

Lions John Cockayne Memorial Fellowship Trust Fund

Terms of Reference

Updated August 2026

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A. BACKGROUND

1. The Lions John Cockayne Memorial Fellowship Trust Fund Committee (hereafter, referred to as the committee) operates under the authority of the Divisional Director – Medicine, Aged, Community and Mental Health, Mr Andrew Slattery.

In 1996, the Oakleigh Lions Club Elderly Peoples Home Inc. donated \$100,000 specifically to create a trust account at the Kingston Centre. The purpose was to use the interest of the money to fund small research projects in Aged Persons' Care or Geriatric Medicine. Subsequently, an additional \$25,000 was donated by local Lions Clubs in memory of the late Mr Norm Fidge.

Monash Health (formerly Southern Health) matched this generous donation with \$100,000. Subsequently \$700,000 from a Monash Health special purpose account used to support research was added to the corpus.

B. PURPOSE AND ROLE

The purpose of the Committee is:

- To advance and sponsor research activities pertaining to the care and treatment of older people, through allocation of grants to research projects or travel originating within the current Monash Health Aged and Rehabilitation Division, inclusive of Inpatient Services, Community Rehabilitation, Residential Care and Specialist Clinics, as well as Monash Health Aged Persons' Mental Health staff.
 - To monitor and review the investment strategies and earnings of the Fund, and to determine on an annual basis the amount of funds which can be directed towards research and travel grants.
 - To consider and determine strategic priorities for research which will be supported by the Fund.
 - To monitor progress of funded research projects and to encourage and support introduction of the findings from research into clinical practice via local support within Monash Health.
- Furthermore, the Committee will encourage grant recipients to publish and promote the outcomes of their research, which may include conference presentations, staff and student education, education materials for patients and families or other resources.
2. The Committee will seek grant proposals at least once per year, based on the following principles:
 - The Lions Trust will primarily support research that seeks to improve health, wellbeing, independence and quality of life of older people.
 - In exceptional circumstances, the Trust may also consider research involving younger adults where the proposed study addresses conditions or syndromes that are characteristic of ageing or geriatric medicine and where the findings may have relevance to the practice of geriatric care.
 - Eligibility is restricted to funding staff whose research projects or travel originates within the Monash Health Aged, Rehabilitation and Community Service (inclusive of Community Rehabilitation, Specialist Clinics, Monash at Home and Residential Care) as well as Monash Health Aged Persons' Mental Health.

- Staff from all professions are eligible to apply for grants. Senior medical staff can apply for research grants but not travel funding.
- a) Applications for research grant funding from the Committee will be on the application form obtainable from the MONARC Manager.
- b) The Committee will review proposals, rank applications and decide on grants to be funded, with external advice sought if required.
- c) If high-quality applications in excess of the amount of interest are received, the committee has discretion to allocate up to 5% of the Monash Health non-corpus contribution in any one year. This additional spending may be considered in exceptional circumstances and with due regard for the long-term financial sustainability of the Fund.
- d) Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible after the committee meeting. Research projects are expected to commence promptly and be completed within 12 months.
- e) Applications will be evaluated on the following selection criteria:
 - Appropriateness of the proposed research or travel, both to the individual applicant, their Department and aged care generally;
 - Relevance of the project to make a difference to the health, care or treatment of older persons;
 - Broad alignment with priorities of the Program, which may include the Strategic Direction and Risk Register. The committee will ensure that information on current priorities is available at the time of the grant round.
 - Research skill development for the applicant and their team;
 - Clarity of the hypothesis or research objectives;
 - Appropriateness of the scientific method;
 - Capacity of the applicant to undertake the proposed research and satisfactorily complete it within 12 months, or a time frame agreed by the Committee, and within budget;
 - Support of the application by Department Head and relevant referees.
- f) Applicants for travel grants are required to provide a detailed budget including quotes for each category of expenses. Applicants can request funds for conference or course registration, flights or other direct modes of transport, transfers, accommodation and other reasonable expenses up to the overall limit specified in the Call for Applications.

The Committee will seek to maximise value for money and fund as many eligible proposals as reasonably possible, hence applicants may not receive the full sum requested.

Managers are required to approve their staff member's travel and to make a reasonable co-contribution from local or departmental funds.
- g) Grants will be only awarded if they are of sufficient quality and they meet all the selection criteria. If there is a need to choose between applications of equal calibre, researchers who have not previously received support from this fund will be preferred. The intention of the Fund is to nurture and support new clinical researchers.

- h) If for any reason, the annual fund allocation is not fully utilised, the Committee reserves the right to hold the remaining funds over to the following year for future project funding. At any time, the Committee has discretion as to the amount to be allocated to an applicant.
- i) Once ethics approval is granted by the Monash Health Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), grant holders can request transfer of funds to a nominated cost centre, in consultation with the MONARC Manager and Business Manager. The Business Manager will provide new grant recipients with a reference number to be used in all correspondence, including invoices and fund transfers.
- j) Grant funding will be available to pay for services as they are incurred, quarterly or in a mutually agreed timeframe subject to satisfactory progress reports.
- k) A final report, including acquittal of the funds must be submitted to the Committee.
- l) A short presentation is to be made at one of the monthly MONARC seminars, reporting on findings and learning arising from the research. This will usually be in October or November.
- m) Capital items must not be purchased from the research grant funding. Expenses in excess of the amount awarded by the Fund Committee will not be reimbursed.
- n) If the applicant is unable to complete the project as planned following the award of funds, the onus is on the applicant's Department /or the applicant to negotiate a mutually agreeable alternative with the Committee as soon as it is known that the project cannot be completed as anticipated.

