APPLICATION GUIDELINES
– Higher Degree by Research Support Program (HDRSP)

Version 1.2 Apr 2016
Background

The Mid North Coast Health Research Collaborative (MNCHRC) is a partnership of local healthcare providers and universities with the goal of promoting and fostering locally driven and relevant research for the employees and students of their organisations.

The MNCHRC is administered by the Mid North Coast Local Health District (MNCLHD) which is committed to supporting staff in their research endeavours for professional and personal development and to benefit the healthcare service and local community.

Whilst research degrees do not currently attract tuition fees (as at April 2016), there are a number of other costs that may be associated with these studies. Honours programs however do attract tuition fees (HECs). The list below is not exhaustive; however is an indication of the costs that may be involved:

- Conference expenses
- Thesis preparation
- Research resources
- Interview transcription
Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline a package that will define the eligibility, criteria and administration of a Higher Degree by Research Support Program (HDRSP) offered by the MNCLHD to employees.

The goals of the HDRSP are to:

- To provide employees of the MNCLHD who are undertaking Higher Research Degrees or Honours with the means to enhance their research experience
- To gain firsthand experience of the grant writing process

Key Dates - 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applications Open</td>
<td>8th April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications Close</td>
<td>22nd April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notified</td>
<td>2nd May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Receipts Accepted</td>
<td>15th June 2016</td>
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</tbody>
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MNCHRC Research Priorities

Applicants will be asked to report how their research addresses the Research Priorities of the MNCHRC. These are as follows:

- Aboriginal Health
- Aged Care and Ageing
- Community Engagement
- Health Behaviours and Environments
- Integrated Care and Chronic Disease Management
- Maternal and Child Health
- Mental health and Drug and Alcohol
- Specialty Disease Management
- Translational/Implementation Research and eHealth
- Workforce Focus Research
Eligibility

The following criteria must be satisfied to be eligible to apply:

1. Current MNCLHD employee
   a. Full time or part time
   b. Permanent or Temporary
      o For Temporary employees, the employment contract must be current at the end of the funding period
   c. Applications will not be considered if the applicant was not an employee of the MNCLHD at the time the expense was incurred.
2. Currently enrolled in a Higher Degree Research (HDR) or Honours Program at an Australian University.
   a. HDRs include: Masters by Research, Master of Philosophy or Doctorate (PhD) program
   b. Honours Programs must include a significant research component involving the planning and completion of a piece of research or an extended project along with a thesis or papers for publication.
   c. Support by the applicant’s supervisor/s
3. Applicants can only be awarded a maximum of three (3) successful HDRSP Grants (to a maximum of $4,500) during their candidature.
4. The research question should address the MNCHRC Research Priorities

Use of Funds

Expenses may be claimed retrospectively if the costs were accrued within the financial year of the grant round (i.e. 1st July 2015 to 30th June 2016).

Funding applications may include, but are not limited to:

1. Conference expenses
   • For the purpose of presenting a paper or poster of which the employee is the author and in connection with his/her research.
   • Conference attendance without presenting, or presentation of a paper or poster of which the student is not the author is not eligible.
   • Expenses eligible to be claimed include: registration fees, travel and accommodation.
   • Official confirmation of the acceptance of the candidate’s paper/poster, or an invitation to the candidate to present at a conference should be included with the application. Where such evidence is not available at this time, it must be submitted
to the MNC Research Office as soon as it is received. Funds will not be released without this documentation.

2. Expenses in connection with a visit to specialist facilities, or to learn specialist technique/s directly related to the employee’s research, but are beyond those normally provided by the University¹ or the MNCLHD.

3. Human Research Ethics submission and review fees

4. Purchase of specialist books, periodicals, software that is essential to the employees’ research, but are not available through the University¹ or MNCLHD.

5. Purchase of computers or other equipment
   - Must be essential to the employees’ research and are above and beyond the normal infrastructure provided by the University¹ or MNCLHD.

6. Transcription services

7. Thesis production expenses

8. Honours Students only - Tuition fees

9. For items not listed, contact the MNC Research Office via email only (MNCResearch@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au)

FAQs

What is the maximum amount for an application?

Applicants may apply for a maximum of $1,500 per grant round.

When does the money need to be spent?

The expenditure must have been incurred or will be incurred during the financial year of the application. Receipts must be submitted to MNCResearch by the 15th June 2016. Funds will be released upon submission of applicable invoices/receipts.

What will not be supported?

Research costs that are normally provided by the University or MNCLHD are not supported. For example:

- In cases where the university offers a laptop/computer for HDR students, employees may not apply for funding for these items.
- Laboratory investigations forming an integral part of the research project
- Education and training normally offered by the university or MNCLHD as part of the HDR program

How often can an employee apply for support?

¹ ‘University’ refers to the University the employee is currently enrolled for their Higher Degree Research
Each eligible employee can lodge only one application in any round and to a maximum of 3 times during their candidature.

**How are the funds paid for successful applicants?**

Payment of funds is upon submission of an invoice for the expenditure committed directly to the employee via electronic funds transfer (EFT) through the Oracle financial system.

**What if my request for funding item is not listed?**

Contact the MNC Research Office (MNCResearch@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au) or 5524 2490 / 0439 571 231

**Where can I get further information?**

Contact the MNC Research Office (MNCResearch@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au) or 5524 2490 / 0439 571 231

**How do I submit the application?**

Submit an electronic copy (signed and scanned) of the application form only to the MNC Research Office (MNCResearch@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au)
Administration

The following forms will be distributed to successful applicants:

Notification and Acceptance of Award
- Applicants will be formally notified of the outcome of their submission by email (supplied in the application) sent by the MNC Research Office.
- Successful applicants will receive a ‘Letter of Offer’ detailing their award, a ‘Research Support Acceptance Form’ (RSAF) and a ‘Transfer of Funds – Form’ (TFF) for completion. The RSAF and TFF must be completed, signed and returned to the MNC Research office at which time the funds will become available.

Payment of Funds
It is the responsibility of RSP recipients to check the implications for income tax liability or Centrelink payments of accepting a grant.

Payment of funds is upon submission of an invoice for the expenditure committed directly to the employee via electronic funds transfer (EFT) through the Oracle financial system.

Carry Forward Request
If an extension of time beyond the timeframe for expenditure of the funds is required the grant holder must apply to the Research Grant Committee for approval using the appropriate form (Carry Forward Request Form). A detailed justification must be given on the form.

Variation of Expenditure Request
Funds granted may not be spent for purposes other than those detailed in the original application budget unless the permission of the Research Grant Committee has been obtained using the appropriate form (Variation of Expenditure Request Form).