



# NDLERF

National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund

## NATIONAL DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT RESEARCH FUND

### Information for Applicants

This document has been developed to provide information about the National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund (NDLERF) to potential applicants, and to assist in the development of grant applications. This information will assist applicants to make a preliminary assessment on whether a proposed project is consistent with NDLERF's Strategic Directions. This information will also help to minimise the potential for delays in the assessment of grant applications caused by the provision of inappropriate or inadequate information.

Potential applicants are strongly advised to contact the NDLERF Secretariat prior to the submission of applications. Applicants from the law enforcement sector are also advised to contact their organisation's representative on the NDLERF Board and/or their agency's Drug and Alcohol Coordinator prior to commencing the application process.

**Grant Proposal Application Forms and Project Concept Forms are available at [www.ndlerf.gov.au](http://www.ndlerf.gov.au)**

**Please note that applications for NDLERF grants are currently assessed in two funding rounds each year and these are advised on the NDLERF website. In addition, applications must be provided to the Secretariat in electronic and in hard copy formats. The hard copy version must have the relevant signatures. Please send signed applications to the address below and electronic copies to the email address below.**

NDLERF Secretariat  
GPO Box 308  
HOBART TAS 7001

Telephone: (03) 6230 2550

Email: [secretariat@ndlerf.gov.au](mailto:secretariat@ndlerf.gov.au)

# National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund

## ORGANISATIONAL BACKGROUND

The National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund (NDLERF) was established by the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy (MCDS) in 1999.

NDLERF exists to support the implementation of the National Drug Strategy by:

- creating research which leads to quality evidence-based practice in drug law enforcement;
- facilitating experimentation and innovation; and
- enhancing strategic alliances and linkages between law enforcement personnel, human service providers, and research agencies,

for the purpose of preventing and reducing the harmful effects of licit and illicit drug use in Australian society.

NDLERF is a sub-committee of the Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs (IGCD). The IGCD is responsible for the implementation of the National Drug Strategy 2005 - 2009 and consists of senior representatives from: law enforcement and health from all States and Territories; the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department; the Australian Customs Service; and the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training. The IGCD reports to the MCDS.

NDLERF is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) as part of its commitment to the National Drug Strategy.

## NDLERF Board of Management

The Fund is administered by the NDLERF Board of Management. The Board is comprised of representatives from law enforcement agencies from all States and Territories; the Australian Federal Police; the Australian Customs Service; the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department; the National Drug Strategy Unit of the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing and a health agency from one of the States or Territories. The NDLERF Secretariat is located in Tasmania. The current NDLERF Board membership can be accessed at [www.ndlerf.gov.au](http://www.ndlerf.gov.au)

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**

NDLERF's current strategic directions and research priorities were endorsed by the NDLERF Board of Management in February 2007.

### **Mission Statement**

The National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund exists to support the implementation of the National Drug Strategy by:

- creating research which leads to quality evidence-based practice in drug law enforcement;
- facilitating experimentation and innovation; and
- enhancing strategic alliances and linkages between law enforcement personnel, human service providers, and research agencies,

for the purpose of preventing and reducing the harmful effects of licit and illicit drug use in Australian society.

### **Terms of Reference**

Projects developed and funded by the National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund should:

- facilitate the research, evaluation and review of drug law enforcement as it relates to licit and illicit drugs;
- assess the impact that the policies and practices of the law enforcement sector and other stakeholders have on each other and on law enforcement and drug harm reduction outcomes; and
- enhance the role of law enforcement and justice personnel in the research, development, piloting and evaluation of innovative licit and illicit drug law enforcement practices,

consistent with the National Drug Strategy.

### **Funding Criteria**

Projects conducted by the National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund should be directed towards:

- the development, promotion and trialling of innovative law enforcement strategies;
- data collection and evidence-based research which leads to better informed decision-making by law enforcement agencies (seed funding only);
- the development of resources to assist law enforcement officers in the execution of their current or future roles; and
- the identification and sponsorship of suitable national law enforcement programs, dependent on satisfactory evaluation,

with a view to the implementation and application of research in drug law enforcement practice.

## **Research Funding Priorities**

The NDLERF Board of Management has identified a number of research areas that are highly relevant to informing drug law enforcement policy and practice within Australia. The list of research priorities is reviewed on a regular basis to account for emerging licit and illicit drug issues.

The NDLERF Board particularly encourages project applications that fall within the research priority areas, which have a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' issues, and/or issues affecting young people.

In some cases research work may already have been undertaken in a research priority area. Prior to submitting an application to NDLERF researchers should ensure that the proposed research does not duplicate work that is currently being conducted or that has previously been conducted elsewhere. The NDLERF Board seeks the advice of expert referees to ensure that it does not fund projects that duplicate research efforts.

