

Grant Application

Aim of NKF research initiative

The National Kidney Foundation (NKF) research initiative aims to support research with expected outcomes **to improve the health outcomes and quality of life of kidney disease patients and those related to kidney diseases**, which will directly lead to improvements in treatments and outcomes for patients, reduce the risk factors as well as to advocate for the policy development based on evidence-based research.

Objective

To facilitate evidence-based research that guides best practices in kidney disease treatment and prevention and shape health policies in these areas. The research must provide relevant and targeted information towards achieving NKF's mission and vision, ACT-KID 2018-2025, and 12th Malaysia Health Plan (MP) 2021-2025.

Eligibility

- A Malaysian citizen residing in Malaysia
- Possess at least a degree qualification from an established higher education institution
- All Malaysian academic institutions, NGOs, and the private sector are eligible to apply for this grant. All entities should be registered under Suruhanjaya Syarikat Malaysia (SSM) or Jabatan Pendaftaran Pertubuhan Malaysia (JPPM)
- International entities are eligible to participate; however, their participation is only valid if they collaborate with a registered local entity. The local entity will be the project-leading organisation.
- Collaboration with other organisations are highly encouraged for the application of this grant scheme
- For the private sector, the company must be in operation for at least one (1) year. The annual sales turnover must be more than RM100,000 with proof of the company's latest six (6) months' Bank Statement (for Businesses) or audited account (for company) for the last three (3) years.

Research aims and outcomes

The NKF Research Grant is established to provide support for evidence-based research that aim to:

- Improve kidney patients' health outcomes and quality of life.
- Improve the delivery of kidney disease treatment and prevention in Malaysia.
- Advocate health policy development in Malaysia

The grant focuses on supporting evidence-based research. Lab-based and life science research are not supported by NKF.

The research aims should achieve **one or more of the following six (6) research outcomes**:

1. **Patient Safety:** To develop systems that prevent errors from occurring and/or prevent medical errors from reaching the patient
2. **Effectiveness:** To enhance treatment that will increase the likelihood of desired health outcomes
3. **Timeliness:** To aid in meeting the needs of patients in a timely manner
4. **Patient-Centred:** To identify patient's needs, values, and preferences to provide high-quality care
5. **Efficiency:** To identify waste and inefficiency in the provision of health care services and eliminate them
6. **Equity:** To services that will benefit all people, especially among B40 and M40

Priority areas of research

- Clinical
- Health system
- Health Social Services/ Behavioural
- Health management
- Health policy research
- Public health/ Epidemiology
- Digital/Technology

Project Duration

The research project duration is between 12 to 24 months. An important element of successful applications is the feasibility of the proposed project completed within the designated time frame (maximum 24 months).

Scope of funding

The grant provides support of **RM 40,000 per year** for each project. NKF reserves the right to vary the number and amount of the grants at any time at its absolute discretion without prior notice. A breakdown of the expenditures must be **described and justified**. Funds can only be used to cover expenditures that are directly relevant to the project, including:

1. Manpower (Research Assistant/Officer only)
2. Local travelling, conferences & training (must not exceed 20% of total budget)
3. Research materials and consumables
4. Professional services
5. Special equipment and accessories (must not exceed 30% of total budget)
6. Publication

Any item budgeted for RM5,000 and above must be attached with 3 separate quotations upon the submission of the full proposal.

Expenses NOT funded by NKF:

1. Payment of any form of the professional membership fee
2. Purchase of reference materials
3. Purchase of office equipment, ICT, and communications equipment (such as mobile phones, laptops, and printer)
4. Payment of utility/telecommunications bills, unless directly used for project activities
5. Payment of space/facility rental at respective organisation
6. Payment for intellectual property filings
7. Administrative and overhead expenses of the Institution/company
8. Other costs that are not directly related to the project.
9. The use of the grant to outsource the project

Required documents

- Researchers' Curriculum Vitae
- Recommendation/support letter signed by an authorised representative of the institutions/company (i.e. head of department/CEO/Managing director)
- Registration of SSM (for applicants from the private sector)
- Company's latest six (6) months Bank Statement (for Businesses) or audited account (for company) for the last three (3) years for applicants from the private sector

Other conditions

- Only one application for each Principal Investigator (PI) is allowed.
- The PI shall be the point of contact for NKF
- Every research proposal must be affiliated with an institution/company

Application Procedure

Applications must be submitted electronically via Asana.