Examples include:

- (1) Absence due to parental leave – defer grant and complete later OR another member of the Department to complete the project in accordance with the original grant application.
 - (2) Resignation from Monash Health – applicant's Department to nominate another person, if possible, to complete the project in accordance with the original grant application.
- o) Failure to inform the Committee of any changed circumstances at the earliest opportunity will result in the remaining funds being returned to the Committee for future funding allocation.
 - p) A final report/presentation is to be made to the Committee by February of the following year in which the grant was awarded, unless otherwise agreed by the Fund Committee.

C. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3. In addition to the tasks described in Purpose and Role, the Committee is responsible for:
 - Supporting a positive research culture within the Aged and Rehabilitation program;
 - Building Monash Health research capacity for the benefit of older people.

D. AUTHORITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

- 4. The Committee operates under the authority of Mr Andrew Slattery, Divisional Director of Medicine, Aged, Community and Mental Health.

5. The GMARC Program Leadership authorises the Committee to perform activities within these Terms of Reference.
6. The Committee may seek information internally and externally and, where necessary, obtain external legal and professional advice to assist in undertaking its responsibilities.

E. MEMBERSHIP

E.1 Composition

The Committee shall appoint new members as required, ensuring diversity of backgrounds and expertise. The Committee administrator and chair will ensure that suitable candidates are nominated to the Committee for their consideration. The Committee will review its membership annually, preferably at the last meeting of the year.

Appointments to the Committee are on an *ex officio* basis. As such, members are deemed to have resigned from the Committee on their resignation from the position on which their membership is based.

A quorum shall be five Members, of which one is from the Lions Elderly People's Homes and four from Monash Health.

The Lions Elderly People's Homes may send a delegate if they are unable to attend a committee meeting or provide a proxy to the Chair of the Committee.

Membership roles and current members:

- Program Medical Director, General Medicine, Aged, Rehabilitation and Community (GMARC) – Dr Maddi Howard
- Deputy GMARC Program Medical Director & Consultant Geriatrician – Dr Sumi Bhaskaran
- Kingston Director of Nursing & Director of Clinical Operations – Ms Jill Jukes
- Monash Ageing Research Centre (MONARC) Manager – Dr Rosa Gualano (Administrator)
- Business Manager, Aged and Rehabilitation Program - Mr Anthony Burton.
- Two representatives of the Lions Elderly People's Homes Inc:
 - Dr Kate Bristow
 - Ms Rosemary Barker
- Allied Health Research Lead – Dr Michelle Kaminski
- Allied Health Research leaders:
 - Dr Sarah Milne, Clinical Research Lead, Physiotherapy and Exercise Physiology
 - Dr Janet Golder, Dietitian and Allied Health Research Fellow, Adult Inpatient Care
- At least one Community Representative:
 - Professor Barbara Workman
 - Ms Sue Viney.

E.2 Chair

The Committee Chair will be the Program Medical Director.

The Chair's role will include managing the Committee, its membership and actions, and ensuring that grants awarded align with the priorities of both the Aged & Rehabilitation Program and Lions Elderly People's Homes.

E.3 Technical expertise

The community representative(s) on the Committee will be appointed in consultation with the Patient Experience office.

The Committee may seek advice from the Research Committee of Monash Health or other committees as required.

E.4 Secretary

7. The Monash Ageing Research Centre manager will be the administrator of the Committee.

The administrator's roles include:

- preparation and distribution of agendas and minutes,
- managing the grant round
- ensuring that the Committee's website is maintained:

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F. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

F.1 Meetings

8. If the Chair is absent from a meeting and no acting chair has been appointed, the members of the Committee present may choose one of them to act as chair for that meeting.
9. Meetings of the Committee may be held or participated in by conference call or similar means, as determined by the Chair.
10. Any member or guest of the Committee who has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a matter being considered, or about to be considered, by the Committee at a meeting must, as soon as practicable after the relevant facts come to the person's knowledge, disclose the nature of that interest and, unless the Committee Chair agrees otherwise, recuse themselves from the relevant item(s) of the meeting. The disclosure of interest and action taken must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

F.2 Access and attendance

11. Other attendees at a meeting of the Committee may include representatives of the Research Committee, and such other persons as the Committee requests to attend. Any such attendees are not Committee members.

F.3 Decisions

12. The Committee will endeavour to reach decisions by consensus. If this is not possible, the Committee Chair has authority to resolve disputes.

F.4 Meeting documentation

13. Meeting documentation (including the agenda, minutes of the previous meeting and all other relevant documents) will be distributed to the members of the Committee and all meeting attendees within the week prior to each meeting.
14. The proceedings of each meeting must be minuted and the minutes must accurately reflect the work and resolutions of the Committee. A draft of the minutes of a meeting must be prepared and promptly provided to the Chair for review. The draft minutes of a meeting must be considered and approved by the Committee at the next meeting following and signed by the Committee Chair.
15. Prior to the final meeting of each year:
 - An annual meeting schedule for the following year must be distributed to all members of the Committee and required meeting attendees.
 - The Committee meets quarterly, usually in late February, May, August and November.
 - At each meeting, the Committee will review a financial report from the Business Manager, reports on current projects along with reports from past projects which are yet to complete their research outputs. Grant recipients will be asked for a progress report from 6 months into their project and quarterly thereafter.

G. REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE

16. The Committee will conduct an annual review of these Terms of Reference and of its performance and provide a report arising from each review to the GMARC Leadership Committee.