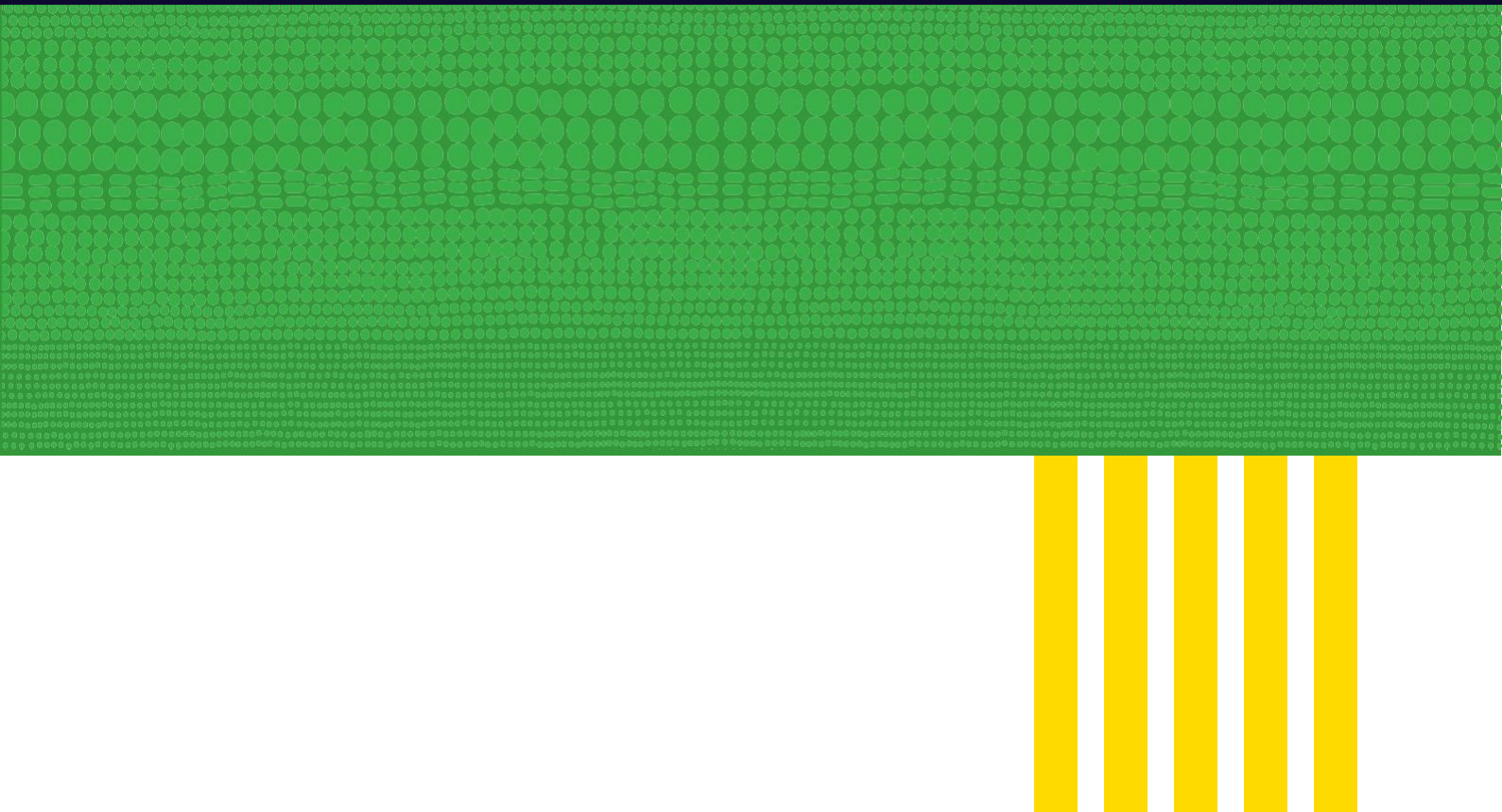


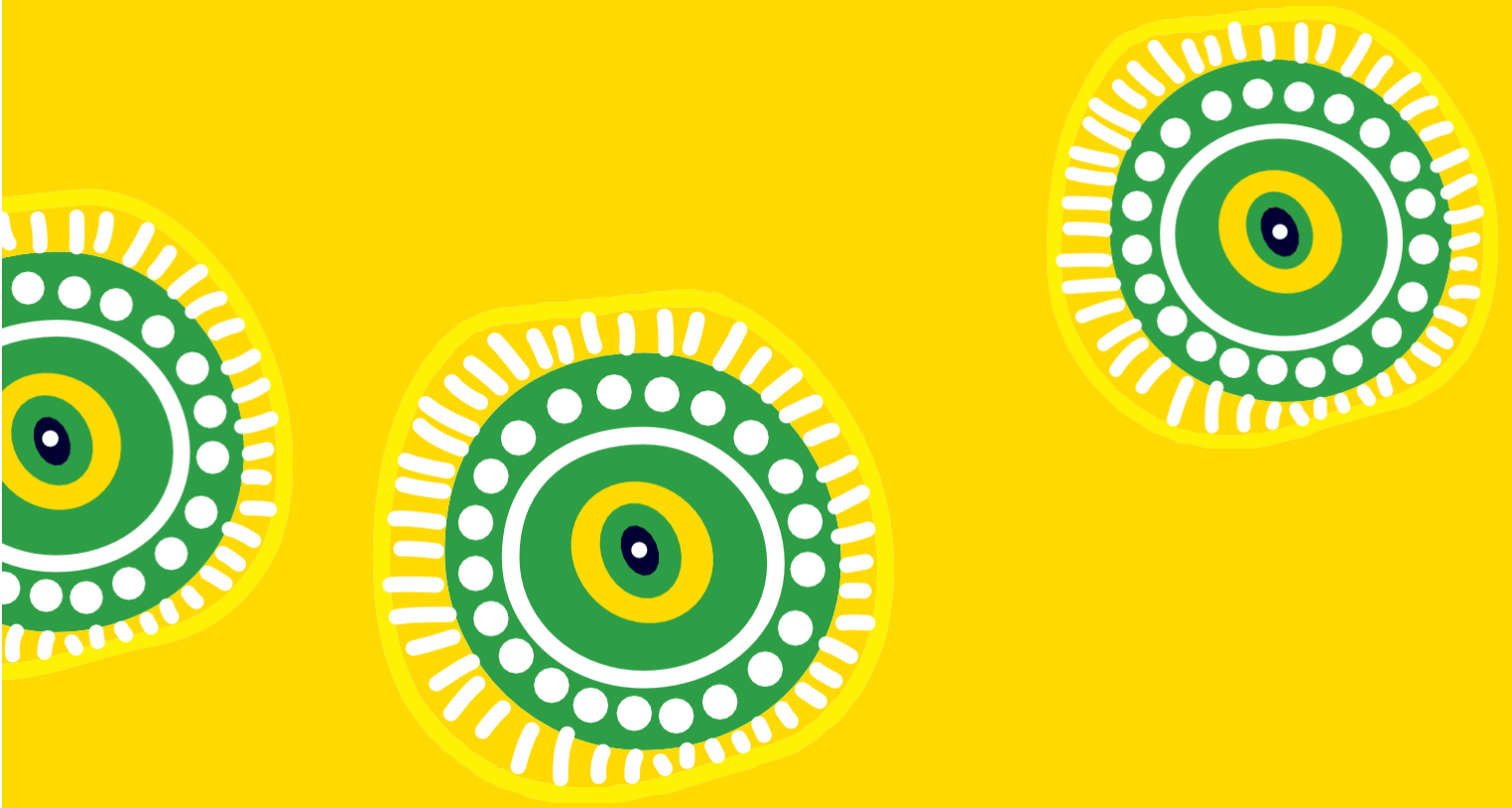
OFFICIAL



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

ASC Research and Innovation Grant 2025 Guidelines





Australian Sports Commission Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where its offices are located, the Ngunnawal people and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, the people of the Yugambeh Nation and the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation.

The ASC extends this acknowledgment to all the Traditional Custodians of the lands and First Nations Peoples throughout Australia and would like to pay its respects to all Elders past, present and future.

The ASC recognises the outstanding contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to society and sport in Australia and celebrates the power of sport to promote reconciliation and reduce inequality.



1. Timeline

2025 ASC R&I Grants Program	Timeframe
Guidelines Release	20 January 2025
Applications Open	20 January 2025, 9am AEDT
Applications Close	28 February 2025, 12pm AEDT
Notification of Successful Applicant(s)	April 2025

2. Application process

This Grant Program contributes to addressing part of the National Sport Research Agenda and an ASC priority, 'Sports are thriving'

What is the cost of the governance and operating structures in the delivery of sport, and what are the major factors that contribute to that cost?



