

DA General Policy and Procedure Manual

Awards

DA Small Grants Program Policy

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This policy outlines the process for managing the Small Grants Program.

BACKGROUND

The national small grants program grew out of a SA Branch grants initiative. The program objective and assessment criteria were reviewed and a new program was approved by the Board in August 2010. The revision included changes to the objective, eligibility criteria and research mentor requirements.

RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF AWARD

The DA Small Grants program is designed to support novice researchers in developing skills and knowledge in research and evaluation in nutrition and or dietetics. Grants will be awarded based on both the strengths of the applicant and the merits of the proposed project according to the evidence provided against criteria.

DA considers a novice researcher to be a practitioner with no or very limited post graduate experience. The term novice does not relate to the time as a practitioner, rather experience as a researcher.

FORM OF THE AWARD

DA offers two grants up to the value of \$5,000 each to support novice researchers to complete nutrition / dietetics research in practice.

METHOD OF SELECTION

Applications will be reviewed by a panel convened by the DA Award and Recognition Advisory Committee (ARAC) members.

Reports will be presented to ARAC at their meeting and recommendations will be presented to the DA Board. Where a conflict of interest occurs between applicant and assessor or research mentor, another ARAC member will be allocated the application.

Criteria for Selection:

Only APDs and ANs residing in Australia with very minimal research experience are eligible to apply for a DA small grant. Experienced researchers are not eligible to apply. This includes doctoral candidates and/or those with completed doctorates, PhD graduates and PhD candidates. Experienced researchers in nutrition and dietetics are supported by DA through a number of other programs, for example the Fay McDonald Scholarship and national conference research awards.

MENTORING

Applicants must nominate an appropriately experienced 'research mentor' as part of their application. Experienced mentors are those with a higher degree and/or a publication record.

WHAT KINDS OF PROJECTS ARE SUITABLE?

The project may focus on an issue that is important locally or at a higher level (regional, state-wide, national or international). It must relate directly to human nutrition. The project must be completed within the calendar year. The applicant must demonstrate how the project will enhance their skills in nutrition /dietetic research. The evidence base underpinning the project must be outlined. Funding decisions are guided by the strategic directions in the current DA strategic plan.

Projects might include:

- Developing, implementing and evaluating practical strategies to improve nutrition-related health outcomes
- Identifying gaps between evidence-based practice and current clinical or public health practice
- Determining barriers to implementing evidence based practice
- Leading a quality improvement initiative

Projects are welcome from all areas of nutrition and dietetics including clinical, community, industry, education / training, health promotion, private practice, food service, research and public health.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

1. The project addresses the objective of the DA small grants program
2. Contributes to knowledge or evidence based practice in nutrition and dietetics
3. Has sound rationale and methodology
4. Is well written with a logical flow of ideas
5. Can be achieved within time allocated (12 months) and has resources available
6. Contains an itemised budget with justification of proposed expenditure
7. Applicant has gained support from an appropriate research mentor (higher degree / publication record)
8. The project is clearly supported by the applicant's workplace as appropriate
9. A high-resolution professional photo and short biography for Annual Report.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

1. Project outcomes have significance to the nutrition/dietetic profession
2. Project plan demonstrates sustainable outcomes
3. Shows originality of ideas/initiatives for nutrition and dietetics
4. Has alignment with current DA strategic plan
5. Makes use of available or readily collected data
6. Overall value for money in regard to the contribution of the research to nutrition/ dietetics knowledge

FUNDING

It is expected that the majority of the grant funding will be put towards applicant salary or back fill. Some funding can be budgeted towards essential project equipment.

Funding will not be available for:

- Existing projects which receive funding from another source.
- Organisational/departmental core functions.
- Conference attendance.
- Travel expenses (unless this is integral to the agreed project and are clearly negotiated within the project agreement).
- The development of evidence based practice guidelines and PEN pathways.
- Prior DA small grants recipients

CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

1. The primary applicant must have current APD/AN status. If a group of people apply, the primary applicant must be a DA member with current APD/AN status (provisional status allowed).
2. Successful applicants agree that DA shares the intellectual property rights to the outcomes of the works, including presentation of the work by the author, distribution of publications arising from the work and the referencing of any such publications on other materials.
3. The outcomes of the project must be completed and ready for publication / presentation in the time frame specified by the project plan.
4. The level of funding will be agreed when the project proposal is approved by the DA Board. Please note, not all the funding requested may be granted. No further changes to funding will be negotiated after this time.
5. DA funding support must be acknowledged in all relevant work done during the project and in all presentations and publications.
6. The applicant must declare any additional sources of support (financial and in kind) and resources available for the project.

7. All applications approved for funding must provide budget details (including GST) and a financial report on how funds were expended 4 weeks from the close of the project. Any unused funds will be returned to DA at this time.
8. Evidence of ethics approval must be provided to DA before funds will be administered if projects require ethics approval. Final ethics approval does not need to accompany the project proposal; however, evidence that ethics approval is being sought is required.
9. A progress report on the provided template is to be submitted after six months. The final project report due at the completion of the project will contain project outcomes and final financial reports. ARAC provide assessment of Small Grants recipient's mid-way and final reports.
10. Project outcomes are to be made available to all DA members in an appropriate form such as publication or presentation. For example, write a short article for the DA Newsletter, submit an abstract for presentation at the DA National Conference. Recipients will also be encouraged to consider publication of their work in *Nutrition & Dietetics* or another journal as appropriate.
11. At the discretion of the DA Board, all funds may not be allocated, depending on applications received. All decisions will be made by the DA Board and will be final.
12. ARAC and the Board will be required to approve the project final report. Payment of last instalment of funds is pending this approval.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants are required to complete the application form in Word format and email to DA by the due date.

Assessment Process of applications received

Applications will be reviewed by a panel convened by the DA Award and Recognition Advisory Committee (ARAC) members in accordance with the selection criteria and makes its recommendations to the April Board meeting.

Where a conflict of interest occurs between applicant and assessor or research mentor, another ARAC member will be allocated the application.

Assessment of Small Grants recipient's mid-way and final reports

Reports will be presented to ARAC at their meeting and recommendations will be presented to the DA Board.

All enquiries and applications to: the ARAC Secretariat awards@dietitiansaustralia.org.au

Applications due: 15 March (in eligible years)