1. Download and complete the Expression of Interest template from the website.
2. Please name/save the Expression of Interest form using the following standard format:

NKF-Name of Project Leader-Institution/Company-Year of Application

3. Attach the completed Expression of Interest form and supporting documents (*as stated in Required documents*) and submit online via the Asana form.

Link to submit EOI:

<https://form.asana.com/?k=7omr2ElvomxxAR0dad5MxQ&d=943385589454630>

Submission deadline

All Expression of Interest forms must be submitted via Asana **by 31 May 2023, 5pm**. Only applications submitted via Asana are acceptable. Late / Non-compliant / Incomplete submissions will not be reviewed.

Assessment Criteria

All applications will be reviewed on the:

Translational potential (25%)

How likely are the findings to translate into practice or further investigation? Has the project considered the applicability or effectiveness at the patient, medical and healthcare system levels?

Impact and significance (25%)

Does the project address an important problem/barrier to progress in the research area? If the research aims are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, patient welfare, technical capability, health policy and/or clinical practice be improved?

Innovation and originality (20%)

Does the proposed work challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice by utilising novel concepts, approaches, instrumentation or interventions? Or is there a new/improved/refined theoretical concept, instrumentation or interventions proposed?

Approach and feasibility (20%)

Are the overall methodology, analyses and evidence type/levels proposed well-justified and appropriate to accomplish the research aims and outcomes? Has a robust and unbiased approach been proposed? Are potential problems, mitigation strategies, and benchmarks for success presented?

Investigator(s) (10%)

Are the principal investigators, co-investigators or collaborators well-suited to the research project? If postgraduate students or Early Career Researchers, do they have appropriate experience and training in the selected research area? Has the principal investigator demonstrated an ongoing record of leadership and accomplishments that have advanced their field(s)? Does the company demonstrate a healthy financial record?

Evaluation and Award Notices

The evaluation is based on a four-tiered procedure:

- 1st Stage: Screening of Expression of Interest submissions by NKF management for full proposal submission.
- 2nd Stage: Shortlisting of applicants by the Evaluation Panel through the review of the full proposal
- 3rd Stage: Proposal presentation to NKF committee and Evaluation Panel
- 4th Stage: Approval of the successful applicants by the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors' decisions are final and will not be contested.

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of the final review by email (no deadline will be indicated for this communication).

Ethical approval

- NKF will not provide any ethical approval
- It is the responsibility of the grant recipient to safeguard the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in research performed in accordance with the appropriate Malaysian code of ethics or legislation.
- Prior to commencing any such research, the grant recipient shall ensure that
 - a) the rights and welfare of the subjects involved in the research are adequately protected
 - b) freely given informed consent has been obtained for all participants,
- Grant recipients will obtain and maintain all necessary approvals, consents, and reviews before conducting the applicable activity
- Submit a copy of the ethics/regulation approval to NKF for record purposes

Amendment of guideline

NKF has the right to amend, modify or revise any part of this Guidelines.

Grant Acceptance

Agreement

In case of a grant being awarded, a research agreement is made between NKF and the Principal Investigator's Institute, in which the Institute undertakes to administer the grant according to the agreement and to provide the necessary support for the Principal Investigator during the entire lifespan of the project.

Disbursement Procedure

- The grant is to be disbursed through the nominating university/institution in accordance with the procedure set by NKF.
- The grant is to be utilised in accordance with the proposed use of the research grant as stated in the application form only.
- The yearly funding is disbursed every calendar year upon signing the agreement with the recipient. If the project is unsatisfactory upon progress report review, NKF reserves the right to terminate and request the refund of all unused funding.
- NKF has the right to request additional documentation to ensure all the procedures adhere to the current laws and regulations.

Grant Monitoring

Administration

The institute/company will undertake to administer the grant according to the agreement and provide the necessary support for the Principal Investigator during the entire lifespan of the project.

