should provide justification for how this grant, if awarded, will contribute to a properly powered study in future.

**Reference list (maximum two pages)**

**Budget and justification (maximum one page)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | BUDGET ITEMS | $ |  |
|  | 1 |  |  |  |
|  | 2 |  |  |  |
|  | 3 |  |  |  |
|  | 4 |  |  |  |
|  | 5 |  |  |  |
|  | 6 |  |  |  |
|  | 7 |  |  |  |
|  | 8 |  |  |  |
|  | 9 |  |  |  |
|  | 10 |  |  |  |
|  | **Total** | Not to exceed $500,000 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Expand table if needed**

**Justification;**

**Other proposed sources of funding to support the project**

If this project or a similar project has received or has forthcoming funding from another source this must be disclosed. The additional benefits of the MNDRA funding must be clearly articulated and need for the MNDRA funding justified below.

**Other MNDRA applications for 2024 in which applicant is named as an investigator**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project Title:** | **Principal investigator/ applicant** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Principal investigator CV (maximum two pages including references)**

**Co-Investigators’ CV (maximum 2 pages for each person – including references)**

**Reports on projects for which the applicant has received funding from MNDRA as PI in the past five years (maximum one page for each report)**

This report should consist of a brief synopsis of the project or fellowship funded (including project title, chief investigator, organisation, year of grant, $ amount received). Importantly, please detail the outcomes and impacts of the project and the relevance of these to the MND community. This summary will be considered in the review of the application.