

ESSA Research Grants 2024: Description and Requirements

Call for applications for research to be conducted in 2025

Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA) is the leading professional organisation committed to establishing, promoting, and defending the career paths of tertiary trained exercise and sports science practitioners.

In alignment with ESSA's vision and purpose for all Australians to use exercise and sports science to improve their health and performance; and to provide industry leadership through advocacy, research, education, and regulation to support exercise and sports science professionals and the Australian community in becoming a more active nation, ESSA will fund four projects of up to \$25,000 each for research commencing early in 2025.

Expressions of Interest are invited, addressing one of the following two research themes:

- A. Evaluating the value of exercise and sports science professions** to understand their service offerings by exercise scientists, sport scientists, or exercise physiologists in varied health settings in Australia, and their impact on consumers and the health system.
- B. A research project, initiated and led by an ESSA member**, which aligns with [ESSA's Strategic Plan](#) and [ESSA's Strategic Priorities](#) and clearly indicates how the work is relevant to the Australian exercise and sport science workforce.

Proposals must address applied research in the professions or settings of exercise physiology, exercise science or sport science and must support translation from research to practical applications for the ESSA practitioner community and to the benefit of their clientele. **Expressions of Interest** (EoI) that are highly ranked, will be invited to provide a **Full Application** to ESSA. It is intended that the projects would commence in early 2025 and be completed by 31 December 2025, however, the time frame may be adjusted subject to written agreement by ESSA.

Funding administration and requirements:

Grant funds are not transferable and are for the explicit use of supporting the research proposal that has been presented to and recommended by the ESSA Research Committee (ERC). Any changes to the project once awarded must be submitted to, and approved by, ESSA in writing, before any change is implemented by the recipients.

Eligibility:

The ESSA Research Grants are open to all Australian-based investigators. The research must be conducted in Australia. A Principal Investigator or a higher-degree research (HDR) student on the team must be a financial member of ESSA prior to the application close date. Please indicate ESSA member ID for relevant team members. An investigator may only be named as Principal Investigator on one application. An application can have more than one Principal Investigator. There is no limit to the number of applications on which an investigator may be named as an Associate Investigator. Undergraduate and HDR students are not eligible to be Principal Investigators. The expectation is that the successful project will be administered by a university/research institute although not all members of a research team are expected to be university/research institute employees.

Budget:

ESSA will fund four (4) projects of up to \$25,000 each in 2025, with two grants allocated per theme.

The budget must be presented exclusive of GST and fully justified in the Full Application. Applications will be assessed against the criteria outlined to ensure funding is awarded to high quality research. Research teams are required to provide a freely accessible version of any publications arising from the project to ESSA members. ESSA encourages publication of findings in quality open access journal where [CAUL](#) supports no-cost access.

Funds may be used for any purpose associated with achievement of the aims of the project including staff costs. This includes travel and accommodation, and fees (maintenance costs) for the project to be undertaken in the proposed facility. Successful grants will be disbursed as follows:

- 80% total funds upon contract execution; and
- 20% total funds awarded on receipt of the financial acquittal and the final report.

The grant may not be used to fund any expenses associated with presentation of any aspect of the project at a conference or for publication. Use of free open access publications that are supported through the [CAUL](#) arrangements is encouraged, so publications are possible to broadly access. Funds are not to be used for the purchase of capital expenditure of any kind including computer hardware, office furniture or clinical machinery. The grant may not be used to fund indirect research costs. Unspent funds will be directed back to ESSA.

The budget may be used to support research in association with another project, but the research must be discreet and standalone. ESSA must receive acknowledgement for research conducted with ESSA funds.

Co-funding and/or in-kind support pledged by university/research institute or other organisation will be highly regarded.

Funds awarded will be transferred to the recipient after contract execution. ESSA will expect that obtaining human research ethics approval progresses immediately and ESSA will be advised of the approval and any updates during the process.