The Principal Investigator remains the focal point of contact throughout the project duration.

Budget and Financial records

- The budget must be utilised based on the approved budget and items approved in the proposal.
- The grant recipient is not permitted to use the grant financing from NKF to make purchases that are not directly related to the project.
- The grant recipient is required to submit to NKF an endorsed Financial Report every **six (6) months** together with the progress report.
- The yearly funding is disbursed every calendar year upon signing the agreement with the grant recipient.
- Budget variation can only be done **once a year** throughout the project duration upon NKF's approval.
- Requests for budget variation to purchase new equipment in the last **six (6) months** of the grant's duration will not be entertained.
- A detailed justification letter, progress report and other relevant supporting documents must be appended at the time of application. Application must be endorsed by the authorised representative of the institution/company (i.e. head of department/CEO/Managing director).

Progress report

- The project must be conducted in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in the NKF Agreement. The project will be closely monitored to ensure that it is carried out successfully.
- The grant recipient is required to submit the progress reports to NKF every **six (6) months**.
- These reports will be used to monitor the progress of the project. It is the project leader's responsibility to ensure that the correct and updated information related to the milestone achievements and expenditure is reported.
- If the project is unsatisfactory upon progress report review, NKF reserves the right to terminate and request the refund of all unused funding.
- NKF reserves the right to call for periodic information on progress or to conduct site visits within the project duration.

Changes in Project Team Composition

If a project leader resigns, retires or moves to another organisation, the grant recipient through the institutional coordinator must immediately seek NKF's approval for a suitable replacement within the project team. The grant recipient must ensure that the new project leader has the necessary expertise and experience to lead the project. Any changes to the project team composition must be approved by NKF.

A detailed justification letter, progress report and other relevant supporting documents must be appended at the time of application. Application must be endorsed by the authorised representative of the institutions/company (i.e. head of department/CEO/Managing director) before submission to NKF.

The NKF reserves the right to terminate the project if there are significant changes to grant recipient leadership (ie. change of project leader) or other factors that NKF reasonably believes may threaten the Project's success.

Project extension

- Under certain circumstances, NKF may allow for an extension of project duration without additional funding.
- Requests for project extensions must be made in writing via the institutional coordinator to the NKF for approval at least three (3) months before the project completion date.
- The maximum extension given is up to **12 months. Each application for extension maximum is 6 months.** A detailed justification letter, progress report and other relevant supporting documents must be appended at the time of application. Application must be endorsed by the authorised representative of the institutions/company (i.e. head of department/CEO/Managing director) before submission to NKF.

Delivery output/publications

- Grant recipients must produce **at least one (1) peer-reviewed publication in a high-impact journal**. This must be proposed when applying for the grant. For private sectors/non-academic institutions, other forms of dissemination of output and acknowledgement must be proposed.
- Grant recipients are also highly encouraged to produce writeups about their research projects for other publications such newsletters and conference presentation
- Publications involving data from projects funded by this grant must include a funding acknowledgment statement as follows: "***This work was funded by the National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia***"
- Recipient institutions/companies must ensure the research findings' validity before publication. NKF takes no responsibility for the validity of the research findings

Intellectual Property

- The Intellectual Property of the grant remains the joint property of the NKF and the institution. Grant recipients are encouraged to apply for registration of Intellectual Property in Malaysia before registration at the international level.

Grant Closure/Termination

Project closure

- The final report of a particular year should reach NKF within 6 weeks after the project completion date, together with the endorsed financial report, jointly certified by the University/Institution and the recipient.
- The grant recipient shall return the unexpended amount within three (3) months after the completion of the project upon acceptance of the final report by NKF.

Residual Fund

The grant should be fully utilised according to the approved schedule. Any unused balance of the awarded amount will have to be refunded to NKF upon completion of the research or expiry of the approved schedule, whichever is earlier. The grant recipient shall return the unexpended amount to NKF within **three (3) months** after the final report is approved by NKF.