This Grant opportunity opens

The ASC publishes the grant guidelines and opens the call for funding.



The Principal Investigator (PI) completes and submits an application

The PI works with their Organisation (and Associate Investigators, if applicable) to complete an application on the ASC's SmartyGrants system, addressing eligibility and assessment criteria.



The ASC manages the assessment of the applications

The ASC manages the assessment of applications against eligibility criteria and assessment criteria. Eligible applications will be assigned to Selection Committee members who will then assess applications against the Criteria detailed in these Guidelines.



The Selection Committee makes grant recommendations

The Manager, Research & Innovation, following the Selection Committee recommendations, will submit a proposal to the Grant Approver (EGM Strategy Insights and Innovation), who makes the final decision. The Approver may consider advice from ASC Executives.



Grant decisions are made

The Grant Approver decides which applications will be funded and the level and duration of funding for grants.



The ASC notifies applicants of the outcome

The ASC advises applicants if their applications were successful or not through SmartyGrants.



The ASC enters into a grant agreement with Eligible Organisation(s)

Successful applicant(s) enter into a grant agreement with the ASC.



Delivery of the grant

Successful organisations undertake the grant activity and report to the ASC as set out in the grant agreement. The ASC manages the grant and monitors progress.



Evaluation of the grant opportunity

The ASC evaluates the grant based on information provided (including post-project reporting) and information collected from other sources.



3. About the program

Background

Led by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), the National Sport Research Agenda includes a research theme entitled, 'Sports System Sustainability'. The ASC has also prioritised 'Sports are thriving' as an important goal, and the recently released 'Sport Horizon – National Sport Strategy 2024-2032' identifies 'Sustainability' as a guiding principle:

"An innovative, resilient and sustainable sport sector that builds capacity and capability and works collaboratively to achieve strategic outcomes, such as ensuring the efficient use of resources to maintain and grow involvement in sport at all levels and locations".

National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) are a key stakeholder in the delivery of value to the Australian sporting community, and their sustainability as organisations is in the interests of the Australian sport sector.

Purpose

This grant is made available to address the following research question:

What are the costs associated with the governance and operating structures in the delivery of sport, and what are the major factors that contribute to these costs?

We are seeking to expand on our current understanding and analysis of known governance and operating models within sporting organisations (for example, federated, one management, unitary, and hybrid) including:

- The cost associated with the delivery of sport within each model;
- The major characteristics of the models, and in particular the major factors within the models that contribute to the cost to deliver sport;
- The effect that these costs have on organisational resilience and sustainability;
- Identifying good and promising practice within and beyond the sport sector.

4. Grant amount and period

The total budget for this grant opportunity is \$100,000 (exclusive of GST).

Applicants can apply for up to \$100,000 (exclusive of GST) in funding.

The ASC will determine the final grant amount awarded, and the total number of applications funded as part of the assessment process.

It is intended that the project(s) will commence in 2025 and be completed within 12 months from the commencement date, however the time frame may vary subject to written agreement with the ASC.



5. Eligibility

Eligible applicants

The ASC will only accept applications from Eligible Organisations.

- The Eligible Organisation submitting the application will be the 'Administering Organisation' (which is the Organisation linked with the Principal Investigator).
- Eligible Organisation linked with Associate Investigator(s) listed on the application will be an 'Other Eligible Organisation'.
- Eligible Organisation supporting the application without the direct involvement of an Investigator from their organisation (e.g. endorsing the project or providing cash and/or in-kind support only) will be 'Partner Organisations'.

An investigator may only be named Principal Investigator on one application. There is no limit to the number of applications on which an investigator may be named as an Associate Investigator. ASC staff and/or ASC affiliates are ineligible to apply as Principal Investigator.

The ASC encourages collaboration between 'value add' partners including National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) and / or National Sporting Organisations for people with a disability (NSODs) as recognised by the Australian Sports Commission, as well as Paralympics Australia, the Australian Olympic Committee, and the Australian Commonwealth Games Association, State Institutes and Academies of Sport, other research organisations and other industry partners.

The ASC is focused on world best outcomes, so any Eligible Organisation that can deliver on the Grant's objectives are encouraged to apply.