Selection criteria:**Table 1: Selection criteria for either an Expression of Interest or a Full Application**

Criterion	Considerations (see word limits in the EoI Form or the Full Application Form)	Expression of Interest	Full Application
		Weight (%)	Weight (%)
Research Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aims and hypothesis are clear and well-justified. • The research design is appropriate to address the aims. • The methods and procedures (including key outcome measures) provide sufficient detail to ensure clarity and replication and are aligned to the research aims. • The management and analysis of data is appropriate. 	25	40
Significance and Translation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research in Theme A has focus on the economics of the exercise and sports professions to support workforce policy or system approaches, by focusing on any of the following: economic analysis of health services that profession deliver, the pricing of services, or the value of the professions' services 	25	10

Criterion	Considerations (see word limits in the EoI Form or the Full Application Form)	Expression of Interest	Full Application
		Weight (%)	Weight (%)
	<p>(eg value to consumers or to Australia; benefits and/or costs of interventions)*.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The research addresses an issue relevant to ESSA’s strategic priorities (e.g., highly prevalent, burdensome, under researched, gap in knowledge, research opportunity, etc). There is a clearly articulated pathway for translation of findings into practice and potential benefit to ESSA members and ESSA workforce. There are research findings proposed for publication in various forms appropriate to the research (eg article (preferred), case study, policy brief, infographic, project brochure, webinar, podcast etc). Researcher provides evidence of prior impact from any preliminary research. 		
Team and Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The investigator team has the skills and expertise to undertake and complete the project as described. The composition of the team is appropriate, and all roles and contributions are outlined, including mentorship of early career researchers. Relevant partners/collaborators are included in the team with their specific role indicated. Stakeholders relevant to direct engagement in the research or application in practice or translation are identified and committed. 	25	10
Timelines, Feasibility and Budget	<p>Timelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timeline is feasible and appropriate to complete the research activities. <p>Feasibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The deliverables are clearly stated and sample size is appropriate. Adequate facilities, infrastructure, and support from the administering university and participating partners/collaborators are available to complete the project. <p>Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The funds requested are essential, adequate, and appropriate to achieve the work described. Budget details not expected in the EoI. The proposal represents good value for money. The requested funds are well-justified. Co-funding and/or in-kind support has been pledged where appropriate. 	25	40

* to create to understand of the professions service offerings and the impact by exercise scientists, sport scientists, or exercise physiologists in varied health settings in Australia, on consumers and the health system. The research could analyse the economics of services and care settings, using cost and value information, modelling, economic burden, economic evaluation eg cost benefit analysis. Research could identify the prices for different services and in different workforce environments (eg exercise physiologists working in NDIS or in rehabilitation, private practice or in hospitals). Research could also assess the impact and value of the services delivered by our professions – eg reduction in hospitalisation, contribution to chronic disease management, contribution to wellness or sport business etc.

Reporting:

Recipients will provide a progress report to ESSA at six months and a final report to ESSA describing deliverables, outputs, budget including any co-funding, project expenditure (personnel, consumables, maintenance, survey, travel) and outcomes relating to the original aims outlined in the application. Recipients will submit their Final Report and project acquittal no later than two months after the agreed end date of the project.

All grant recipients are strongly encouraged to disseminate any findings through publications, conference presentations (eg ESSA's *Research to Practice Conference*) (and acknowledging ESSA) and/or to influence policy review or decisions or program development, review or implementation change. All grant recipients are required to communicate research project activities and provide ESSA professional development once findings of the project are final, and publications are encouraged and highly desirable.

Acknowledgement of ESSA:

The support of ESSA, in whole or in part, must be acknowledged on all publications, presentations, workshop materials and media reports that result from the research being undertaken.

Application process:

- Text word limits must be adhered and applications going over limit will not be assessed.
- Provide all details required via the ESSA Research Grants Expression of Interest form from the website. The lead Principal Investigator only will provide a brief CV.
- Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their Expression of Interest, and if they will progress to a Full Application using a separate form provided to them. All team members will be required to provide a brief CV for a Full Application.
- Please ensure the CV of the Principal Investigator for the EoI is named as *ESSA24RG_PI Surname*
- Please ensure that one file is provided for the Full Application that includes all CVs and the file is named as *PI Surname_ESSA24RG_Full App* for the Full Application
- A template form with the questions on the Expression of Interest form is on the webpage.
- No Expression of Interest can be emailed.

All enquiries regarding the ESSA Research Grants should be directed to research@essa.org.au

Timeline for Submission of Applications:

Expressions of Interest **open: Monday 27 May 2024**

Expressions of Interest **close: Monday 24 June 2024**

Advice of Expressions of Interest proceeding to Full Application: August 2024

Full Applications close: September 2024

Late applications and email applications WILL NOT be accepted.

Winners announced: By December 2024