Termination

NKF may modify, suspend, or discontinue any payment of Grant Funds or terminate the Agreement if:

- a) NKF is not reasonably satisfied with the progress on the Project;
- b) there are significant changes to grant recipient leadership (ie. change of project leader) or other factors that NKF reasonably believes may threaten the Project's success;
- c) Grant recipients fail to comply with the Agreement.

Process workflows

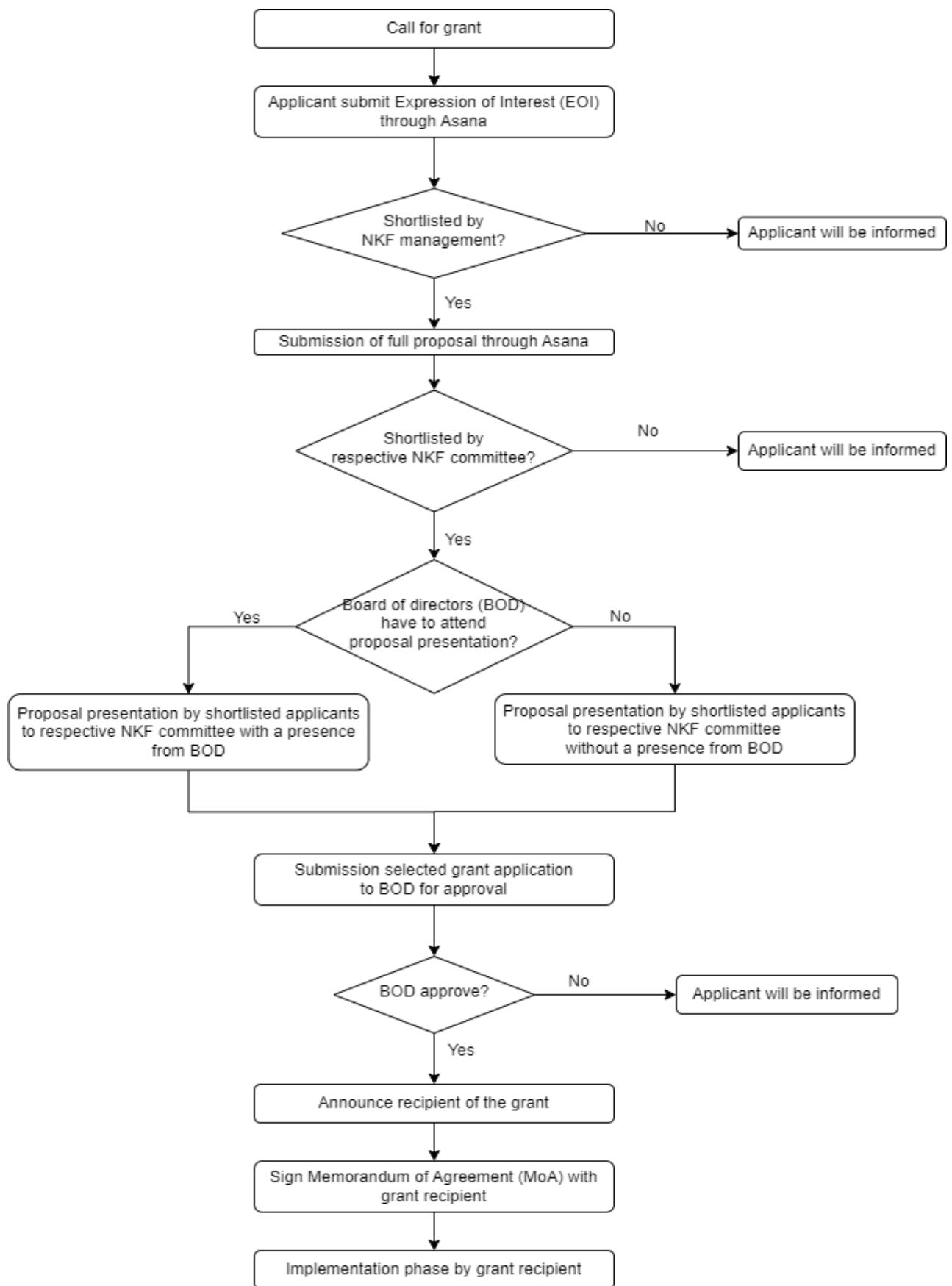


Figure 1: Grant Application Workflow

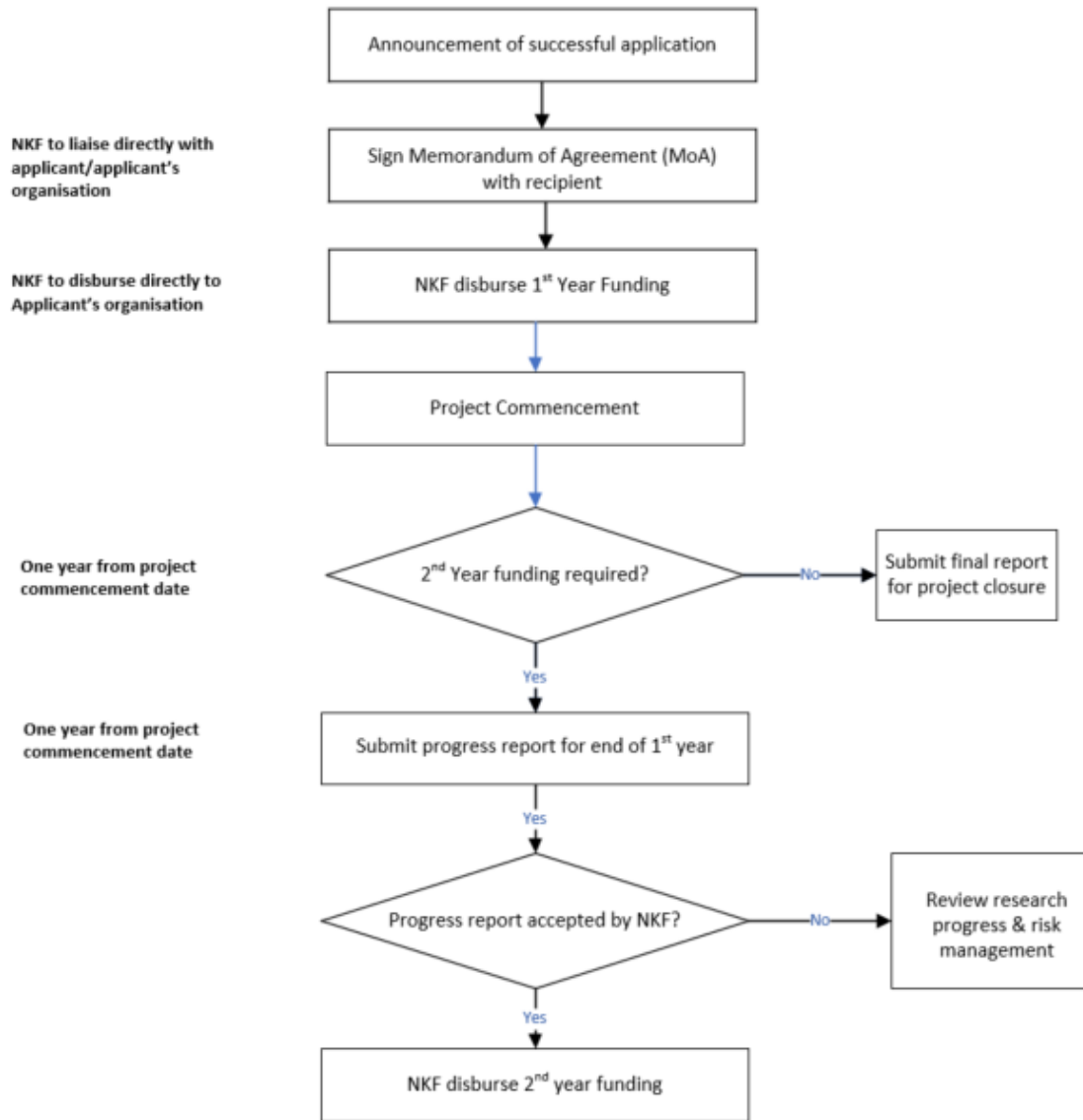


Figure 2: Grant Acceptance and Disbursement Workflow