The ASC will only accept applications from Eligible Organisations as identified below.

Eligible organisations

To be eligible, Organisations, must:

Not be an organisation named by the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (www.nationalredress.gov.au) on its list of "Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme".

Additionally, the Administering Organisation must:

Have a current Australian Business Number; and

Additionally, the Administering Organisation and Other Eligible Organisation(s) must:

Have demonstrated capabilities to undertake quality research projects to deliver outcomes aligned to the National Sport Research Agenda.

Have demonstrated capabilities of delivering tangible value to industry partners.

Eligible grant activities

All items for which grant money is sought must be justified in the application to the ASC's satisfaction.

Grant funds are for the explicit use of supporting the research proposal that has been submitted.



6. Types of activities that will not be funded

Ineligible grant activities

Funds are not to be used for the purchase of capital expenditure of any kind including computer hardware, office furniture, or clinical machinery unless approved in writing by the ASC.

Funds are not to be used for the purposes of covering organisational overhead costs, unless approved in writing by the ASC.

Funds are not to be used for costs not directly related to the project, including but not limited to, professional membership fees, fees for patent application, and maintenance.

The ASC may, at its absolute discretion, determine whether any project costs involve items not permitted. If such a determination is made, then the ASC may decide to not support part or all the application for funding.

7. Application process

Applications must be submitted online via the ASC's grant application portal during the application period.

To apply, applicants must:

- Complete and submit an application form online on the ASC website:
https://www.sportaus.gov.au/grants_and_funding/asc-research-grant-program
- Provide all the information requested on the application form.

Please ensure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code 1995 (Cth). The ASC will investigate false or misleading information and may not consider your application for the grant.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should notify us immediately at funding@ausport.gov.au. Applicants cannot change your application after the closing date and time, unless invited to by the ASC.

The ASC will not accept applications submitted after the published deadline, unless it is satisfactorily proven that a technical issue has prevented the applicant from submitting their application in time.

Applications close on Friday 28 February 2025 at 12pm (AEDT).

If you have any questions regarding this grant opportunity, please contact the ASC Research Office via aisresearch@ausport.gov.au

8. Assessment process

The ASC adopts the Australian Research Council's (ARC) Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) Statement, supporting equitable access to research funding. The ASC is seeking to increase equity in grant programs through improved advertising mechanisms and changes to the application and selection processes.

The ASC will appoint a Selection Committee to:

- Assess and shortlist applications; and
- Make a recommendation related to the successful applicants.

The Selection Committee comprises of:

- Relevant members of ASC staff;
- A representative of the National Sport Research Advisory Group that is not submitting an application to the grant program;
- An independent representative from the Australian Sport Sector.



During the assessment, the ASC may request additional information, which does not change the nature of the application.

Applications will undergo a preliminary review by ASC Research & Innovation Administration to determine eligibility, prior to being scored and ranked by the Selection Committee.

Final determination of grant allocation will be decided by the Grant Approver.

In agreement with the ARCs suggestions, the ASC recommends all assessors undergo a process to identify and raise awareness of personal biases, question the basis for thoughts and feelings, build skills in cultural diversity and reflect on the strength of a culture that embraces differences.

Assessment Criteria

All applications will be considered through a competitive process, based on how well they meet the assessment considerations and how they are ranked against each other.

Below is a list of considerations that will guide decision-making for the assessment of applications.

Criterion 1 - Investigators – 40%

*Assessment against the ‘investigators’ criterion should include consideration of the opportunities the applicants have had to build their profiles.**

Demonstrable expertise and capability to address the research priority, including assessment of publications previous work in the sport sector and/or R&I impact. #

- Access to resources needed to complete the project (including but not limited to peer support, statistician, software, contacts into the sports sector etc).

Criterion 2 – Value for Money – 30%

Assessment of the budget request, in kind contributions, and leverage of funding.

Demonstrable contributions and leverage of funding.

- Well justified and detailed budget, deliverables and timelines.

Criterion 3 – Project – 30%

- High-quality R&I project, with a clear research question/s (needs-driven) and information related to the appropriate design, feasibility, data management procedures, data analysis, and reporting.
- Reach (potential beneficiaries of the proposed activity; inclusive design)
- Impact (output with measurable positive impact on sport; either short and/or long-term impact)
- Commitment to conducting the research activity according to the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#) and, when applicable, in line with the [“Recommendations for conducting AIS-supported research in high performance sport”](#).

