LINC grant application – Q&As and grant writing tips

1.   Frequent Q&As

What if I don't have a clinical or scientific collaborator?	Contact TRI's clinical and research engagement Managers for support in making some connections. You will need to provide a short paragraph outlining what you need in a collaborator and research you are hoping to work with them on. TRI holds networking events in the first half of the year which are a great opportunity to meet a potential collaborator. Please note, you should allow at least two months but preferably more to find a collaborator. E: funding@tri.edu.au
Does the collaboration have to be new?	Yes, this needs to be a new collaboration for the Principal Investigators. You are still eligible if your mentors or Group/Department leaders have previously collaborated.
Can the Principal Investigator-clinician be from a hospital other than in Metro South Health, Mater Health or CHQ?	Not as a Principal Investigator but they can be a CI.
With regard to the PI Clinician, how do you define early to mid-career?	The clinician must 17 or less years post their clinical qualification, that is from when they completed their medical/clinical degree (not from a specialist qualification or a PhD or Masters).
Are all PI Clinician's required to be an early to mid-career clinician?	The clinician must be an early to mid-career for the TRI-MSH & TRI-CHQ LINC grants.

Clinicians at any career stage are eligible for the TRI-Mater LINC Grants. |
How can we share our grant application on SmartyGrants with the rest of team?	The only way to share the application form online with multiple people is for the form user to share their username and password – and them only one person can open the form at a time. Most teams will download a PDF of the form, convert to a Word doc and either upload to Sharepoint (for example) to enable edits from multiple users, or store the document in a shared drive.
Do I need to have a research plan developed for the LINC application?	No, you just need an outline of what your project could involve. You have 12 months to develop your research plan and get any necessary ethics and governance approvals before carrying out a pilot project in year 2 of your grant.
Can I apply again if I was previously awarded a LINC grant?	You are welcome to submit an application to subsequent LINC grant rounds post being awarded a LINC grant.

Do you have any tips on forming a successful collaboration?	Have a look at these articles for some insights:
	• Vicens Q, Bourne PE (2007),"Ten Simple Rules for a Successful Collaboration", PLoS Comput Biol 3(3): e44. **https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.0030044**
	• Nyström, M.E., Karltun, J., Keller, C. et al. Collaborative and partnership research for improvement of health and social services: researcher's experiences from 20 projects. Health Res Policy Sys 16, 46 (2018). **https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-018-0322-0**

2.   Grant application writing tips

Communicating your research	We strongly recommend you attend a TRI Research Communications workshop and a Translation Pathways workshop. Why? To write a good grant application you need to be able to clearly communicate your research and its potential impact on healthcare. You also need to understand your research and the ecosystem surrounding it.
	➢ Make sure your application is simple, concise, and easy to understand.
	➢ Do not use jargon or acronyms (ever!).
	➢ Assume the grant reviewers know nothing about your research or any techniques you plan to use. You need to explain the importance/significance of your work to date and proposed work. And you need to be persuasive in the process.
	➢ Clearly identify what the healthcare problem is that your research has the potential to address and explain why your work could make a difference.
	➢ Understand who the end user of your research will be. You don't need to involve a consumer for a LINC grant, but it will be essential for any grants moving forward, so see if it's possible to engage with a consumer to understand their perspective and any insights they might be able to provide you.
Read the key criteria in the LINC Guidelines	The reviewers use these criteria to score your application. You need to make sure you address all the criteria in your application.
The lay summary	This summary is used by TRI and its partners to promote your research. This your first opportunity to grab the attention and enthusiasm of first the grant reviewers and then if your grant is successful, potential collaborators or funders.
	➢ Treat it like an 'elevator pitch': what healthcare problem are you addressing; why this work is important; who will benefit; and any unique point of difference about your project.
	➢ This is being published publicly so do not include any specific details in your lay summary that could jeopardise intellectual property protection in the future.
The project overview	In this section make sure you address several of the key criteria, particularly those relating to the clinical/public health significance and translation potential. It is

important in this section to emphasis what is unique about your project. Reviewers will often do journal searches to see if what you claim is true so be honest and do your own research to check no one else is doing or has done what you are looking at doing.

Consider including:

- Current knowledge relating to the aim/s of your research (especially any data in this area you may have already generated).
- The importance of the proposed research for advancing new knowledge
- Significance of the research to clinical care (what will it improve or address)
- How your research outcomes will be novel or the point of difference over existing healthcare approaches
- Explaining how this research project has the potential to benefit patients
- Details for any ideas you have for translating your research outcomes (this may include knowledge transfer, clinical trials/studies, commercialisation – reviewers will favourably consider that you have considered what the next steps will be to getting your research into the clinic).
- Touch on the strengths your collaborative team brings to this project. You will answer this in more detail later but it will be good to highlight it here too.

Project Feasibility – Design, methods	Be realistic about what you can achieve in 2 years with a $50,000 budget.
	Please note, you are not expected to have a full project plan put together for this application. The reviewers do, however, want to see that you have put some thought into how you are going to collaborate together and what you hope to achieve. That means, this section is more of an overview of what you think might work.
	If you are considering running a clinical trial or study, talk to someone with experience to get an idea of a realistic number of patients/samples you can recruit and the number of sites you should involve (hint: more than one site may give you heartburn unless you have some very experienced collaborators). You also need to understand how many patients or samples you need to give you a credible sample size for what you aim to achieve.
Budget	In this section, you are demonstrating that you've given some thought to how much it is going to cost to achieve your aims and objectives. Again, be realistic about how far $50,000 will stretch and the real costs.
	If you are planning on using equipment or facilities you haven't used before, take the time to talk to someone who runs or uses these so you don't underestimate the costs involved.
Key project milestones	In this section, the reviewers want to get a sense you have considered the time it will take to complete the various stages of your project. What key work do you hope to do at what time point in the two years of the project? It may be that need to revise your aims and objectives to match what can be achieved.

	Please note, if you are thinking of doing a clinical study or trial, it is recommended you allow at least six months for ethics and governance approvals to come through.
	Remember: the aim of the LINC grant is to generate pilot data so that you can apply for larger grants.
Meet with the UQ or QUT technology transfer office	TRI highly recommends meeting with the university tech transfer office staff based at TRI to run your application by them. This gives them the opportunity to advise you of any potential intellectual property issues. They can also provide insight into the type of data you might need to generate if there is commercialisation potential for your project.
	UniQuest: Tamsin Terry E: t.terry@uniquest.com.au QUT: Patrick Dwyer E: p6.dwyer@qut.edu.au
Need more tips?	➢ Guyer RA, Schwarze ML, Gosain A, Maggard-Gibbons M, Keswani SG, Goldstein AM. Top ten strategies to enhance grant-writing success. Surgery. 2021 Dec;170(6):1727-1731. doi: 10.1016/j.surg.2021.06.039.
	➢ 12 Quick Tips for Better Grant Writing
	➢ How to write a grant application: our top 10 tips for success
	➢ 10 Essential Grant Writing Skills