NDLERF's current research priority areas are identified under the following headings:

1. Supply reduction
2. Alcohol
3. Law enforcement workforce development
4. Prevention
5. Performance measurement
6. Partnerships
7. Evaluation and Best Practice

Applicants are strongly encouraged to access NDLERF's current research priorities at [www.ndlerf.gov.au](http://www.ndlerf.gov.au)

## **GRANT PROPOSAL APPLICATIONS**

### **General information about applications**

The NDLERF Board of Management aims to fund research that promotes practical innovation in drug law enforcement in Australia. In order to achieve this aim the Board funds a diverse range of projects that involve a range of methodologies. NDLERF-funded projects are not limited to formal academic research such as that which might be conducted in tertiary settings. The Board also considers funding of research that involves the trial and evaluation of initiatives that have the potential to practically inform drug law enforcement policy and practice.

The NDLERF Board encourages applications from law enforcement agencies and applications that involve collaboration between law enforcement agencies, or between law enforcement, other agencies and research organisations. The Board aims to ensure that the Fund enhances the role of law enforcement personnel in the design and implementation of drug-related research in Australia. It is important that the results of NDLERF-funded research are of practical benefit in enhancing the capability of law enforcement agencies to achieve the objectives of the National Drug Strategy (NDS). NDLERF aims to foster partnerships and cooperation between groups involved in achieving the NDS objectives.

In addition to inviting project applications, NDLERF is able to commission research on significant issues facing drug law enforcement in Australia utilising a national competitive tender process.

## **GRANT PROPOSAL APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

### **Applicant Initiated Projects**

Applicants from law enforcement agencies and organisations are strongly encouraged to discuss potential applications to the Fund with the NDLERF Board representative or drug and alcohol coordinator from their State or Territory. Applicants are also advised to consider whether their application could be enhanced by the inclusion of collaborative partners from an organisation outside their own sector.

Applicants can choose to complete a NDLERF Project Concept Form to gain feedback from the NDLERF Board prior to proceeding to a full application. The Secretariat may also be able to provide applicants with feedback that could enhance the application, as well as information concerning contact persons in the applicant's State or Territory. By utilising these processes applicants can obtain information about whether NDLERF is an appropriate source of funding for their project before completing a Grant Proposal Application Form. Personnel from police agencies should initially forward the Project Concept Form to their organisation's Drug and Alcohol Coordinator.

If a decision is made to make a full application, this must be made on the Fund's Grant Proposal Application Form ([www.ndlerf.gov.au](http://www.ndlerf.gov.au)). **One electronic version in Word format and one signed hard copy are required.** Please email the electronic version to the Secretariat at [secretariat@ndlerf.gov.au](mailto:secretariat@ndlerf.gov.au). Additional copies of the Grant Proposal Application Form are available in hard copy or on disc from the NDLERF Secretariat. Applications are considered in two funding rounds each year with application deadlines set to enable the NDLERF Board to consider these at Board meetings. Application deadlines are advised at [www.ndlerf.gov.au](http://www.ndlerf.gov.au) and further information can be obtained from the NDLERF Secretariat.

All sections of the Grant Proposal Application Form must be completed, including a detailed justification of each requested item of the budget. Additional funding is generally not granted to researchers after projects have commenced and it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the original research is completed within the budget and on time. Applicants should also note that funds are not available for travel other than that which is essential to the project.

For projects that require items involving major capital expenditure such as computers, applicants are urged to consider the option of leasing the equipment for the term of the project, rather than purchasing it. In situations where the purchase of equipment is unavoidable, either any proceeds from its sale, or its residual value must be repaid to NDLERF at the completion of the project. Host organisations have the option of disposing of the equipment in accordance with the approved procedures in place in that organisation, or negotiating with the Secretariat to determine the depreciated value of the equipment. The Secretariat will use the equipment depreciation rates used by the Australian Taxation Office as a guide in these matters.

In projects requiring access to governmental, institutional or personal records, ethics approval must be obtained prior to the funding being provided. In these cases the applicant/s must provide, evidence of the ethics approval process that is to be used with the Grant Proposal Application and must comply with requirements relating to the disclosure of information. Additionally, applicants must have the approval of relevant law enforcement organisations to conduct the research.

Applicants are required to nominate two referees to comment on the project. The referees must be experts in the area that the project seeks to address and must be willing to provide written comments on the proposal.

Upon completion the Grant Proposal Application Form should be forwarded to the NDLERF Secretariat. Personnel from police agencies should forward the Grant Proposal Application Form to their organisation's Drug and Alcohol Coordinator who will then pass it to the organisation's representative on the NDLERF Board, who will in turn provide it to the Secretariat.

The application will be sent to the referees nominated by the applicant, as well as one independent referee, with relevant expertise, identified by the NDLERF Research Priorities Sub-Committee and the Secretariat. Referees are invited to provide constructive advice that may enhance the application as well as written comments addressing:

- the project conceptualisation;
- the degree of replicability and the transferability of the proposal between Australian jurisdictions;
- the relevance of the project to NDLERF's Terms of Reference, Funding Criteria and Research Priorities;
- whether or not the proposal meets the Funding Criteria;
- the adequacy of the project methodology; and
- the likelihood of satisfactory completion of the project within the stated budget and timeframe.

