



Grant Overview

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Purpose:

The Accelerating Innovators in Clinical Care Grant is designed to support healthcare professionals in Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Care, midwifery, neonatal nursing, obstetrics, neonatology, dietetics, pharmacy or other areas of perinatal health undertaking higher degrees of research focused on human milk for preterm infants and their families.

Objectives and expected outcomes:

- **Facilitate clinicians** undertaking advanced research that addresses critical questions in neonatal nutrition and care.
- **Foster innovative research designs** that respond to clinical challenges and bridge evidence gaps.
- **Support knowledge generation** that informs best practice and enhances health outcomes for preterm infants and their families.
- **Promote integration of research into clinical practice**, ensuring findings translate into improved care delivery for infants and their families.
- **Build leadership capacity** among clinicians to champion evidence-based change within their professional communities.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet all requirements below.

a) Professional Background

- Registered healthcare professional with current AHPRA (or equivalent) registration.
- Minimum **2 years of clinical experience** providing healthcare services or support to preterm infants and/or their parents/caregivers.

b) Academic Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree; and



- Current enrolment in, or demonstrated intention to enrol in, a PhD (or equivalent) or Masters of Research.
- **Preference will be given to applicants already enrolled.**
- **Funding is strictly contingent upon acceptance into, and enrolment in, a research degree.**

c) Employment Status

- Currently employed as a healthcare professional (full-time, part-time, or casual).
- Affiliated, or intending to establish affiliation, to the CRE in Human Milk Nutrition for Preterm Infants.

Research Focus

Applicants' research must align with the CRE's goals/priority areas and advance clinical care for preterm infants and their families.

CRE research program priorities:

- Evidence to drive practice change
- Optimising lactation care for mothers and babies
- A safe, sustainable supply of donor milk
- Lacto-engineering to enhance the benefits of human milk

Funding Details

A total of **\$15,000** will be awarded as a **one-time grant** during the life of the CRE to be utilised by June 2028. The funds can be used to support an individual research project, a component of a larger research project or to build experience as a researcher. This may include expenses such as:

- Tuition fees / further research training
- Buy out of clinical time
- Living expenses to enable the pursuit of a research project
- Research materials
- Travel for fieldwork
- Other project-related costs

In addition to financial support, recipients will be recognised as **scholars of the CRE in Human Milk Nutrition for Preterm Infants**. This includes access to **mentorship and training opportunities** provided by the CRE to support professional development and research excellence.



Selection Criteria

All grant applicants will be reviewed by the Career Development Committee. The assessment rubric for the grant is available in the supporting documents.

Application Requirements and Document Information

Applicants must complete the REDCap form to confirm eligibility, submit the application form, and provide a research proposal (either their university-submitted proposal or the CRE Research Proposal Template). Applicants must also provide details of one professional referee via the REDCap form. A checklist and further guidance on the application requirements are provided below.

Applicants are required to complete and provide the following:

- REDCap form confirming eligibility requirements
- Completed *CRE in Human Milk Nutrition for Preterm Infants - Accelerating Innovators in Clinical Care Grant Application*
- Provided copy of University Research Proposal or CRE Research Proposal (Template)
- Professional referee details



*CRE in Human Milk Nutrition for Preterm Infants - Accelerating Innovators in Clinical Care Grant
Application - Application*

Applicants are required to complete and upload the **application** as part of their REDCap form submission. The document must include the following components:

Short Project Title and Summary

Provide a brief project title and a concise summary (200 word maximum) outlining the focus and aims of the research project.

Research Track Record

Applicants should provide a concise **250–300 word** overview of their clinical and academic background relevant to preterm infant and maternal care. Early-career applicants are encouraged to describe their developing skills, interests, and how this grant will support their growth. The overview may include:

- Clinical experience, including key roles in caring for preterm infants and/or parents/caregivers, and any leadership, quality improvement, or service development work.
- Qualifications and training, including degrees and any neonatal, perinatal, lactation or related certifications.
- Professional memberships and registrations such as AHPRA (or equivalent) and involvement in relevant organisations.
- Research or scholarly activities, including participation in research, audits, evaluations, or quality improvement projects, and any methodological skills.
- Academic outputs such as conference presentations, posters, abstracts or publications.
- Research interests related to human milk, neonatal nutrition, or care of preterm infants.
- Any supervision, mentorship or collaborative experience that supports research development.

Statement of Alignment with CRE Priorities and Funding (1 page; 500 words)

Part 1: Alignment with CRE Priorities and Expected Grant Outcomes

- Explain how the proposed research aligns with the CRE in Human Milk Nutrition for Preterm Infants by addressing at least one of the CRE priority areas.
- Applicants should also outline how their work contributes to broader CRE goals such as knowledge generation, practice improvement, and research translation.
- Describe how the primary objective(s) of your research will contribute to the expected outcomes of the grant, including improved clinical care, integration of research into practice, and strengthening human milk feeding outcomes for preterm infants and their families.

Part 2: Funding plan

- Detail how the \$15,000 grant will be used (provide a breakdown) and timeline for expenditure (please note, grant funds must be expended by June 2028).

Research Proposal

- **A copy of the full research proposal** submitted (or intended to be submitted) to the administering university as part of their higher-degree research program; **or**
- **If a university proposal has not yet been completed**, applicants must complete the **CRE Research Proposal Template** and upload it as a PDF.

Please note: Applicants are *not* required to provide both documents—only one is required.

Referee Details

In the REDCap form, applicants must provide the details of **one professional referee** who can be contacted to discuss their suitability for higher-degree research and participation in the proposed project. The referee should be either:

- The applicant's current line manager, or
- An affiliate from the institution where the research will be undertaken.

The referee should be able to confirm:

- That the applicant has discussed their intention to undertake higher-degree research.
- Their support for the applicant's involvement in the proposed project.
- That the workplace or host organisation is supportive of the applicant undertaking further education and research training.
- Any relevant organisational commitments, such as flexibility, research time, supervision, or mentorship.

Applicants should provide the referee's name, position, organisation, email address, and phone number.

Terms and Conditions

1. Acknowledge the support/contribution of the CRE in Human Milk Nutrition for Preterm Infants (grant provider) when publishing or presenting material that relates to the research project.
2. Provide a short written report about your project, for use on the CRE website, newsletter, and other communications.
3. Contribute to communication updates for CRE stakeholders.
4. Complete a conflicts of interest declaration.



CRE
In Human Milk Nutrition
for Preterm Infants

**Centre of Research Excellence in Human Milk Nutrition for
Preterm Infants:
Accelerating Innovators in Clinical Care Grant**

Supporting Documents

Accelerating Innovators in Clinical Care Grant Overview (Clinical-CRE-grant_Final_11-03-2026)

REDCap Form

Grant Application (Clinical-CRE-Grant_Application-Template-[SurnameInitial]-25-02-2026)

Research Proposal Template (Clinical-CRE-Grant_Research Proposal-Template-[SurnameInitial]-25-02-2026)

Grant Assessment Rubric (CRE-Clinical-Grant-rubric_v1_10-02-2026)

Key Dates

- Applications open 24th March to 5th May 2026

Contact Information

- For any further information, please contact the CRE Program Manager at humanmilkcre@sahmri.com.