** For example, researchers who are early in their research career or have had an interrupted research career, including employment outside academia, unemployment, child birth, carers’ responsibilities and other personal circumstances, will have this taken into account. This provides assessors with information to determine whether a Principal Investigator (PI) has had extensive opportunity for research compared to a PI who may have had more limited time for research. In this way, the quality and benefit of achievements are given more weight than the quantity or rate of particular achievements enabling excellent researchers to be competitive regardless of their career path. (from: <https://www.arc.gov.au/funding-research/peer-review/assessment-process>)*

For example, assessment of the publications track record will not include a list of all publications, and will instead focus on up to 10 of the Research Group’s nominated best publications from the past 10 years (taking into consideration career disruptions). This will help to ensure that assessment of publication track record focuses on the quality and contribution to science rather than the quantity of publications. (adapted from: [Peer review | NHMRC](#)).

Approval of Grant

The ASC Manager, Research and Innovation, following the Selection Committee recommendations, will submit a proposal to the Grant Approver, who makes the final decision including:



- The grant amount to be awarded;
- The duration of the grant, and
- The terms and conditions of the grant.

9. Successful grant applications

Notification and Agreement

All applicants will be notified by email of the outcome of their application including:

- The funding amount, if awarded;
- The duration of the grant, if awarded; and
- The specific terms and conditions of any funding.

Successful applicants will be required to enter a 'Research Funding Agreement' (RFA) with the ASC. The Agreement will set out the general terms of the relationship, with details of specific research projects to be set out in the 'Project Schedules' of the Agreement. Funding will be granted upon signing the Agreement, but specific project funding will be allocated by mutual agreement in accordance with the relevant provisions in the Agreement.

The ASC has a strategic mandate to generate knowledge for the benefit of the Australian sports sector through its research funding. Therefore, the research funding agreement for successful applicants, seeks a licence for the ASC to share the results of research with the sports sector. More broadly, research applicants are expected to be compliant with the [National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research](#).

Applicants should also be aware that breaches of the funding agreement or failure to comply with agreed obligations may affect the eligibility of future grant applications.

At its absolute discretion, the ASC may contact unsuccessful applicants to discuss elements of their application, unless otherwise indicated in the application process.

Successful Grant Recipient Responsibilities

Successful Grant recipients will be required to:

- Accept the research funding agreement and abide by the Terms and Conditions of the agreement;
- Undertake the R&I activity as set out in the agreement;
- Undertake the research activity according to the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#) and, when applicable, in line with the "[Recommendations for conducting AIS-supported research in high performance sport](#)";
- Work with the ASC Research and Innovation Manager for monitoring progress of the R&I activity.
- Provide project reports and acquittals as specified in the grant agreement; and
- Promptly notify and seek approval from the ASC if the grant activity has been delayed/postponed due to circumstances, and/or there has been a change of grant activity.
- Seek written approval from the ASC in case of any changes to the project.



10. Probity

Conflict of Interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or Program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if ASC staff, any member of the Assessment Panel, a committee or advisor, and/or the applicant, for example:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an ASC officer, or a member of an external panel;
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently; or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant Program.

Applicants will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest. If you later identify an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest, the ASC must be informed in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for ASC staff will be handled in accordance with ASC's Conflict of Interest Policy. Selection Committee members will also be required to declare any conflicts of interest.

Disclosure of Information

The ASC will treat any personal information in accordance with the *Privacy ACT 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles.

Personal information can only be disclosed to someone for the primary purpose for which it is collected unless an exemption applies.

Personal information submitted via the online application is collected by the ASC for the purpose of considering applications for and administering the Program.

The personal details of successful applicants (including name, home state, sport, the value of the grant awarded and a brief description of the purpose for the program) may be released by the ASC to the public and the media for the use of promotional and educational purposes.

To view the ASC Privacy Policy visit: https://www.sportaus.gov.au/legal_information/privacy_policy

11. Enquiries and Feedback

If you have any questions regarding the grant program, please contact the ASC Research Office via aisresearch@ausport.gov.au

If you wish to lodge a complaint regarding the program, this can be done using the ASC complaints form: https://www.sportaus.gov.au/contacts/australian_sports_commission_complaint_form



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