Where referee assessments indicate concerns about the application applicants are invited to respond to the assessments. In addressing minor points of concern expressed by the referees, applicants can either vary the proposal, or where appropriate justify the original proposal. Referee concerns of a more substantial nature may require a complete redraft of the application. The redrafted application will then be reassessed by the referees before it is put to the NDLERF Board for consideration.

Both the referees' comments and the responses from the applicants will be forwarded to the NDLERF Board to assist with the fund grant decision-making processes. The NDLERF Board makes decisions on the funding of projects based on:

- the original application;
- the extent to which the application is consistent with the Terms of Reference, Funding Criteria and Research Priorities of the Fund;
- referees' comments and the applicant's response where appropriate;
- the likelihood of satisfactory completion of the project within the stated budget and time frame; and
- the availability of NDLERF funds.

Members of the Board of Management do not vote on those applications that emanate from their jurisdiction or organisation. Applicants should note that the time required to process an application from its receipt to the provision of funds is usually six months.

### **NDLERF Initiated Projects**

At times law enforcement agencies will become aware of drug research issues that appear central to their effective operations. However, law enforcement agencies do not always have the personnel, structures or available resources to allow them to conduct research to address these issues. In such cases, these issues may be brought to the attention of the NDLERF Board through the State's or Territory's law enforcement representative on the Board. If the Board indicates that the issue is one that the Fund should address, the NDLERF Secretariat will develop detailed project tender specifications and a national competitive tendering process will be conducted to invite appropriate researchers to undertake the study.

## **GENERAL NOTES**

### **Dissemination of the findings of NDLERF-funded research**

The NDLERF Board is keen to ensure the findings of its projects are widely and appropriately distributed and that the relevant skills and knowledge developed as a result of the research are communicated to law enforcement personnel. Consequently, applicants are required to advise of dissemination, knowledge and skill transfer strategies for project findings, which will be assessed as part of the Grant Proposal Application process. The NDLERF Board also has its own dissemination strategies that it may implement to distribute the report or abstracts. The nature of project dissemination strategies will be determined by the contents of project reports and any confidentiality or operational sensitivity provisions that may relate to this content.

Grant requests must be given the approval of the NDLERF Board before using any data, information or other research material gained as part of NDLERF project for other purposes. Any papers relating to NDLERF-funded projects that are proposed for publication or for presentation at conferences must be provided to the NDLERF Secretariat in sufficient time to allow the Board to approve this occurring.

In using any research materials developed using NDLERF monies in presentations, publications or the like, grant recipients must acknowledge the support of NDLERF. The following acknowledgment is recommended: *Supported by the National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund, an initiative of the National Drug Strategy.*

NDLERF has specific requirements concerning the appearance of final NDLERF reports. Reports must comply with specific size, colour, appearance, font size, and layout requirements. Reports must also have the NDLERF corporate report cover. Details of these requirements are available from the Secretariat.

### **Access and Equity**

The access and equity policy of the Australian Government is designed to ensure that all residents of Australia, who may face barriers of race, culture or language have equal access to, and receive a fair share of, the resources managed by the Government on behalf of the community. Women, indigenous groups and individuals from non-english speaking backgrounds are key groups within the access and equity policy.

In conducting NDLERF projects, grant recipients should ensure that projects do not disadvantage or discriminate against these groups and should take into account gender differences and the varied cultural and linguistic characteristics of Australian society.

Dissemination of project findings should take the above factors into account and ensure that people involved in the project (either directly, or through their representatives) are advised of the outcomes of the research.

## **Legal Issues**

Projects funded by NDLERF must comply with relevant legislation and regulations in the State or Territory in which the research is conducted. NDLERF will not accept responsibility for any lack of adherence to these laws or regulations.

### **Requests for additional funds after projects have commenced**

Applications for extra funds after a project has commenced will be referred to the entire NDLERF Board.

Extra funds will not be provided for projects when these requests for funds:

- result from budget overruns that occur in the normal conduct of the project;
- result from underestimations of the cost of conducting the project that occurred in the initial application;
- result from extensions of time that are required by researchers to complete a project; or
- where the researchers do not propose to add value to the project by extending the products of the project beyond those specified in the project application.

The Board may approve applications for additional funds when:

- budget overruns occur in a project as a result of a totally unforeseeable occurrence that takes place during the conduct of the project (such as a serious illness involving key project personnel or the need for major changes to project design which incur additional expense);
- the researchers propose to add value to the project by extending the project significantly beyond that specified in the initial application (for example in the course of conducting a project, researchers may discover additional lines of research enquiry that were not foreseeable in the initial application);
- the additional research contained in the application is consistent with the strategic directions, research priorities and funding criteria of the Fund; and
- the extension to the project represents good value for money.

To apply please refer to the Project Concept Form and/or the Grant Proposal Application Form at [www.ndlerf.gov.au](http://www.ndlerf.gov.au) .